

Exegetical Notes for 2 Peter 3:3-9

KEY

ACCS = Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI (Gerald Bray, Ed.)

ADAMS = An Exposition of 2 Peter (Thomas Adams)

ATR = Word Pictures in the New Testament (A.T. Robertson).

BAG = Bauer Arndt and Gingrich: A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.

Barclay = The Letters of James and Peter: Daily Study Bible Series (William Barclay).

BAW = Syntax of New Testament Greek (James A. Brooks and Carlton Winbery).

BKBC = Bible Knowledge Background Commentary: John, Hebrews - Revelation (Craig A. Evans, Gen. Ed.).

Brown = Parting Counsels: An Exposition of the First Chapter of the Second Epistle of the Apostle Peter with Four Additional Discourses. Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Sons. 1861 (John Brown).

Bullinger = Figures of Speech Used in the Bible (E.W. Bullinger).

Calvin = Calvin's Commentaries, Vol. XXII (John Calvin).

Cedar = The Preacher's Commentary: James, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude (Paul A. Cedar).

Clark = Clark's Commentary (Adam Clark).

CNTOT = Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament (Beale and Carson, Eds.)

Comfort = New Testament Text and Translation Commentary (Philip W. Comfort).

Dauids = The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude: The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Peter H. Davids).

DNTT = The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Colin Brown, Gen. Ed.).

Expositors = The Expositor's Greek New Testament: Volume Five (W. Robertson Nicoll, Ed.).

Gill = Gill's Commentary on the Bible (John Gill).

Gene Green = Jude and 2 Peter: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Gene Green)

Grudem = Systematic Theology (Wayne Grudem).

Guthrie = New Testament Introduction (Donald Guthrie).

Helm = 1 & 2 Peter and Jude (David R. Helm).

Keener = The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (Craig S. Keener).

Kelly = A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude (J.N.D. Kelly).

Kittle = Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (G. Kittle and G. Friedrich, Eds.).

Lewis = Integrative Theology (Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest).

Lenski = The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude (R.C. Lenski).

Luther = Commentary on Peter and Jude (Martin Luther).

Lloyd-Jones = Expository Sermons on 2 Peter (D.M. Lloyd Jones).

MacArthur = MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 2 Peter (John MacArthur).

Maclaren = Expositions of Holy Scripture: 2 Peter (Alexander Maclaren).

Metzger = A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (Bruce M. Metzger).

Michael Green = Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: 2 Peter and Jude (Michael Green).

NLK = New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament..

Schreiner = The New American Commentary: 1, 2 Peter, Jude (Thomas R. Schreiner).

Shedd = Dogmatic Theology (W.G.T. Shedd), 3rd edition.

Thomas = 1 & 2 Peter: The Crossway Classic Commentaries (Griffith Thomas).

Vincent = Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament (Marvin R. Vincent).

Wallace = Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics (Daniel B. Wallace).

Three Steps of Exegesis

- ❶ **Translate the text:** Do an initial translation of the passage.
- ❷ **Exegete the text:** Detailed exegesis of the passage by way of a "shot-gun" approach, using various exegetical tools.
 - √ In no particular order:
 - Work from critical commentaries to practical.
 - Word studies and cross-references (analogy of the faith).
 - Applicational analysis - applicational issues arising from the text.
 - Theological analysis - theological issues arising from the text.
 - √ "Blast away" at the passage until I am content with my exegesis, main idea, and outline.
 - Smooth away all of the wrinkles.
 - The process is to yield an accurate "statue" as I chisel away the debris.
- ❸ **Finalize a translation of the text:** Render a final translation after the exegesis and analysis of the grammar is complete.

Parsing Verbs and Declining Nouns

- Verbs: ποιμάνατε (ποιμαινῶ = to tend, shepherd || Verb: Aorist Imperative Active, Second Person Plural).
ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι (ἀποκαλύπτω = to reveal, disclose || Verb: Infinitive, Present Passive).
- Nouns: παθημάτων, (παθημά = suffering || Noun: Neuter Genitive Plural).
- Participles: μελλούσης (μελλῶ = to be about to || Participle: Feminine Genitive Singular, Present Active).
- Adjectives: (ἐπιεικής = gentle, kind || Adjective: Masculine Dative Plural).
- Pronouns: (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Nominative Singular).
ἡμῖν (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).
ὑμῖν (σύ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).
(αὐτός = He, Him || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Singular).

