

Time Is on Our Side

Text: II Peter 3:1-14

Key Verse: II Peter 3:8: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

What does this mean, "...that one day is with the Lord as thousand years, and a thousand years as one day?" One teacher said it means that time goes on, then a momentous day comes and a paradigm changes everything, such as the day when the Berlin wall came down, or December 7, 1941 when Pearl Harbor was attacked or 9/11. In other words, that one particular day changes everything surrounding it, even for a thousand years. This rather spiritualizing, hidden esoteric meaning doesn't quite make sense.

Before the turn of the last millennium, some students of prophecy were quoting Hosea 6:2: "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." This was understood by some that two millennia would represent 2 days since Christ came the first time and then interpreting the third day, which would begin at the year 2,000, bringing in the return of the Lord (He will raise us up), followed by His 1,000 year reign on Earth. But this is a stretch. Then others have tied Hebrews 4:4 to Hebrews 4:9 thusly: "For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works" (Hebrews 4:4); "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9). The application being that believing there have been 6,000 years of recorded history and the year 2,000 AD began the 7th Millennium. Again, this is another far-fetched stretch since we passed that deadline a few years ago, that's even taking in mind that we may be off in our Roman calendar by 3 to 5 years.

We are back to the question, what does this mean, "...that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day?"

1. SCOFFERS SAY NOTHING HAS CHANGED.

God said in II Peter 3:3, 4, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

The humanist believes that life is a circle, we come and we go again in another form. The major religions that hold to a form of belief in reincarnation are Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. This belief system places man on an even keel with the animal kingdom. And of course this all blends in perfectly with evolution, which believes that man is a mere higher order of animal. This conflicts with the Scripture that informs us in Ecclesiastes 7:29, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Man did not start out in some primordial pond of slime, graduate into fish, then an amphibian, then a primate, then a knuckle-dragging Neanderthal, then as a straightened up a little higher Cro-Magnon and finally, a man. And religions which

do not believe in the true and living God, along with humanists, see man as one with nature, when God, in fact, not only set man apart from nature, but gave him authority over nature and the animal kingdom. This is seen in Genesis 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." The false religious world and secular world believe that since life is a circle, they must protect the earth, because it "mothered" them. The earth did nothing of the sort. We were uniquely made by God and the God who made the earth can keep it going until He says time is up. God has made life for us linear while in this dispensation. As Christians, we are going on from one higher level to the next. We are made in His image and God's ultimate goal is to bring us finally into His likeness in the greater glory yet to come. II Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." In the Christian world-view, we believe that one day we will be raptured out of this earth to heaven and then we will return with Christ to Earth to reign with Him and then He will bring in a new Heaven and a new Earth. That is the unbroken circle that we look forward to.

2. GOD SAYS THAT WE HAVE ALREADY HAD A MAJOR CHANGE.

II Peter 3:5, 6: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Here God is saying that when He created the world, He made the land, the sea and sky and divided everything with the perfect mix of air that fills our lungs with 78.08% nitrogen, 20.95% oxygen and other small amounts which include argon, carbon dioxide, neon, helium, and hydrogen. Genesis 1:6, 7: "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so." Then about 2,348 B.C., God rearranged the water division from above the earth and in the earth, and all of mankind (other than Noah's family) perished in the flood. Things changed!

3. GOD SAYS THAT WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER MAJOR CHANGE.

II Peter 3:7: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." II Peter 3:10-12, explains we are in for climate change, but of a far more severe sort than man with his pollution could ever begin to accomplish. After the 1,000-year reign of Christ, the Great White Throne Judgment takes place and while the unconverted stand before God in Heaven, the Earth and universe will be "uncreated" in incredible cataclysmic fiery judgment. And then God re-creates a new Heaven and Earth.

4. OUR CHANGELESS GOD GIVES A MESSAGE OF HOPE TO HIS PEOPLE IN THE CHANGING WORLD.

Returning to our key verse, “But, ye beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing...” (II Peter 3:8a). Where do we hear this similar wording? I invite your attention to I Thessalonians 4:13: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” In I Thessalonians 4:14-17, the Bible tells us that the dead in Christ shall rise, then we will be caught up together with them to meet our Lord and Savior to ever be with Him! Then the Lord says through His apostle in I Thessalonians 4:18, “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

II Peter 3:8 goes on to say, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

To a snail, a mile is very long. To a deer, a mile seems considerably shorter. To a man in a car, it is even shorter yet. And should we be able to travel at the speed of light, it is barely measurable. God declares, “...I AM THAT I AM...” (Exodus 3:14b). How does this apply? When my wife and I were traveling on a Viking Cruise down the Danube, our longship would curve and bend with the river and on either side we would see castles and beautiful terrain high above us. Occasionally we would stop and climb the mountain above us and we could see so much more than below on the waters of the Danube. We could see the bends and the forest, the vineyards and the other ships all at one moment from that high place. In II Peter 3:8, God is saying basically what He said in Isaiah 57:15a: “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place....” He is saying that a thousand years to Me is only tomorrow and for Me, tomorrow is today. I see it all. I know it all. Don’t be discomfited with that world as you see it. I will change it. The I AM was in yesterday and is in today, tomorrow and forever. He is the eternal God, outside of time and yet in time.

Therefore, why does God seem to delay His return? Because of the lost who are yet to be found (II Peter 3:9)! And in the meantime, God expects us to diligently live peaceably, without spot and blameless (II Peter 3:14) as His witnesses in this quest for the lost.

Conclusion:

Let the scoffers scoff. Let us continue to serve God, Who loves us and will one day silence all scoffing as written in Philippians 2:10, 11: “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

-Pastor Pope-