

II Peter 3:8-13 - Encouragement in the Promises of God

Tuesday, February 19, 2013
10:02 AM

To Read:

1. Psalm 90
2. I Thessalonians 5

Introduction

A. From big to little: how does our passage this morning fit into the whole of II Peter

1. The Big Picture: Dangers will not only come from outside the church but also inside the church...
2. II Peter 1: The gospel is always marked by godliness
3. II Peter 2: False teachers will deny godliness by perverting freedom and promoting licentiousness
4. II Peter 3:1-13 - Scoffers will deny godliness by disbelieving God's words and following their own passions instead
 - a. II Peter 3:1-7 - Peter defines what scoffers are and why they are wrong
 - b. II Peter 3:8-13 - Peter encourages the believer in the promises of God

B. Read II Peter 3:8-13

C. Our passage this morning is directed to the believer, so before I start I want to make two overarching observations

1. Sometimes believers have doubts - this is why Peter is writing to them
 - a. Peter knows that the arguments the scoffers make sometimes cause the believer to have doubts
 - i. It's true that, from a human point of view, it has been a long time since Christ left
 - b. Elijah doubts God's final victory over Baal in I Kings 19
 - ◆ I Kings 19:13-18 - *And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."*
 - c. Sarah and Abraham doubt God's promise of a son in Genesis 17-18
 - ◆ Genesis 18:10-14 - *The LORD said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?"*
 - d. John the Baptist doubts that Jesus is the Christ in Luke 7
 - ◆ Luke 7:18-23 - *The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'"*
 - e. Thomas the apostle doubts the Resurrection in John 20
 - ◆ John 29:24-29 - *Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."*
2. The difference between a scoffer and a believer is how they address their doubts
 - a. We saw last week that the scoffer laughs at what God has said and disregards it
 - b. But this week we'll see that when believers have doubts, they remind themselves of the truths of Scripture that fortify them against the scoffer
 - c. This is Peter's message here, he comes as a loving shepherd to encourage the sheep, to build us up in our faith even when the scoffer might tempt us to doubt

D. Proposition and Outline

1. Because scoffers arguments are often enticing, we must remind ourselves of the truths they scoff at
 - a. We know why Christ hasn't returned yet: salvation (vs 8-9)
 - b. We know Christ will return imminently: judgment (vs 10)
 - c. We must desire Christ's return: holiness (vs 11-12)
 - d. We will be blessed at Christ's return: righteousness (vs 13)

I. We know why Christ hasn't returned yet: salvation

Verses 8-9 - *But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

A. When the scoffer scoffs, remind yourselves that God is not like us

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

1. This is a quote from Psalm 90, which we read earlier
 - a. Psalm 90:2-4 - *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You return man to dust and say, "Return, O children of man!" For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.*
 - b. The purpose of this section of Psalm 90 is to capture how much holier and how much greater than us God is
 - c. So, Peter takes this verse to illustrate that God is not like us
2. So, what does it mean: God is not like us
 - a. He is not affected by or limited by time in the same way we are
 - b. While we may look at the long periods of time and wonder why, God does not, He does not experience time like we do
 - c. So, we must remind ourselves that God is not like us
 - d. Psalm 50:21-22 - *These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you. "Mark this, then, you who forget God, lest I tear you apart, and there be none to deliver!"*
3. But (side note), what does it not mean: God does not accurately portray time
 - a. Some people take this verse out of context and apply it to improper things, especially the creation account, claiming that with God one day is as a thousand years, so six days doesn't necessarily mean six days
 - b. But this verse is not saying that God doesn't accurately portray time - God does not sometimes call one thousand years one day or one day one thousand years.
 - c. It is saying that God doesn't experience time like us, but He created it and He is able to accurately portray what He means by time
 - d. So, this verse is no reason to throw away six days in Genesis
4. Why does it matter?
 - a. The scoffer claims that the length of time since Christ's promise to return makes His promise meaningless.
 - b. But God is not bound to time like we are - to God all times are soon. We can take hope that what seem like vast spans of time to us are nothing to God.
 - c. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader: Aslan to Lucy: *"Do not look so sad. We shall meet soon again."* "Please, Aslan," said Lucy, "what do you call soon?" "I call all times soon," said Aslan.

