

Will God Destroy The World With A Nuclear Bomb? by Jeff Strite

2 Peter 3:1-3:13

OPEN: There are a lot of people who seem to agree that the world is going to end. They just don't all agree on how it's going to happen.

I visited website that reviewed several theories about how the world would end.

Among them:

1. Some believe an Asteroid will destroy the earth. In 2028 (14 years from now), there's a huge asteroid will come very close to hitting Earth. They don't think it will... but IF it did dust from the impact and ash from the forest fires would cloud the Earth's atmosphere for years, blocking sunlight and destroying plant life, and cause food shortages worldwide.
2. Others are convinced a worldwide Pandemic (a deadly sickness) could spread rapidly throughout the whole world and annihilate mankind. In 1918 an influenza outbreak killed more people than died in World War I, and if a deadly contagion surfaced today, it could spread even faster and infect even more people.
3. Others believe Solar Storms could destroy us. Our sun is a star and every 11 years there are storms that build up on the sun until they're unleashed in the form of electromagnetic radiation and huge balls of plasma that would shoot out from the sun. If these balls of radiation and plasma shot out in the direction of the earth, the results could be catastrophic. In 1859, a solar storm caused telegraph wires to short out in the U.S. and Europe, and in 1989, a solar storm knocked out all the power in Quebec, Canada.
4. Some believe in Global Warming. According to this theory, as critical greenhouse gases build up in the atmosphere... the Earth's climate will become more volatile. Temperatures will rise, food will become scarce, air quality will grow increasingly worse and diseases will spread.
5. Many believe a Nuclear War (as mentioned in the sermon title) will be the end of us all. Nuclear warheads would not only cause huge explosions, but there would be years of radiation pollution throughout the atmosphere. This, in turn, would contaminate our food and water supplies, and create a "nuclear winter" across the globe.
6. But my personal favorite for how earth will be destroyed includes... Zombies. "Ripley's Believe It Or Not" even tells us that Michigan State University has a class entitled: "Surviving the Zombie Apocalypse". (<http://science.howstuffworks.com/30793-10-ways-the-world-will-end-doomsday-asteroid-video.htm>)

Those are all fairly interesting theories... but they're all wrong.

In II Peter 3:10 God tells us the world will end, and He tells us HOW it's going to end.

"The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." And 3:12 says: "That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat."

God's description of how the World will end led many "theologians" during the Cold War to theorize that God would destroy the world with Nuclear Warheads during a final conflict

between Russia and the U.S.
(PAUSE)

But frankly - God doesn't need our help to destroy the world.
He can do this all by Himself.

All God has to do is rearrange some of the basic elements of this world and it will all be gone in a twinkling of an eye. Just as an example - look at this experiment with 2 of the basic gases in our atmosphere: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6qGIMqDKwA> (it shows 3 balloons being ignited by a scientist in a lab setting. One balloon is filled with hydrogen, one with oxygen, and the third with a mixture of hydrogen and oxygen).

My point is this: God doesn't need any help from us to destroy the earth. All the basic elements necessary for the heavens disappearing in a roar and the earth melting from the heat... are already here. There's Hydrogen, Oxygen, Nitrogen, Methane, Sodium, Uranium and a host of other elements that if mixed in proper proportions would light up our world like a torch.

Someone once asked me if I believed in Global warming... and I answered yes.
"The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." 2 Peter 3:10

You can't get much warmer than that!

Now, what I find interesting about what Peter is writing here is that starts out saying that he writes what he writes "... to stimulate us to wholesome thinking." II Peter 3:1b
The KJV says it this way: "to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance"

In other words - Peter wants us to THINK!
He wants us to remember something.
What do you think Peter wants us to THINK about here in this chapter?
(PAUSE)
That's right. He wants us to think about the end of the world.

"First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."
But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed." 2 Peter 3:3-4

In other words: there are scoffers out there who don't believe in the Bible
They mock what God has said.
They scoff at what Scripture teaches.
And deliberately ignore any evidence that God brought judgment on the earth with the Flood in the past.

ILLUS: Historians have a yardstick they apply to history. This yardstick is the belief amongst historians that if a story occurs in several cultures with similar themes... something happened.

Well, over 270 cultures around the world share stories of Noah's Flood, and most of them share common themes:

♣ Man became corrupt

- ♣ The Flood was worldwide
- ♣ A few people were saved
- ♣ Representatives of all land animals were rescued
- ♣ A dove was released to seek dry land
- ♣ The survivors came down from a mountain to repopulate the whole world
- ♣ The heroes name is often a variant of Noah: Nu-u; Nu-Wah; Noh, Nos; and Nuh

In other words, there was a flood.
It was worldwide.
And only a few people were saved.

Anyone who is honest with themselves will acknowledge that just this one fact gives power to the story of Noah and the flood. But there will always be people who will mock the Bible, scoff at God's power and reject the idea that God would ever punish the world again. Because they don't believe He did it the first time.

Well, I've got news for them: He did... and He will.

So don't listen to the scoffers
They haven't a clue what they're talking about.
They're just talking to hear themselves talk.

(PAUSE)

But on the other hand, don't worry yourself too much about the influence of scoffers. God has a way to bypass their foolishness.

Jesus said: "I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" John 16:7-8

When Jesus ascended on high, He sent the Spirit to us.
And the Spirit's job is to convict men of their sin, of their need for righteousness, AND of the fact there WILL BE a coming judgment.

That's part of what Peter wants us to think about here.

2 Peter 3:9 "He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

God's doing His part. He has sent His Spirit to convict folks of the fact that one day – the party is gonna be over. He does that so that they might repent and seek forgiveness.

That's God's part.