Basic English Diagram

- 3 Knowing this first,
that *in the last days*
mockers will come
with mockery,
- 4 following after their own lusts,
and saying, ==>
"Where is the **promise** of His coming?
For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they have from the beginning of creation."
- 5 For when they maintain this, ^
it escapes their notice
* that the heavens existed long ago,
* and the earth was formed -out of water
and -through water
by the word of God, >
through which the world at that time
was **destroyed,**
being flooded with water.
- 7 But
the present heavens
and the earth
by the same **word**
are being stored up
for fire,
being kept for the day of **judgment**
and **destruction** of **ungodly men.**
- 8 But
do not let this one thing escape your notice, beloved,
that with **the Lord** *one day is as a thousand years,
*and a thousand years as one day.
- 9 **The Lord**
is **not slow** about His **promise**
as some count slowness,
but
is patient toward you,
not willing for **any**
but for **all** to perish
to come to repentance.

TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

GREEK TEXT:

3 τοῦτο πρῶτον γινώσκοντες ὅτι ἐλεύσονται ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν [ἐν] ἐμπαιγμονῇ ἐμπαίκεται κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας αὐτῶν πορευόμενοι 4 καὶ λέγοντες Ποῦ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ; ἀφ' ἧς γὰρ οἱ πατέρες ἐκοιμήθησαν πάντα οὕτως διαμένει ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως. 5 λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας ὅτι οὐρανοὶ ἦσαν ἔκπαλαι καὶ γῆ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος συνεστῶσα τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγῳ 6 δι' ὧν ὁ τότε κόσμος ὕδατι κατακλυσθεὶς ἀπώλετο· 7 οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσὶν πυρὶ τηρούμενοι εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως καὶ ἀπωλείας τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων. 8 Ἐν δὲ τοῦτο μὴ λανθανέτω ὑμᾶς, ἀγαπητοί, ὅτι μία ἡμέρα παρὰ κυρίῳ ὡς χίλια ἔτη καὶ χίλια ἔτη ὡς ἡμέρα μία. 9 οὐ βραδύνει κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ὡς τινες βραδύτητα ἡγοῦνται, ἀλλὰ μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ὑμᾶς, μὴ βουλόμενός τινας ἀπολέσθαι ἀλλὰ πάντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

3 Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers will come with mockery, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they have from the beginning of creation." 5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But the present heavens and the earth by the same word are being stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 8 But do not let this one thing escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

- I. The Accusation of the Mockers: Where is the Promise of His Coming? (3-4a)
- II. The Evidence of the Mockers: All Things Remain the same since Creation (4b)
- III. The Answer to the Mockers (5-9)
 - A. God Created the Heavens (5a)
 - B. The Earth was Formed out of Water by His Word (5b)
 - C. God Destroyed the World by the Word through Water (6)
 1. The Flood is Evidence of His Activity in Creation and His Judgment
 - D. God will Again Judge the Earth - this time by His Word through Fire (7)
 - E. God's Timing is Different than that of Man (8)
 - F. God's Delay is in Keeping with His Mercy (9)

SERMON OUTLINE:

I. A Two-Part Accusation (3-4)

- A. The Accusation Anticipated by Peter (3)
- B. The Two-Part Accusation (4)
 - 1. Where is the Promise of His Coming? (4a)
 - 2. The Basis for Their Argument: Uniformitarianism (4b)

