

Reading: 2 Peter 3:1-13

## Introduction

In our calendar there are many days which have a special name attributed to them:

- For example in the first half of the year there is New Year's Day; St. Patrick's Day; Good Friday and May Day.
- In the second half of the year there are other days such as Reformation Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day to name but a few.

Just as you and I have special days with special titles for special reasons, so the OT people of God had special titles on special days for special reasons: They had the Day of Passover, the Day of Unleavened Bread, the Day of First Fruits, the Day of Pentecost, the Day of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Day of Tabernacles. The list could go on! Many of you will have heard of these annual days – but did you know that there is another Day mentioned in Scripture that is not an annual day and yet it is mentioned over 100 times in Scripture. It is the Day of the LORD!

This Day can go by a variety of phrases such as *"the day of Christ"*, *"the day of God"*, and *"that day"*. In fact, even by looking at that last phrase, *"that day"* - a phrase used many times in Scripture, it shows to you and me that this day, the Day of the LORD is a day of singular importance and significance!

## Context

Having seen in our chronological study of the End Times God's Promises to Abraham and David; we will now look at...

### God's Message through the Prophets

The very first time you and I will ever read of the phrase, "The Day of the LORD" is in the prophets. And as you hear of this "Day" you would be mistaken for thinking that there are many "days of the LORD". For example, you will read of...

- The Day of the LORD upon Edom in Obadiah 1:15
- The Day of the LORD upon Babylon in Isaiah 13:6
- The Day of the LORD upon Egypt in Jeremiah 46:10;
- The Day of the LORD upon Israel in Amos 5:18;

But while there may have been many "days of the LORD" (small 'd'), these are all prophecies and warnings of the ultimate Day of the LORD (capital 'D'): a day which according to 2 Peter 3:10 is still to come.

## 1) The Revelation of the Day of the LORD

As we will look through the prophets in the Old Testament there are two very prominent characteristics of the day of the LORD:

### A) The Day of the LORD is a Day of Judgment

#### The Day of the LORD is a day when the LORD will Judge Sinners

Turn with me please to Isaiah 13. Speaking of the judgment of God about to come upon Babylon in v1, in v9 the prophet Isaiah declares, "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it".

What is the day of the LORD? It is a day when the LORD will judge sinners!

#### The Day of the LORD is a day when the LORD will Judge Sinners with Great Wrath

Speaking again of Babylon in Isaiah 13, in v13 the prophet speaks of "the wrath of the LORD of hosts" and "his fierce anger".

You could also turn to Zephaniah 1:14-18. Hear we read of God's judgment upon Judah and in v14 the prophet declares, "*The great day of the LORD is near, it is near*" and in v15, "*That day is a day of wrath*".

#### The Day of the LORD is a day when the LORD will Judge Sinners with Great Wrath and without Hope

In Zephaniah 1:18 the prophet says of those in Judah, "their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath".

Nothing was going to be able to stop those who still had their sins on them in that day from receiving God's wrath! Nothing! No money! No possessions! No offerings of anything they had ever earned or made! There was no hope in that day! Their time was up.

You can therefore understand why...

**The Day of the LORD is a day when Sinners are in great fear!**

In Isaiah 2:20-21 we read of the day of the LORD and we read, "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

Men and women, what is God's revelation regarding the day of the LORD?

- It is a Day of Judgment.. when sinners will be in great fear... for God will Judge sinners in His great and fierce wrath... and there will be no hope left for them! No salvation. No mercy. No grace!

Notice also with me that when we look through the prophets in the OT there is another prominent characteristic of the Day of the LORD. Not only is it a day of judgement...

**B) It is a Day of Victory**

Sticking with Isaiah 2, in v12 and following we are reading about the day of the LORD and in v17 the prophet declares, "*And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day*".

Men and women, the Day of the LORD is a day when the LORD will be exalted!

- According to Jeremiah 46:10 it is a day when the LORD will get vengeance on His enemies; and
- According to Isaiah 2:18 it is a day when the LORD will show the utter folly of trusting in idols.