B. When the scoffer scoffs, remind yourselves that God keeps His promises

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness

1. Here Peter directly responds to the scoffers assertion by applying our last point
 - a. If God is not affected by or limited by time in the same way we are, then it is not possible to say that He is delaying in keeping His promises
 - b. God will keep His promises according to His plan, not our view of time
 - c. When the scoffer points out that it has been a long time, that's ok, because God isn't bound by time
 - d. God will still fulfill His promises
2. You see, Peter knew that God had appeared to delay before, but God had brought His promises to pass
 - a. Throughout the period of the Old Testament, it appeared that God's promises to Abraham and to Moses and to David had been delayed or failed
 - i. Habakkuk 2:3 - *For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end---it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay*

- ii. Jeremiah 33:14 - *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.*
- b. But, even though it took thousands of years, God's promises were fulfilled at just the right time
 - i. Galatians 4:4-5 - *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*
 - ii. Mark 1:14-15 - *Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*
- 3. So Peter encourages the believer to have the same faith in the second return of Christ
 - a. It had appeared that God was delaying the first advent of Christ, but He came at just the right time
 - b. So, when it appears that Christ is delaying His return, we should know that He is not slow to fulfill His promises
 - c. Hebrews 10:23 - *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.*

C. When the scoffer scoffs, remind yourselves that God has a purpose

but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

- 1. So far, Peter has reminded us that God is not like us and that He will fulfill His promises at the right time, but now Peter increases the encouragement by telling us what God's purpose for waiting is
 - a. God's purpose for waiting is to give people a chance to repent and find salvation
 - b. Paul says it this way in Romans 2
 - i. Romans 2:4 - *Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?*
- 2. As we come to this verse, we need to spend just a moment carefully consider what it means
 - a. What does 'not wishing that any should perish' mean: There are two options in how to read this, but both options end with the same purpose for writing this.
 - i. The first way we can read this is that God does not desire any of those whom He has chosen to be in Christ to perish, so He is waiting until all of the elect are saved.
 - ii. The second way we can read this is a little more involved but has some parallel passages (like I Timothy 2:4) and we can read that God does not desire anyone to perish. But then the question comes up, why do people perish? We must respond that God desires something greater than not having anyone perish. The Armenian viewpoint would say that God desires human freedom greater than no one perishing. The Reformed viewpoint would say that God desires the display of His own glory greater than no one perishing. Although I stand firmly in the Reformed understanding of this passage, this argument overlooks the point of the passage right now, so I'm not going to enter into it this morning - if you have questions you can talk to me afterward.
 - b. In both readings, the purpose of God's delay is to hold out salvation to as many as possible, whether it means to all the elect or to everyone. God's delay has a purpose, Christ has not returned yet for a reason.
 - c. What does 'not wishing that any should perish' not mean: that God is proclaiming universal salvation in some way. The rest of the Bible clearly denies this.
- 3. Why does it matter:?
 - a. Christ's delay in returning has a purpose and that purpose is to gather all of His sheep together.
 - i. John 10:16 - *And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*
 - b. When the scoffer questions Christ's return because He hasn't yet, they overlook this. We ought to rejoice that Christ has delayed to this point, because that delay has given us the chance to participate in Christ.
 - i. II Peter 3:15 - *And count the patience of our Lord as salvation*
 - c. So, far from being a discouragement to us, Christ delay ought to be a source of joy. Don't be worried when the scoffer scoffs, rejoice in the patience of God.

II. We know Christ will return imminently: judgment

Verse 10 - *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

A. When the scoffer scoffs, remind yourselves that no one knows the time of Christ's return

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief

1. In his second argument Peter starts with a similar point about time
 - a. His first argument started with God is not bound by time
 - b. His second argument starts with no one know what God's plan for time is
 - c. But he's going to build on this foundation in a slightly different way
2. It is a well attested to fact in Scripture that the timing of the second coming of Christ is unknown and will surprise those who are not looking for it
 - a. Matthew 24:36-44 - *"But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 - *Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*
 - c. Revelation 3:3 - *Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.*
3. Why does it matter?
 - a. Again, the scoffers were scoffing at Christ timing, but when they scoff at Christ's timing they are only displaying their ignorance
 - b. Of course the believers do not know when Christ will return, Christ Himself in His humiliation did not know when He would return
 - c. So, when the scoffer points this out, it is no reason to worry - the day of the Lord will come like a thief

B. When the scoffer scoffs, remind yourselves that when Christ comes it will be in power

and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved

1. Again, Peter builds on His previous thought - when Christ returns, it won't be like the first time
 - a. Christ came the first time in humiliation - born as a baby in Bethlehem to die on a cross in Jerusalem
 - b. When He returns it will be in glorification - He will be the sovereign ruler of the universe that will bring it to a violent and glorious end
2. The glory and power of the coming of God are often described in terms of His creation burning up before Him
 - a. Hebrews 12:18-29 - *For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse him who is*

speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken---that is, things that have been made---in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

- b. Revelation 20:11 - *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.*
3. Why does it matter?
 - a. When the scoffer scoffs at God, he is forgetting who he is dealing with
 - b. But, the believer doesn't forget - our God is a consuming fire
 - c. There is no reason to scoff at God's promise - not only is Christ sure to return, when He returns it will be in such power and glory that even the heavens will flee away

