

Godliness and God's Timing



Thinking It Through

Peter returns to his theme of encouraging 'pure' [godly] thinking by reminding his readers about critical issues facing the Church. He warns about those who would mock God and His plan.

Introduction: There are two parts to this text—both start with Peter's word of endearment, "Dear friends." In the first section we are introduced to those who mock God for not fulfilling His promises and in the second, God's view of time and timing. The godly will always follow God's plan and His time and timing.

A. Man's Perspective of God's Time 2 Peter 3:1-7

Peter gives a warning about those who mock or challenge the purpose and plan of God.

1. **Keep this in mind:** [3:2] The godly need to have a firm faith in the OT prophetic word about the future and also in the commandments of Jesus.
2. **Be warned:** [3:3] As the Day of the Lord approaches, those who mock God will increase. One of the main things that cynics and mockers attack is the reality of God's promises:
 - a. **Attacking the promises:** [3:4] Specifically, the mockers are saying that God has NOT brought either the judgment or deliverance that He promised through the prophets of old.
 - b. **Suppressing the Word:** [3:5] The nature of the cynic is to suppress or beat down the Word and in doing so discredit the validity of the Word and the nature of God.

Mocking creation: As today, 'creation' was a flash point to the unbelieving cynic in Peter's day. They deny/attack the creation, the flood and future Biblical promises.
 - c. **The power of the Word:** [3:5-7] The creation via the 'water and the Word' is now reserved by 'fire and the Word' for the coming day of judgment upon all ungodliness.

B. God's Perspective of Time 2 Peter 3:8-10

1. **The long and short of it:** [3:8] Psalm 90:4-6 is the backdrop for this verse. What seems like a lifetime—or even lifetimes is but a moment to the God of eternity who is not bound by time and space. Peter's point is simply that God's view of time is unlimited whereas ours is limited.
2. **God is NOT slow—He's patient:** [3:9] What we consider slow—is simply God exercising His patience. The object of His 'patience' is salvation.
3. **When His patience runs out:** [3:10] There is coming a day when those who mock God will dread that they ever did. All that He promised in His Word will come to pass. At that time every deed done on earth will be laid bare! This refers to the works of the ungodly. [See also 3:7]

2 Peter 3:1-10 (NKJV)

3:1 *Dear friends*, this is already the second letter I have written you, in which I am trying to stir up your pure mind by way of reminder:

3:2 I want you to recall **both** the predictions foretold by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles.

3:3 **Above all**, understand this: In the last days blatant scoffers will come, being propelled by their own evil urges

3:4 and saying, "Where is his promised return? For ever since our ancestors died, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation."

3:5 For they deliberately suppress this fact, that by the **word** of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water.

3:6 Through these things the world existing at that time was destroyed when it was deluged with water.

3:7 But by the same **word** the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, by being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

3:8 Now, *dear friends*, do not let this one thing escape your notice, that a single day is like a thousand years with the Lord and a thousand years are like a single day.

3:9 The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some regard slowness, but is being patient toward you, because he does not wish for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; when it comes, the heavens will disappear with a horrific noise, and the celestial bodies will melt away in a blaze, and the earth and every deed done on it will be laid bare.