

## Lesson Eleven — Last Day Mockers

*Day One — Another Reminder*

*Day Two — Mockers Will Come, Saying...*

*Day Three — The Seventh Day*

*Day Four — The Day of the Lord*

*Day Five — Be on Your Guard*

For the past two weeks we have spent time studying false teachers — their work, their destruction, and their judgment. II Peter is a letter written to people in a region wherein Paul had previously warned about false teachers rising up from among their own ranks. Now Peter had reason to write to them about the same warning. What Paul had warned them about was happening. And Peter's words concerning false teachers were strong and to the point. He minced no words about their destruction and doom. False teachers would do a destructive work amongst the people of God. And what was true in the early church is still true today.

But what is the work of the false teacher? What area of Scripture does the false teacher malign? Peter has been clear on the point, and will clarify the matter even more in the upcoming chapter. The one area of Scripture maligned by false teachers is prophecy. Due to Peter's personal eyewitness account of seeing Christ in kingdom glory, we have the *prophetical word made "more sure"* or more clear, in the sense of additional confirmation. Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John after six days (on the seventh day) and the event was written by three of the Gospel writers through inspiration of the Holy Spirit — Matthew, Mark and Luke (Mt. 17:1ff; Mk. 9:2ff; Lu. 9:28ff).

Under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter wrote that prophecy is for no one man's interpretation, which would include even the prophets themselves. The Spirit must interpret that which He gives, through comparing Scripture with Scripture. Prophecy must be understood in light of the picture drawn throughout Scripture — line upon line, precept upon precept, a little here, a little there. This is the prophetical Word, which has been made *very clear*.

This week we are going the glimpse the work of the false teachers in the church today. Whereas Peter has referred to them as false teachers in chapter two, he now calls them "mockers" in chapter three.

So, are you ready to begin?

### Day One — Another Reminder

Peter reminds them...

#### II Peter 3

**1 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the words spoken**

**beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.**

Go back to II Peter 1:12-14 printed below, and read what his reason was for writing this second letter:

**II Peter 1:12 Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. 13 And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, 14 knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.**

The word “*Therefore*” connects this statement to that which he has previously stated. Using either your Appendix sheets or your Bible, look up what he has previously said (just prior to the “therefore”) and summarize it in your own words below:

And because of all of this, after telling them that his death is fairly imminent, he states the reason for his diligent reminders:

**II Peter 1:15 And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you may be able to call these things to mind.**

What is the reason for his diligent reminders?

Call what things to mind? ...*the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*

What kind of prophets?

As opposed to what kind of prophets (see 2:1)?

And what might the words of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior be? (This is easy to ascertain. It is exactly the same thing that Peter deals with in his second letter.)

Go back to chapter one and read vv. 15-21 again. What is Peter’s focus as he diligently reminds his readers of things they should be able to easily recall?

OK. With that in mind, continue to read chapter three:

**II Peter 3**

**3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever**

since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.” 5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

You may want to study through this several times. Your familiarity with this text will serve you well in this week’s study.

We’ll pick it up here tomorrow.

## Day Two — Mockers Will Come Saying...

To begin today reread II Peter 3:3-10. Notice Peter speaks of the last days and the mockers who will come. Paul wrote the same idea to Timothy in both letters, then again he mentioned it to the church at Thessalonica. Read the passages below and relate it to what Peter says.

**I Timothy 4** (Notice the phrase the faith is used two times in this passage.)

1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, 3 men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude; 5 for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer. 6 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

How is this related to what Peter says?

**II Timothy 4**

1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be

**ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.**

How is this related to what Peter says?

#### **II Thessalonians 2**

**1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,**

How is this related to what Peter says?

In an overall sense, what is being said by both Peter and Paul?

Now looking at II Peter 3:3, what do you think Peter means when he says, “Know this first of all...”?

When will these mockers come?

What will they follow after?

(That word “lust” has the idea of *passion* in it. These mockers will passionately do what they do.)

Would you please write down word for word what the mockers will say? Write the entire quote.

Underline the question they ask.

Do you see their point of contention?

Now rephrase in your own words the statement that they make *following* their question.

