

## 2 Peter 3:1-18

- 3:1-7 – **Scoffers vs. Word** (Scoffing Second Coming vs. God's Historical Intervention)
- 3:8-10 – **Our Temporal Time vs. God's Eternal Time**
- 3:11-18 – **POINT: Live righteous today because Evaluations are in the Future**

## 2 Peter 3:1-7

### 3:1 – Peter returns to the Word of the Lord

“Dear friends” is *agapetoi* which means “beloved” and refers not to Peter’s “friends” but God’s chosen people who are participants in receiving God’s grace and love.

“stimulate you to wholesome thinking”

- “Thinking”, *dianoia*, frequent word in philosophical circles. This exact phrase *eilikrine dianoia* is used by Plato. Peter is using the Greek/Roman vocab to communicate his Christian truth to these Gentiles.
- “wholesome” is *eilikrine* which indicates thinking that is “pure, right, good.” Peter’s idea of “wholesome thinking” is clearly to move the believers away from thinking like the scoffing false teachers and back to thinking like the prophets (OT) and the apostles (NT) who spoke the Lord’s Word (command).

“first letter” is likely First Peter since it was a letter that easily matches Peter’s identification for his purpose in writing his two letters. Peter’s focus in First Peter was:

- 1 Peter 1:13 – “Prepare your MINDS for action; be self-controlled; SET YOUR HOPE fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is REVEALED.”
- “mind” (*dianoia*) in 2 Peter 3:1 is the same as “mind” (*dianoia*) in 1 Peter 1:13.
- 1 Peter 1:3-12 focuses on eschatological events and the return of Jesus as Peter encourages his readers in both letters to keep the coming of Jesus at the center of their thinking.

### 3:2 –

“recall the words spoken...by the holy prophets”

- Similar to Peter’s words in 1:20
- Drawing on the consistency between the prophetic word and the actual historic results
- “recall” (*mnesthenai*) is a modifier for the verb “stimulate in 3:1, which means Peter’s plan of “stimulating wholesome thinking” is simply this: RECALL and REMEMBER the OT Word of God, the Word of Jesus and the NT Word spoken by the apostles.
- ESV says it this way:
  - *“In both of them (letters) I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles...”*

Peter mentions both the OT prophets and the NT apostles which is where he left off in chapter 1:16-21 (the apostles, 1:16-18; the prophets, 1:19-21).

- Chapter 2 Peter says avoid the false teachers.
- Chapter 3 Peter says return to the prophets and apostles.

“the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.”

- “command” is singular...a command from the Lord that was consistently reiterated by the true apostles. Unlike the false teachers who altered the Lord’s teaching, redirected the Lord’s intention and skeptically renounced the Lord’s return.
- “our Lord and Savior” has only the one article (“our”, *tou*) in the Greek which means the Lord and the Savior are the same person.

### 3:3 – Peter contrasts the Word of the Lord with the False Teachers

“First of all...” means the most important than for his readers to know. The Greek says *proton*, an adverb of degree which would mean “in the first place”

“you must understand” is **ginoskontes** is saying that the readers should be knowing that there are false teachers who are scoffing at the teaching of the Word because this is what the readers were told by the apostles who started the church.

The “last days” (or, the time of the church age which included Paul and Peter’s day) would include many scoffers and doubters, not revival and repentance.

- James 5:3; Jude 18;
- The “last days” were Peter’s days... or, the church age “scoffers will come”
  - The false teachers (“scoffers”) stand in contrast to the apostles who spoke the same word as the Lord
  - Matthew 24:5, “Many will come in my name...”
  - Acts 20:29-30
- “The last days” is **eschaton ton hemeron** in the Greek and it is used in the LXX in
  - Gen. 49:1
  - Is. 2:2
  - Jer. 23:20
  - Jer. 25:19; 37:24
  - Ezek. 38:16
  - Dan. 2:28
  - Hosea 3:5
  - Micah 4:1

1Tim.4:1- “following own evil desires”

### 3:4 –

The issue seems to be that the false teachers cannot accept the fact that the Lord will interrupt world history with a Second Coming. The false teachers are naturalist who cannot accept a cosmic intervention of the Lord (as in a Second Coming) as a real possibility.

False teachers follow their own thoughts and desires Psalm 1:1 – blessed if you do not sit in the seat of the mocker (scoffer) Proverbs 1:22; 9:7-8; 13:1 – the righteous are told to avoid the mocker (scoffer) “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised?”

The coming of the Messiah was to be followed by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in the Last days as understood in Acts 2:17-18 and Hebrews 1:2 This question by the scoffers is similar to those in Jeremiah and Malachi’s day:

- Jeremiah 17:15 – The people kept saying to Jeremiah, “Where is the word of the Lord? Let it now be fulfilled!”
- Malachi 2:17 – “You have wearied the Lord with your words...by saying, ‘All who do evil are good’...’where is the God of justice?’ ”

“Fathers” is a reference to the men of old. The prophets who had spoken before and whose words had been fulfilled.

“sleep” or “fallen asleep” (**ekoimethesan**) was used not only by Christians, but by pre-Christian Greeks and Romans to refer to death.

### 3:5 – Peter returns to the False Teachers – First Argument -

A good translation is the REB (Revised English Bible) - “There were heavens and earth long ago, created by God’s word out of water and with water.”

“they deliberately forget” “long ago by God’s word the heavens existed”

This was a fatal flaw in the logic of the false teachers: God DOES intervene in history because HE DID create the world!

- Psalm 33:6 “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.”  
“the earth was formed out of water and by water.”
- Genesis 1:2 – water covered the earth and the Spirit was “hovering over the waters”
- Then God made sky and separated the land from the water.

### 3:6 – Second Argument

God did overthrow the world that he created to judge the world

“by these” is a plural pronoun that refers to two or more things (the NIV adds “waters”), but the context is these two things:

1. The Word
2. The water

“the world” – this word is **cosmos** referring to the people, the culture, the civilization of humans.

- This is a switch from the previous verse’s focus on the physical planet
- It does NOT refer to “Heavens and Earth”, but only the cosmos, or world.

“that time”

“deluged and destroyed.”

### 3:7 – Third Argument

God has also spoken of the final judgment ...and, that will be by fire.

“same word”

“present heavens and earth”

“reserved for fire”

“kept for the day of judgment and destruction”

### 3:8 –

“Do not forget this one thing” – again a reminder to REMEMBER

“a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day”

### 3:9 –

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise”

“He is patient”

1. “not wanting anyone to perish
2. “(wanting) everyone to come to repentance”
- 3.

### 3:10 –

“The day of the Lord will come like a thief.”

“The heavens will disappear with a roar”

“the elements will be destroyed by fire”

“the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.”

### 3:11 –

“Destroyed” is **lyomenon** in the present tense which means either:

1. Destruction is certain
2. The process of destruction is occurring already

### 3:12 –

“Speed its coming” – How?

- Prayer – Matt. 6:10 – “*Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*”
- Proclaiming Message – Matt. 24:14 – “*This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*”
- Repent (Jewish repentance) –
  - Acts 3:19-21 – “*Repent, then, and turn to God, so (1) that your sins may be wiped out, (2) that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and (3) that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you – even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.*”
  - Romans 11:11-15 – “*Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring...For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?*”

“Melt” is **teketai**

- Same word found in the LXX in Isaiah 34:4, “*All of the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree.*”

**3:13** –

“in keeping with his promise”

- The promise made through his prophets

“we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth”

“the home of righteousness.”

- Jeremiah 23:5-7
- Jer. 33:16 –
- Psalm 9:8 –
- Isaiah 11:4-5 –
- Isaiah 45:8 –
- Isaiah 65:17-25 –
- Daniel 9:24 –
- Revelation 21:1 –
- Revelation 21:8 –
- Revelation 21:27 –

**3:14** –

“since you are looking forward to this”

“make every effort” is **spoudasate** which is used in 2 Peter 1:10 and 1:15 and the noun in 1:5. It means an intense effort.

“found”

1. “Spotless” – **aspiloi** -
2. “Blameless” – **amometoi** -
3. “Peace with him” – in 1 Peter 1:19 Jesus is described as being “without blemish” (**amometoi**) and without defect” (**aspiloi**)

The false teachers are called “blots and blemishes” (**spiloi** and **momoï**) in 2 Peter 2:13. They would be an example of NOT being at peace with Jesus.

3:15 –

“bear in mind” –

“Lord’s patience means salvation” –

- “patience” is **makrothymia** which means “longsuffering”

“just as...Paul also wrote you”

“with the wisdom that God gave him”

3:16 –

“He writes the same way in all his letters”

- Paul wrote of God’s eschatological plans of grace now, judgment later as in Romans 2:4, “*God’s kindness leads you toward repentance.*”

“speaking in them of these matters.”

“His letters contain some things that are hard to understand”

- “hard to understand” is *dysnoeta*
  - The revelation and wisdom that Paul wrote with could be (and, likely was) misinterpreted and used against Peter.
  - Here Peter places Paul (and, Paul’s writings) on Peter’s side.
- “some things” is **tina** refers to themes, mottos, points of doctrine that could be placed on refrigerator magnets and church banners to use out of context:
  - Romans 3:8 – “*Why not say--as some slanderously claim that we say--"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is just!"*”
  - Romans 5:20-6:1 – “*The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more. What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?*”
  - Romans 6:15 – “*What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!*”
  - Romans 7:25 – “*So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.*”
  - 1 Corinthians 6:12-13 – “*All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.*”
  - 2 Corinthians 6:8 – “*through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors.*”
  - 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 – Corinthians thought Paul meant to avoid all contact with the world after he wrote his first letter. But, Paul corrected this understanding in his second letter (1 Corinthians) when he said that he meant those in the church who were immoral.

“ignorant” – **amatheis** refers to those who have not learned the apostolic teaching (Acts 2:42)

“unstable” – **asteriktoi** refers to those who have not been given a foundation.

- People who are easily deceived in 2 Peter 2:14 are called “unstable souls” (**asteriktous psychas**) because they have rejected the apostolic teaching.
- In 2 Peter 1:12 we are told of being “firmly established in the truth”

“distort” – **streblousin** means “to twist, to torture”. The idea is here is to twist and warp.

“as they do the other Scriptures” – Paul’s writings were consider revelation from God within the first 30-35 years of the church or within 30 years of the resurrection.

“to their own destruction”

- “destruction” is **apoleia** and used frequently for eschatological punishment.

**3:17** – “YOU” is emphatic

“since you already know this, be on your guard”

- “guard” is **phylassesthe**

“so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men”

“fall from your secure position.”

- “secure position” is **sterigmos** is only used here in the NT. It is similar to:
  - Jesus words to Peter in Luke 22:32 - “...*when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.*”
  - 2 Peter 2:14 – The false teachers “seduce the unstable”
  - 2 Peter 3:16 –
- How to be on your guard:
  - Know they are coming or they are there. The readers knew ahead of time the false teachers were coming. They were told in 1;20 and 3:3 “knowing this first of all!” that there are false teachers that look like Peter describes.
  - Recognize their fruit, or immorality.
  - Always return to the Apostolic revelation and the OT prophets, or return to the Scripture
  - 2 Peter 3:18 – “Grow”!... in grace...and, in knowledge.

**3:18** –

“grow”

1. “in the grace”
2. “in the...knowledge”

“of our Lord and Savior Jesus.”