

December 20, 2020

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2 Peter 3

Christ's Coming Judgment

([Genesis 3:1-7](#); [Genesis 7:1-5](#); [Romans 5:12-21](#))

1This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: **2**That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

Peter is laying out again the bona fides of the Bible; its writers and their direction by God as to what to write.

2 Peter 1:21 “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

God repeatedly points us to the Old Testament as a focal point of what the future has to hold. Anyone who neglects the Old Testament will miss out on a great deal of knowledge, wisdom and understanding about the New Testament and New Covenant. For example, the Old Covenant/Old Testament gave clear guidance as to the manner in which to sacrifice animals for the forgiveness of sin. That translated into a direct prophecy about

the coming of Jesus Christ the Messiah, the Lamb of God. He would be the one individual who would fulfill the law, surrender His life in this world to save all of mankind.

If you were to study this out in the Old Testament you would find that an animal sacrifice was only a temporary resolution to sin. All the elements from the animal to every temple furnishing; all pointed to the coming Messiah. You would learn the meaning of various numbers and colors as to what they mean in God's economy.

Without studying the Old Testament, you would not be familiar with those direct connection. It is in fact our heritage and without it we have no salvation through the One and Only Son of God.

3Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4And 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 idea of scoffing at gods was not knew.

1 Kings 18: 25And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. 26And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. 27And it came to

pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. 28And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. 29And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

It is one thing to mock fake gods created by men, it is a far different matter to mock the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

It is human nature fueled by Satan and his minions that if you do something wrong and you see no response to your wrong actions then you get the idea that there is no one that will come for you.

We can see that same flawed human nature all across the US with rioters who are not incumbered by the government in anyway. It simply fuels their lust to continue.

The world takes the same approach to sin and God's apparent failure to respond. God is well aware of the mocking and is fully capable of resolving all of those sins to the pain of those who are committing them. God is patient and loves mankind, giving every opportunity for all to come to a saving Grace through Jesus Christ. However; God will not be mocked; vengeance is His and He has every right to carry out justice in any manner He sees fit.

5For 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:

The fact is that God created the Heavens and the Earth. This verse is seen in two ways and neither requires understanding to come to Salvation; but we will briefly discuss the ideas presented.

God created the Heavens by His Word and they were old, or ancient. God has always existed but not so the Heavens. They were a creation by the One and Only eternal God Elohim.

“God is creator, powerful and mighty, Lord of lords. He is the Lord Most High, stronger and mightier than anyone or anything. When you face impossible circumstances or adversaries, now that your God is stronger.

(Gen. 1:1, 17:7, Ps 19:1 Jer. 31:33)

<https://www.godisreal.today/names-of-god/>

Likewise, God created the Earth by His Word, but it states a more specific state of creation;

“the earth standing out of the water and in the water:”

Some commentators understand this to mean that all of the elements of dirt and other constituents when rendered out of the water becoming solid or “earth”, having been suspended within a mixture that was predominately water. They believe that water was the first element created and we know it consists of what our scientists call 2 Hydron and 1 Oxygen atoms “H₂O”. Water and

oxygen are the two most important elements to life on earth. Take away either and there is no life.

Genesis 1:1 ***1In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.***

The other Biblical hypothesis is that the solid formation “earth” was beneath the water and that God ordered the water by His Word to coalesce in only several locations thus allowing the firmament to be exposed as the surface. Our world is still made up of ¾ water on its surface.

It would be nice to know but as far as I am concerned, I know that God did it but how He did it is within His knowledge not ours.

6Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

The reference here is of course to the flood; all living creatures except those on Noah’s ark were destroyed.

7But 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.

There are two main understandings of this verse; the first part about the heavens and the earth “which are now” is not a

reference to pre flood earth but rather a reference to “New Heaven and New Earth”.

Isaiah 65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

“By the same Word are kept” refers to this unfailing Word of God. “If God said it, I believe it and that settles it”. But what is it kept in store for?

“Reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men”.

So, the heavens and the earth are reserved for a day in which God will consume them with fire. Either consume or set them on fire which may have some connection with the lake of fire.

The fire that is sited here may come from one of two places. One understanding is that the intense fire that burns within the earth itself; a molten river of superheated rock that from time to times erupts to the surface in the form of volcanoes. Some believe God will release that immense power from within the earth to destroy the earth.

