

R E M E M B E R Y O U R

**HOPE**

2 Peter 3:1-13

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# Introduction

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- Peter returns to his main argument: Jesus is coming back
- The false teachers doubt His coming because they don't understand God's concept of time. God is waiting as long as He can before the Day of Judgment to save as many people as He can.
- One day, He will fulfill His promise of the Day of Judgment when the righteous will be vindicated, and the wicked will be destroyed.
- But no one knows the day or time. He will come like a thief in the night.

We need to remind ourselves of the truth  
so we can recognize false teaching

2 Peter 3:1-4

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# False Teachers

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- In Peter's first letter, he talked about hope in the midst of persecution.
- Even though the focus of this letter is different (more on false teaching than persecution) the concepts are related.
- In both situations, the people had to rely on their hope in God's promises.
- The only way they could keep the faith through persecution and false teaching was by remembering and clinging to God's promises.

# False Teachers

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- The false teachers were spreading a lie that Jesus wasn't coming back.
- In chapter 1, Peter gave two reasons we can be confident that Jesus is returning in glory at the Second Coming to judge the wicked and vindicate the righteous: the transfiguration (1:16–18) and the prophecies of the Old Testament (1:19–21). Here, he repeats his arguments in more detail.
- Peter says his desire is to “stir up their sincere minds.”  
A more literal translation of that word would be to wake them up out of sleep. Peter is saying, “Wake up. This is important!”

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# Remember

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- The way to keep our minds awake and alert is to remember.
- God encourages His people to remember what He has done and to tell their children about it (Deuteronomy 4:9).
- David said the reason the Israelites rebelled in the wilderness was that they “did not remember His power” (Psalm 78:40–43).
- Peter encouraged the people to remember the Scriptures – both what Jesus said and what the Old Testament prophets said. The best way to fight the spiritual warfare of false teaching is to remember the truth.

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# Scoffers

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- These false teachers weren't just teaching the wrong things; they were scoffers or mockers.
- The use of the word scoffers harkens back to those who mocked Jesus on the Cross. These false teachers mocked the teaching that Jesus was coming back to judge the living and the dead.
- Peter considered their teaching to be blasphemy against the truth and considered them to be even worse than atheists who mock Christ, because they claimed to do so in the name of God.

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# Mocking

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- This mocking of the Second Coming was how the false teachers justified their sinful behavior, which Peter discusses in chapter 2 and mentions again here.
- If Jesus were not coming back to judge, they could live however they wanted. Their sinful behavior led them to develop bad doctrine.
- As many false teachers do today, they twisted Christian doctrine to justify the way they wanted to live.
- Peter believed that the way we can recognize false teaching is by comparing it to the unchanging truth of the Word of God.

We need to recognize that God's  
timing is different than ours

2 Peter 3:5-8

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# God's Timing

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- Peter's answer is that they don't understand God's timing. To God "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day."
- This is actually a metaphor. In the ancient world, "a thousand years" was a symbolic number meaning a really long, indefinite period of time.
- Peter wasn't giving them a timeline for Christ's return. He was sharing a deep theological truth: God's calendar is nothing like ours.
- Our entire lifetime is but a mere vapor to Him (James 4:14).

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# God's Timing

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- We can find a similar line in Psalm 90:4 - “For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past or as a watch in the night.”
- Psalm 90 is a prayer of Moses that centers on the destruction that awaits those who give themselves over to sin (Psalm 90:7–9) and includes a prayer for God to “come back to us” (Psalm 90:13).
- In their culture, faithful Jews and even Gentile Christians would have had the Psalms memorized, so with this one line the entire Psalm would have come to their minds.

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# God's Timing

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- Peter was pointing out that Scripture has taught the truths he was reminding them of:
  - Those who give themselves over to sin will be judged.
  - Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead.
- Peter referred to “the last days” because he lived expectantly, believing that God would fulfill His promises.
- Theologically “the last days” are the entire Church Age, from Christ’s First Coming to His Second Coming.

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# God's Timing

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- Even though 2,000 years have passed since Christ promised He would be coming back “soon,” it has only been like a couple of days to God.
- The Lord isn’t being “slow” about fulfilling His promises.
- He is being patient, waiting for as many people to repent as possible before He returns to judge the world.
- We may not understand God’s timing or why He waits, but we can trust that if He does, it is because more good will be done by His waiting.

