

2 Peter 3

Read 2 Peter 3:1-7: People who do not believe the biblical account of history claim that things have continued just as they are for years beyond measure. Some unbelievers claim that over enough time, anything could have happened. Others claim alternate origins of other kinds. The Bible speaks of dramatic changes, over relatively-short periods of time. The Bible tells us that the universe and earth were created from nothing around 6,500 years ago. It also tells us that a worldwide flood killed almost every living thing over 4,000 years ago. If such things were not true, it would not be necessary for people to try to suppress or cover up biblical truths. You have to get past the first verse of the Bible to believe any of the rest of it.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

This important, since the Bible talks about near-future things that will bring unwelcomed changes. We are close to the rapture and tribulation, and then the second coming of Jesus.

It is ironic, as we can already see many of the things described in the scriptures that accompany the end times society. This should be a wake-up call; that we are near.

Read 2 Peter 3:8-13: It seems that we keep failing in the moment. We make adjustments in our expectations after we have wrestled with something new. We lose track of how many times God has delivered us. Each mini-crisis seems to have so much possibility of something even worse. In the end, we always worry and react way too much. With God 1,000 years is like a day. Our lack of faith allows us to assume that we are stuck forever in our current dilemma. How much of that pessimism is logic and how much is it attributed to demonic influence? What happened to the thoughts and joy we had during moments of worship? What changed? Our faith is based on what is beyond what we see in the moment.

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.² This is what the ancients were commended for.³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. ... By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,¹⁸ even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.
(Hebrews 11 excerpts)

God has a salvation process working on all men. Once we are saved we fret over the world going down the drain. Before we were saved; we held on to the things that we enjoyed doing. We are told that God's allowance of increasing darkness is a demonstration of God's patience. He is waiting for the last ones to take his hand. It seems like God is letting go of things as mankind turns away from him. In reality he is letting men's dreams form their own nightmares. This seemingly-delayed action from God's throne is evidence that he really does not desire to destroy any man. It is interesting to note that the greatest salvation will come during the tribulation. The more mankind pushes God out of the conversation, the less sustainable men's efforts and ideas become. They are creating their own God-sized crisis. The more desperate man's attempt to escape morality and God; the more severe his imaginary world he creates wraps around himself. We are currently building false economic models, false means of equality, false definitions of family member roles, empty investments, make work, etc... Our assumptions are fake. Reality does not tilt towards men's expectations. Men are building their own trap...and they are walking into their imaginary society (that does not work). The whole system across the world will come crashing down. At that point some will further harden their heart towards God; while others will lose their composure and repent.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;¹⁰ and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,¹² saying,

*Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”*¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?”¹⁴ I ^[a]said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.¹⁵ For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His ^[b]temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them.¹⁶ They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun ^[c]beat down on them, nor any heat;¹⁷ for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the ^[d]water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:9-16)

We need to keep these things in mind; as we see the world go down the drain. God allows us to experience the fruits of our own decisions. It is perfect. In the end; we will have the opportunity to see that none of our hearts desires except Jesus can deliver us. God will let all of our false hopes to fail. Some men need to see their government and careers fail them. Others need to see technology reduced to ashes. Even Christians need to see that their hope and future is not tied up in their employer or their spouse or their health. We need to be at peace as we stand alone before God. The world is really only a stage. These verses tell us that God will completely destroy the earth and the universe; to usher in a new one. There is nothing that will last, except God...and what he brings with him. He is our only ticket.

The Day of the LORD has a precise and an expanded definition. The precise meaning refers to the day of his second coming. The expanded use of the term includes the tribulation.

²⁹ “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from ^[e]the sky, and the powers of ^[f]the heavens will be shaken.³⁰ And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:29-30)

The massive numbers of people who become saved have some knowledge of God. We have the opportunity right now to plant those seeds. This whole worldly scene

is heading to a halt. The wagon is going hit a rock and tip over. Life without Christ will not be fun anymore.

Read 2 Peter 3:14-18: We have a huge advantage. We know how the story ends. We can select a destiny, by taking action now. We have guidance systems built in. We will feel a lack of peace when we are not resting on him...and pursuing God in fellowship. The alternative is to let your faith go on *auto pilot* and essentially enter *sleep mode*. It is difficult to stay focused if you are not in a faith-growing and worship path. It is like the guy doing traffic control, who is holding a sign. He stares into the horizon, waiting for a car. He becomes bored, and he is mesmerized. Then, unexpectedly, a car comes up behind him. Peter uses key words to guide us in our journey. He uses: *diligent, blameless, steadfastness, growing, and knowledge of God*. . If you are not going forward, you are surely going backward. Check yourself. Do you have more resistance to study the word and pray? Do you find yourself getting antsy; and breaking off your quiet time?

Peter mentions that Paul has also written about the need to be vigilant in faith as our society crumbles. He did add that Paul is a little harder to understand