The second understanding and more likely the case, is that God will send fire down from heaven in some form that will ignite and

set fire to the earth. That could come in the form of meteors, asteroids or simply God speaking fire to fall from heaven.

God's Word does not give us a clear understanding of which type event will ultimately consume this planet we reside on presently. He does give us more information more about why He does this than how.

The why is the sinful and unregenerated hearts of men.

Romans 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Isaiah 66:15 For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

Daniel 7:10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

Malaki 4:1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

2 Theselonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

God clearly grasps the nature of humanity and we have previously spoken about this. When you do something sinful or illegal and there is no immediate response from either God or the Judicial system, mankind in their sinful nature think they have gotten away with something. Some go to the extent of believing that God does not exist. That logic would follow that if you commit a crime and you are not arrested is that there are no Police out there. The fact is that your time will come.

Habakkuk 2:3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

8But, 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.

Psalms 90:4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

God is making several points here, but the prominent point is that God is not incumbered by time of any sort. Time exists on this earth based on Solar and Lunar orbits, being an infinitesimal aspect of God's massive creation having no impact on God's view of time.

9The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward,

not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

One reason we should be thankful that God is not incumbered by time is that His promises are eternal as is He. Within those promises is the promise of Salvation. God intended all men to be saved and He is in no rush due to no time limitations on Him to bring Judgment. As we find elsewhere in Scripture God's desire is that all mankind come to repentance and to the Sure Salvation through the Blood of Jesus the Lamb of God. However, there is a limit on how much time on earth God will allow to pass due more to the intensity of sin than the issue of time. As God has warned us sin will continue to increase

1 Thessalonians 2: 1Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

God is describing an order of end times event although not specific the general idea is;

1. Falling away first

This falling away is not political but religious. It is not brought about by the revealing of the Anti-Christ but is the catalyst that brings about his revealing.

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

We see this occurrence almost daily. When people leave the truth in search of a better truth in their opinion they are falling away. There is only one Truth and that is God's Truth. We see certain religions growing at an amazing rate; Islam fastest growing religion in the world more due to threats and fear than devout belief, but non-the-less as people migrate to Islam, they are abandoning the Truth for a lie. And, it is not just Islam, any religion that does not declare that Jesus is the One and Only Son of God and that He died on the Cross to give mankind Salvation from certain death is an abomination to God.

2. The revealing of the Anti-Christ.

4Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of

his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The Day of the Lord

(Zephaniah 1:7-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)

10But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

The Lord; referring to Jesus will come as a “thief in the night”. According to Pulpit Commentary the most reliable translations omit the words “in the night”. If we take that at face value, then this verse says; “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the heavens.....” Most likely one or more translators added the words “in the night” to further the idea of stealth. When Jesus returns is a mystery only known to God according to His Word.

Matthew 24:36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

We must take a deeper look at the event that will change eternity for millions and millions of lives. To do that we need to look at the wedding feast of Christ with the Church.

Matthew 25: 1Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

We are all aware of the process of the Jewish wedding. After the betrothal the son goes to the father's house and begins to build a home for his bride. This is a simile of Christ having been Crucified returns the Father's side and begins to prepare a place for His Bride the Church in His Father's house. Jesus said as much;

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

In this simile there were 10 virgins all representing "complete" as the number 10 is used to represent completeness in God's Spiritual economy. We can consider that this represents all those who claim to be of the Church, the Bride of Christ.

2And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

Please all hear this; we all need to take this to heart as each of us will be judged according to our walk with Jesus; you can depend on no other person to fulfill your personal responsibility.

In the simile there were 5 virgins who took adequate oil for this endeavor. There were 5 who did not. The idea here is that there are 10 Christians all apparently walking with Christ through their lives. The oil is likely a symbol of the Grace of God through the Power of the Holy Spirit. It is available to all who earnestly ask for it. What is portrayed here is that of the 10, half of them waxed cold toward God toward Jesus the One who had died for all of them. Perhaps it was the pull of the world to draw them back from Christ. It undoubtedly had to do with sin as sin is the mechanism that Satan uses to pull us away from our Savior. We can debate whether or not they were ever saved but the implications is that the 5 who failed were of the 10 the whole of what was the Brides Court.