II. A Three-Fold Answer (5-9)

- A. An Answer that Looks Back to the Past (5-6)
 - 1. He Created the Heavens (only God is eternal)
 - 2. He Created the World (water / word)
 - 3. He Destroyed the World He Created (water /word)
- B. An Answer that Looks Forward to the Future (7)
 - 1. Assuming Uniformity can be Dangerous to your (eternal) Health
 - 2. God's Work and Word Are Sure
- C. An Answer that Looks Heavenward to the Promise (8-9)
 - 1. Time Itself was Created by God who Providentially Rules Over it (v. 8)
 - a. Peter uses the same word in addressing "the beloved" that he used in verse 5 of the "mockers"
 - b. Background to verse 8: Psalm 90:4
 - 2. God is not Procrastinating; He is Patient! (9)
 - a. His patience relates to His promise
 - b. His promise relates to His people
 - (1) Four views
 - (a) Universal Salvation View
 - (b) Arminian / Free-Will View
 - (c) Calvinist / Sovereign Election View(s)
 - i. Secret versus Revealed Will of God
 - ii. Gathering of the Elect View

PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what is the passage talking about): Mockers who deny the promise of Christ's coming based on their belief that all things remain the same since creation

PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what is the passage saying about what it's talking about): God has demonstrated in the past, through creation and the flood, that He is active and will judge wickedness, even as the seeming delay of judgment is in keeping with His promise of mercy.

PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text): The delay of God's judgment is in keeping with the promise of His mercy.

CENTRAL PROPOSITION OF THE SERMON: We must understand the prophetic presumption of the pessimists in light of the promise of God's perfect patience.

SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE: "The Promise of Christ's Coming"

HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/GRAMMATICAL CONTEXT

Building upon verses 1-2, this is Peter's final reminder to his "church" in Asia Minor, that they remember the words of prophets and apostles as given through Christ. The focus moves toward the eschatological confusion that the false teachers were sowing as it related to the coming of Christ and final judgment (vv. 3-12). Verses 3-4 explain why the readers must remember the words of the prophets and commands of the apostles.

Verses 5-9 expand upon this focusing on vv. 8-9 where Peter defines time in light of God who is creator of time, and God's patience as it relates to His will for all to come to repentance.

23 of 27 NT books refer to the Lord's return. Estimated that of the 260 chapters in the NT there are nearly 300 instances in which the return of Christ is referenced.

3:3 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ ΓΙΝΩΣΚΟΝΤΕΣ ὅτι ἐλεύσονται ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν
ἡμερῶν [ἐν] ἐμπαιγμονῇ ἐμπαίκεται κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας
αὐτῶν πορευόμενοι

ΤΟΥΤΟ (οὗτος || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Accusative Singular).
πρῶτον (πρῶτος || Adverb / Adjective).
γινώσκοντες (γινωμαι || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural, Present Active).
ὅτι ἐλεύσονται (ερχομαι || Verb: Third Person Plural Future Indicative Middle).
ἐπ' ἐσχάτων (ἐσχατος || Adjective: Feminine Genitive Plural).
τῶν ἡμερῶν (ἡμερα || Noun: Feminine Genitive Plural).
[ἐν] ἐμπαιγμονῇ (ἐμπαιγμονη = mockery, scoffing || Noun: Feminine Dative Singular).
ἐμπαίκεται (εμπαικτης = mocker, scoffer || Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural).
κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας (ιδίος || Adjective: Feminine Accusative Plural).
ἐπιθυμίας (ἐπιθυμια || Noun: Feminine Accusative Plural).
αὐτῶν (αὐτος || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Genitive Plural).
πορευόμενοι (πορευομαι = to follow after, to go after || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural,
Present Middle/Passive).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers will come with mockery, following after their own lusts,

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Knowing this first, (ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ ΓΙΝΩΣΚΟΝΤΕΣ)

Cf. 1:20 for the same phrase.

that in the last days mockers will come with mockery, (ὅτι ἐλεύσονται ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν [ἐν] ἐμπαιγμονῇ ἐμπαίκεται)

The last days

ISA 2:2 #Now it will come about that In the last days, The mountain of the house of the
\Lord\ Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills;
And all the nations will stream to it. (NASB)

ACT 2:17 #\And it shall be in the last days,\ ' God says, '\That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind\; \And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy\, \And your young men shall see visions\, \And your old men shall dream dreams\; (NASB)

2TI 3:1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. (NASB)

HEB 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in {His} Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (NASB)

JAM 5:3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! (NASB)

JOH 6:39 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. (NASB)

JOH 6:40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." (NASB)

1PE 1:20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (NASB)

JUD 1:18 that they were saying to you, "In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." (NASB)

1PE 1:5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (NASB)

1 John 2:1 - "it is the last hour"

The last days began with the death and resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:17; Heb. 1:2). "All eschatology begins at the cross."

