

Message 2 Timing of the Day of the Lord 2 Peter 3: 8-10(a) NIV

On Wednesday evening I went outside to look at the night sky. I wanted to see the Super Blue Blood Moon, but it was clouded over. Around the world in various places, however, this phenomenon was clearly visible. It reminds of the famous OT passage in the book of Joel - *The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. (Joel 2:31)*. In the Genesis account of creation, the heavenly lights were designated as for signs and seasons. Can we expect the Day of the Lord to come soon? Do we know when Christ will return? Our reading (2 Peter 3:8-10(a)) give some explanations about this.

1. **The Day of the Lord may seem a long time in coming.** *v8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.*

It was insightful for Peter to write about God’s perspective on time. Two thousand years later, Jesus still hasn’t returned! We may feel justified in thinking God is very *slow* in his promises. Peter quotes Psalm 90 - *A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. ... (Ps.90:4)*. The key thought is in verse 12, *Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom*. Our individual time on earth is short, wisdom is necessary to make our lives count and that is by becoming godly people.

But can we number our days in a global sense? Many predictions have been made about when the world will end, as one example, in a super nova within 300,000 years. Scientific predictions are mostly in millions of years. Perhaps we can solve all problems by then! In the nearer future, scientific based predicts include global warming and flips of the earth’s magnetic field causing much damage.

Predictions of the end of the world are also based on the Bible. These string together verses from Daniel and Revelations. Isaac Newton, for example, predicted 2016 and then recalculated to 2062 (I don’t believe either is correct). The book of Daniel calls for wisdom to understand the times. There are signs that time is short – the Jews are back in Israel, most nations (insanely) are against Israel, there are active volcanoes, and blood moons!

Predictions and interpretations are only helpful if they simulate us to wholesome living. And they can only be tentative. Jesus said, “... *that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*” (Matt.24:36).

Jesus return may seem a long time coming but there is a very good reason for this – God loves you!

2. **The delay enables more people to be saved.** *v9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

God’s love causes the delay – 1,000years, now 2000 years! All the while more and more people are entering the Kingdom of God. Christianity is now the world’s largest religion, but not everyone is Christian, not everyone has heard the Gospel. According to Jesus, the Gospel must be preached to all nations before the coming of the end. Paul wrote to Timothy - *1 Tim.2:1 Pray for kings those in authority 3 This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, 4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

We must challenge ourselves. Are we caring enough for our neighbours and friends? Since starting the church, we have been privileged to see many accept Christ, but we want to see more. I like the OT story of Noah’s Ark. It is a great picture of the worldwide church. When Noah completed its construction, he opened the door for all the animals to come in. When it was full, God shut the door and the floods came suddenly. Sometime in the future there will be no more alter calls, no evangelists, no sharing of the Gospel - Christ will have come with rewards and punishment.

3. In the end, the Day of the Lord will come suddenly & unexpectedly. *v10(a) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. ...*

Other places in the Bible says the same. *1 Thess.5:2 2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. Matt. 24:44 ...you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.*

One Boxing Day, many years ago, I was taking our kids for a walk when I suddenly felt very uncomfortable and that we needed to be back home. We got back we disturbed a thief who came suddenly out of our driveway on a motor bike. Thankfully, he only took a few things including an old computer I wanted to get rid of; he missed the new one!

Jesus calls us to watch and be ready (morally) for his return. *Rev.3:3 “wake up ... if you do not wake up I will come like a thief... One theologian (Louis Berkhof) observed, “The Bible intimates that the [surprising nature of the] second coming of Christ will be in an inverse ratio to the measure of our watchfulness.”*

What is the timing of the Day of the Lord? Soon!