



Master of Truth

THE DAY OF THE LORD

2 Peter 3

Teaching Notes

INTRO

Second Peter is one of the general letters in the New Testament and is written to the same audience as 1 Peter. Peter dealt with persecution and wrote about how to deal with it physically in 1 Peter. This second book of Peter is about how to deal with persecution mentally and during the end times.

In 1 Peter 5:12, Peter states he wrote this letter to encourage and testify that this was the true grace of God. As believers suffered, Peter encouraged them to embrace the grace of God and stand firm.

In 2 Peter 3:1, Peter emphasized that the purpose of the letter was to help believers develop a genuine understanding, with a reminder, of the words of the prophets and apostles. Basically, 2 Peter was written so believers would recall what had been said and written about Christ the Savior.

Peter wanted to help the believers stand firm on the foundations from the apostles and the prophets. He wanted believers to be able to withstand the false teachers and their teachings. He was trying to refresh the readers' memories of all that they had been taught.

TEACHING

2 Peter 3:1-4: In verse 3, Peter describes the false teachers again. Scoffers were going to show up in the last days, and Peter assumed they were already in the last days. Scoffers were those who mocked and laughed at the truth. They communicated false messages and lived according to their desires.

These scoffers ignored the truth. MacArthur identifies the marks of a false prophet and false teacher: "1. Teach destructive heresies (2 Peter 2:1), 2. Deny Christ (2 Peter 2:1), 3. Blasphemers (2 Peter 2:2), 4. Twist Scripture (2 Peter 2:2, 3), 5. Covetous (2 Peter 2:3, 14), 6. Self-willed (2 Peter 2:10), 7. Immoral (2 Peter 2:10, 14), 8. Wicked (2 Peter 2:12, 14), 9. Bring true faith into disrepute (2 Peter 2:15), and 10. Mock Christ's Second Coming (2 Peter 3:4)."¹ Believers had to contend for their faith. The battle would come from within the church from the false teachers. Peter's emphasis in this last letter was that he wanted the believers to remember the truth. If believers would remember the truth, then they could discern what teachings were false.

Peter used the flood from the Old Testament to make reference to the coming destruction at the Day of the Lord. He reiterated that there was total destruction by water in the past but that the next destruction would come by fire. The water references and illustrations were to remind people that there had been a total destruction of the earth but, this time, there was an opportunity and a way to avoid personal destruction. That way was by repenting, coming to the Lord, and accepting Christ.

2 Peter 3:5-18: In 2 Peter 3, there was the notice of another destruction that would be coming. In verse 7, Peter states that this next destruction will be by fire. Judgment was coming to the false teachers and to the unbelievers. God wanted as many people as possible to embrace the truth and repent, but destruction would come in God's timing to those who do not believe. The Day of the Lord will take place in God's timing.

A false teacher would say this destruction will never happen. A true teacher will get people ready for the return of Christ.

In Acts, the disciples were told that the way Jesus went up to heaven would be the way He would come back to earth. In order for the Day of the Lord to take place, a third temple will be built in Jerusalem. There will be seven years of peace. Halfway through the seven years the Anti-Christ will put himself in the temple and declare he is god. The seven years will be the tribulation. Even though the next destruction of the earth will come like a thief in the night, it will not come without the seven years of tribulation.

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2005), p. 1937.



Master of Truth

THE DAY OF THE LORD

2 Peter 3

Teaching Notes

There are three views of the tribulation. Those who embrace pre-tribulation believe that believers will be raptured out before the destruction. Those who embrace mid-tribulation believe that believers will experience the rapture in the middle of the seven years before the trials of the last three and a half years. Those who embrace the post-tribulation view believe that after the seven years of tribulation, the church will be removed. The tribulation has to take place before the Day of the Lord, which is God's judgment.

The Day of the Lord is described in the Old and New Testaments. MacArthur has identified all references to the "Day of the Lord" in the Old Testament: "Day of the Lord. Nineteen Explicit Mentions of 'Day of the Lord' in the Old Testament:"²

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Obadiah 15 | 6. Joel 3:14 | 11. Isaiah 13:6 | 16. Ezekiel 13:5 |
| 2. Joel 1:15 | 7. Amos 5:18 | 12. Isaiah 13:9 | 17. Ezekiel 30:3 |
| 3. Joel 2:1 | 8. Amos 5:18 | 13. Zephaniah 1:7 | 18. Zechariah 14:1 |
| 4. Joel 2:11 | 9. Amos 5:20 | 14. Zephaniah 1:14 | 19. Malachi 4:5 |
| 5. Joel 2:31 | 10. Isaiah 2:12 | 15. Zephaniah 1:14 | |

MacArthur states that in the New Testament, the Day of the Lord is mentioned four times: "Four Explicit Mentions of 'Day of the Lord' in the New Testament:"³

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Acts 2:20 | 2. 1 Thessalonians 5:2 | 3. 2 Thessalonians 2:2 | 4. 2 Peter 3:10 |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|

In verse 11 Peter encourages believers to be ready for the coming of Christ. They should desire the coming of the Day of the Lord. Their godliness should reflect Christ, and they should be ready.

CLOSING

Believers should be on guard and should grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Believers should not just wait, but they should continue to pursue Christ. Peter doesn't hold back. 'Church,' we have to get ready! We have to earnestly wait and desire for His coming.

² MacArthur, p. 1942.

³ MacArthur, p. 1942