False teachers were part of this (here, 1 Tim. 4:1ff; 2 Tim. 3:1ff.; Acts 20:29-30). That they exist and increase demonstrates that we are in the last days.

Follow church history, from the erosion of the church at the time of John through its early expansion and demise during the middle ages to the revival during the Reformation.

For by the last days is commonly meant the kingdom of Christ, or the days of his kingdom, according to what Paul says, "Upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11.) [Calvin]

. . . for it is a rule with the Jews, that wherever the last days are mentioned, the days of the Messiah are intended; (see Hebrews 1:1). [Gill]

"mockers with mockery" (ἐμπαιγμονῆ ἐμπαικταί) forms another of Peter's word plays. Actually a Hebraism (cf. 3:1 "remember / reminder" and Luke 22:1 "with desire / desired").

Note the parallel in Jude (and that Jude bases this on apostolic testimony):

Jude 17–18 17 But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,¹⁸ that they were saying to you, “In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.”

A prophecy which has been abundantly fulfilled. You need not go far to find them; they come in the form of living men, and they swarm in the form of their books. They are to be met with almost everywhere; like the locusts, they fill the air, and hide the light of the sun: “There shall come in the last days scoffers?” Every time a blasphemer opens his mouth to deny the truth of revelation, he will help to confirm us in our conviction of the very truth which he denies. The Holy Ghost told us by the pen of Peter that it would be so. [Spurgeon]

Errors of doctrine are almost always attended with errors of practice, and certainly’ they legitimately lead that way. Those who scoff according to the lusts of their intellect are very likely to live according to the lusts of their flesh. The two things are congruous; they are born from the same cause, they flourish for the same reasons, and they tend to the same ends: “Walking after their own lusts.” [Spurgeon]

There have always been "mockers" / "scoffers" and there always will be. Sarcasm; mockery; derision/ making fun of; belittling; laughing at.

The meaning is, that the more God offers himself by the gospel to the world, and the more he invites men to his kingdom, the more audacious on the other hand will ungodly men vomit forth the poison of their impiety. He calls those scoffers, according to what is usual in Scripture, who seek to appear witty by shewing contempt to God, and by a blasphemous presumption. It is, moreover, the very extremity of evil, when men allow themselves to treat the awful name of God with scoffs. Thus, the first Psalm speaks of the seat of scoffers. So David, in Psalms 119:51, complains that he was derided by the proud, because he attended to God’s law. So Isaiah, in the 28th chapter, having referred to them, describes their supine security and insensibility. Let us therefore bear in mind, that there is nothing to be feared more than a contest with scoffers. On this subject we said something while explaining the third chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians. As, however, the Holy Scripture has foretold that they would come, and has also given us a shield by which we may defend ourselves, there is no excuse why we should not boldly resist them whatever devices they may employ. [Calvin]

Some common ones:

- Evil in the world
- Hypocrisy among Christians; sins of the church
- Post-modern doubt about anyone knowing absolute truth
- Supposed "errors" in the Bible - Bible being myth
- Unreliability of the NT (Bart Ehrman)
- Mass of religions in the world
- Science
- Delay in the coming of Christ (v. 4).

The reason why they mock? They follow after their own lusts. Cf. Romans 1:18 (post-modern study from Wed.).

following after their own lusts, (κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας αὐτῶν πορευόμενοι)

πορευόμεαι = to follow after, to go after || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural, Present Middle/Passive)

ἐπιθυμία – Goes back to what we saw in chapter 2 (vv. 2-3, 10, 14, 18, 18).

Here is where the lines are drawn: true believers follow after Christ, not self.

Anthropocentric hedonism [man-centered pleasure-seeking] always mocks at the idea of ultimate standards and a final division between saved and lost. For men who live in the world of the relative, the claim that the relative will be ended by the absolute is nothing short of ludicrous. For men who nourish a belief in human self-determination and perfectibility, the very idea that we are accountable and dependent is a bitter pill to swallow. No wonder they mocked! [M. Green, 127]

On "mocking" see Matthew 27:39 ff. (cf. 1 Peter 2:23).