C. When the scoffer scoffs, remind yourselves that when Christ comes it will be for judgment and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

1. Peter continues building on His thought
 - a. If the time of Christ return will surprise those who are not anticipating it
 - b. And, if Christ will return in glory and power to undo the very fabric of the universe
 - c. Then, it is clear that Christ will judge His enemies when He returns
2. When Christ returns He will come as the judge of mankind
 - a. Jude 14-15 - *It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."*
 - b. Acts 10:39-42 - *And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.*
 - c. Acts 17:30-31 - *The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."*
3. Specifically, Christ will expose every hidden thing in judgment
 - a. Romans 2:15-16 - *They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.*
 - b. I Corinthians 3:12-15 - *Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw--- each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*
 - c. I Corinthians 4:5 - *Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.*
 - d. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 - *The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.*
4. Again, why does it matter?
 - a. Believers can fortify themselves in believing God because they know what the end of the scoffer is
 - b. The scoffer will not be vindicated, he will be destroyed, his secrets will be exposed before Christ
 - c. The believer on the other hand will not be destroyed, he will be vindicated as the secrets of his heart are also exposed
 - d. So, the scoffer may scoff, but it will only end in judgment for them and vindication for the believer, there is no need to worry about them

III. We must desire Christ's return: holiness

Verses 11-12 - *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!*

- In this paragraph Peter changes his purpose a little bit
 - In the last paragraph, our last two points, we saw how Peter was fortifying us in our faith against the scoffers
 - Now, in this paragraph Peter is going to build on what He has said and give us a command for how we should live to demonstrate that the scoffer is wrong
 - You could call this paragraph Peter's application - He's given us truth to meditate on, now he's applying it to our lives

A. When the scoffer scoffs, we must continue following after Christ

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness

1. Peter starts by pointing back to what he has just said and asks a simple question
 - a. If Christ is going to return imminently in power and in judgment, then what sort of people ought we to be?
 - b. Should Peter's teaching affect only our beliefs or our lives as well? It must affect our lives as well.
2. So, how should our lives be affected by Peter's teaching about the return of Christ
 - a. Peter tells us our lives should reflect two things - holiness and godliness
 - i. Holiness - living in accordance with God's character and commandments
 - ii. Godliness - being wholly devoted to the things of God
 - b. When the scoffer scoffs, we use our lives to demonstrate that the things of God are true
 - i. We demonstrate that God's promises are true when we live in accordance with God's character and when we are devoted to the things of God
 - ii. I Peter 2:12 - *Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*
 - iii. I Peter 3:16 - *having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.*
 - c. When the scoffer scoffs, it should remind us that God will come to judge all men
 - i. This is where Peter has been building from - He points to the surety of Christ return and that He will come in power and in judgment and so we ought to live lives that will be judged rightly
 - ii. Romans 2:6-8 - *He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.*
3. This is the application of all of Peter's writings
 - a. I Peter 1:14-16 - *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."*
 - b. II Peter 1:5-7 - *For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.*
4. What does this look like in real life?
 - a. It means that we will care what God wants us to do in all of life
 - i. Ephesians 5:8-9 - *Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord.*
 - b. It means that we will take care to do what God wants us to do in all of life
 - i. Ephesians 5:15-16 - *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*

B. When the scoffer scoffs, we must set our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us

waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God

1. The promise of Christ's return in power should affect not only our conduct but our hope as well
 - a. We should live lives of holiness and godliness
 - b. But we should also wait for and hasten the coming of the day of God
2. There is a contrast of terms here
 - a. Waiting and hastening are nearly opposites in the Greek
 - i. Waiting means that we are patient and content until Christ returns
 - ii. Hastening means that we desire earnestly for Christ to return quickly
 - b. But both attitudes ought to mark the Christian - we ought to be hoping for Christ to return quickly, but also patiently content until He does, knowing that He will return when the time is perfect
3. We could rephrase this statement into another phrase Peter uses in I Peter
 - a. I Peter 1:13 - *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
 - b. If our hope is set fully on the grace that will be brought to us when Christ returns, then we will be able to patiently wait until He comes - we have a sure hope
 - c. If our hope is set fully on the grace that will be brought to us when Christ returns then we will earnestly hope for the return of Christ to happen quickly - His return is our hope
4. What does this look like in real life?
 - a. In a lot of ways, this looks the same as living lives of holiness and godliness, but perhaps the purpose is different
 - i. We might say that it looks like not loving things in the world - not being preoccupied or caring too much about things in the here-and-now because we have a better hope
 - ii. It's as if someone came up and offered you something to eat but you said, "No thanks, I'm waiting for and expecting something better."
 - iii. It's also as if someone came up and took something away from you and you said, "That's ok, I'm waiting for and expecting something better."
 - b. This attitude is described throughout Scripture
 - i. Matthew 6:19-21 - *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*
 - ii. Luke 12:32-34 - *"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*