Remember last week from 2 Kings we talked about the axe head falling off and it was borrowed? It is a similar thing that apparently happens here; they were walking with Christ and they lost their first love for Him due to the world and what it offers. They lost the power of the Holy Spirit by some means and it is represented here as “oil” for their lamps as part of the wedding procession.

5While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

The picture here is that the Bride Groom; Christ was delayed in His coming for His Bride. Again the picture is that the Bride Groom was traveling some distance not just across a small town. And during this lengthy travel the entire Bride's Party grew sleeping and dozed off. It indicates a major issue even though natural to sleep in the flesh; the issue is what is happening in the Spirit of each of these 10 virgins "the Church". Has the Spiritual Church fallen asleep; will it awaken in time to meet the Groom? How vast is this problem of slumber in the Bride of Christ? Who will awaken and be saved?

6And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

As we saw in verse 10 of 2 Peter 3 the implication is that the Bride Groom comes in the middle of the night; at a time when we are slumbering; asleep. The human body needs sleep but not so the Spirit, it is ready at an instant to do the Will of God.

7Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

All 10 arose, the Church was awakened; not just half or 5 but all 10. When they awoke they trimmed their lamps? This trimming was a process of preparing; they would take a wire fastened to the side of the lamp and pull the wick up, so it sat above the mantle. They would then add more oil from the supply they had

brought and relight their lamps if they had gone out completely.

All 10 lamps leapt to life giving off light. However;

8And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

Just as quickly as all 10 lamps were brought back to life, five immediately started to falter and go out. In the simile it is indicative of people who speak the right words and perhaps have with great diligence followed Christ, but the Power of the Holy Spirit is no longer with them. They have been drawn back into the world. Again, we can debate the idea of losing ones salvation; which may prove useless as it did these 5. Perhaps the better approach is to ensure you do not have that problem; that we are filled with the Power of the Holy Spirit and that we are walking in obedience. Do we have an area of our lives where we are in danger of slipping away from Christ and back into the flesh? If so then it is like leaven, a little leaven we are told will leaven the whole loaf. If that is the case I think we are in grave danger; the time is drawing close to Jesus return; do we have oil, do we have the Holy Spirit in each of us.

9But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

Why would those with the Power of the Holy Spirit; the oil to operate the lamp tell the others “no”?

The answer is simple; none of us can share the personal attributes of our lives that we will be judged by with anyone else. We will all be judged by what we did or did not do. The 5 virgins who had prepared cannot give what they prepared with to the other 5; all will be judged on what they each did with their lives.

The simile suggests that they go and buy more oil from them that sell. The principal is that those who are saved in mind alone or were saved and turned away from the Truth go to Pastors and Teachers and try to regain or for real purchase what is needed to be saved. The interesting thing is that what is purported to be sold is free as a gift from God. God has entrusted the delivery of the message of Love and Grace. But even then it will still be up to each individual to seek out that truth on their own if not through a church.

10And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

This life is like the vestibule the outer room to the Master’s dining room. It is this vestibule that we are to prepare and failure on our

part to prepare will result in not being allowed in the Dining Room when the doors are opened.

As with the 5 unprepared virgins while they were off looking for oil; the Holy Spirit, the Bride Groom invited all those who were ready to come into the Banquet of the Lamp. When the virgins returned whether or not they found the oil it did not matter, the doors were closed.

11Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

We are given hints that those who are saved but have not been obedient to Christ are still saved. The implication is that there are levels of joy in heaven; I do not intend to make a doctrine on this idea just an observation based on the following verse;

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

11Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, 12Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

God revealed in Genesis 6 that His intention was to destroy the earth and that is exactly what He is going to do. It will be burned with fire and all of our personal efforts will be tested with fire. We cannot rely on anything anyone else did it will be wholly on each of us. This earth will not be saved but God will create a new heaven and new earth.

Final Exhortations

14Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Our diligence will be proven by our obedience. If we having any areas of our life we are not obedient in we MUST address them now before it is to late.

15And account *that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;*

God has been patient enough with all of us; it is up to each of us to ensure we are in obedience to Christ; it is up to each of us.

16As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

This is intended for those who do not work at understanding God's Word. They are lazy and rely others to do the work for them. It is critical to be personally responsible and diligent for your own salvation.

17Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.*

Here we have a WARNING. Please all of us need to take HEED.

18But grow in grace, and *in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

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