

*1 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*

*3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

*8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

*10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*

*11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.*

I don't consider myself a hellfire and brimstone preacher. But . . . when the passage is about hellfire and brimstone, you can sort of count on it.

On some level, I suppose every preacher wants to be popular and accepted. We want to be a welcoming place where folks will feel at

home and loved, and visitors will enjoy their time with us, and hopefully want to return and hear more and perhaps join our little family here. Every church wants to grow.

But on another level I am haunted by Paul's words to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20 where he says, *For I did not shrink back from proclaiming to you the whole counsel of God.*

So when we get to these severe warnings, if I can borrow from James Comey, I have a higher loyalty. We need to understand the difficult passages, word by word. And in fact it seems that there are many such warnings in this book.

Our time on this earth is short, and this business must be transacted with God now, or there is only perdition. So the book is replete with warnings of God's plan, His holiness, our fallenness, and the peril we are in if we do not know Him and His forgiveness.

Peter is arguing with a representative antagonist who has stated his reason to dis-believe in God or judgement. The disbeliever has said; *"Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."*

In other words, your God, your Christ isn't real because He promised to return, and you've based your religion in Him and on His claim; and it hasn't happened.

And Peter is going to argue against that idea in about four different ways. We looked at the first of those last week. Peter says, nothing's ever changed? God doesn't judge evil? I think you forgot about the flood.

This guy is not only short sighted for the future, he's short sighted in his history. Every civilization on earth, at that time, and in ours, has a knowledge of a cataclysmic flood.

You can go 80 miles north of here and look at an Ichthyosaur. A giant fish from an ancient sea. The whole state is layers upon layers of rock

with evidence of the flood locked in the layers.

Peter goes right to scripture in his argument, over and over. First to creation itself. The world was formed out of water and by water. And God used water to destroy an entire civilization of evil men.

Peter's opponent who says *all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation* has selective memory loss. God does judge evil. And He has already proved once that He will judge the whole world. Be warned. God responds against rebellious people who hate Him.

No one knows how many people drowned in the flood. Do the math. In that ecosystem, men lived 900 years. 100's of millions? All but 8 perished. We will see later in Peter's argument that God is patient, but ultimately He will judge rebellion against Him.

You may be shocked at the thought of God drowning hundreds of millions of peoples in the flood. But ultimately, at the fall, when sin entered the world, the judgement was set in place. The wages of sin is death. And death is appointed unto every man.

Every sinful rebel that has used the breath that God has given him to rebel against the author of life is already pre-judged. Death finds every man. But in the case of the flood, it was a deluge that engulfed every man on the planet except Noah and his three sons, and their wives.

The flood is a reminder that God will judge this rebellious world.

Peter's next argument is against his opponent's claim that God is a do-nothing God. "*Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.*"

Eons have come and gone. The fact that eons have come and gone, and God hasn't answered what His book claims He promises, proves it's all a hoax. God's a phony. Enough time has come and gone. Big promises. Nothing happened.

Is He asleep? Did He die? Inactivity proves He isn't. There is no God. Therefore; If it feels good, do it. No judgement will come. Remember Peter has told us their motivation already. Lust.

Peter's first rebuttal. You have selective memory loss. God has judged, and will judge.

Peter's second rebuttal; *8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

Now in the first rebuttal, Peter, though he's explaining to his beloved flock, he answers as if he's answering the opponent almost directly. But in verse 5, he's actually explaining the truth to believers. The mockers and scoffers aren't answered in the first person. He calls them, they.

And in verses 8 and 9 Peter continues to speak to believers. Christians scattered across Asia minor. It's important to keep who the recipients are in front of our eyes so there's no confusion. *But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved,* Peter is explaining something to the elect.

The scoffers and mockers are not the beloved. We long for them to become the beloved. To be convinced and changed. That possibility exists as long as death doesn't come, or judgement begins, it comes like a thief while they're still alive. Sometimes death comes like a thief when you don't expect it. This warning is imperative.

The opponent argues, enough time has gone by to prove that God is not. If He was there, He would have done something by now. Eons of inactivity prove He is not.

