



# The Good News

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## *The Promise of the Return of the Lord*

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**W**e live our lives as Christians based on a single hope: the hope of salvation if we live faithfully. We fight against sinful influences every day, we talk to people about the Gospel, and we persevere through life's sorrows and hurtles all for the hope that one day we will be saved and justified by God. The question that many people wonder is whether God will deliver on that promise. Some choose to believe that God has no power to save man and so man must save himself. Others have simply decided there is no God at all.

Peter warns the saints in **II Pet. 3:3** that scoffers will come and ask *"Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."* Peter says that they willfully forget that by God's power He created the heavens and the earth and that He has reserved His creation for fire until the Day of Judgment. His point to the saints is that God will return and the Day of Judgment will come, implying that those who have been promised salvation will receive it at that time. How long will God allow this world to continue? Why hasn't He come back yet? Peter answers this as well in **verse 8** when he says that God is not slack concerning His promise, but is longsuffering so that more individuals may have an opportunity to be saved. God does not adhere to man's schedule of time and therefore will come when He is ready. It is not a matter of "if" He comes back, but "when" as Peter says in **verse 14-15**, *"looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation"*.

The Hebrew writer tells us that God cannot lie concerning His promises in **Heb. 6:13-18**. The Hebrew writer refers to the promise God made to Abraham and that God *"determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of*

*His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast"*. The Hebrew writer identifies this hope as Jesus Christ in **verse 20**.

If it is "impossible for God to lie", then what was it that He promised us? Paul tells Titus in **Titus 1:2** that we have *"hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began"*. John says in **I John 2:25**, *"and this is the promise that He has promised us – eternal life."* If God cannot lie and He has promised us eternal life if we live faithfully, then there is no reason to think that God will not fulfill that promise. If God does not come back in our lifetime, does that mean He never will? Certainly not! God works according to His plan and His schedule. If He truly made this promise to us "before time began", then He already knows how He will end this world. The "when" is not our concern; our only concern is that we live faithfully and obediently.

Paul tells the saints in **I Cor. 15:58**, *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."* Be assured that our labor is not in vain. Therefore, stay strong despite the "scoffers".