3:4 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

καὶ λέγοντες Ποῦ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ; ἀφ’ ἧς γὰρ οἱ πατέρες ἐκοιμήθησαν πάντα οὕτως διαμένει ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως.

καὶ λέγοντες (λεγω || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural, Present Active).

Που (Που = where || Interrogative Adverb).

ἐστὶν (εἰμι || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active).

ἡ ἐπαγγελία (ἐπαγγελια || Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular).

τῆς παρουσίας (παρουσια || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

αὐτοῦ; (αὐτος || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

ἀφ’ (ἀπο = from || Preposition). With ἧς (ἀφ’ ἧς) it is translated "ever since" (see note on the RP below).

ἧς (ὅς || Relative Pronoun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Adverbial/Conjunctive. "The RP is often used after a preposition. Frequently, such prepositional phrases have an adverbial or conjunctive force. In such instances, the RP either has no antecedent, or else its antecedent is conceptual, not grammatical." [D. Wallace, 342, cf. 343]

γὰρ οἱ πατέρες (πατηρ || Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural).

ἐκοιμήθησαν (κοιμαω = to sleep, fall asleep [only pass.] || Verb: Third Person Plural Aorist Indicative Passive). Classic euphemism for death (not "soul sleep"). We use the euphemism today, as in "put an animal to sleep." Cf. the word "cemetery" (sleeping place). Cf. Acts 7:60.

πάντα (πάς || Adjective: Neuter Nominative Plural).

οὕτως (οὕτως = in this way, thus || Adverb).

διαμένει (διαμενω = to remain, continue || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active). Wallace refers to this as a 'Broad Band Present' indicating "an event or occurrence taking place over a long interval, or an extended sequence of events." [519] Specifically, he cites this word in this verse as a present of past action still in progress: "The present tense may be used to describe an action which, begun in the past, continues in the present. The emphasis is on the present time." [Ibid] He states that this differs from the perfect in that "the perfect speaks only about the results existing in the present time." [Ibid] Wallace suggests normally translating this as an English present perfect and translates this part of the verse "all things thus continue [as they have] from the beginning of creation." [520]

ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (ἀρχη || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

κτίσεως (σωτηρ || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they have from the beginning of creation."

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Their argument comes in two parts and Peter's answer comes in three parts.

and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" (καὶ λέγοντες Ποῦ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ;)

This is not the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD (can prove them from the context).

Review my notes on the parousia in 1:16-18.

This is the only sample of the questions raised by these mockers. Peter had mentioned this subject of the parousia in i:i6. Now he faces it squarely. Peter, like Paul (I Thess. 5:if.; II Thess. 2:if.), preached about the second coming (i:i6; Acts 3:2f.), as Jesus himself did repeatedly (Matt. 24:34) and as the angels promised at the Ascension (Acts i:ii). Both Jesus and Paul (II Thess. 2:if.) were misunderstood on the subject of the time and the parables of Jesus urged readiness and forbade setting dates for his coming, though his language in Matt. 24:34 probably led some to believe that he would certainly come while they were alive. [ATR, 6:173]

Similar to the critics of Jeremiah (Jer. 17:15).

This "concern" supports an early date (authentic Peter) as opposed to a 2nd c. date (forgery). This was a common critique and concern: the delay in the parousia. Cf. 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4 (Luke 12:45; Heb. 10:36ff.; James 5:7ff.).

Promise - cf. vv. 9, 13. Can't divorce this criticism from final judgment. The skeptics were mocking future judgment.

For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they have from the beginning of creation." (ἀφ' ἧς γὰρ οἱ πατέρες ἐκοιμήθησαν πάντα οὕτως διαμένει ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως.)

Could sum up their objection in one word: "Uniformitarianism." All things continue the same. Sun goes down at night, comes up in the morning. Seasons / grass withers, flower falls off. People are born, live, die. We work, we eat, we sleep, we rest. Round and round we go. Round and round the world goes. Where is the spectacular?