And Peter says; *that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*

Eon's prove nothing, except perhaps God's nearly infinite patience. God

does not dwell in a time ~ space continuum like we do. Yesterday has passed. Tomorrow isn't here. All we have is today. We live in the moment. God does not. He has all of eternity past and all of eternity future, all at the same time. And not at the same time.

Our minds can't really fathom what that is, because we don't experience it. Some day soon we will. But for now, about the best we can do is say what Peter has just said; *that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*

That blows up your eons argument. Eons don't mean anything to God. They prove nothing.

*Vs. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

You have mis-understood God's time clock. Eon's have passed, come and gone, for a different reason. God has a perfect plan. And here we need to be careful.

I'm not an english teacher. Wish I was. But we need to assign an antecedent to the word **you** in this verse, or we end up with people teaching universalism. *but is patient toward you* Who is the you here?

Whoever it is, it's the same as the any and the all *but is patient toward **you**, not wishing for **any** to perish but for **all** to come to repentance.*

The antecedent of this group is the word beloved. And those are the same beloved that are defined for us where Peter says this is my second letter to you, and his first letter tells us who they are;

*1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,  
To **those who reside as aliens**, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, **who are chosen** 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood:*

Peter has no fear of the doctrine of election. The *beloved* in vs. 8 of chapter 3 of his second letter are the elect. Chosen by God according to foreknowledge. Foreknowledge is impossible for us to understand for the same reason non-time is.

God foreknew His elect, He chose them, and the Spirit sanctified them. Removed them out of the kingdom of this world, and into the Kingdom of God.

Back to vs. 9 *The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

Is it possible for the elect, the beloved ones, to not have come to repentance yet? Yes! Yes, and that's why we need to be proclaiming the gospel all over the place. Let me show you some of them.

*1 Cor. 6:9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.*

Such were some of you. Those words are so hopeful in a civilization as hopelessly lost as ours is. Such were some of you.

Peter's words in vs. 9 make perfect sense. It may seem like too much time has come and gone. 2000 years! This world is incredibly wicked. Spectacularly wicked. Taunting God. Mocking Him. What is He waiting for?

*9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

God is calling out of this world a people for His name. And when that

last one is called out of this world, judgement will come. But until that moment, and we don't know when that is, God endures the wickedness of this place.

But do not be fooled. Wrath not yet present, is wrath stored up for this wretched world. Do not be fooled into thinking God's patience misplaces His wrath. His patience waits for His elect to come out of this world. Then His fearsome wrath will be displayed. And that's Peter's next logical point.

*10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*

When God's chosen elect are all in; judgement comes.

*13 On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, 14 they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds. 15 So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. 16 Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the LORD closed it behind him. 17 Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth.*

From Genesis 7. A picture of salvation in the midst of wrath. They entered the ark in obedience to the voice of God, male and female, that's important for re-population, that's God's design, and when 8 elect persons were safely in the ark, it says; The Lord sealed the door behind them. God sealed His elect in a safe place during judgement.

That's what's happening in vs. 9. God patiently waits while He calls all of His elect to safety. Then in vs. 10, as in Noah's time, judgement ensues.

In vs. 10 Peter is prophetic. The elect are safely in; the fire and

brimstone falls. Just like Noah. Except God keeps His promise to not use water to destroy the cosmos again. This time it will be fire and brimstone.

Now Peter's purpose here is not to explain all the nuances of prophecy. What we have here is an extremely condensed and compacted version that meets his parallel with Noah. God does judge. God preserves His own. His chosen ones, His elect. Then judgement comes like a tidal wave. It comes suddenly, irreversibly, and overwhelmingly.

Let's look at what Peter tells us, because at first glance we have trouble making it fit neatly into our prophetic systematic theology. I'll do my best to help.

*10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief,*

I'll take the easy part first. It comes unexpectedly. I could walk up and down through my neighborhood and knock on 20 doors and ask, Do you think there's any possibility that today might be judgement day, and 20 people would say "absolutely not".

Nobody's expecting a tidal wave today. Nobody expects a thief today either. Neither is announced as to day and hour. April 23rd came and went. Some number cruncher aligned planets and stars according to Revelation 12 and April 23rd was the day.

