

2 Peter 3:8-15a^{iv}

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

^{iv} About 2 Peter 3:8-15a

Today's reading responds to the anxiety of many about the apparent delay of Christ's eagerly expected second coming (3:1-7). Peter explains that this delay is not divine procrastination but divine mercy. God's view of time is different from ours, and God's forbearance will bring about repentance and salvation. Yet the day of the Lord will come unexpectedly, "like a thief" (v. 10).

The belief that the world would end in fire was current at this time in both Jewish and Stoic writing. Peter goes beyond the final conflagration to the hope of "new heavens and a new earth" (v. 13). Peter emphasizes how Christians are to live now, even indicating that their repentance may hasten the Lord's coming. Peter exhorts them to increase in the grace and knowledge of Jesus so as not to be useless.
