2 Peter 3:10-18

Key Verse 3:10

*“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 done in it will be laid bare.”*

Introduction: In this passage the apostle Peter helped the believers to be prepared for Jesus’ second coming and God’s judgment. God’s judgement is real. It will bring about the destruction of the heavens and earth and the ungodly by fire. However, believers look forward to God’s judgment because Jesus will usher in a new heavens and new earth where the righteous will live with God for eternity. Based on the promise of Jesus’ second coming and God’s judgment, believers should purify their thoughts and actions. They should repent and prepare themselves for that holy day of the Lord. God’s patients means salvations and gives those that believe the opportunity to repent and of their sins and live holy lives.

1. Read verses 10-12. How will the day of the Lord come? (10) What will happen to the heavens and the earth? (10, 12b) How should the believers live based on God’s judgment? (11-12a)

*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 done in it will be laid bare.* ***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* ***12*** *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.*

1. The day of the Lord will come like a thief. Here, the day of the Lord refers to the day of God’s judgement, when Jesus will return to judge the world. Jesus will come suddenly and without warning. He will come at a time when people are not expecting him. The people of the world will not be prepared for Jesus’ second coming. The false teachers, who said, “where is this coming he promised'' will be shocked and dismayed. No one will know the day or time of Jesus’ coming, but only God the Father (Mrk 13:32, Rev 3:3)
2. On the day of the Lord, the heavens will be destroyed by fire and the earth and everything done it will be laid bare. God’s judgment will bring about complete destruction of the physical universe. The elements will melt in the heat and the heavens will disappear. Also, the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. God’s judgement will bring about the complete and final destruction of the world as we know it. It will be a catastrophic event for all the unholy and ungodly people of the world. All the evil things they have done will be laid bare before the judgement of God. No one will be able to hide what they have done any longer.
3. Based on God’s coming judgment, believers should live holy and godly lives. They should be holy and godly people. They should be holy as God is holy. Believers should not be like or live like the people of this world. The people of this world are unholy and ungodly and do all kinds of unholy and ungodly things. They will not be prepared for God’s judgment. However, believers should prepare for God's judgment by living holy and godly lives.
4. Read verses 13-16. What promise were the believers looking forward to? (13) How should they live based on this promise? (14) Why is God patient with sinners? (15, 3:9) Why did some people distort Paul’s letters and what would happen to them? (16, 2 Pet. 2:1)

*But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.* ***15*** *Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.* ***16*** *He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

1. The believers were looking forward to the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. For unbelievers, the day of the Lord is a horrible day, but for believers it is a glorious day. For believers it is the day they have been looking forward to; the day when the Lord will fulfill his promise. At that time, God will establish his eternal kingdom where the righteous will live with God forever and ever.
2. Based on the promise of a new heavens and a new earth, believers should make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with God. Living a holy life requires a lot of effort to remember the gospel and all the truths of God and to work on one’s faith before God. It requires a lot of effort to pray and study the words of God and repent of our sins. God provides the strength, but we need to provide the effort.
3. God is patient with sinners in order to save them. God doesn’t want anyone to perish in their sins. Believers should not show contempt for God’s patients by continuing to sin, but should make every effort to live holy and godly lives by living lives of repentance. When we remember God’s patients, we can be thankful for the opportunity his patience affords by repenting of our sins. In this way, God's patience means salvation. Patience means the opportunity for salvation.
4. Some people distorted Paul’s letters because they did not understand them, but did so to their own destruction. The people Peter was talking about here were ignorant of God’s word. They not only distorted Paul’s letter, but the other Scriptures as well. Here, Peter was probably speaking of the false teachers. These false teachers most likely distorted Paul’s core message of salvation by grace through faith. Since they did not understand God’s grace as the opportunity to repent, they misused it as a licence to sin. Perhaps they took Paul's words out of context in order to distort what he said. For example they might have used Rom 6:1-3 which say, “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? **2** By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” They may have used such words to promote their idea to go on sinning that grace might increase, which was exactly the deceptive type of message Paul was warning about.

1. Read verses 17-18. How should the believers respond to Paul’s warnings? How could they grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ? (18; 1 Pet. 2:2) Why did Peter end his letter by giving glory to Jesus Christ?

*Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.* ***18*** *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

1. The believers should respond to Paul’s warnings by being on their guard against the errors of the lawless. By teaching that there was not second coming or judgement and by distorting Paul’s message about the grace of God and other Scriptures, The lawless false teachers taught freedom to sin without consequence before God. The believers should be on their guard against such deceptive and distorted messages. They should instead believe the message of Jesus’ second coming and God’s judgement. They should accept the message that patience means salvation and take it as God’s grace and as an opportunity to repent of their sins and live holy and godly lives.
2. They could grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ though eating and drinking the spiritual words of God. In order to keep from being carried away by the error of the lawless and falling from their secure position, they should make every effort to grow up spiritually in God’s words. According to 2 Peter 1:2 and 1:13, they needed to remember these things, meaning the things of God and words of God or the words spoken by the prophets and command given through the apostles.
3. Peter ended his letter by giving glory to Jesus Christ, because Jesus it is through Jesus that we can believe in and know God and grow to have faith and hope in God.