We need to be ready for Christ's  
return by sharing the Gospel

2 Peter 3:9-13

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# Day of the Lord

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- God is not being slow; He's being patient.
- He's not delayed; He's waiting as long as He can to save as many people as He can.
- God does not wish that anyone should perish, but that all would turn and repent.
- On the Day of Judgment, the ungodly will be destroyed (3:7), the current heaven and earth will pass away (3:10), and everyone's deeds will be exposed (3:10).

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# Day of the Lord

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- Peter agreed with all the other New Testament writers that the Second Coming would come as a surprise.
- It would come like a thief in the night (Matthew 24:36; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; Revelation 16:15).
- Peter asked, how should you respond? Live lives of holiness and godliness (3:11).
- Jesus Himself said no one knows the day or time He will return.
- We should be ready for that day whenever it may come (Matthew 24:36–44).

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# Day of the Lord

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- As we wait, we are to share the Gospel to the ends of the earth.
- In the beginning of Acts, just before Jesus ascended, the disciples asked Him if this were the time He would take the throne. Jesus answered that it was not for them to know God's timeline, but to be His witnesses.
- Jude described it as to snatch as many people as we can out of the fire (Jude 1:23).
- We don't know when Jesus is coming back. It may be a thousand years from now or it may be tomorrow.

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# Ask Kerby

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Why will there be a new  
heavens and new earth?

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# Creation

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- The Bible begins with creation, and we are the pinnacle of that creation.
- God has been engaged in a rescue mission to bring us and the creation back to what was intended in the first place.
- Our ultimate destiny will be in “the new heavens and a new earth” (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).
- The story of the Bible begins with “God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1) and ends with “a new heaven and the new earth” (Revelation 21:1).

# Destruction

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- The Bible talks of the total destruction of the earth twice: once in the flood in the days of Noah and the other in the final destruction of the earth by fire.
- Both of these events are mentioned in 2 Peter 3. But the flood in Noah's time certainly destroyed the world, but it did not obliterate it.
- 2 Peter 3:10 has the image of a purifying fire which removes the dross of imperfections.
- The dross of sin will be removed and the purity of the gold will be exposed.

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# New Bodies

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- The ultimate hope for the Christian is “a new heaven and a new earth” (Revelation 21:1) within which our resurrected bodies will live.
- Should we die prior to this, death will not be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38–39).
- As we await the general resurrection, we will be “away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8).
- Those who have died exist in a “present heaven” awaiting their return to Earth with Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:11–14).

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# What do they know?

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- Do people in this “present heaven” see what is happening on earth?
  - They know God hasn’t brought judgment (Revelation 6:9-11).
  - Apparently, martyrs in heaven pray (Revelation 6:10).
  - When Babylon is brought down, there is rejoicing in Heaven (Revelation 18:20).
  - There is a great roar and shouting of Hallelujah for God’s judgment that takes place on earth (Revelation 19:1-5).

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# New Heaven and Earth

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- New Heaven and Earth come at the end of Millennium (Revelation 21-22).
- New Earth will no doubt have features similar to the current Earth (which groans in travail). Our current Earth has atmosphere, mountains, water, trees, houses. Similar features are mentioned in Revelation 21-22.
- Heaven's gates will be always open so people can travel in and out (Revelation 21:24-25; 22:14).
- Believers in this new heaven “shall see His face” (Revelation 22:4).

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# We will rule with Christ

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- Jesus talks about ruling over cities (Luke 19:17).
- Paul says believers will judge the world (1 Corinthians 6:2-3).
- Paul says that we will reign with Christ (2 Timothy 2:12).
- God's decree is that His servants will “reign forever and ever” (Rev. 22:5).
- Since crowns are a symbol of ruling, every mention is a reference to ruling (Revelation 2:10, 2:26, 3:11, 4:10-24, 5:9-10)

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# What will we know?

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- Will we know everything?
- No, only God is omniscient.
- We will be in presence of God's holiness, and we will no doubt learn knowledge and wisdom for Him directly.
- Paul says we will see things more clearly (1 Corinthians 13:12).
- Ephesians 2:6-7 - Christ will “show” the riches of His grace, in coming ages.