People were laughing about it in the chow hall is how I learned the news. Stear well clear of people who have prophetic information beyond the clear words of this book. God doesn't line up numbers in cryptic secret ways that only one brilliant guy can figure out. Avoid those people like poison gas.

*10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief,* OK, the thief part is easy, no one knows or expects judgement to fall today. But what is the **day of the Lord**.

First of all, Peter has just told us that God's days are different than our days. The day of the Lord is conceptual. The day of the Lord is what

we pray for every time we pray the Lord's prayer. Did you know that? When little children pray the Lord's prayer they're praying for a cataclysmic judgement on this world.

*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*

We memorized that when we were 4 years old in Sunday school. And we've said it with our brains dis-engaged ever since. Do you realize that you are praying for a cataclysmic time period and ultimate event.

You are asking God to displace the ruler of this world, Satan, the devil and to come and reign in righteousness. Think about that for a moment. What will that day look like?

Jesus roars out of heaven, with 10 thousands of His saints, comes to earth, the second coming of Christ, and tells Satan and the false prophet and the anti-christ, times up.

And even that event is preceded by a 7 year tribulation period after the church is raptured.

Let's do an old testament review of this term; Day of the Lord. What we'll see is that this term encompasses a sequence of events that lasts for a thousand years.

The Day of the Lord is a time frame where Satan is bound, evil is judged and removed, Jesus reigns on the throne of David, in Jerusalem, in righteousness, with His saints, and with His chosen people, the messianic Jews, and there will be millions of them who all turn messianic on one day when they see Him in the sky and weep for Him, and embrace His rescue of them.

The day of the Lord also envisions an eco-system very different than the cursed one we are living in.

So join me as we look at some of the references to the day, or time period, if you will, called the day of the Lord. 6000 years were the day

of Satan's rule. The day of the Lord is Satan deposed, God rules this world. a thousand years, and then a new heaven and a new earth.

Peter just used a tiny part of that for his purposes. It'll begin unexpectedly, and it's judgement will be with fire. The elect will be safe.

Listen to a couple of passages from Isaiah;

*Isa.2:10 Enter the rock and hide in the dust  
From the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His  
majesty.*

*11 The proud look of man will be abased  
And the loftiness of man will be humbled,  
And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.*

*12 For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning  
Against everyone who is proud and lofty  
And against everyone who is lifted up,  
That he may be abased.*

*13 And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and  
lifted up,  
Against all the oaks of Bashan,*

*14 Against all the lofty mountains,  
Against all the hills that are lifted up,*

*15 Against every high tower,  
Against every fortified wall,*

*16 Against all the ships of Tarshish  
And against all the beautiful craft.*

*17 The pride of man will be humbled  
And the loftiness of men will be abased;  
And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,*

*18 But the idols will completely vanish.*

*19 Men will go into caves of the rocks  
And into holes of the ground  
Before the terror of the LORD  
And the splendor of His majesty,  
When He arises to make the earth tremble.*

*20 In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats  
Their idols of silver and their idols of gold,  
Which they made for themselves to worship,*

*21 In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the  
cliffs  
Before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty,  
When He arises to make the earth tremble.*

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*Isa 13:6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is near!  
It will come as destruction from the Almighty.*

*7 Therefore all hands will fall limp,  
And every man's heart will melt.*

*8 They will be terrified,  
Pains and anguish will take hold of them;  
They will writhe like a woman in labor,  
They will look at one another in astonishment,  
Their faces aflame.*

*9 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming,  
Cruel, with fury and burning anger,  
To make the land a desolation;  
And He will exterminate its sinners from it.*

*10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations  
Will not flash forth their light;  
The sun will be dark when it rises*

*And the moon will not shed its light.*

*11 Thus I will punish the world for its evil  
And the wicked for their iniquity;  
I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud  
And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.*

*12 I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold  
And mankind than the gold of Ophir.*

*13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble,  
And the earth will be shaken from its place  
At the fury of the LORD of hosts  
In the day of His burning anger.*

Are you beginning to get a sense of what it will be like when Jesus returns to this world, casts out Satan and locks him up for a thousand years, casts the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire, judges this world with fire, and sets up His thousand year reign.

