

# Peter and His Epistles

## Lesson # 20: The Day of the Lord 2 Peter 3:1-18

### I. Introduction

Peter shifts his attention to the scoffers (those false teachers) who ridicule the reality of Christ's promised return.

"scoffers" – those who deny a "future eschatology" (that part of theology that is concerned with death, judgment and the final destiny of mankind).

They are "mockers" – "ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has..."

They rule out any kind of divine intervention in history.

"The last days" – "This present age"

Dating from the rejection of Christ as the Messiah until His second coming.

Note: the "second coming" refers to both Christ's coming in the air (2 Thes. 4:10-17) and His coming with power (Zech. 14:1-4 and Rev. 16:14-19)

It is referred to as a "mystery" (Eph. 3:3-6). Mystery: Things hid in God.

### II. Their ignorant denial that Christ will return (3:5-13)

#### A. Arguments against their denial

1. These false teachers forget that God intervened in human history once before. He destroyed the antediluvian world (Gen. 6)
2. These false teachers misunderstood the delay. God's sense of time is not the same as ours. Ps. 90:4 *"A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night."*
3. They misunderstood God's reason for the delay. He is motivated to be patient based on His love.

Rom. 9:22 *"What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction?"*

1 Tim. 2:4 *"who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."*

Eze. 18:23 *"Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?"*

4. They did not realize that the day of the Lord will come suddenly (consider Matt. 24:42-44)

### III. The "Day of the Lord" (3:10-14)

A time when God will judge the wicked and end the world system (as it is today)

John 12:48 “There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.”

Note: The Book of Revelation is a book of judgment. Chapters 4-19 depict an even increasing intensity of judgment (seals, trumpets and vials)

Rev. 19:11 “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war.”

Ultimately sheol (hades) is tossed into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14) and the wicked are cast in as well (Rev. 20:15). Satan and demons are confined. The eternal fire is not quenched ( Jude 7, Mark 9:47-48).

“Heavens will disappear with a roar (noise of something passing swiftly through the air). See Rev. 6:14 and 20:11)

“Element will melt with fervent heat.” This could be the basic elements that make up the earth

“Works will be burnt up.” (Earth and everything in it will be laid bare)

#### IV. So what?

What manner of person ought you to be? (vs. 11)

A. Perspective: Look forward (vs. 14)

1 John 3:1-3 “ See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup> Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,<sup>[a]</sup> we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.”

B. Behavior: without spot and blameless (vs. 14)

Eph 5:27 “and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”

James 1:27 “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

C. Caution: be careful that you don’t fall (vs. 17)

1 Cor. 10:12 “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!”

D. Instruction: grow in grace (vs. 18)

1 Pet. 2:2 “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,”

#### Discussion Questions:

In what practical way do you “test the spirits”?