



“Living in Light of the End of the World” (II Peter 3) 2014

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THE TEXT

v.1 Stimulate = To awaken; arouse the mind.

Wholesome thinking = “To stir up your minds by way of remembrance” (KJV); see II Peter 1:12-15.

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

Rom.8:5-8; Col.3:1-4

v.2 What words spoken in the past by the prophets? Isa.13:6-13; 2:2-4; 9:6-7; Jer.3:17; 33:15-16 (context); Ezek.33:11; 47:1-12; Daniel 2 & 7; Hosea 13:14 (context); Joel 2:1-2; 3:21b; Amos 5:18-20; 9:11a, 15; Obadiah 15a, 17, 21; Jonah; Micah 1:3-5a; 4:1-3; 7:13, 18-19; Nahum 1:2-3a, 15; Hab.1:1-6; 2:4b, 14; 3:16-19; Zeph.1:2-3, 14-15, 18; 3:8b; 2:11b; 3:14-20; Zech. 13:8-9; 14:9; Mal.4:1-3.

What command given by our Lord? Matthew 24

vv.3-4 Scoffers = mockers; A German philosopher named Hegel years ago birthed the view that the history of the world is a magnificent progress being worked out toward a time we eventually arrive at a glorious state. Carl Marx borrowed from this view in creating communism, which in essence seeks to arrive at a state of perfection wherein we all live in a classless society. A much older view of history was espoused by Greek philosophers that history is a matter of cycles, with civilizations rising and falling over time, then endlessly repeating the process. Then there is the modern scientific view that involves the second law of thermodynamics, that the world is like a clock which has been wound up and is gradually unwinding itself and running down, and there will come a time when it runs down altogether and life on this planet will cease. One last view I will mention is that of many professional historians which says that history is a meaningless, lawless, shapeless sequence of events.

As we warn people of the judgment to come, don't be surprised if they laugh (Lot's sons-in-law), and consider us to be fools (see Hosea 9:7).

v.5 The deliberately forget = They are resolved, determined, and purposed to ignore truth; see Rom.1:20, 28.

vv.6-7 Some in the church today do not believe that the flood in Noah's day was literal, or that it was universal. My question to these people is what do they have to say to Jesus, because he believed in a universal flood, as did the apostle Peter. The truth is there was a universal judgment in Noah's day, and the Word of God declares there will be a future universal judgment by fire.

Note: The coming judgment is for the ungodly. This is something we should long for. Not that we should not love people just as God loves them, but that we long for the day when heaven deals with the godlessness in this world. The martyrs mentioned in the book of Revelation cry out "How long O Lord..." (Rev.6:9-11). They want to know when the godless will be dealt with, and the persecution and martyrdom of the righteous will end. And the answer is that they must wait "a little longer." Just how long is "a little longer?" Well, it depends on the perspective of the one answering the question – GOD!

v.8 God does not live at all in the realm of the time process. God is eternal, He is above time. God is like a man making a watch or clock. He himself is outside it, is not a part of it. Though God is above time, He yet acts in time. God is controlling time and His actions are all worked out in a very definite plan.

Genesis 15:16...the sin of the Amorites has not reached its full measure.

Gal.4:4...when the time had fully come, God sent his Son...

Rom.5:6...at just the right time...Christ died for the ungodly.

v.9 On the one hand we wonder why God allows the godlessness to continue any longer, especially if we are more personally affected by it. Hebrews 11 gives a stark contrast near the end of the chapter of those who experienced tremendous miracles that included deliverance from persecution at the hands of the ungodly, and others who were tortured and refused to be released (suggesting they would have been released had they been willing to renounce their faith). Some faced jeers and flogging, were chained and put in prison, stoned, sawn in two, put to death with the sword, went around in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated, wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground – the world was not worthy of them. When I think about believers having to face that kind of suffering at the hands of godless people, I cannot help but cry out "Come quickly Lord Jesus!" See II Thess.1:5-10a.

One saint who suffered greatly in this world was the apostle Paul (II Cor.11:23b-27). But he said he was willing to suffer everything for the elect, those who would come to saving faith through his life and ministry. So God allowed him to suffer because he wanted others to be saved like him.

We must realize that the staying of God's hand of judgment is because he is giving people an opportunity to be saved. He wants all people saved! That is why he waited patiently in the days of Noah, why he allowed the wicked in the Promised Land to continue in their wickedness for hundreds of years before he brought judgment upon them (Amorites, Sodom & Gomorrah, etc.).

And that is why he still waits. He wants this generation to be saved! But time is limited, and time will run out! Refer to Hebrews 3 & 4, Today if you hear His voice...

v.10 Judgment is coming, and when it comes, we will not have time to get ready, we must be ready!

vv.11-12 The coming judgment should motivate us to live “holy and godly lives.” As we do, we do not fear the judgment to come, because we know that we are “not appointed to suffer wrath...” (See I Thess.5:4-11.)

v.13 See Rev.21:1-5, 27.

v.14 Are you right with God today?

vv.15-16 Don't focus on the things you don't understand about the Bible, but rather what we clearly understand. We are born into sin, and without a Savior, we will all face the judgment and wrath of Almighty God. But God is patient with us, GIVING US TIME TO REPENT and BE SAVED!

v.17a What he is telling them they already knew!

v.17b Here we have once again one of those verses that causes us to have to deal with the question of eternal security. Are you saved?

I could not get my mind off of that one statement in v.5, “But they deliberately forget...” (Willfully ignore). The Bible records specific examples of people who did just that. Let me close with just a few of those examples:

- Pilate and Jesus (John 19:7-16); Pilate allowed the pressure of the crowd to keep him from making a decision that would save his soul from damnation.
- Felix (Acts 24:24-25); Felix was a rebel who refused to repent, even though he believed in and feared future judgment.
- Herod (Acts 26:19-29); Herod believed the prophets, but he was not willing to give up his sinful lifestyle in order to be saved.
- Jeremiah 36:21-25 (King Jehoiakim); So hardened to truth that he took delight in attempting to destroy the Word of God.
- Acts 7:51-58 People who will kill you to stop you from proclaiming truth (I hope there's no one from this crowd in church today!).

CONCLUSION

- Are you saved? Salvation invitation; Eccl.3:11; James 4:13-16
- Christian, are you living in light of the end of the world?