How is their question and their statement related to each other?

(I am having you do these things because I want you to grasp exactly what is being said here.)

The King James Version says of the last day mockers, that they are “willingly ignorant” of the facts which Peter uses to correct their wrong belief. In other words, they maintain their false belief even in the evidence of the facts of what Peter writes. They are *willing to allow themselves to be ignorant of these facts...that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.*

By *what* did the heavens of old come into existence? Or...how did the heavens of old come into existence?

And how was the earth formed out of water and by water?

In this passage, what time frame is Peter referring to — Genesis chapter one or Noah’s flood? Write down what you think, and what makes you think so.

Remember, Peter is referring to what the mockers say. And “*when they maintain this...*” Maintain what? Write down again what they maintain.

When they maintain this, these mockers are willingly ignorant of the fact that...*by the Word of God ...*

So again I ask you, what time frame is being dealt with by the mockers as well as by Peter? Is it referring to Noah’s flood, or the water on the earth *in the beginning*? Contextually, how must this be answered (vv.4, 5)?

Let’s see if other portions of Scripture give any more evidence of what time frame. We are looking for the phrase *in the beginning* and something that would indicate that by God’s Word things happened (things happening *by the Word of God*). Look in your Bible at Genesis chapter one. Skim down the chapter. Do you see anything about the phrase *in the beginning*? Where?

Keep skimming. Look back and forth. Do you see anything about *God saying something* (by the Word of God) about *the heavens*? Where and what does He say?

Keep going. Do you see God *saying* anything about the earth coming out of water? Where and what does He say?

Anything else about water? Where and what?

OK. Now go to Genesis chapters six through eight, and read about Noah's flood. Skim down the chapters, back and forth. Do you see anything about the phrase *in the beginning*? If so, where?

Keep skimming. Do you see anything about *God saying* something about the *heavens so that they might come into existence*? Where and what?

Keep going. Do you see anything about God saying something about the earth coming out of water? Where and what? (Remember, we are looking to see if the earth came out of water *by the word of God*.)

Do you see anything else about water? Where and what?

So now what do you think? What time frame would both the mockers and Peter be referring to?

Getting back to Peter's letter, Peter spoke of a destruction of the earth in the past (v. 6), and he speaks about a future destruction of the heavens and earth (v. 7). And then he says something about the time, which separates the two the destructions (v.8). Read verse eight and write what you think Peter means by sticking verse eight right there:

### Day Three — The Seventh Day

So did I leave you hanging yesterday? Do you have any more thoughts about verses six through eight? If so, why don't you write it down.

Let's pick up where we left off yesterday. Verse eight is an interesting verse to throw into the mix. Let's look at some of the phrases found in this context. Read through these phrases several times, making thoughtful connections.

*Where is the promise of His coming?*

- *the beginning of creation... the word of God...the heavens existed*
- *the earth was formed out of water... and by water*
- *the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water*
- *the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for...judgment*
- *one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

*The Lord is not slow about His promise*

Any other thoughts?

It seems clear that in Peter's mind, he is having reference to *timing* concerning Christ's return. Let me ask you. How many days were dealt with in Genesis chapter one? (Look at the last verse of chapter one.)

Now look at Genesis 2:2. What day is spoken of here?

Now look at Genesis 2:3 and write the verse out.

The seventh day is the day of rest — the day when God rested from all of His work. Most likely you know, from previous study, that the Lord made the seventh day a very special day, setting it aside for His people in a very unusual way. He called it *the Sabbath Day*, and made it as a sign for the people of Israel. A sign is something that they were to keep ever before them, looking forward to something to which lay out ahead — something to which the sign pointed — a coming Sabbath for the people of God. It is a Sabbath Rest — the seventh day rest.

So important was this in God's sight that His Law forbade anyone to work on the seventh day. In fact, one would be stoned to death for working on the Sabbath. It was a day of rest — the seventh day!

But what does this have to do with us today? The writer of Hebrews makes it very clear. Let's look at a few passages there. Hebrews chapter three deals with the provocation of the Children of Israel in the wilderness between Egypt and the promised land. This first generation *did not enter the rest* God had planned for them in the land promised to their father, Abraham, because of their disobedience due to their lack of faith (see Heb. 3). So they were not able to enter that rest.