Cataclysmic doesn't really begin to describe it. Listen to the prophet, Zephaniah;

*14 Near is the great day of the LORD,  
Near and coming very quickly;  
Listen, the day of the LORD!  
In it the warrior cries out bitterly.*

*15 A day of wrath is that day,  
A day of trouble and distress,  
A day of destruction and desolation,  
A day of darkness and gloom,  
A day of clouds and thick darkness,*

*16 A day of trumpet and battle cry  
Against the fortified cities  
And the high corner towers.*

*17 I will bring distress on men  
So that they will walk like the blind,  
Because they have sinned against the LORD;  
And their blood will be poured out like dust  
And their flesh like dung.*

*18 Neither their silver nor their gold  
Will be able to deliver them  
On the day of the LORD'S wrath;  
And all the earth will be devoured  
In the fire of His jealousy,  
For He will make a complete end,  
Indeed a terrifying one,  
Of all the inhabitants of the earth.*

Malachi chapter 4 speaks of both joy and terror connected with this time

*1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch." 2 "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. 3 "You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the LORD of hosts.*

OK, we'll circle back to Peter and finish our thoughts for this morning.

*10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*

Do we need to assign an exact time to what Peter says? No.

We know that the time frame of the Day of the Lord, begins at the rapture. God removes His elect, his church. That day will arrive like a thief. Un-announced. Un-suspected. We believe it could happen any moment.

The judgement by fire, I believe, from my study, this sounds like the events immediately after the seven bowls of God's wrath are poured out on the earth in rapid fire succession, and then heaven is opened and Christ returns.

And yet this again is all compressed, because following the millennial kingdom is when this creation is uncreated and a new heaven and a new earth are created.

I think Peter compresses all of that, again for his purposes, into one brief sentence. Time stamps become un-important. Jesus will come to this world at the end of the tribulation period in fiery judgement. The wicked rebellors will be consumed.

But listen to a promise that God gave Noah the first time he destroyed the world system. Way back in the first book of the Bible. This promise remains for us; Genesis 8:21 and 22

*...21 The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. 22 "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat, And summer and winter, And day and night Shall not cease."*

That tells me that the day of the Lord, Jesus deposing Satan and ruling this world on David's throne in Jerusalem, as messy as that is, fire and brimstone and destruction, this earth will continue but with a different eco-system than what we have now.

Paul tells us this world, as beautiful as it is, groans under the curse. God cursed this world when Adam sinned in Genesis 3.

In Isaiah and other prophets we have snippets of what it will be like in the millennial reign of Jesus. The earth will be un-cursed. Perhaps very similar to the garden of God at Eden.

From Isaiah 11: *6And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. 7Also the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox....*

Ezekiel 34:25

*"I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.*

Hosea 2:18

*"In that day I will also make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, The birds of the sky And the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land, And will make them lie down in safety.*

Amos 9:13 *"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD,*

*"When the plowman will overtake the reaper  
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;  
When the mountains will drip sweet wine  
And all the hills will be dissolved.*

*14 "Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel,  
And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them;  
They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine,  
And make gardens and eat their fruit.*

*15 "I will also plant them on their land,  
And they will not again be rooted out from their land  
Which I have given them,"  
Says the LORD your God.*

In this new ecosystem, the guy planting the stuff can't work fast enough to not get run over by the guy reaping it. It grows so fast.

**Don't** worry about pseudo scientists and alarmists telling you we're destroying the planet. That's God's business. He's going to make a mess

out of this planet. Then He's going to renew it, and it will be more beautiful than we've ever even imagined.

**Do** worry about your relationship with the King of Kings. Don't be a rebel. Repent of your sin and ask Him to own you and forgive you. Tell Him you want to be His child. Ask Him to remove your sin and to give you His righteousness.

That's the lesson from Peter's warning. Judgement will overtake this world like a thief. Don't wait. Repent and give your heart to God. Safety is dwelling in Him.