Our part is to share our testimony of what Jesus has done in our lives so people will realize there is a real God and He does offer real hope.

So, don't listen to the scoffers.
Listen to God and share what He's given you.

But now, why should Christians concern themselves with the Day of Judgment?
Why should we bother to THINK about the end of the world?

Well, 2 reasons:

1st, God doesn't want us to get caught napping.

Jesus will come like a thief, in the twinkling of an eye, and you don't want to be caught by surprise when He shows up.

Just a passing thought here.

When Jesus comes again, what does this passage say is going to happen?

That's right – heavens will disappear and the earth and everything in it will melt in the heat.

For the past 40 years I've heard prophetic teachers talk about 7 years of this, and a 1000 years of that. They have charts and graphs and seminars and books telling us all about all the things that are going to take place when Jesus comes again.

But according to this passage, there's just enough time for those things to happen.

ILLUS: The teachings of most prophetic teachers remind of an actual TV commercial I heard about that went like this:

"Jesus is coming soon -- perhaps TOMORROW!

Send \$10 for a video that will explain the Second Coming of Jesus Christ!

Please allow six weeks for delivery."

He's MIGHT come TOMORROW???

But I should send for this man's video that may take 6 weeks to arrive?

I don't think so!

It's because of this kind of nonsense that I long ago stopped believing in that kind of teaching. There's just not enough time for all that stuff they imagine taking place.

"...the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." 2 Peter 3:10

Jesus will come... and then everything will disappear in a puff of smoke.

And Peter's saying – BE READY!

Be ready because "... the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat." 2 Peter 3:10-12

"Be ready" says Peter.

Think about the Day of Judgment.

And let that thought cause you to live a holy and godly life.

You see, when Jesus comes again some folks won't be living holy and godly lives...

Jesus said it this way "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

But suppose the servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to beat the menservants and maidservants and to eat and drink and get drunk. The master of that servant will come on a day WHEN HE DOES NOT EXPECT HIM and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. Luke 12:42-46

Jesus saved us so we could live holy and godly lives and there are 1000s of Christians who do so. But I've seen a few Christians who've been mean spirited and harsh. Church goers who have said terrible things about others and hurt entire congregations.

Have you ever seen that take place?
Of course you have.
And when Jesus come again... those people are going to be in for a rude awakening.

Paul saw that in Galatia.
He told them that "The entire law is summed up in a single command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you KEEP ON biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."

They weren't biting off ears like Mike Tyson did to Evander Holyfield.
These folks were back biting and devouring the character of others in the church.
And Paul was telling them – cut it out!

Then Paul wrote: "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like"
Then he says: I warn you, as I did before (they've been doing stuff like this) that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21

In other words – because some of the folks in Galatia were allowing themselves to be consumed with hatred, and jealousy, selfish ambition, dissension... and lots of other sins.
And what weren't they going to inherit?
"The Kingdom of God"

You know what that means?
If they don't inherit the Kingdom of God... where will they end up?
They'll go to hell!

If any Christian gets caught doing stuff like that when Jesus comes back it will NOT be a pleasant experience! And so Peter was warning them... and us... to stay away from that kind of behavior. Avoid hurting others in the church as if Jesus was going to show up tonight.
Do NOT hurt another person in church... no matter what your motive may be.

So, that's the 1st reason we should be thinking about the Day of Judgment.
We don't want to get caught napping.

But there will be a lot of people who will NOT get caught napping.
These folks are the ones who love Jesus so much that they "...are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells." 2 Peter 3:13

You see, the people who look forward to that new heaven and earth are the ones who work hard at developing a fruit in their lives that they know can please God.
Do you know what that fruit is?
That's right – it is the Fruit of the Spirit.

And what does that fruit of the Spirit look like?
(I asked for the audience to tell me)
That's right. Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, and so on.

You can tell the people who make that a priority.

- They are the ones who try to show LOVE to other Christians,
- Who try to create an atmosphere of JOY in the church,
- Who seek to promote PEACE between Christian bros and sisters

- Who are PATIENT with folks who are difficult
- Who are KIND to the folks who struggle
- Who try to be GOOD to people in need.
- Who are FAITHFUL to God and His church
- Who are GENTLE with those whose faith is fragile
- And who attempt to exercise SELF-CONTROL, when it would be easier to lose control.

These folks are the ones who can look forward to the new heaven and new earth because that's where righteousness dwells. The fruit of the Spirit is what God's kind of righteousness looks like.

So Peter wants us to THINK about the Day of Judgment.
He wants us to be READY when that Day comes.
Because that will day when we get to see Jesus face to face.

CLOSE: A man named Charles Swindoll told about working in a machine shop alongside a fellow named George. George's job was to sweep and clean out the shavings underneath the huge lathes and machines

George was an excited Christian, He was all the time singing hymns as he worked. Many of them had to do with the coming of Christ, such as "In the Sweet By and By" and "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder."

Late one Friday afternoon about 10 minutes to quitting time when everybody was weary. Swindoll looked at George and said, "George, are you ready?"

George said "Yep."

But he was all dirty. He was just obviously not ready. In fact, he looked like he was ready to keep on working. Swindoll said, "Aren't you ready to go home?"

He said, "Yeah, I'm ready."

Swindoll said "Look at you! Man, you're not ready. You've gotta go clean up."

"No," he said, "let me show you something." And he unzipped his coveralls and underneath were the neatest, cleanest clothes you can imagine.

He had them all ready.

All he had to do when the whistle blew was just unzip and step out of that coverall, walk over, and punch his clock and he was gone.

And then he said,

"You see, I stay ready to keep from gettin' ready - just like I'm ready for Jesus!"