Yet, was that *the seventh day rest*, which God had planned for them? No, it was to be but a picture for them of the seventh day rest which lay out ahead. A rest was before them in an earthly land wherein God would dwell in their presence and He would rule in a theocracy with Israel ruling as the head of all the nations. A rest, which would be but a picture of the coming time when God will bring His people into a

heavenly promised land, dwell in the midst of His people in the person of Christ, and rule in a theocracy with Christ and His bride ruling over all the nations. And THAT is the rest yet for the people of God. And the rest of which we are warned not to fall short, as the Children of Israel fell short. Let's read what Hebrews 4 says about it. Watch for the warnings:

#### Hebrews 4

**1 Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; 5 and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." 6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God.**

Even in this passage, the Holy Spirit prompted the writer of Hebrews to relate this day of rest back to the beginning. Look at verse three and four. What does it say?

So the future rest for the people of God is noted as being connected with the rest of God which He did on *the seventh day*. From the beginning of Scripture, this day of rest is always on the seventh day, following the sixth day.

Now check out verse nine. What does it say?

Would you read through this passage in Hebrews another time or two. Think it through. Study it carefully. Is there anything else you notice? Write it down.

Now as we close for the day, go back to II Peter chapter three and reread the first eight verses. See if it makes more sense now.

See you tomorrow.

### Day Four — The Day of the Lord

Today we will pick up in II Peter 3:9, but before we do, would you spend some time in prayer today? Don't be hurried about it. Seek the Lord for understanding. Submit yourself to Him today.



Now read the first thirteen verses of II Peter chapter three.

In verse nine, Peter refers back to the mockers asking about the promise of Christ's coming (v.3). And it appears to be with reference to time, since he answers their question with this statement: "***The Lord is not slow...***" This timing thing falls exactly on the heels of verse eight. Think about that for a moment, realizing that nothing is coincidental with the Lord in His Word. This is not simply a statement of the fact that time means nothing to God — a minute is like an eternity to Him, or eternity like a minute. That thought would have to be pulled completely out of thin air, not found within the context at all. But rather, Peter's answer is very specific. *The Lord is **not slow** about His promise...*

Then Peter addresses the mockers' statement that "all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." Peter corrects their purposeful misbelief with the facts of Genesis chapter one. There **was** a destruction after the original creation of the earth. Things **have not** continued on just as it was from the beginning. The earth **was** destroyed by water, and by the Word of God — God speaking time after time (Gen. 1:3,6,9,11,14, 20,24,26, 29) — the earth was brought out of water and was made inhabitable for man (cf. Isa. 45:18). (Many teach that this statement is referring to the Noahic Flood. In Noah's day, the water simply subsided. At that time it wasn't *by God's Word* that the earth came out of the water, time simply passed, Noah waited on the ark, and the water subsided.) But here in II Peter chapter three, we see the earth being formed out of water *by the Word of God* — i.e., "And God said..."

Just as God used a specified amount of time in bringing order out of the chaos in Satan's desecration of the earth when it had been destroyed by and covered with water, so shall God use a specified amount of time to bring order out of the chaos caused by man's sin. Six days are seen in both, with a seventh day of rest following. But now, as Peter says, *a day is as a thousand years...* and Peter commands his readers to stop letting this fact escape their notice! (The inference in the Greek is that his readers were allowing this fact to escape their notice, and Peter wants them to stop it.)

What fact were they allowing to escape their notice? Write it out:

Let me ask you. Are you allowing this particular fact to escape your notice? If you are, what does Peter say to you?

And so you see, *the Lord is **not slow**...* He has a specified amount of time prior to His coming...six days/six thousand years. Then the Lord is coming back for His Rest, His Sabbath Rest, His seventh day rest.

