

CHRIST'S RETURN AND THE END OF THE WORLD (PART 1)

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There are several passages of New Testament scripture that declare the certainty of the return of Jesus Christ and the end of the world. Christ himself promised it in Mark 13:33-37: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. *Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*" And 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 says, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*"

Scoffers are confident but wrong

Second Peter 3:1-6 warns us of those who will scoff at the promise of Christ's return and the end of the world: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may 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 Savior: *knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?* for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was,

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being overflowed with water, perished.”

We do not know when, but Christ *will* come again

In 2 Peter 3:7-13, we have yet another promise of the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world. But this passage also explains how God has a different perspective of time than what man does. And however much time passes before Christ comes back, it is a testament not to God being slack about his promises, but rather his longsuffering towards mankind. Yes, the Lord is willing to let this world stand longer in his quest to save the souls that he has made.

“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. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 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. 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.” Since the matter of Christ’s return is only a matter of *when* not *if*, what should we be doing? “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (2 Pet 3:14). As Christ said in Mark 13:37, “*And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*”