Many jump on the creation vs. evolution bandwagon here (particularly as it relates to geology, cf. MacArthur, 114). While that's not totally irrelevant, that's not what Peter had in mind. This is more of a theological issue. Theological uniformitarianism vs. providentialism; or naturalism vs. supernaturalism. Much like the old Deistic beliefs.

ἐκοιμήθησαν (κοιμαω = to sleep, fall asleep [only pass.] || Verb: Third Person Plural Aorist Indicative Passive). Classic euphemism for death (not "soul sleep"). We use the euphemism today, as in "put an animal to sleep." Cf. the word "cemetery" (sleeping place). Cf. Acts 7:60.

"Where is the God of justice?" asked the evil men of Malachi's day (Malachi 2:17). "Where is your God?" the heathen demanded of the Psalmist (Psalm 42:3; 79:10). "Where is the word of the Lord?" His enemies asked Jeremiah (Jeremiah 17:15). [Barclay, 338]

Schreiner states that D. Moo notes that the term "sleep" for death is reserved only for believers who die (Matt 27:52; John 11:11—12; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor 7:39; 11:30; 15:6,18,20,51; 1 Thess 4:13-15). Death is temporary.

"Fathers" not 1st c. Christian fathers (among whom was Peter) but the Patriarchs of the OT.

The most important word in this verse is "fathers" (*pateres*). Many commentators argue that it refers to Christian believers of the first generations, and if this is the case, then the author could not be Peter since he was a member of the first generation. But there is a decisive objection against this interpretation. The plural "fathers" never refers to the first generations of Christians in the New Testament, but it always refers to the patriarchs of the Old Testament (e.g. Matt 23:30,32; Luke 1:55,72; 6:23,26; 11:47; John 4:20; 6:31,49,58; 7:22; Acts 3:13,25; 5:30; 7:2,11-12,15,19,32,38-39,44-45,51-52; 13:17,32,36; 15:10; 22:1,14; 26:6; 28:25; Rom 11:28; 15:8; 1 Cor 10:1; Heb 1:1; 3:9; 8:9). Furthermore, there are hundreds of verses in the Old Testament where "fathers" refers to the patriarchs. Another piece of evidence points toward fathers referring to the Old Testament patriarchs. Then "fathers" overlaps with the phrase "since the beginning of creation." [Schreiner, 373]

διαμένει (διαμένω = to remain, continue || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active).

Wallace refers to this as a 'Broad Band Present' indicating "an event or occurrence taking place over a long interval, or an extended sequence of events." [519] Specifically, he cites this word in this verse as a present of past action still in progress: "The present tense may be used to describe an action which, begun in the past, continues in the present. The emphasis is on the present time." [Ibid] He states that this differs from the perfect in that "the perfect speaks only about the results existing in the present time." [Ibid] Wallace suggests normally translating this as an English present perfect and translates this part of the verse "all things thus continue [as they have] from the beginning of creation." [520]

Sounds like the heresy of full-preterism: "no future coming of Christ. No bodily resurrection." If Christ isn't coming back, then there will be no judgment.

May be the background = Epicurean philosophy of constant self-sustained evolution (cf. M. Green, 129-30). Cf. previous notes on Epicureanism.

But, in truth, the universal whole always was such as it now is, and always will be such. For there is nothing into which it can change; for there is nothing beyond this universal whole which can penetrate into it, and produce any change in it. [Epicurus, Letter to Herodotus 38; Lucretius 1.225-37]

The error is that STABILITY = SECURITY. Cf. Luke 12:18. This is how we live. Taking things for granted. Dangerous / deceptive at a few different levels. Even for believers, we take things for granted (health, loved ones, fact that we have food & a warm place to live, even our riches in Christ).

For us, it's the other way around: Security = Stability (we are secure in Christ therefore we live in a stable hope). For the false teachers the error was even more deadly. . . .

Cf. "I almost got away with it." Cf. v. 10.

3:5 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας ὅτι οὐρανοὶ ἦσαν
ἔκπαλαι καὶ γῆ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος συνεστῶσα τῷ τοῦ
θεοῦ λόγῳ

λανθάνει γὰρ (λανθανω = to escape notice, be hidden from || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active).