Is this line of thought found within the context of II Peter or is it just being pulled out of thin air? Please remember what Peter is talking about in this second letter. Go back and review a few of the passages leading up to this passage. In chapter one, Peter wants his readers to *diligently add to their faith* certain qualities which would **not** allow them to fall away from *the faith*. And in adding these qualities to their faith, they would *have an abundant entrance into the kingdom* (v. 11). Then Peter spoke of the *power and the coming of our Lord* in His *majesty*, this having to do with the prophetic word (vv. 16-21). This prophetic word is the very topic of Scripture, which would be maligned by false teachers, just as the false prophets maligned it in the Old Testament (ch. 2), and this topic is the very thing that mockers will mock in the last days (3:3). But it is not so much that mockers will mock His return per se, rather they will mock *the timing* of His return, because they refuse to allow the first chapter in Genesis to give the picture, to lay the foundation. If one understands the timing of His return followed by a day of rest from the first page in Genesis, then one will not be thinking that the Lord is slow about His return (vv. 4-9). His return will be anticipated. And we are exhorted to be in great anticipation of His return (cf. I Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13).

So where is the promise of His return? It is found in the very first pages of Genesis. And we must stop letting this one fact escape our notice...that with the Lord, *a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day*. Think this fact through carefully. What does it mean?

With all of that in mind, look at verse ten.

**II Peter 3**

**10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.**

This verse speaks of *the day of the Lord*. How can one day come as a thief, and end with the earth and the heavens passing away? What is that all about? Want to try to answer that question on your own?

How did you do?

Well, first of all. How long will *the day of the Lord* last? (Peter tells us in verse eight.) How long?

Then he tells us *how it will come*, and *how it will end*. So, how does this day begin?

How does it end?

Let's see if other Scriptures depict the same thing. How will the day of the Lord come?

**Matthew 24:43 “But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.**

**I Thessalonians 5**

**1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.**

**Revelation 3:3 Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.**

From these passages, can you see that not all will be caught off guard at his coming? What will be the differentiating factor?

His coming like a thief would be the at the beginning of the day of the Lord, and the end will be...

**Psalms 102**

**25 “Of old Thou didst found the earth; And the heavens are the work of Thy hands.  
26 Even they will perish, but Thou dost endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing Thou wilt change them, and they will be changed.**

**Isaiah 34:4 And all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as one withers from the fig tree.**

**Micah 1: 4 The mountains will melt under Him, And the valleys will be split, Like wax before the fire, Like water poured down a steep place.**

**Matthew 24:35 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away...**

**Matthew 5:18 “For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.**

**Mark 13:31 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.**

**Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.**

**Revelation 21: 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.**

And so Peter tells what has already been declared by the holy prophets and by the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. The day of the Lord will not be delayed, as so many will think it will, but will come as a thief for them. But we can be ready, if we are not asleep and lazy.

Think on these things.

## **Day Five — Be on Your Guard**

So far this week we have looked at a future day — the day of the Lord. While Peter does not go into any detail concerning the day itself (the entire thousand years), other writers in Scripture fill in those blanks. We will touch on some of those details in the lecture, but for now, let's see how Peter tells Christians how they ought to live since they look forward to these things. Begin your day in prayer, then we'll finish up the book of II Peter.

Peter has just told how all the things having to do with this earth will come to an end. The day of the Lord will begin as a thief, and will *end with a roar and the elements destroyed with intense heat and the earth and its works will be burned up*. Then the *day of God* begins. The day of the Lord and the day of God are two different time periods. Remember, the day of the Lord lasts one thousand years and it is the day of rest for the people of God. It is the seventh day, so it is depicted as the end of a complete period of time. (Seven is a number of completion of that which is in view.) The *day of the God* speaks of a new order of things, a beginning of the eternal ages ahead wherein there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

Read what Peter says about it with reference to how we are to live in light of these things.

### II Peter 3

**11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless...**

So what sort of people ought we to be?

Read the rest of the passage below. Remember that Peter is writing to people who are already saved, but who need to be careful not to fall away. In the upcoming passage Peter mentions salvation (v. 15). What salvation would he be dealing with here?

**14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 15 and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.**

Be sure to connect verses sixteen and seventeen with fifteen. It flows as one thought.

Summarize this passage in your own words.

As time permits, reread all of II Peter.