Men and women, the Day of the LORD is Day of Judgment for sinners where sinners will be judged according to their sins (Isaiah 13:11) and when the LORD will be exalted for the holy, just and true God He is!

This is a general overview of the Day of the LORD from the prophets of the Old Testament as a whole. But there is one prophet in the OT who is commonly called by men, "The Prophet of the Day of the LORD". The reason for this is because his entire prophesy is around this subject of the Day of the LORD. Turn with me please to the OT prophecy of Joel.

For a short time this evening, I want to give you a brief overview of this OT book and as I do so I trust you and I will get a clear grasp in our mind's eye the LORD's teaching on the Day of the LORD.

My reason for doing is so that when we come to looking at the two main ways in which people interpret the day of the LORD, we will be better equipped to understand where they are getting their ideas from.

***The prophecy of JOEL***

As Joel 1:1 tells us, this is the prophecy of Joel, a name which very suitable means, "Jehovah is God". Not Baal, not Ashtoreth, not self; but Jehovah – He is God!

Writing in the early 9<sup>th</sup>C BC when the nation of Israel was living in great wickedness having turned from the LORD to serving idols and thereby deserving of judgment – either in the time of queen Athaliah or king Joash. Joel commences his prophecy in 1:2 and can be split into two major sections

- The Ultimate Day of the LORD is Typified in 1:2-2:27
- The Ultimate Day of the LORD is Prophesied in 2:28-3:21

Notice with me first of all...

**The Ultimate Day of the LORD is Typified**

...and it is typified by two events: the past disaster of the locusts in chapter 1 and the present danger of the new judgment in chapter 2.

Concerning...

**A) The Past Disaster of the locust invasion in chapter 1, observe..**

**a) The Extent of this Disaster**

In 1:2-12 the prophet Joel will address a variety of people – the old men/elders of the nation (1:2-4), the drunkards (v5-7), the worshippers (v8-10), farmers (v11-12) and priests (13-14). From these speeches you and I can learn about the disaster that...

#### I. *The Disaster is Incomparable*

Speaking to the old men/the elders of the land, and then to all the inhabitants of the land, Joel rhetorically asks the question, v2, "Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?"

To put it in other words, Joel is asking them, "Can you ever remember such a terrible disaster in your own time or in the time of your ancestors?" Can you compare this to anything else you have ever seen?" The clear answer is, No: they cannot! Why? For this judgment of God is incomparable with all that they have previously known!

#### II. *The Disaster is Undesirable*

In v3 Joel – knowing how awful God's judgment is – commands these old men to tell their children about it, who will in then tell their children; who will tell their children; who will tell their children. Why? So that these future generations will learn from the current generation and never receive God's judgment!

#### III. *The Disaster is Total*

In v4 Joel says, "That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten".

These words do not describe different insects, instead they describe different stages of the locust from larvae to maturity. Joel 2:25 indicates that this plague of locusts lasted for several years; with each stage of locust having its own particular food: which when combined year after year resulted in everything being eaten and the land devastated!

Van Lennep in his work, Bible lands, speaks of the locust and says, 'they devour every green thing that lies in their path...Fields of standing wheat and barley, vineyards, mulberry orchards, and groves of olive, fig, and other trees are devoured within hours, every green blade and leaf destroyed! Well did the Romans call them 'the burners of the land', which is the meaning of our word Locust.

Another says, "they will eat all things: hay, straw, linen, woollen clothes, and leather – with saw-like teeth they tear everything in pieces. They even eat the barks of the trees!

It is also no wonder that when Moses announced to Pharaoh a coming plague of locusts, that Pharaoh's counsellors exclaimed in desperation, "Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed!"

#### IV. *The Disaster is Unmistakable – v5-7*

Addressing the drunkards, those who live most of their lives in a drunken stupor, oblivious to everything going on around them; Joel commands them to waken up and to weep and howl, crying to God! Why? For even though they live in a drunken stupor, yet even they will not mistake God's judgment, for the grape vines being laid waste there will be no wine!

#### V. *The Disaster is Tearful – v8-10*

V8 describes those who lament like a young girl who has just married her husband, but her husband then dies before they are able to be together. How many tears would such a situation bring!

Also how many tears would be brought when public worship could not happen the way it used to! In v9-10 we are told those who would offer up sacrifices were no longer able, for every sacrifice in the OT included a meat offering, and yet the offerings were not possible due to the devastation.

#### VI. *The Disaster is Miserable – v11-12*

Speaking to the farmers in v11-12, we read in v12 that joy is withered away. All the delights that God gives men to enjoy are gone: the sweetness of the vine; the tastiness of the fig, the juiciness of the pomegranate, the beauty of the palm, the usefulness of the apple – all are gone!

Application

Men and women...at the beginning of his prophecy Joel is speaking of God's past judgment on Israel – a judgment which typifies the ultimate judgment of the LORD!

Notice with me...

- God's Ultimate Judgement is Incomparable: You and I can think of terrible things that have happened to our lives and the lives of others down throughout history: pain we have been in; famines that have occurred; diseases that have swept the world – but I am telling you nothing is comparable to God's ultimate judgment on sinners!
- God's Ultimate Judgement is Undesirable: Knowing the awfulness of God's judgment, you and I should warn our children and the next generation of what happens when men reject Christ – for such judgment is not to be desired!
- God's Ultimate Judgement will be Total: Every part of this earth will be burned up on the day of the LORD! Nothing will be left! Furthermore, those who remain in their sin will be burned by God's eternal wrath – their bodies and their souls!
- God's Ultimate Judgement is Unmistakable: People can deny God now and deceive themselves now that what they see around them speaks to them of God; but there will be no denying God at His judgment!
- God's Ultimate Judgement will be Tearful: people howling and weeping in absolute agony and being unable to rest like the troubled sea!
- God's Ultimate Judgement will be Miserable: Just as the delights of the fruits were gone in Joel's day so the delights of men will be gone in God's judgment. No joy, no comfort, no love: only hate, only misery!

What a judgment to avoid!

Having seen the Extent of this Past Disaster, notice with me...

**b) The Exhortation from this Past Disaster in 1:13-20**

Speaking to the priests, the leaders of the people, the prophet Joel tells them to do two things in v13-14: to mourn and to pray!

- To Mourn – v13
  - o To mourn earnestly – to lament and howl
  - o To mourn continually – lie all night in sackcloth
  - o To mourn purposefully – the worship of Christ is with-holden!
- To Pray – v14
  - o To pray particularly – set apart time to pray – to fast
  - o To pray together – call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land
  - o To pray in hope – to gather into the house of the Lord where Christ would be seen!
  - o To pray for mercy in repentance – to call upon the Lord

Application

Men and women, when we see God's judgment upon our own land and nation at this time – with something that is incomparable in many senses and with something that is bringing many tears to many families...

- Should we not mourn now?
  - o Should we not mourn earnestly?
  - o Mourn continually?
  - o Mourn purposefully that Christ Himself will be worshipped again by ourselves and by others!

Should we not pray?

- Should we not set aside times to pray where we can? Maybe even 15 minutes each day?
- Should we not pray for mercy – for God who is rich in mercy to have compassion on the creatures He has made and that He cares about for He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that they turn from their way and live!

Men and women...

- It is either mourn now or mourn at the ultimate day of judgment!
- It is either pray now when there is hope or be prayerless then when there is no hope!

In 1:15-20 the prophet Joel anticipates the people asking the question Why? Why pray? Why mourn?

❖ *He says Mourn and Pray now because a worse day will come if you do not repent! The Day of the Lord is Unimaginable!*

V15, *“Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.”*

- This worse day is near – it is within arm’s reach
- This worse day is certain – it shall come
  
- ❖ *He says Mourn and Pray now because Hope is to be found in the LORD alone now – not later*
- Already your Hope for necessities is gone with the locusts eating the food (v16)
- Already your Hope for joy is gone in going to God’s House! (v16)
- Already your hope for future crops is gone with no seed to plant in the new season and your barns broken down (v17)
- Already your hope for provision is gone with your cattle and sheep groaning for lack of food! (v18); and the sun scorching your barren fields and drying up the rivers (v19-20)

Men and women of Israel – you have no hope in and of yourself! But cry to God and cry to God now! There is hope in Him but in Him alone!

When the Lord spoke through Moses to the children of Israel before they entered the promised land, the Lord set before them the way of blessing and the way of cursing. In Deuteronomy 28 the Lord declared in v15, *“it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee”*; and in v42 we read, *“All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume”*. Men and women, this disaster came upon the people of God because they forsook the way of the Lord.

But why send such a disaster? You may ask

- Such a disaster gives people a glimpse of the choice they are making to be without the LORD, and the horror of it. Men and women, the LORD desires they will come back.
- It also shows what it is like to be with the LORD – the opposite of God’s judgment.
  - Instead of incomparable pain, there is incomparable pleasure
  - Instead of that which is undesirable there is everything desirable! The LORD Himself!
  - Instead of God’s wrath being poured out on every aspect of you, there is God’s love being poured out on every aspect of you!
  - Instead of tears of regret there are tears of joy!
  - Instead of unimaginable Hell there is the indescribable New Heaven and Earth where there is an abundance of hope, love and joy in the Presence of God.

Having seen the past desolation of locusts, in chapter 2 the prophet tells the priests, the teaching servants of God to blow the trumpet in Zion, to sound the alarm, to let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh: in fact it is nigh at hand with a new invasion of locusts!

Observe with me..

a) The Description of this Day – 2:1-11

In these verses we learn more about the great and final day of the Lord!

I. It is Unsurpassable – v2

“There hath not been ever the like, neither shall there be any more after it”

II. It is Inescapable – v3

“A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth...nothing shall escape”

- Before and behind – nowhere to run, nowhere to escape!

III. It is Terrible – v4-6

It is Terrible in how they look, v4! They look like an army of horses and horsemen – all lined up, row after row, coming swiftly, vehemently, fiercely, unstopably!

It is terrible in how they sound, v5! They sound like an army of chariots bouncing over the rough terrain, the chainmail around them thundering – a noise so loud in the ancient world it could be heard 6 mile away by the human ear!

The terror of this day is seen on the faces of those for whom they come – their faces losing colour and becoming like dead men.

IV. It is Unstoppable – v7-9

Climbing walls, overcoming obstacles, entering windows... we read nothing can stop them! Not even wounding!

Van Lennep in his book Bible Lands, describes the locust in their devastating march: “they have no king or leader, yet they falter not, but press on in serried ranks, urged in the same direction by an irresistible impulse, and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left in their way: they climb straight up, going over the roof and to the other side, and blindly rush in at the open doors and windows. When they come to water, whether it be a puddle, a river or the open sea, they never attempt to go around it, but unhesitatingly leap in and are drowned, and their dead bodies, floating on the surface form a bridge for their companions to pass over.”

V. It is Overwhelming – v10-11

The numbers of the locusts being so many, they overwhelm and disquiet the people of the land: turning the sun to darkness during the day, and the moon and stars to pitch black at night!

With all this said, Joel asks in 2:11, “the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it!”

b) The Exhortation from this Day – 2:12-17

After hearing of all that is about to come upon the people for their sin, the Lord tells the priests in v12-17:

I. Turn to the Lord – 2:12-14

- Turn to the Lord away from sin!
- Turn to the Lord with all your heart – God says, “rend your heart and not your garments” (v13). God is not interested in an empty show, He wants your heart: He wants your entire inner being – your will, your mind, your emotion!
- Turn to the Lord in hope
  - God tells you He is gracious and merciful – He withholds His wrath and bestows goodness upon the repentant

- God tells you He is slow to anger – He is patient and long-suffering: though you may have offended Him much, yet there is hope still!
- God tells you He is of great kindness and will withdraw from sending the punishment you deserve, and instead bring you to joy and service in Me!

God then tells the priests to preach this message to all the people! V16, “Gather the people...assemble the elders, gather the children” – no one was exempt, all were to turn to the Lord!

The Lord then tells the priests to...

## II. Pray to the Lord – 2:15-17

- To intercede on behalf of the people
- To intercede for the glory of God: that God's name would not be mocked by the world and heathen who would say God was not able to keep His people; not able to provide for them! O Lord, the wicked will not consider our sins, they will not justify You for your justice; instead they will say You cannot preserve us, purify us, work in us! Oh for the glory of Thy Name, turn us and make us holy again!

## c) The Deliverance from this Day – 2:18-27

In v18-32 the Lord promises that if His people turn from sin to Him, then He will do two things: He will bless them now; and He will bless them in the future!

- There will be Satisfaction – v19, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith
- There will be Peace – v20, “I will remove far off from you the northern *army*, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate” – a land where they will find no food and will perish never again to be a threat to you.
- There will be Joy – v21, “O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things”
- There will be Fruitfulness – v22, “the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength”
  - Abundance of Fruit – v23, “he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain” – i.e. all that is needed for abundant fruit!
  - Certainty of Fruit – v25, “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm”. The prophet here describes the four stages of the locust and hereby declares that while the locust did eat everything up and left nothing behind, yet God would so work that fruit would be possible!
    - Note – this verse does not mean the years of sin are restored. The years of sin are wasted years – you cannot get them back. But the hope is that the wasted years will not affect the new and future years! There is hope that no matter how much we have failed, we can bring forth great and abundant fruit for the Lord!
- There will be Praise and thankfulness to the Lord! – v26
- There will be Love – v27, “ye shall know that... I *am* the LORD your God...: and my people shall never be ashamed”

## 2) The Day of the LORD is Prophesied

In the Hebrew Bible, 2:28 begins a new chapter and as v28 tells us refers to that which shall come to pass afterward. 2:28 to 3:21 reveal to us two details about the Day of the LORD:

### A) What happens BEFORE the Day of the LORD

#### a) The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Abundance – 2:28-29

In 2:28 we read, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit”.

- This outpouring is universal – “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh”: no longer would the Lord work among the Jewish nation primarily, but He would work among the nations of this world!
- The outpouring is inclusive – v28-29 speak of the Holy Spirit being poured upon all classes of people: men, women, old, young, servants, etc..
- This outpouring is purposeful – v28 speaks how people will prophesy and see visions and dreams. The Lord revealed Himself in these OT times by dreams and visions, and in so doing people would then prophesy or proclaim Him. Joel here speaks of a time when people will know more of the Lord and will proclaim Him with great power!

There will also be...

**b) The Showing of Wonders – 2:30-31**

And according to historians like Josephus and others, these occurred down to the letter in the days of the early church.

And there will be...

**c) A Calling on the Name of the Lord – 2:32**

Calling on Him for salvation, repenting of their sin and God saving His chosen remnant of people!

Application

Some people think that the Holy Spirit was not given to the people in the OT: however as 1 Corinthians 12:3 makes clear to us, “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost”. People in the OT were born fallen just like you and I were; born in sin and shapen in iniquity. Like us they needed to be born again by the Holy Spirit; and like you and me they could only live for the Lord by the strength of God the Holy Spirit.

What this verse is referring to is a greater giving of the Holy Spirit than ever before, and as the apostle Peter tells us in on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:16, “this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams...-> v21).

Men and women, Today is the time before the Day of the LORD!

- This is the period when the Lord is outpouring His Spirit upon all flesh – working mightily not only among the Jew but also upon the nations of this world!
  - o Just think of our own little denomination: within 60 years of it beginning it has branches in NI, Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Spain, etc...
- This is the period when the Lord is outpouring His Spirit abundantly – while we can see revivals in the OT, yet they are far and few between. Furthermore, they are mostly on a small scale: but as we look at the times of the NT and particularly throughout church history we see God pouring His Spirit upon people of all ages – young and old, men and women, and there they serve the Lord with great power and effectiveness: souls coming to know Him!
- This is the period when we have a greater knowledge of the Lord is available more than ever before. Yes, the OT saints and prophets had a saving knowledge of the Lord and a great knowledge of the Lord, but much of what they knew was in types and figures: today we look back at the reality of Christ: His life, His work, His cross, His resurrection, His prayers! They saw the shadow, we see the reality!

Encouragement:

- o We are living in the period of the Holy Spirit outpouring
  - When the Holy Spirit will give us a greater knowledge of the Lord
  - When the Holy Spirit will equip us greatly to serve Him
  - When the Holy Spirit will give days of refreshing and revival and people call on the name of the Lord!

Will you take advantage of such days and cry to the Lord for such?



**B) What happens ON the Day of the LORD****a) God's Enemies are Judged – 3:1-17**

Speaking of the nation of Judah as the summary of all His redeemed people throughout the ages, in these verses we read how the LORD will:

- Judge universally – He will judge all people hostile to Him and His children – in v2, the valley of Jehoshaphat means “God judges” and it is where in 2 Chronicles 20 the Lord gathered and smote those who hated and attacked God’s people!
- Judge vengefully – He will judge them for despising His people – v3, counting them as worthless in their sight and to be abused and for defiling His Name – v5, *as Babylon stole the vessels from the Temple of the Lord and later used them to worship to false gods, so God will judge all that defile His Name and Worship.*
- Judge them fairly – He will judge according to their evil – v7, returning “their recompense on their own head”
- Judge them irresistibly – in v9 the Lord tells them to prepare war, to wake up their mighty men, (v10) to beat their farming instruments into weapons but it will be to no end, for they will be brought to judgment in the valley of decision – a valley where God’s decision on them will be pronounced!
- Judge them fearfully – v16, the Lord shall roar against them as a lion roars against His prey!

And while God will judge His enemies in this valley, He will venerate His people! And now in v18-21 we read how

**b) God's People are Blessed – 3:18-21**

They will be blessed with

- Abundant Fruitfulness – the mountains flowing with wine
- Strength – the hills flowing with milk that makes strong
- Satisfaction – the land flowing with water
- Holiness – the fountain that cleanses from the house of the LORD
- Everlasting life – (v19-20), while the enemies of God’s people will perish without blessing forever, God’s people shall dwell safely and wonderfully in the presence of the LORD.
- Glorification – v21, God will perfect us by means of His shed blood.

Men and women...this is God’s message to the OT prophets and His revelation of the Day of the LORD!

- The Day of the LORD is a Day of Judgment on sinners when His great and fierce wrath is poured out without mercy!
- The Day of the LORD is a Day of Victory when the LORD is exalted as the true and living God
- The Day of the LORD is a Day of Blessing for the Saved when they will be blessed.

Having seen the revelation of the Day of the LORD, notice secondly with me..

**3) The Discussion of the Day of the LORD**

People interpret the Day of the LORD in two main ways:

- One View says the Day of the LORD is One 24 hour Day
- The Other View says the Day of the LORD is a Long Period of Time.

Turn with me please to Turn with me please to 2 Peter 3 so I can explain where these people get their differences interpretations from.

2 Peter 3 is a passage that speaks very clearly about the Day of the LORD and what happens on it. Note what it says:

In 3:3 we read that some scoffers will deny the second coming of the LORD and say, (v4) "Where is the promise of His coming". But, v9, "the LORD is not slack concerning His promise". In v10, Peter then calls this second coming of Christ, "the day of the LORD."

Men and women, what is the day of the LORD? **Lesson 1: It is the coming of the LORD Jesus Christ to this earth!**

Notice also with me 3:10-13, "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"

What else happens on the Day of the LORD?

- Christ returns to earth; AND
- Christ sets up eternity – the new heaven and the new earth!

How does this help us understand where people get their different interpretations of the Day of the LORD from?

#### ❖ **View 1: The Day of the LORD is a LONG period of Time**

The Day of the LORD is a long period of time which encompasses: Christ's return; His setting up a 1,000 year kingdom; His judgment of the wicked at the beginning of the 1,000 years; His judgment of individual sinners and Antichrist at the end of the 1,000 years; and the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth.

The reason why this second view believes a day is not a literal 24 hour day is because of what we have already seen in our previous studies – namely that God has given a promise to the Hebrew people that they will possess the temporal land of Canaan. This possession cannot happen until Christ returns and it must last for 1,000 years.

Therefore the day of the LORD (which according to 2 Peter 3) includes the second coming of Christ and the commencement of eternity with the new heaven and earth; it must also include the 1000 year reign of Christ in the middle. The Day of the LORD must therefore be a long period of time.

#### ❖ **View 2: The Day is of the LORD is ONE Day**

View 2 not believing there is any need for Christ to give the Hebrew people the temporal land of Canaan, there is no need for a 1,000 year reign on earth.

Therefore in 2 Peter 3, the Day of the LORD is one day when Christ returns, immediately judges the world and eternity begins for His people on a new heaven and a new earth.

### **4) The Implications of the Day of the LORD**

The view you hold will have a significant impact on your view of Christ's second coming:

#### **1) Will the ungodly have a chance to be saved after Christ returns?**

- View 2 says No: the unsaved must be saved now if they are ever to be saved. The coming of Christ is therefore a day they should not look forward to.
  - After all, did Peter not say in 2 Peter 3:9 that the LORD is longsuffering in regards to His coming because He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Surely this means at Christ's coming there is no more hope for repentance?!

- Furthermore, in the OT prophets we are told that the Day of the LORD is a day of judgment on sinners, of God's fierce wrath where there is no more hope for sinners! Surely this all makes it clear the Day of the LORD means there is no more chance for the ungodly to repent and be converted.
  - Therefore, when you are witnessing, you must tell them there is no hope once Christ returns! They must be prepared to meet their God now!
- View 1 says, Yes: with exception of those who have the mark of the beast and who make a false profession of Christianity, all the unsaved in the world have the opportunity to be saved once they see Christ face to face.
- And in fact, according to many who hold to View 2 will say that more people will be saved in Christ's visible presence than at any other time. Therefore, according to this view the coming of Christ is a day the saved can look forward to for their lost loved ones for it is day when so many lost will be saved.
  - According to this View, the coming of Christ is a great thing to be had by you and your unsaved loved ones – for herein the truth of Christ will be seen more clearly than ever before.

### 2) *Will the believer finally be at rest from struggle with evil at the second coming of Christ?*

- View 2 says, Yes, for the wicked are judged and eternity begins where the believer will rest in the LORD in glory forever.
- View 1 says, No, for there is another 1,000 years and a final battle before eternity begins.

### 3) The Application of the Day of the LORD

There are applications for us all no matter view you hold to:

#### A) *The Application of Comfort*

There may be those who say the world has not changed since time began and Christ is not coming – therefore stop waiting for your Saviour to come and make all things well: just give up, live in the misery of sin, and be realistic – the world is a nightmare and we just have to make the best of it.

No, child of God! Just as God kept His promise with Christ's first coming, so God will keep His promise with Christ's second coming: His arriving to this earth is now one day closer than it was last night: just think, we are one day closer to seeing His face; to enjoying His presence; to living in righteousness!

The Day of the LORD is coming: when Christ will come; when the fullness of truth will be revealed; when the light of Christ will shine throughout the world; when purity, righteousness, holiness shall reign; when peace will cover the earth; when lions shall lie down with lambs; when Christ will make all things well! We are one day closer! Don't give up! Keep looking unto Jesus for strength the author and finisher of our faith!

#### B) *The Application of Challenge*

2 Peter 3:14, *"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."*

Seeing such a wonderful day awaits us, let us...

- Be diligent (not careless about our lives) and let us
- Be found of Him in peace – having a close and harmonious walk with Him as two who are agreed
- Being found without spot and blameless in repentance rather than being found with spots and plenty of blame which will bring disappointment to His face for the shame you have shown forth regarding Him and His love