αὐτοὺς (αὐτος || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Accusative Plural).

τοῦτο (οὗτος || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

θέλοντας (θελω = to maintain || Participle: Masculine Accusative Plural, Present Active).

Adverbial-Temporal Participle.

ὅτι οὐρανοὶ (οὐρανός || Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural).

ἦσαν (έιμι || Verb: Third Person Plural Imperfect Indicative Active).

ἔκπαλαι (ἔκπαλαι = for a long time, long ago || Adverb).

καὶ γῆ (γῆ || Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular).

ἐξ ὕδατος (ὔδωρ, ὕδατος || Noun: Neuter Genitive Singular).

καὶ δι' ὕδατος (ὔδωρ, ὕδατος || Noun: Neuter Genitive Singular).

συνεστῶσα (συνισημι = to continue, endure, exist; consist, collect, recommend || Participle: Feminine Nominative Singular, Perfect Active).

τῷ (ὁ || Definite Article: Dative Masculine Singular).

τοῦ θεοῦ (θεός || Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

λόγῳ (λογος || Noun: Masculine Dative Singular). Dative of Means.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God,

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice (λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας)

Previous argument. Escapes their notice (parallel to "remembering" in 3:1-2).

Some translations have the idea of wilfully or deliberately forgetting (NIV, KJV, RSV, ESV). However, the word order / syntax favors the NASB rendering (λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας) ==>

The translation proposed by the NIV (cf. also KJV, NKJV, RSV, NRSV), however, is unlikely. Syntactically, it makes more sense if the word "this" (*touto*) is the object of *theolontas*. The term *thelo* can be translated "maintain." Hence, the translation of the NASB should be accepted here . . . [Schreiner, 375]

that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water
(ὅτι οὐρανοὶ ἦσαν ἔκπαλαι καὶ γῆ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος συνεστῶσα)

The heavens existed long ago, they were not eternal but created. Ex-nihilo.

Difficult phrase. Perhaps Gen. 1:2 cf. with 1:9. See Genesis account.

. . . that in Genesis 1 a watery chaos covers the earth, making life impossible for human beings. In creating the world, God separated the waters by making the expanse of the sky so that the waters were above and below the expanse (Gen 1:6-8). Furthermore, the waters on earth were collected so that dry ground would also exist (Gen 1:9-10). Hence, when Peter said that the world was created "out of water" (*ex hydatos*), he probably had in mind the emergence of the earth and sky from these waters. Discerning what he meant by the world being formed "by water" (*di hydatos*) is more difficult. Some think he referred to the rain by which the earth is sustained. Peter, however, referred to the creation of the world, not how it keeps going, and so we should reject this idea. Others understand *dia* locally, so that the idea is that the world was formed in the midst of the waters. This is a possibility but represents an unusual definition for the preposition. We should settle, then, for the third option, which is that God used the water as an instrument in forming the world. Perhaps Peter stressed water for rhetorical purposes since it is the agent of judgment in the next verse. [Schreiner, 376]

The world no doubt had its origin from waters, for Moses calls the chaos from which the earth emerged, waters; and further, it was sustained by waters; it yet pleased the Lord to use waters for the purpose of destroying it. [Calvin]

But the opponents beg the question since they affirm creation. Things cannot be truly uniform if God created. Creation itself was cataclysmic. The recreation will be also.

Colossians 1:17 - Christ upholds all things. Theological doctrine of secondary causation.

For it ought always to be borne in mind, that the world stands through no other power than that of God's word, and that therefore inferior or secondary causes derive from him their power, and produce different effects as they are directed. Thus through water the world stood, but water could have done nothing of itself, but on the contrary obeyed God's word as an inferior agent or element. As soon then as it pleased God to destroy the earth, the same water obeyed in becoming a ruinous inundation. We now see how egregiously they err, who stop at naked elements, as though there was perpetuity in them, and their nature were not changeable according to the bidding of God. [Calvin]

'by water' not = ancient pagan cosmology (Eg. Thales of Miletus who argued that of the 4 basic elements, water is the most basic and therefore everything is made out of water). Rather, the emphasis is on Genesis and fitting for the argument Peter is making, connected with the flood and judgment (cf. 2:5; 1 Peter 3:9-20).

