



The Second Epistle General of Peter

The Admonition to Growth

2 Peter 3:8-18

- I. THE PROMISE OF CHRIST'S COMING (2 Peter 3:8-10)
 - A. The Answer to Ignorance (2 Peter 3:8)
 1. Note: Reconsider the context of the passage at hand.
 - a. Peter desired to stir up the pure minds of his audience so that they would be mindful of the words of the prophets and of the apostles (2 Peter 3:1-2).
 - b. He did so because there was a coming threat when scoffers would call God's involvement in the world's affairs into question in a spirit of mockery (2 Peter 3:3).
 - c. Peter had already warned that these people spoke evil of things which they understood not (2 Peter 2:12), but now warned that their ignorance was willful ignorance (2 Peter 3:5).
 - d. Mockingly, the false teachers set forth the question "Where is the promise of his coming" (2 Peter 3:4).
 - e. In order to strengthen the saints' faith, the Lord offered an answer. This answer was not given to the scoffers, but to the saints. The answer to the question is given in 2 Peter 3:8-10 and the proper response to the answer is provided in 2 Peter 3:11-18.
 2. The audience of the answer—"beloved"
 - a. The audience of the answer was obviously intended to be believers.
 - b. God would not waste His time to answer the scoffer, but He did take the time to speak to the saints to quell their doubts.
 3. The admonition in the answer—"be not ignorant of this one thing";
Note: Just because the scoffers chose willful ignorance did not mean that the saints had to do the same.
 4. The principle in the answer
 - a. On a practical level
 - (1) It was just warned that scoffers would mockingly call into question God's involvement in the world's affairs.
 - (2) Perhaps this mockery would affect the saints and cause them to question the speed at which God moves inside of time.
 - (3) Peter issued a warning that time is viewed differently from man's perspective than from God's perspective.
 - a) One day to a man is as 1,000 years to the Lord.
 - b) 1,000 years to a man is as one day to the Lord.
 - c) In other words, God is not bound by time and moves according to His calendar and not based upon the questions or desire of man (see Psalm 90:4).



- b. On a prophetic level
 - (1) As Bible-believers, we understand that nothing in the Bible appears by accident. God could have chosen any number to compare to a day and He specifically chose 1,000 years.
 - (2) It is believed by many, including myself, that 1,000 years was chosen because of the prophetic implications in the coming context that God was going to speak of a “day” that would last 1,000 years.

- B. The Faithfulness of God (2 Peter 3:9)
 - 1. The answer to the accusation
 - a. The accusation—“Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” (2 Peter 3:4).
 - b. The answer
 - (1) The Lord is NOT SLACK concerning His promise.
 - a) Variations of the word *slack* (slack, slacked, slackness) appear ten times in nine verses.
 - b) In short, it speaks to avoidance of obligation, deferring, or failure to meet one’s commitment.
 - c) In other words, God made a promise and He fully intends to keep it.
 - (2) As some men count slackness
 - 2. The explanation of the supposition
 - a. God’s character—“The Lord...is longsuffering to us-ward.”
 - (1) What scoffers viewed as absence or lack of involvement on God’s part was actually for their own benefit.
 - (2) Specifically, it spoke of God’s longsuffering. Simply put, the word *longsuffering* indicates that God suffers (puts up with, allows to continue, etc.) long with man.
 - b. God’s concern—“The Lord is...not willing that any should perish.”
 - (1) If man got what he deserved, he would perish.
 - (2) If God always moved immediately to exercise justice, man would cease to exist.
 - (3) The cessation of man would displease the Lord. After all, it is not God’s will for any man to perish in judgment.
 - c. God’s choice—“The Lord is...willing...that all should come to repentance.”
 - (1) Two things should be understood in regards to this truth:
 - a) Repentance is necessary for salvation (Acts 20:21).
 - b) God wants men to repent and provokes them to do so (Romans 2:4; 2 Timothy 2:25).
 - (2) Salvation is not just made available by the Lord, but He desires it and wills it for ALL (see 1 Timothy 2:4).
 - (3) In light of the context, what the scoffers saw as a lack of God’s participation was actually in hopes that they would be saved.



C. The Coming of Christ (2 Peter 3:10)

1. The identifier of His coming—"the day of the Lord"
 - a. The time frame of the day of the Lord
 - (1) After the rapture (1Thessalonians 5:1-5)
 - (2) Preceded by
 - a) Wonders in the heavens and earth (Joel 2:31; Revelation 6:12)
 - b) Elijah's coming (Malachi 4:5; Revelation 11:1-12)
 - (3) Associated with Christ's coming (Zechariah 14:1-5)
 - (4) Extending through heaven and earth's destruction (2 Peter 3:10-13)
 - b. The recipients of the day of the Lord
 - (1) The proud and lofty (Isaiah 2:12)
 - (2) The wicked (Isaiah 13:11)
 - c. The characteristics of the day of the Lord
 - (1) A time of humiliation (Isaiah 2:12-17)
 - (2) A time of destruction (Isaiah 13:6-9)
 - (3) A time of darkness (Isaiah 13:10; Joel 2:1-2, 10; Amos 5:18)
 - (4) A time of war (Joel 2:1-11)
 - (5) A time of judgment (Joel 3:12-14)
 - (6) A time of inescapable troubles (Amos 5:18-20)
 - (7) A time of sacrifice (Zephaniah 1:7-18)
2. The manner of His coming—"will come as a thief in the night"
 - a. Consider the association between Christ's second advent and the references to a thief.
 - (1) The army that returns with Christ "shall enter in at the windows like a thief" (Joel 2:9).
 - (2) In such an hour as man thinks not, "the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:43-44; see Luke 12:39-40).
 - (3) The "day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2, 4).
 - (4) The Lord promised, "Behold, I come as a thief" (Revelation 16:15).
 - b. This association offers at least two great insights.
 - (1) The Lord will return on an unsuspecting world.
 - (2) When He comes, He comes for the purpose of gathering precious jewels (Malachi 3:17). This speaks of Jewish people who fear the Lord and think upon His name, but specifically and prophetically it will be those who do so during Daniel's seventieth week.
3. The culmination of His coming (see Psalm 102:26; Isaiah 51:6; Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Hebrews 1:11-12; Revelation 20:11; Revelation 21:1)
 - a. The heavens shall pass away with a great noise.
 - b. The elements shall melt with fervent heat (see 2 Peter 3:12).
 - c. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.