

2 Peter 3:1-7(NLT) ¹This is my second letter to you, dear friends, and in both of them I have tried to stimulate your wholesome thinking and refresh your memory. ²I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles. ³Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. ⁴They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created." ⁵They deliberately forget that God made the heavens by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. ⁶Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. ⁷And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed.

Your soul longs for God. Your soul yearns for God. Your soul is thirsty for a drink that only God can give. When we look at what is happening today we long even more for Jesus to come again. I think the closer we walk with God, we wish Jesus would hurry up and come soon, very soon. We want this to happen because all of our longings can only be met by God. This world will never produce what we can only find in God. Capitalism, socialism, communism, politics specifically, do not have the answers to our social problems. What took place in South Chicago this past week never should have happened. The blood of the innocent cries out to God even as Abel's blood cried from the ground after Cain killed his own brother. The Bible says, "God hates the hands of those who shed innocent blood" (Proverbs 6:16-17). That would include the innocent blood of the unborn to the innocent blood that is spilled in south Chicago and all across the nation. Sinful human nature will never improve or get better. The only answer is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Only Jesus has what it takes to halt this downward spiral. O Lord Jesus, please come quickly.

How do we live until that time when everything will be made right, correct, good, and holy? One day there will be no more of the shedding of innocent blood. **Isaiah 2:4(NLT)** "The LORD will mediate between nations and will settle international disputes. They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore." O Lord Jesus please come quickly. **Isaiah 11:6-**

7(NIV) ⁶The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.” These verses promise that when Jesus comes again, He will put an end to the curse that was pronounced after Adam and Eve sinned. All the problems we see today are a result of the curse, a result of our sinful human nature. When Jesus comes again the curse will end and there will be a brand-new heaven and a brand-new earth; Lord Jesus, please come quickly. We know with certainty that the curse will be no more for Jesus bore the curse on the cross, but the full effects of that work will not be experienced until the 2nd coming of Jesus. The war has already been won but the battles will not end until we hear that last trumpet sound and are caught up to be with the Lord forever. **1 Thessalonians 4:17(NLT)** “¹⁷Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.” O Lord Jesus, please come soon.

This is Peter’s second letter to his friends in Christ. He calls them his beloved in the Greek. When God calls you to minister to a specific group of people or church, God gives to the person a Christian bond of love. Why do you think Bob Yarbrough loves us so much. Do you actually think it is because we are so loveable? It is a God given love. But the love goes both ways. God gives a Christian bond of love to the group or church for the one called to serve. Do you love me because I am so loveable? Of course not. But it is how God works and what a privilege it is to be part of God’s group or church. I must say Bob feels so loved here. I have heard missionaries saying, “Ever since I was a little child I felt love for” and then they will name a particular country. All of us are God’s beloved and God is still to this day placing church leaders and missionaries where He wants them to serve in love and opens the people or church to receive that particular ministry with love. Peter’s heart is filled with love for his readers.

¹This is my second letter to you, beloved [dear friends], and in both of them I have tried to stimulate your wholesome thinking and refresh your memory. ²I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles

Peter is writing both letters to remind the readers of specific God given truths. Friends, I am asking all of us to spend time in 1st and 2nd Peter for your devotions especially during this time of the virus and social upheaval. God has put things here He wants us to remember and unless we read these two letters, we will not know what God wants us to remember.

Last week Peter spoke of a ladder that descended into hell built by false teachers who hope to sway us Christians away from Jesus. Peter does not want any of us to take on step on that down hill ladder that leads to judgment, the same judgment every false teacher will receive from God. Peter writes, "For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved" (2 Peter 2:17). Peter has words for us that will keep us faithful to God, so we will not fail and deny Jesus like Peter did on the night Peter betrayed Jesus. Peter knows we will face heavy opposition shortly before the second coming of Christ. Peter writes, ³Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. ⁴They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

One reason why there were scoffers then and yes there are today, making fun of Jesus coming again is this; it is beyond their knowledge and belief that one day we will have to answer to God for the lives we have led. People wish to feel free to sin all they want because there are no consequences in the end. Wrong. False teachers and scoffers as such are on the wrong ladder. Peter is doing his best to keep us off that ladder that descends into utter darkness. Peter's critics are saying Peter is nothing more than an old man, an outdated windbag blowing smoke.

Two things before I move on. Peter speaks of the second coming not to scare us but to prepare us for what will take place. Since God is the Creator, God will keep the creation around until God has had enough of its rebellion (David R Helm, 1st 2nd Peter and Jude, pg. 245). It is good for us to give ourselves careful and quiet preparation for that day. Secondly, Peter's writing is completely under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, therefore what we are reading is truly the Word of God.

He reminds his readers and the scoffers in three ways that what Peter is writing is absolutely correct. 1. The Holy Prophet's Predictions. 2. The Words of Jesus Christ. 3. The Apostles Public preaching. All three ways give the very same message that cannot be denied if you have intellectual integrity.

The Old Testament Prophet Isaiah, my favorite of course. **Isaiah 24:1-20(NLT)** ¹Look! The LORD is about to destroy the earth and make it a vast wasteland. He devastates the surface of the earth and scatters the people. ²Priests and laypeople, servants and masters, maids and mistresses, buyers and sellers, lenders and borrowers, bankers and debtors - none will be spared. ³The earth will be completely emptied and looted. The LORD has spoken! ⁴The earth mourns and dries up, and the crops waste away and wither. Even the greatest people on earth waste away. ⁵The earth suffers for the sins of its people, for they have twisted God's instructions, violated his laws, and broken his everlasting covenant. ⁶Therefore, a curse consumes the earth. Destruction falls like rain from the heavens; the foundations of the earth shake. ¹⁹The earth has broken up. It has utterly collapsed; it is violently shaken. ²⁰The earth staggers like a drunk. It trembles like a tent in a storm. It falls and will not rise again, for the guilt of its rebellion is very heavy.

The Prophetic word tells us the curtain will come down according to God's timetable and none other. God will give a commanding shout and the end will come. Global warming will not

bring this earth to an end, God does according to God's perfect timetable. Until that day, seed time and harvest will not end. That is God's promise to Noah and to us.

Jesus spoke of his second coming so that we will all be prepared to meet our maker.

Matthew 25:31(NLT) ³¹“But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne.” It is on the throne where Jesus judges the living and dead, divides the sheep from the goats, and the wheat from the chaff. God separates those who are heading toward heaven from those who are not.

I read through much of what the Apostle Paul wrote about the 2nd coming so the entire Old and New Testament proclaims loudly Jesus is coming again. Please never question that. And may Jesus come soon.

Peter writes of his critics, ⁵“They deliberately forget that God made the heavens by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. ⁶Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood.” Critics, look at what God did long ago. The truth cannot be denied.

⁷“And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment when ungodly people will be destroyed.”

It may look today like things could not be more wrong than they are. The good news is one day Jesus will say, “Enough.” In but an instant all will be made right. Until that day, we all need to be reminded of what Peter wrote to prepare us for this time. God has given to us His precious promises to live by. God has placed divine power inside of us, the Holy Spirit, who holds us in Christ forever. God has given to us His Holy Word for our instruction, encouragement, and perseverance (Romans 15:4). He has also given to us our Christian friendships, a place where God's love is poured forth in abundance. **Romans 15:4(NLT)** ⁴Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and

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encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled. Oh, how we need God, God's Word, and each other more than ever. Amen and Amen.