

2 Peter: Lesson #86 – The Day of the Lord Will Come

Notes for Parents to Study With Their Children

For Wednesday, April 1st

Read II Peter 3:1-18 (a simplified explanation of the text will be supplied at the end of these notes).

Memory Verse: II Pet. 3:13 “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

The Apostle Peter Writes to Stir Our Memory

- One of the reasons that the Bible is written down is so that we can read it and study it and it will stir up our memories about what God has said.
- We must study and remind ourselves of what God says so that if others teach things that aren't true, we will know what the truth really is.
- Peter mentions how some people twisted the Scripture to make it say what they wanted it to. He talks about how they had also done that with Scriptures that Paul had written.

Some Laughed at the Idea of a Judgment Day

- Jesus had promised that one day He would return for His people and judge the world. But it had been 40 years since He had said that. The apostles taught that Jesus was coming again. Peter was getting older and would not be around much longer, yet Jesus had still not returned.
- Some people asked, What has happened to Jesus' promise to come? Some people didn't want to follow what the apostles taught, so they claimed they weren't telling the truth, that Jesus wasn't really coming again.
- These people claimed that the Lord wouldn't really judge the world. They said that since the beginning of time, He had never judged the world before. But Peter shows that they were wrong about that. God had judged the entire world back in Noah's time. He had brought a flood that covered the whole earth and wiped out everyone but Noah and his family.
- God would once again judge the whole world, but this time He would do it with fire.

Why Did it Seem Like the Lord Was Delaying His Return?

- Peter wants us to know that the Lord's return is not taking a long time because God is slow or has been delayed or because He is not keeping His promise. People may be like that, but the Lord isn't slow to get His work done.
- Time is different to the Lord. He doesn't operate by our clocks and calendars. Peter says that a day to the Lord could just as well be a thousand years, or a thousand years could seem like no more than a day to Him.
- The reason that the Lord has not acted quickly about coming back to bring an end to the world and have Judgment Day is because He does not act quickly on His anger. He is willing to put up with man's ways for a long time before He acts.

What Will the Day of the Lord Be Like?

- It will be totally unexpected, like a thief in the night. We have read before that when Jesus returns to take His saints to heaven, judge the wicked and bring an end to the world, that it will be like a thief in the night. No one knows when this is going to happen.
- The heavens (not God's heaven, but all that is in the sky), will come to an end with a loud noise.
- The earth and everything that is in it will melt with a very hot fire.
- Those who have disobeyed God will be punished.
- Then the New Heavens and the New Earth will begin for God's people. Our heavenly home is described several different ways in the Bible: Jesus described it as being "many dwelling places in His Father's house", The Hebrew writer calls it the "city God has prepared" and the "heavenly Jerusalem", Revelation calls it the "new Jerusalem" and also the "New heavens and the new earth." All of this explains that when this earth is destroyed, God will have already made a whole new place for us to live. We don't know exactly what it will be like, but the Bible tells us it will be very big and will be much more wonderful than life on this earth has been. God and His Son will dwell with us there.
- In the New Heavens and New Earth, Peter tells us, righteousness will dwell. Sin will no longer be part of that place. No more murders, no more hatred, no more robbery. In our heavenly home we will have kindness, joy, peace, and great things we will be able to do.

Since This is True, We Should Live Godly

- If this world is going to be done away with and the New Heavens and New Earth are going to begin, then we should live right so that we can be part of the New Heavenly City.
- It is not wrong to live in this world and appreciate what God has given us. But this world will not last forever. We need to live our lives thinking about heaven, living our lives for the day we can be part of the great place the Lord has prepared for His people.
- Peter warns his readers (and us) not to get carried away with wicked people's error and fall away from our own stability.

Simplified Explanation of the Text

Remember the Truth We've Taught You

II Pet. 3:1 Beloved, I'm now writing to you this second letter to stir your minds (which I know are sincere) to remember something.

2 I want you to remember all the words that were spoken by the holy prophets, and all the commands that we the apostles of the Lord and Savior have given you.

3 It will be very important to remember these teachings, because, first off, in the last days there are going to be people who will come who will make fun of what we have taught you and will claim that what we've said isn't true. But you need to understand that they

are doing this because they don't want to obey the truth – they want to follow the sinful things they want to do.

Some Scoffed at the Idea of the Judgment Day

4 They'll try to undermine your faith in what've we told you. They'll try to get you to doubt the promise we've made that the Lord is coming back. "Where is the promise of His coming?" they'll scoffingly ask. They'll try to prove this by claiming, "Everything about this world keeps going on just like it has since creation began."

5 But those who claim this are choosing to ignore one great fact: By the Word of God the heavens and earth that existed along time ago was formed out of water and by means of water.

6 But that world that existed back then was flooded with water and destroyed, and that shows that their claims are wrong. This world has not kept going on its same course since creation -- God judged the world with a flood.

7 Now the heavens and the earth which we are currently exist are awaiting a fire. God has stored this fire up and is keeping it for the Day of Judgment, a day when the ungodly will be ruined.

Why Does It Seem Like the Lord is Delaying His Coming?

8 So when scoffers ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?", I don't want you, dear brethren, to fall for that. Please don't miss this on great truth: One day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years to Him could be like one day.

9 Don't ever think that the Lord is slow about keeping His promise, at least not in the way that people think of others who are slow about doing what the promised. What may seem to us like slowness is really God's willingness not to show His anger against people's sins too quickly. You see, God doesn't want anyone to be ruined on Judgment Day. God wants everyone to change their hearts and their lives so they don't have to face punishment on the Day.

Judgment Day Will Come

10 But let's be clear: The Day of the Lord will come, and when it does it will be no more expected that when a thief breaks in house in the middle of the night. In that Day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise and all the elements will melt with fire. The earth and all that has been done on it will burn up.

11-12 Since all these things will fall apart, it really shows us what kind of persons we must be! While we live our lives set apart for God and always keep a deep respect for Him, we should be looking for the coming of that Day of God, and even hoping it will come soon – this day when the heavens will be on fire and the elements will melt as they are burned up.

13 But on the basis of God's promise, we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth where righteousness dwells.

14 So, beloved, because you are looking forward to these things, keep on being very careful and very dedicated so that the Lord will find you living in peace, free from anything that would stain your life. Keep conducting yourself in a way that no one could blame you for doing bad things.

15 And also keep in mind what I said about the Lord not showing His anger too quickly, because that will result in salvation for many.

Paul's Writing Has Been Twisted

Our beloved brother Paul has written some of those same things to you, by the wisdom God has given to him.

16 And when Paul has written all his letters telling you about these matters, some of what he writes that is difficult to understand has been twisted and misused by people who are ignorant and unstable. But they do that very same thing to the rest of the Scripture, too, to their own destruction.

17 So, beloved, since you already know about this, just make certain you don't get carried away with wicked people's error and fall away from your own stability.

18 But keep growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen.