

L 7 ... The Second Coming and End of the World

[2 Peter 3:1-10](#)

In the previous chapter, Peter focused on counterfeit preachers and teachers. He now turns his attention to the Second Coming and end of the world. Peter begins by reminding his readers this is his *second epistle* to them ([3:1a](#)). Then, he states his purpose is to *stir up* his readers' *pure minds by way of remembrance* ([3:1b](#)).

The word translated *pure* (EILIKRINĒS, eli-kree'-neice) literally means "sincere" or "sun judged."

The English word "sincere" comes from two Latin words (SINE CERA), which means "without wax." In ancient times, when pottery was dried in a kiln, it would sometimes crack. Some types of pottery were very valuable, so a dishonest merchant would fill the crack with wax and paint over it. The only way to detect the crack was to hold the piece of pottery up to the sun, which would expose the crack. God wants us to have "sun judged" minds in which there is no covered sin.

As Peter begins this section, he prompts his readers to *be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour* ([3:2](#)). The best way to maintain a *pure* mind is to *be mindful of the words* in the Bible.

Therefore, what does the psalmist write in [Psalm 119:11](#)?

This passage in *2 Peter* tells us **three** truths about **the Second Coming and end of the world**. First ...

There will be repudiation (3:3-4a)

Peter explains it like this: *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts* ([3:3](#)). The phrase *the last days* refers to the time between Christ's first and second coming.

What does [Hebrews 1:2a](#) declare?

The *scoffers* deny the second coming of Christ. They do not believe the world will ever come to an end or that there will be a day of accounting. These *scoffers* will follow *their own lusts*. They want to fulfill their sinful desires without any fear of future judgment.

The scoffing is in the form of this question: *Where is the promise of his coming?* ([3:4a](#)). What is the *promise* the *scoffers* deny? The night before His crucifixion, Jesus tells His disciples He is going to prepare a place for them ([Jn 14:3a](#)).

Then, what does He promise ([14:3b](#))?

Before Christ returns and the end of the world, **there will be repudiation** and ...

There will be separation (3:4b-9)

The return of Christ and end of the world will be a time of separation. Believers will be separated from non-believers and the ungodly will be forever separated from God.

However, *scoffers* will also say, *for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation (3:4b)*. They insist things have remained unchanged since the *creation* of the world. *Scoffers*—past and present—believe since the world has continued as it is for thousands of years, God will not intervene.

To remind his readers things have **not** always been the same, Peter writes that the *scoffers* deliberately forget some things. He then cites the example that long ago *by the word of God the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of the water and in the water (3:5)*. In other words, God started everything in creation by just speaking *the word*.

How does [Hebrews 11:3a](#) express this fact?

When God spoke, the universe came into existence. He spoke again and *dry land* came out of water ([Gen. 1:9-10](#)). God will end the world the same way He began it—with a *word*.

The **first separation** occurs when the Lord Jesus descends *from heaven* and gives a *shout (1 Thess. 4:16a)*. This results in the separation of the saved from the lost. The *dead in Christ shall rise first (4:16d)*. After that, what happens to believers who are still *alive and remain (4:17b)*?

Though the word is not in the Bible, this is what we call “the Rapture.” Jesus says, *Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left (Mt 24:40)*. He also says, *in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left (Lk 17:34)*. Why are some working and some asleep? Because the Rapture will be global! It will be daytime on one side of the world and nighttime on the other. These verses also tell us that even believers will not know when He is coming.

Peter’s next example that proves things have not always been the same since creation is Noah. He writes, *Whereby (God’s spoken word) the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished (3:6, explanation mine)*. God is not only the Divine Creator but also the Divine Judge. Therefore, all the evil people of Noah’s day were destroyed by the flood ([Gen. 7:17-24](#)).

After citing two examples of God’s intervention in the past, Peter explains the Lord will intervene in the future in the same way. He writes, *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (3:7)*.

How does [Isaiah 66:15d–e](#) describe this event?

The first worldwide judgment was with water; the second will be by *fire*. That's why Isaiah writes: *For, behold, the LORD will come with fire* (66:15a–b). God has already decided the culmination of all things and the **second separation**—the separation of the *ungodly*. They will ultimately be separated from God as they are *cast into the lake of fire* ([Rev. 20:14-15](#)).

Peter has made his point that the Lord will bring about the culmination of all things, but these questions remain: when will it be and why the delay? Therefore, he writes we should *be not ignorant of this one thing* ([3:8a](#)).

What is it (3:8c–d)?

This means God doesn't watch a calendar or wear a watch because there is no time in eternity. God is outside the sphere of time.

The reason God is not in a hurry to bring judgment is found in verse nine: *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance* ([3:9](#)). God is *not slack*; He is *longsuffering*. This doesn't mean everyone is going to be saved or that God is lazy in fulfilling His promise. It means God wants as many people as will to come in faith to Him ([Ezek. 18:23](#); [1 Tim. 2:4](#)).

God's unwillingness *that any should perish* is global. About His second coming and the end of the world, Jesus says: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations*" ([Mt 24:14a](#)).

Then, what does our Lord say ([24:14b](#))?

Does this mean Jesus can't come at any time? No! Between the Rapture and Christ's return to earth, the Great Tribulation will occur. During that time an *angel* will *fly* through the sky *having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people* ([Rev. 14:6](#)).

At the return of Christ and end of the world, there will be **repudiation, separation**, and ...

There will be incineration (3:10)

The culmination of all things will be unexpected. Peter writes, *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night* ([3:10a](#)). It will come without any warning. The phrase *day of the Lord* refers to God's intervention in history for the purpose of judging the wicked. It begins after the Rapture and culminates with the Great White Throne Judgment ([Rev. 20:11-15](#)).

On that day, *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise* ([3:10b](#)). This will involve fire ([3:7](#)). As a result, *the elements shall melt with fervent heat* ([3:10c](#)). The word translated *elements* denotes the basic elements, such as atoms and molecules, which make up the universe.

Verse ten is reminiscent of what words of our Lord ([Matthew 24:35](#))?

As a result, *the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up* ([3:10d](#)). The old earth is too far gone to renovate it, so it will be completely incinerated by fire and replaced with a *new earth* ([3:13](#)).

At the Second Coming and end of the world, there will be

REPUDIATION,

SEPARATION,

INCINERATION.