

## 2 Peter 3:9-14 (NIV)

<sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

<sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

<sup>11</sup>Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives

<sup>12</sup>as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

<sup>13</sup>But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

<sup>14</sup>So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

61-03-01- A New Year Outlook

New Year, watchfulness, judgment, Christian living, holiness

2 Peter 3:9-14

This world's future destiny is a wake-up call for present holy living.

### INTRODUCTION: (Text as Scripture Reading)

–[In 1933, at UC Long Beach, Albert Einstein and a geology professor strolled the campus discussing earthquakes. They wondered why students were suddenly running from buildings. They were so busy discussing earthquakes, they failed to notice one.] With so much trouble and turmoil in the world, or in our own lives, we may be so focused on *what the world's coming to*, that its end *suddenly* happens while we're *discussing it* rather than *being prepared for it*.

–The **text** tells us about the *end of the world*, but also calls us to an outlook on the present (**title**). **HOM.idea**. God saw where our world was headed... that, ultimately, He'd have to *scrap it for a whole new design*. He told **us** about it, so we'd gain the right perspective on living out *every new year* for the rest of our lives *in this world*.

- I. God's Promise Is Prolonged by Patience**— v.9, *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*
- A. This verse establishes both the concepts and the context needed for discussing God's coming day of *judgment* and *cosmic renewal*.
- B. Skeptics doubt that God has ever intervened in human history:
1. Peter's response to skepticism is *the Flood* (a prior example of God's promise to "*scrap this world for a whole new design*"— 2 Pet 3:3-7, First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by **God's word** the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By **the same word** the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of **ungodly men**.)
  2. Skeptics ("ungodly men") aren't judged *immediately* for one reason: *God is patient* (Peter, still using the flood illustration (v.19b-20a), talks about "the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when **God waited patiently** in the days of Noah while the ark was being built." [120 yrs.])
- C. Persistent skeptics will finally perish, but not without God's intervening love, which they continued doubting and denying.

1. God causes none to “perish” in their sins! But in a world caught by Satan’s lies— 2 Thes 2:10, every sort of evil... deceives those who are perishing. They perish **because** they refused to love the truth and so be saved.
2. God’s first act isn’t to *destroy* but to *rescue*. (Jesus came— John 3:16b, that whoever believes in him **shall not perish** but have eternal life.)
3. God wants everybody saved, but v.9 doesn’t end with “finally all will repent and come to Christ.” (God *sovereignly lets people choose*.)

**TRANS:** God’s a God of love, **but** also of truth; a God of mercy, **but** also of justice. He wants *all saved*, **but not all repent**. He wants *none to perish*, **but some will reject Jesus Christ**, Whom to know *is* “eternal life” In that context, we learn how God will ultimately destroy this world.

**II. God Will Purify Both Planet and People— v.10**, *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.*

- A. Sin matters to this world of matter!— Lev 18:24-25, Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled. Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.
- B. What matters to creation isn’t her present form but our acceptance of God’s invitation to fulfill our destiny— Rom 8:19-21, The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.
- C. How can our proper view of this world’s future help purify us?
  1. [Visualize the metaphor: “**But** the day of the Lord will come **like a thief**” When that future breaks in on us, what will it steal from us?
    - a. all temporary possessions (*material and territorial*)
    - b. all fluctuating satisfactions (both *desires* and their *fulfillment*)
    - c. all passing social positions (*our status, prestige, influence*)
  2. When that “*day*” comes “*like a thief*,” what *treasure* alone will be safely preserved? It’s **how we invested our lives in Christ— v.11**, *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives... (Jesus tells us where the place of safety is— Mat 6:19-20*, Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.)

**TRANS:** This world’s future destiny is a wake-up call for present holy living. This “*thief*” metaphor goes only so far. We’re *not* to fear God’s day of *destruction* and *cosmic transformation*. **NO**, we’re to pray for it to come, using the Bible’s last recorded prayer— Rev 22:20b (NKJV) Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! But we’re to do more than pray...

**III. We’re to Prepare for God’s Plan— v.12-14** (3 forward outlooks)

- A. An evangelistic outlook (v.12, “*as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming*”)— Mat 24:14, this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- B. A sojourning outlook— v.13, “*we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness*”)— 2 Cor 5:8, We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at **home with the Lord**.
- C. A diligent outlook— v.14, “*since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*”

**CONCLUSION:**

—Will our **2022 outlook** be to “*look forward to the day of God*”? Will we use 2022 to “speed its coming” by helping to spread the “gospel of the kingdom”?  
 —Some dream of earthly mansions but forget the *eternal* mansions that Jesus is preparing. They invest in what this world calls *valuable*, while God’s planning a *cosmic melt-down* to reshape everything by His *value system* and make the whole universe “*the home of righteousness.*” That’s why **this world’s future destiny is a wake-up call for present holy living**. *Let’s make it a point to stay spiritually awake in 2022!*