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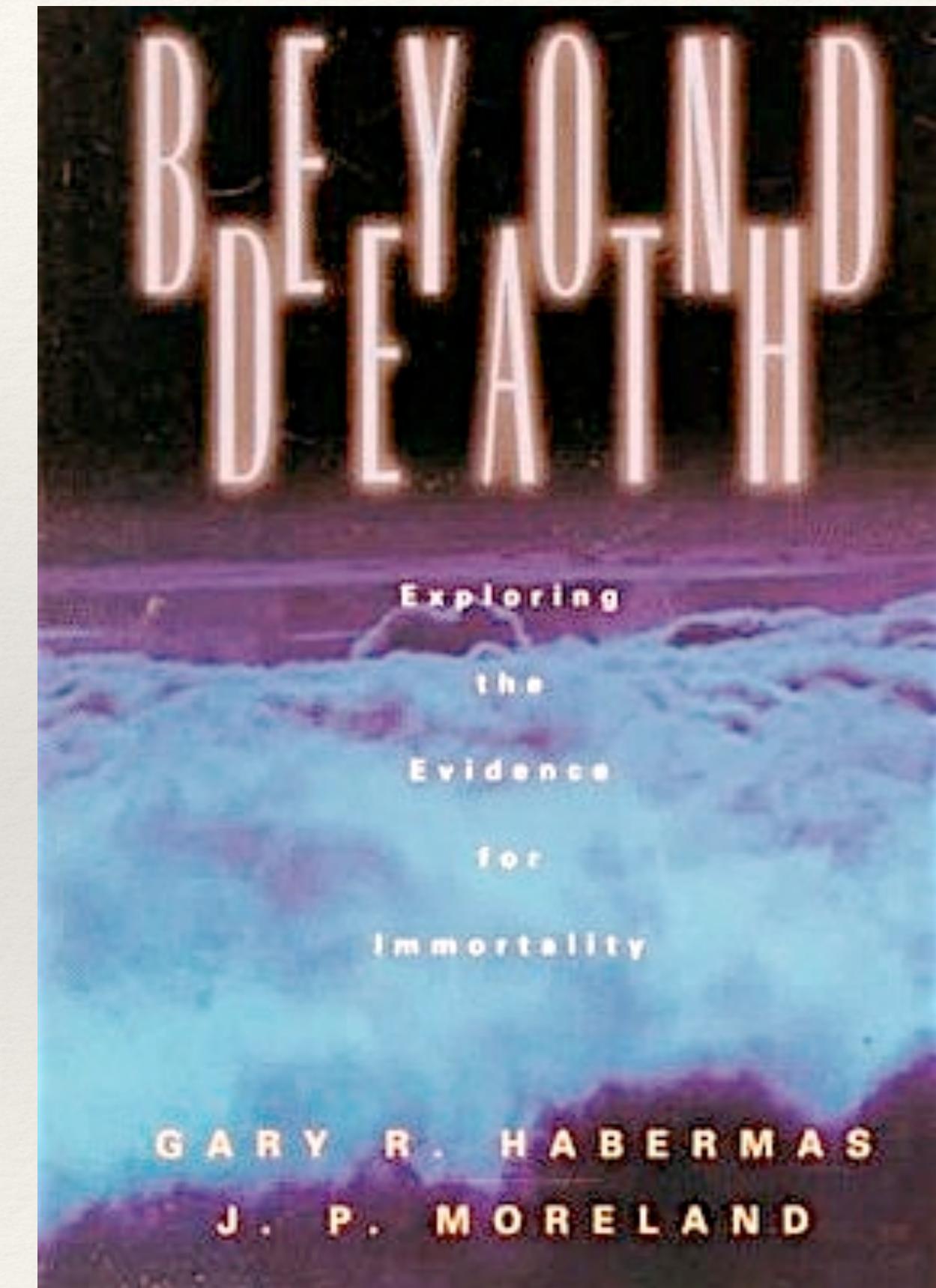
# Animals in heaven?

