

2 Peter

7) The Certainty of the Second Coming

'Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior'

(2 Peter 3:1-2)

'Beloved' occurs 4 times in this chapter. It marks the switch from false teachers (chapter 2) to true believers

✓ **'Pure minds', as when grain is separated or sifted as with a sieve. They have not been contaminated by mixture with false teaching. Their understanding of the gospel is clear**

✓ **Peter already wrote about the importance of being reminded, 'For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you' (2 Peter 1:12-13)**

- ✓ **We need to be reminded more than informed**
- ✓ *'For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe' (Phil.3:1)*
- ✓ **More than anything we need to be reminded of the Scriptures, brought to us by both the OT prophets and the apostles**
- ✓ **By placing the apostles of the new covenant on the same level as the prophets of the old covenant, Peter understood the inspiration and authority of the New Testament, even as it was being formed**
- ✓ **Notice Peter spoke of 'apostles' (plural)**

**Peter wanted them to be mindful of the very
'words' of Scripture**

**He clearly believed that the *words* of Scripture
were important; i.e. the *words* themselves, and not
merely the meaning behind the words**

Paul also,

***'These things we also speak, not in words which
man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit
teaches'***

(1 Cor.2:13)

'Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation"'

(2 Pet.3:3-4)

✓ **The last days are between the first and second coming. In that capsule of time, we have run alongside the edge of the 2nd coming, ready to go when God wills**

✓ **In this epistle Peter has said that,**

1) He and others had a glimpse of the 2nd Coming (1:16)

2) It will be a time when false teachers are judged and the godly delivered

3) Now he says that they will mock at the idea of the 2nd Coming, and ask on what grounds do we believe in it, since everything continues as always

✓ We should not be surprised to find that there are those who scoff at the idea of the 2nd Coming, particularly false teachers who, *'walk according to their lusts'*. Cynicism and self-indulgence go together

✓ Part of the gospel is to proclaim that he who does not believe will be condemned. Human history will reach a climax in a day of judgment. False teachers mocked this asking, 'Where is the promise of His coming?'

✓ Their argument: All things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. It's a stable world. Everything is ticking over nicely and has always done so

'For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men'
(2 Pet.3:5-7)

- ✓ **Yes, it is a stable world unless God intervenes, e.g. the Flood**
- ✓ **This is not just a universe, it is a moral universe, because it is God's universe**
- ✓ **By the same Word that created the heavens and the earth, judgment came and is coming again**
- ✓ **The earth we stand upon emerged out of one watery mass. Then God placed a firmament between the waters. He put some under the earth in underground springs and some above the earth, originally above a canopy**

- ✓ **Then, came the judgment of mankind through the Flood when the waters from beneath and above were released upon the earth**
- ✓ **In a similar way the coming judgment will be unleashed. Then by water, in the future by fire**
- ✓ **Preserved, *thesauros* = to amass, treasure, heap up, store ('kept in store' KJV). The heavens and the earth are stored with fire ready for the Day of Judgment. The instrument by which God will judge and destroy this world, i.e. fire, is already here. It's not something He is going to bring from outer space; nor create at the last minute. The great active agent for the destruction is already present**

- ✓ **The atmospheric heavens are composed of mainly 2 elements, oxygen and nitrogen:**
- ✓ ***Oxygen is the one element without which nothing can burn. When a thing burns up it is merely the uniting of oxygen with another element. Oxygen makes up 21% of the earth's atmosphere**
- ✓ ***Nitrogen, used in dynamite, TNT, nitroglycerin, etc. makes up 78% of the earth's atmosphere**
- ✓ **The two most explosive elements are stored right above us. Peter says they are *reserved*, lit. detained, prevented from escaping**

- ✓ **And also, beneath us, there is a raging fire waiting to be released**
- ✓ **We live on a crust of a fireball. The core is flaming, boiling, molten fire (6000°)**
- ✓ **One day it will be unleashed**
- ✓ **The same Word of God that created all matter, and judged the world in the flood will bring judgment of fire upon the earth at the climax of human history**

***'Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent;
a fire shall devour before Him'***

(Psa.50:3)

***""For behold, the day is coming, burning like an
oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do
wickedly will be stubble. and the day which is
coming shall burn them up," says the Lord of
hosts'***

(Mal. 4:1)

- ✓ **The argument of nature, then, is not enough to deny a coming judgment. Because the very elements of judgment were stored within the natural world from the beginning**
- ✓ **God, Himself, is a consuming fire**
- ✓ **This all makes way for the new heavens and the new earth**

'But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance'

(2 Pet.3:8-9)

- ✓ **'Do not forget'. Same word as in v.5. False teachers deliberately forget. In contrast, believers constantly remember**
- ✓ **What seems like forever for us is but a short time for God, He is the eternal I AM**
- ✓ **He is the I AM in the present, the I AM in the past, and the I AM in the future**
- ✓ **Just as we say of God that He is everywhere, so we may say of Him that He is always. He is everywhere in space; He is everywhere in time**

- ✓ **Though God is above time, He does act in time**
- ✓ **What concerns God is not time, i.e. how long things take, but what is happening during that passage of time. E.g. Gen.6:3; Gen.15:16; the fulness of the Gentiles; Matt.24:14; Acts 1:7-8**
- ✓ **So we are not to focus on date-setting, but on understanding the purposes of God**
- ✓ **God will keep His promise, and without delay according to His timing. Any perceived delay from our perspective is due to the longsuffering of God, who allows man as much time as possible to repent**

- ✓ **He wishes all to be saved. Consequently He has never devised nor decreed the damnation of anyone. *"As I live," says the Lord God, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live"* (Ezek 33:11)**
- ✓ **Also, many of us who are Christians today are happy that Jesus didn't return 10 years, or even one year, ago. There is a compassionate purpose in God's timing. *'...we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure'* (1 John 3:2-3)**