



The Witness of the Flood

... mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, 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." 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, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded

with water. But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men ... (2Peter 3:1-13)

Peter, having introduced Noah and the ark as types, or witnesses, of something greater to come, "completes" the witness list from this historical episode in his second letter. Noah, because of his faith and righteousness, is seen as a witness to the Christ. The ark is witness to the place of the saved, the family of God in Christ. Now, Peter uses the flood itself to point to the finality of God's physical creation and the eternal condemnation of the ungodly.

Some denied then, and some still do, that Christ is coming again (**2Peter 3:3-4**). They offer as proof that from their perspective, things continue on as they always have been. Peter brings forth witness that their perspective and their argument is false (**2Peter 3:5-6**). God destroyed once. He will destroy again (**2Peter 3:7**). They had willfully ignored this. Furthermore, their argument was based upon their faulty premise in their assumption of time—that God's consideration of time is the same as man's (**2Peter 3:8**). Also, these assumed that since some time had passed and God had not fulfilled His promise, that the "statute of limitations" had run out and that God never would fulfill his promise. Men may fail to fulfill their promises because of death, or forgetfulness, or inability, or even refusal, but God is unaffected by any of these. He is eternal (**Psalm 90:1-2**). He is not slow about His promises and He cannot lie (**Titus 1:2**). Don't make a mistake. Christ will come again. No one knows when Christ will come again. This does not mean that He will not come again.

Just as at the time of the flood, men continue in their erroneous assumptions. When Christ comes again, still some will be found to be skeptics (**2Peter 3:1-11**). (2) Some will be found to be indifferent. Some will be found to be otherwise wicked. However, some will be found to be faithful as had been Noah. As in the case of Noah and his family, the faithful will be just a few (**Matthew 7:13-14**). All will be found to be on one side or the other (**Matthew 25:32**).

Christ is not coming to do what a lot of people look for. He is not coming to save the world. That was his mission the first time (**Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10**). He has already come and given Himself son when He returns, it will not be in regard to sin (**Hebrews 9:28**). He is not coming to

reign on David's throne—He is now reigning (**Acts 2:29-33; 1Corinthians 15:24**). He is not coming to set up his kingdom—that is done (**Mark 9:1; Revelation 1:9; Colossians 1:13**).

When Christ comes again, He is coming to raise the dead (**John 5:28-30**) for judgment. He is coming to judge everybody (**2Corinthians 5:10; Acts 17:31; 2Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2Peter. 3:7**). He will do this by the word (**John 12:48**). All will be gathered—not just a part, with the other part after a thousand years. Eternal destinies will be declared. God's people will be given new bodies. (**Philippians 3:21; 1Corinthians 15:35-54**). God's people, the redeemed, will be taken to glory (**John 14:1-4; Colossians 3:4**).

He will destroy this earth and all things. This will be the end of the world, as this world will be dissolved. The Lord will destroy the world with fire. Temporal things will pass away. Don't mistake it! Our hope is not to be fulfilled on this earth or in the heavens which we now see.

There will be new heavens and a new earth (**2Peter 3:13**). There is one thing for certain. These heavens and this new earth under consideration will be new because the heavens and earth we now see will be destroyed. What are the new heavens and the new earth?

The term has a variety of meanings. Such was promised in Isaiah 65 and 66. In some sense, when Israel was brought out of captivity, their new state would be of new heavens and new earth (**Isaiah 65:17; 66:22**). It is figurative—they came back to the same earth from which they went into captivity. In this new period is a new fold (**Isaiah 65:1**). There is a new name (**Isaiah 65:15**). Regardless of what application is made of the new heavens and new earth as connected with Israel, it is referring to a description of a state or condition and not a literal place.

The term “new heavens and new earth” is also found in **Revelation 21:1-2**. This is describing the condition of God's people, the redeemed, in their victorious state. Notice that this has to be figurative, also. This is describing the happy state of people in the saved state.

The new heavens and new earth of our text describes something which is still different from **Isaiah 65:17** and **Revelation 21**. This is to be a dwelling place of the righteous, and of righteousness. Righteousness comes from doing right (**Psalms 119:172**). The new heavens and the new earth is a term that describes the final dwelling place of the righteous—heaven itself, as that is where the righteous are going—to dwell as the household of God (**John 14:1-4**). The new heavens and new earth come after the coming of Christ. That does not leave any place for a Utopia here upon this earth. The new heavens and the new earth come after the resurrection when all will have been raised. The new heavens and new earth come after the present heavens and earth have been destroyed. It is likewise clear that the new heavens and new earth are not the present heavens and earth in a regenerated state. Notice that nothing is said about Christ reigning in the new heavens and new earth. He now reigns, and when these come, He will have completed his reign (**1Corinthians 15:24-27**).

Have you learned anything from the flood? Are you ready for the return of Christ? Will you be found in the eternal rest, dwelling with God?