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- Horses are mentioned (2 Kings 2:11; Revelation 6:2-8).
- A number of types of animals in millennial kingdom will probably also be in New Heaven and New Earth.
- Isaiah 11 mentions many animals (wolf, lamb, lion, ox, leopard, goat, calf).
- Do animals have a soul?
- God breathed a spirit into Adam's body (Genesis 2:7). The Hebrew word is *nephesh* - meaning soul or spirit. The same Hebrew word is used for animals and for people.

# Animals with souls?

- Gary Habermas and J.P. Moreland
- “It wasn’t until the advent of the seventeenth-century Enlightenment . . . that the existence of animal souls was even questioned in Western civilization . . . the doctrine that animals, as well as humans, have souls.”



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# Animals with souls?

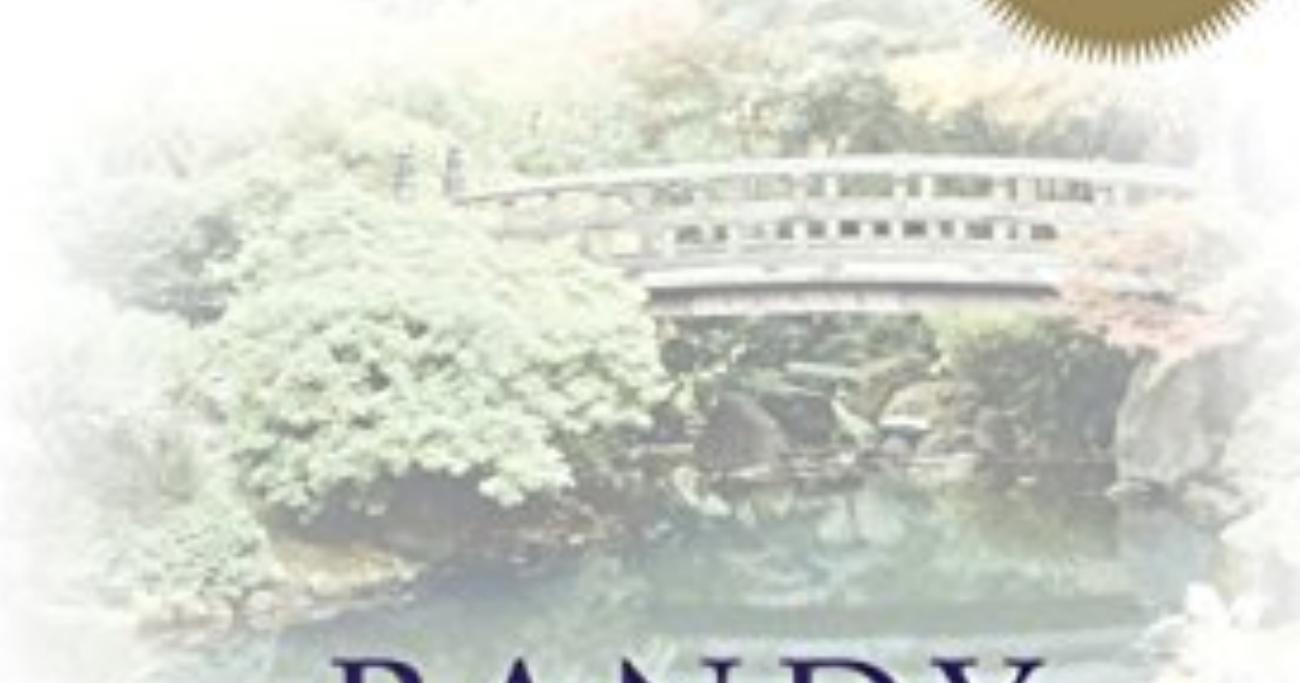
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- Do animals have a human soul? No
- Are animals and humans different? Yes
- The Bible does however seem to teach that animals have a soul of some type.
- Will animals talk?
- Revelation 8:13 - an eagle calls out in a loud voice.
- Every creature will praise God (Revelation 5:13).

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# HEAVEN

OVER  
1 MILLION  
SOLD



RANDY  
ALCORN

FOREWORD BY BILLY GRAHAM

*In Troubled Times,  
Looking Forward With Hope To...*

HEAVEN  
*My Father's House*

ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