C. When the scoffer scoffs, we must properly fear God

because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

1. Peter closes this statement by reiterating something he has already said
 - a. He discussed Christ's coming in power and judgment in verse 10 with almost the same terms
 - b. So, the question is, why does he repeat himself only two verses later?
2. I think the answer is because his purpose is different for each of the statements
 - a. In verse 10, Peter was encouraging the believer that God would come to judge the scoffer and vindicate the believer
 - b. In verses 11-12, Peter is reminding the believer that God is going to come and they will be judged as well
3. So, I think Peter's point here is that the fact that Christ is going to return in power and in judgment should affect not only our conduct and our hope, but our attitude as well
 - a. Our attitude must reflect that fact that Christ will return in power and the universe will come unraveled at His approach
 - b. Our attitude should be one of proper reverence and fear for Christ who is going to return in power
4. Once again, this is a command that Peter has pointed to earlier in his letters
 - a. I Peter 1:17 - *And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile,*
5. What does this look like in real life? It looks like not being the scoffer.

IV. We will be blessed at Christ's return: righteousness

Verse 13 - *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

- A. When the scoffer scoffs, we can rest in God's promises
But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth
1. As we enter verse 13, Peter again changes his tack a little bit
 - a. So far in chapter 3, Peter has referred several times to Christ return in terms of power and judgment
 - i. In verse 7, the heavens and earth are being stored up for the day of judgment
 - ii. In verse 10, the heavens will pass away with a roar at the return of Christ
 - iii. In verse 12, the heavens will be set on fire and burn at the return of Christ
 - b. But now, Peter turns and says, "this is not our fate, beloved."
 - i. Although the promise of the judgment of Christ ought to:
 - A- Show us that scoffer is wrong (vs 7)
 - B- Guard us from being discouraged by the scoffer (vs 10)
 - C- And encourage us to fear God rightly (vs 12)
 - ii. The judgment of Christ is not what our hope is set on. The wicked are being stored up for the judgment in which the entire universe will pass away before God. But we are not.
 - iii. Our hope is set on something far greater than the end of this world, we are looking forward to the recreation of the world by God.
 2. Peter is pointing to a promise from the end of Isaiah
 - a. *Isaiah 65:17-25 - "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the LORD.*
 3. The end of the matter is, we have a better promise that the scoffer cannot take away
 - a. Peter has us contemplate the return and the judgment of Christ for a while as he combats the scoffer, but he doesn't leave us there - he calls our minds to something even higher and greater
 - b. The scoffer may scoff and the scoffer may even discourage us at times, but the scoffer cannot take away what God has promised to us
 - c. So, Peter's final word is that we can rest in the promises of God
 - d. God has promised to send Christ and God has promised to recreate the world for His people
 - e. When the scoffer scoffs, we can rest in those promises

B. When the scoffer scoffs, we can rejoice in the final end of evil

But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

1. Notice the description that Peter gives to the new heavens and new earth that we are waiting for
 - a. They are new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells
 - b. In other words, the new heavens and new earth will not be like the current ones
 - c. When God recreates, there will be no scoffer, there will be no sin, there will be no discouragement for God's people
 - d. So, not only can we rest in God's promise, we can rejoice that the scoffer will not last forever
 - e. The purpose of God has been to conquer and destroy evil and to generate a righteous people who rejoice before Him and He will accomplish that
2. Revelation 21:1-8 - *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."*
3. Revelation 21:22-22:5 - *And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day---and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.*

Conclusion

A. We know why Christ hasn't returned yet: salvation

1. When the scoffer scoffs, we should remind ourselves that God is not like us
2. When the scoffer scoffs, we should remind ourselves that God keeps His promises
3. When the scoffer scoffs, we should remind ourselves that God has a purpose

B. We know Christ will return imminently: judgment

1. When the scoffer scoffs, we should remind ourselves that no one knows when Christ will return
2. When the scoffer scoffs, we should remind ourselves that when Christ returns it will be in power
3. When the scoffer scoffs, we should remind ourselves that when Christ returns it will be for judgment

C. We must desire Christ's return: holiness

1. When the scoffer scoffs, we must continue following Christ
2. When the scoffer scoffs, we must set our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us
3. When the scoffer scoffs, we must properly fear God

D. We will be blessed at Christ's return: righteousness

1. When the scoffer scoffs, we can rest in God's promises
2. When the scoffer scoffs, we can rejoice in the final end of evil