

## LAST DAYS...REMAIN STEADFAST...GROW IN GRACE

### **2 Peter 3:1-18**

There is much talk and discussion about these days that we live in. Many are looking for explanations, time tables, and prophetic insight. I think that Peter offers us some understanding and gives us some surprising words of action.

#### **Purpose of This Letter**

**3** This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, <sup>2</sup> that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior *spoken* by your apostles.

#### **The Coming Day of the Lord**

<sup>3</sup> Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, <sup>4</sup> and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.” <sup>5</sup> For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water, <sup>6</sup> through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. <sup>7</sup> But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. <sup>8</sup> But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. **2 Peter 3:1-9 NASB**

- Peter is well aware that those he is writing to are trying to figure out ‘what’s next.’
  - They are looking for a fresh revelation or insight.
  - He unashamedly tells them that his purpose of writing to them is to ‘stir them up,’ to stimulate their thinking by way of ‘reminder.’ **(v1-2)**
  - He is reminding them to remember what he has already said and what the prophets and apostles have spoken and written.
  - He is prompting them to a ‘fresh rediscovery’ of what they have learned.
    - Note this: the Word never changes, but we do. Our posture of heart, our needs and desires, our level of maturity, all these change and can give us a new depth of understanding to things we

discovered earlier. This is why Peter is using a ‘reminder’ to stoke their understanding and perception.

- He is helping them through a route they were not looking for...a reminder of real truth.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you *already* know *them*, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. <sup>13</sup> I consider it right, as long as I am in this *earthly* dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, <sup>14</sup> knowing that the laying aside of my *earthly* dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. <sup>15</sup> And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind. <sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. <sup>17</sup> For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” — <sup>18</sup> and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. <sup>19</sup> So we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a *matter* of one’s own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. **2 Peter 1:12-21 NASB**

- He reminds them of the reality of the truthful experiences that he is using to stir them up with.
- Now he speaks of the Day of the Lord. (**2 Peter 3:3-9**)
  - He speaks of scoffers and false teachers...that was a present issue and a real danger in the days yet to come...the last days...
    - The last days are the days between Jesus first coming and His second coming.
  - Peter was writing in the last days, so there were already false teachers and mockers.
    - These men mocked and teased people about the second coming, saying that nothing is happening and nothing will happen...everything is and will be the same.
  - He reminds them about the power of God’s Word (**v5-7**) and how that by His Word the heavens and earth are still here.
  - He reminds them that God is not regulated by time, He is ‘above’ time...a day and 1000 years are not measured in heaven like we do it here. (**v8**)

- God moves in the ‘fullness of time.’
- His heart is set on reaching everybody not on a page of a calendar...He does not want anyone to perish. (v9)

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will vanish (pass away) with a thunderous crash, and the [material] elements [of the universe] will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up.

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are thus in the process of being dissolved, what kind of person ought [each of] you to be [in the meanwhile] in consecrated *and* holy behavior and devout *and* godly qualities, <sup>12</sup> While you wait and earnestly long for (expect and hasten) the coming of the day of God by reason of which the flaming heavens will be dissolved, and the [material] elements [of the universe] will flare *and* melt with fire? **2 Peter 3:10-12 NASB**

- The new heavens and the new earth are now discussed.
- The day of the Lord comes like a thief, Peter is likely recalling what Jesus said in **Matthew 24:42-44** where He says, “The Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him.”
- He tells us that everything has to go, all will be destroyed. **V10**
  - Since that is true...what kind of person should you and I be?? (v11-12)

<sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, <sup>15</sup> and regard the patience of our Lord *as* salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, <sup>16</sup> as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. <sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, <sup>18</sup> but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. **2 Peter 3:13-18 NASB**

- We are looking for a new heaven and a new earth where freedom from sin and right standing with God abide. (v13)
  - Since we expect these things, we should be eager for His coming and be spotless (blameless), free from fears, at peace, and free from agitating passions and moral conflicts. (v14)

- We are supposed to regard the patience of God as the salvation of people...(v15)
- Peter equates Paul's writings with all the other God-breathed words of Scripture. (v16)
  - He says we are to be on guard...don't get deceived or 'drift away' from the Truth...maintain your steadfastness.
- Grow in grace...do this...but how?

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. **2 Peter 1:2-4 NASB**

- God's multiplied grace!

<sup>9</sup> For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. **Colossians 1:9-12 NASB**

- Filled with His Spirit and love and being increased.

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup> We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is *only* fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows *ever* greater. **2 Thessalonians 1:2-3 NASB**

- Faith and love growing and being enlarged.

<sup>9</sup> [For it is He] Who delivered *and* saved us and called us with a calling in itself holy *and* leading to holiness [to a life of consecration, a vocation of holiness]; [He did it] not because of anything of merit that we have done, but because of *and* to further His own purpose and grace (unmerited favor) which was given us in Christ Jesus before the

world began [eternal ages ago]. <sup>10</sup> [It is that purpose and grace] which He now has made known *and* has fully disclosed *and* made real [to us] through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who annulled death *and* made it of no effect and brought life and immortality (immunity from eternal death) to light through the Gospel. <sup>11</sup> For [the proclaiming of] this [Gospel] I was appointed a herald (preacher) and an apostle (special messenger) and a teacher *of the Gentiles*. <sup>12</sup> And this is why I am suffering as I do. Still I am not ashamed, for I know (perceive, have knowledge of, and am acquainted with) Him Whom I have believed (adhered to and trusted in and relied on), and I am [positively] persuaded that He is able to guard *and* keep that which has been entrusted to me *and* which I have committed [to Him] until that day. **2 Timothy 1:9-10 NASB**

- Filled with His calling, power, and purpose. (prothesis)

<sup>1</sup> Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup> May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. **Jude v1-2 NASB**

- Multiplied mercy, peace, and love.

In these days we live in, the 'stirring up' the Word brings to us is...grow in grace!