

(1) This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.”

(5) For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

(8) But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

(10) But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Think on these things:

- 1) What two things does Peter say are his goals in reminding the readers of the prophets and the Savior, Jesus? Do you think these are good reasons to come to church? Explain.

He wants them to remember and think about prophetic predictions (i.e., biblical prophecies about the future) and Jesus’ commands. Many people are ‘curious’ about what God says about the future, the whens, wheres, and hows. These are hard to understand, and shared insights from church pastors, teachers, and lay people help us better grasp them. And it is always important to remember the commandments that Jesus laid out for His followers.

- 2) We think we live in the “last days”, but Peter explained way back at Pentecost that the coming of the Holy Spirit in power marked the beginning of God’s last days (see Acts 2:17). What activity is cited as dominating our world, culture (v. 3) and even our churches (v. 4)?

Since the “last days” started 2,000 years ago, Christians face skeptics, pessimists, and scoffers who taunt us with, “You’ve been saying these things for years and nothing happens.” They attack us this way because they don’t want to change from their own desires and agendas.

- 3) When Peter says “fathers” in v. 4, he is conveying that these skeptics are actually within the Christian church. The fathers they refer to are the Old Testament patriarchs, and even the New Testament apostles who died believing Jesus would return in their own lifetimes. Do you have a response to this (v. 4)? – People saying, “You always talk about Jesus coming back. When? The Church has been saying this for over 2,000 years! I don’t believe it.” The question always seems to be, “When...?”

God has many signs attached to His return to deliver believers, including the Gospel going out to all the world. It really is not a matter of “if” but “when” Jesus comes back, so the point is to

have saving faith. God is not bound by (our concept of) time; Peter also says a thousand Earth years is but as one day to the Lord.

- 4) Will God intervene in our world? In verses 5-6 Peter says He already did --- twice --- creating the world out of water (Genesis 1:6-10), and destroying those living in the world (Genesis 7:17-24) when sin ran rampant because of men's evil hearts. How do these members of the church deal with these truths (v. 5a) in their skepticism of Jesus Second Coming?

Peter says that they "deliberately overlook" these fundamental truths everyone knows about.

- 5) V. 7 says that our present earth and heaven exist by God's Word (see Colossians 1:13-17 and Hebrews 1:1-4). What will be the outcome for our present world (v. 7b, Revelation 21:1)?

The present heavens and the earth will face God's fiery destruction on the Day of Judgment when the ungodly will also be destroyed. Colossians emphasizes that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, and He created all we see and know in the natural world. Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus is God's Son, heir of the world He created, and the exact imprint of God's nature for people to grasp. Revelation says we will be given a new heaven and new earth, with no seas.

- 6) V. 8 admonishes us not to overlook what in relation to God's perception of time? Consider Isaiah 55:8-9.

God is not bound by time. To Him, a thousand years is the same as a single day. God's ways and thoughts are so much higher than that of human beings --- we can't totally fathom Him.

- 7) Is God's Day of Judgment late? What's holding Him up (v. 9) that makes us even think this (see Romans 2:4-5 and 1 Timothy 2:1-4)?

God is NOT late --- but patient. He pauses to allow people to repent and be saved. When the full number of people to be saved arrives (omniscience), the end will come. Romans speaks to allowing time for repentance, but also that the unbelieving will store up God's wrath against themselves for the judgment to come. 1 Timothy expresses God's desire: that all people come to know the truth and to be saved.

- 8) V. 10 is a detailed description of what Peter talks about in v. 7b. Even though we have these end times prophecies here and in Revelation (6:12-17), what is surprising about people knowing in advance that this will all happen?

Verses 7b and 10 speak to the total destruction of our earth (and heavens) by God, this time destroyed and dissolved by fire. Revelation adds that ALL humanity will be terrified as signs of the destruction arrive. Yet, even with this advance information, most people in our world still choose to ignore or reject God and His warnings. We march towards an 'end', where believers will be saved and the ungodly subjected to God's wrath and judgment.

People and situations I want to pray for this week: