

POWER HOUR

3/16/2025

Lesson Text:
2 Peter 3:3-15a

Background Scripture:
Matthew 24:29-31

Devotional Reading:
Genesis 1:1-31, 8:15-22; Isaiah 24:1-13

“JESUS IS COMING”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: *The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. 2 Peter 3:9 NLT*

Time: A.D. 64

Place: Unknown

2 Peter 3:3-15a NLT

3 Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. **4** They 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.” **5** They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. **6** Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. **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. **8** But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. **9** The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. **10** But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. **11** Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, **12** looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the

elements will melt away in the flames. 13 But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.

14 And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight.

15 And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever thought about what hope really means? What does hope mean for the prisoner in jail waiting to get out? What does hope mean for the cancer patient who has been told that she will die soon unless she gets a particular medicine? Hope clings to the possibility that one-day things will be better. When Jesus comes again to this earth, things will certainly be different for all of us who look forward to His coming. Peter encourages us to hold on because one glorious day Jesus will change things for those of us who have trusted in Him. Christ declared, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). If the date of the Second Coming is a closely guarded secret, it is more than presumptuous to claim to know what even angels do not know! Yet this is precisely what some have claimed throughout church history. A misguided person asserts that he has unlocked the prophetic code and sets a date for the Lord's return. Fully convinced of his calculations, he gathers around him like-minded people who will parrot his views. In time the errors of the false teacher will become apparent. In most cases, however, those making such predictions will never admit any error; they simply recalculate the date or adjust their theology accordingly. In contrast, some doubt that Christ will return at all.

1. Some will mock the hope that we have in Jesus' coming (2 Pet. 3:3-7).

Everywhere we go, we meet people who laugh at the promise that Jesus will return to this earth. Yet Peter said that this is exactly what would happen. In the last days, we should expect people to scoff at the idea of Jesus' return. Yet as believers, this prospect is what keeps us going forward. What a striking contrast in attitude toward the same event!

The negative attitude of the scoffers makes them live without restraint. There is nothing to hold them back from living out their evil desires. They mockingly say our

Lord has not kept His promise to return. After all, they say, from the beginning of time, nothing has changed. One day follows another in routine fashion.

The mockers have forgotten what God has already done. He created the earth with a word from His mouth. He separated the land from the waters. Then He used the Flood to cleanse the earth and teach humanity that He does not tolerate evil. Peter also reminded us that the heavens and earth as we know them will one day be utterly destroyed by fire on the final Day of Judgment.

2. The Lord is patient with us and offers us hope (2 Pet. 3:8-13).

What a wonderful God we have! All the mockery about His coming has not altered our Lord or His plans. We must understand that He looks at things differently from the way we do, for He has a heavenly perspective. God sees times differently from the way we do. God lives in eternity, which is not limited by hours and days and nights. God transcends our concept of time.

To help us understand, Peter explained that a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day to God. We can hardly comprehend this as human beings, but it explains how God is not really being slow about fulfilling the promise of Christ's coming. He is just being patient, giving people more time to change their minds and repent.

In view of all that is coming, we should concentrate on godly living. This is in contrast to the ungodly, who live evil lives (vs. 3). We look forward to the time when the new heavens and new earth will appear and all will be made right by God. There will be no more marks of sin. We have no excuse for fears or doubts about the future, for Peter has told us what is coming and the certainty of it all. We dare not take this lightly. For the Christian who has received Jesus, there is always this certain hope Peter tells us about.

3. The Lord is waiting (2 Pet. 3:14-15a).

Peter challenged us through his teaching to be ready for our Lord's return, but he also reminded us that the Lord is patient. As we look for and wait for His coming, we are to be diligent to live pure and holy lives. As we lead such lives, we are to be at peace with God. This is the proper response to the patience of our Lord, who has given us the time and opportunity to respond to Him. He waits to return so that others can yet be saved.

POINTS TO PONDER

We should never be rattled by scoffers; they are simply fulfilling Scripture (II Pet. 3:3-4). The willful ignorance of unbelievers keeps them totally unprepared for the coming judgment (vss. 5-7).

The Lord operates on His own schedule; our part is simply to stay ready (vss. 8-10).

Attachment to this world is foolish in light of its coming destruction (vss. 11-12).

Setting our minds on the new creation will help us be ready for it (vss. 13-15).

CONCLUSION

Every negative criticism of the Bible, God's existence, and Christian faith has an answer. We may not know the answer off the top of our head, or the skeptic may not accept our answer, but we should never back down from truth.

A story is told of a skeptic who claimed that it was impossible to believe in any book (meaning the Bible) whose author is unknown. A Christian asked whether the author of the multiplication table was known. The skeptic said, "No." "Then," said the Christian, "you do not believe it." "Of course I believe it," replied the skeptic, "because it works." "Even so," said the Christian, "the Bible also works!"

QUESTION(S)

1. Who were the scoffers Peter was concerned about (2 Pet. 3:3)?
2. What is indicated by the term "last days"?
3. What mistake did the scoffers make concerning past events?
4. In what ways are the great Flood and the end of the world similar? How are they different?
5. How does the Lord measure time?
6. What is the Day of the Lord? How is this expression used in the Bible?
7. What is going to happen to the earth when Christ returns?
8. What should the truth of Christ's return inspire Christians to do?

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is *"Worship Before the Throne"*

Lesson Text: **Revelation 4:1-11**

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