

2021: Saturday, 10/16 at 4:00 & Sunday, 10/17 at 9:00



**Series: Are You Ready to Cross the Finish Line?**

# **The Blindness and Fire** *When Jesus Returns!*

www.BLC7500.com



**Scripture: NAS 1995**

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Many things in our nation and world have been going from bad to worse, *which has caused me to think more about Jesus' return.* To help YOU think about Jesus' return, I created the series: **Are You Ready to Cross the Finish Line?** We started with creation; *today we focus on things related to Jesus' return.* What does the Bible say?

1. **The LORD Knows How to Punish:** Three examples: (2 **Peter 2:4-6**): **"...God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell..."** // The holy angels who rebelled against God were not shown mercy. **"[God] did not spare the ancient world... when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly..."** // They died in the flood and were cast into hell. **"[God] condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes..."** // Lot and his family left; then the LORD destroyed the others with fire out of heaven (**Gen. 19:24**).

2. **The Punishment will be Worse for Those Who Fall Away** (2 Peter 2:20-21): "...if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away..." // **Hell-bound**; **then** forgiven in Christ and **heaven-bound**; **then**, entangled, overcome, and **hell-bound** again ☹️. For all such people, *NOW is still the time of mercy*, so, **TODAY, repent and be renewed in Christ!**
3. **The Water Points to the Fire** (2 Peter 3:3-7): "...in the last days mockers will [say]..., 'Where is the promise of His coming? [Such mockers embrace this lie: There never was a worldwide flood, so Jesus never will return! Then Peter told the truth: As, by God's word, there actually was a worldwide flood, so, by God's word and on the day of judgment, fire will come upon the heavens and earth for the] ...destruction of ungodly men.'" // As the flood ushered multitudes into hell, so the coming fire will usher multitudes into eternal punishment! The unrepentant should be terrified, but we should be at peace! As God delivered Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego from the fire of the fiery furnace (Daniel 3), so – **THROUGH JESUS** – He will deliver all repentant ones from the fire that is coming!
4. **The Reason for Jesus' Delay** (2 Peter 3:8-9): "...with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. [Not "is" but "like" – reminding us that the Lord is not living in time, but in eternity.] The Lord is not slow about His promise [to return], as some count

slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” // If I said, “I will return soon,” then went on a trip, *you would probably expect me to return by the end of this year.* However, since Jesus is now living in eternity, *there is a BIG difference between “soon” for us and “soon” for Him.* Also, the delay is showing God’s love and patience – *giving more time for all the unrepentant ones to TURN **from** their sins **to** trust in Jesus as their Savior!*

5. **The Fire When Jesus Returns (2 Peter 3:10):** “...the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.” // When God commands it, the fire will come **to** destroy and **to** purify. So now, *as we await that awesome day,* let us **live** for Christ and **treasure** eternal things – *since they will last forever!*
6. **How We Should Wait for Jesus’ Return (2 Peter 3:11):** Since all these things are to be destroyed [with intense heat], what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness...” // The more we understand God’s amazing gift of salvation, *the more we will be filled with joy, resulting in **love** for God, **respect** for God, and **a** desire to please God with holy behavior!*
7. **A Parallel between the Flood and Jesus’ Return (Matthew 24:37-39):** “...the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were **eating** and drinking, **marrying** and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

// Before the flood, *life seemed normal to most people*, so they were ▶eating (Acts 27:33), ▶drinking, and ▶marrying – *WHEN THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN REPENTING!* What about today? Only a few are ▶concerned about their sins, ▶afraid of God's wrath, and ▶seeking God's mercy! So, ***now is a prime time for Jesus to return!*** Since many are blind to His coming, *many do NOT expect His coming!*

8. **Fear and Joy When Jesus Returns (Luke 21:25-28):** [Jesus said:] “There will be signs in sun and moon and stars... [and] **men fainting from fear...** for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. But when these things begin to take place, [you, who believe in me] straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” // Signs, powers? *No problem!* We are ▶trusting in Jesus, ▶living without fear, and ▶excited about our blessed eternity!

### **Conclusion:**

- **Truth** – Jesus' return is drawing closer and closer!
- **Relevance** – Now is the time to reach out to others!
- **Inspiration** – No fear – *because Jesus is in control!* Total peace – *because we are fully forgiven through Jesus!*

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Father, we don't know when You will send Your Son, maybe today, but please ☞keep us ready and ☞use us to †share Your truth and †call others to repent!

**Website:** [www.blc7500.com](http://www.blc7500.com) (our short URL); **YouTube-watch:** Benefit from the Bible  
**Facebook:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma; **Podcast-listen:** Benefit from the Bible  
**Address:** 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134; **Phone:** 440-845-2230