Their position is self-refuting:

. . . and by this instance the apostle shows the falsehood of the above assertion, that all things continued as they were from the beginning of the creation; for the earth was covered with water first, and which, by the command of God, was removed, and, after a long series of time, was brought on it again, and by it drowned; and from whence it also appears, that this sort of reasoning used by those scoffers is very fallacious; for though the heavens and the earth may continue for a long time, as they did before the flood, in the same form and situation, it does not follow from thence that they always will, for the contrary is evident from what follows.
[Gill]

by the word of God, (τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγῳ)

"God's word" (Gen 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26,29). The theme is common elsewhere in the OT as well. "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth" (Ps 33:6; cf. Prov 8:27-29; Heb 11:3; and in the post-biblical tradition. Sir 39:17; Wis 9:1; 4 Ezra 6:38,43).

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

God's word = His command; His will; His decree. Cf. Psalm 136.

Clement: "by a word of His majesty he created all things, and by a word he can destroy them." [1 Clement 27:4).

"Has God said?"

3:6 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

δι' ὧν ὁ τότε κόσμος ὑδατι κατακλυσθεὶς ἀπώλετο·

δι' ὧν (ὅς || Relative Pronoun: Neuter Genitive Plural).

ὁ τότε (τότε = then, at that time || Adverb).

κόσμος (κόσμος || Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular).

ὑδατι (ὑδωρ, ὑδατος || Noun: Neuter Dative Singular). Instrumental of means.

κατακλυσθεὶς (κατακλυζω = to inundate, deluge || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular, Aorist Passive). Cf. "Cataclysm."

ἀπώλετο· (ἀπολλυμι = to destroy || Verb: Third Person Singular Aorist Indicative Middle).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. (δι' ὧν ὁ τότε κόσμος ὑδατι κατακλυσθεὶς ἀπώλετο·)

δι' ὧν (ὅς || Relative Pronoun: Neuter Genitive Plural). Question as to what this refers to. Water? the word? May be both (cf. Davids, 270).

κατακλυσθεὶς (κατακλυζω = to inundate, deluge || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular, Aorist Passive). Cf. "Cataclysm."

Interesting thought. Original creation was chaotic in a sense. God, in his plan, took that which was in process and looked chaotic, and made it orderly / liveable. The flood put it all into reverse. Chaos and judgment. Flood was catastrophic and the catastrophe argues against uniformitarianism.

The Word of God was the agent in both creation and the flood. Flood = judgment.

So the "scoffers" have forgotten something. Yes, there was an original creation, and, yes, the world appears to be running quite well now along the lines laid down in the creation, but, no, there is not a full continuity. We are in the second age of the world, an age that is demarcated from the first age by God's judgment in the flood, just as our age will be demarcated from the next by God's judgment with fire. Things have not continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. There was a great discontinuity, after which God again had to separate the waters, restraining chaos and returning the world to its original order. Forgetting this

discontinuity is quite serious, for it has allowed the "scoffers" to forget that- there is a precedent for the coming judgment. Their first assumption has proved false. [Davids, 271]

3:7 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ τεθησαυρισμένοι
εἰσὶν πυρὶ τηρούμενοι εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως καὶ ἀπωλείας τῶν
ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων.

νῦν (νῦν = now, the present || Adverb).

οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ (οὐρανοὶ (οὐρανός || Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural).

καὶ ἡ γῆ (γῆ || Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular).

τῷ αὐτῷ (αὐτός || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Dative Singular). αὐτός used as an Intensive Pronoun – as an Identifying Adjective (hence "same" - cf. Luke 23:40; 1 Cor. 12:5). Note that the NASB does not follow this use, translating the pronoun as "His," while the NIV, ESV, and NET do.

λόγῳ (λόγος || Noun: Masculine Dative Singular).

τεθησαυρισμένοι (θησαυρίζω = to lay up, store up || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural, Perfect Passive).

εἰσὶν (εἶμι || Verb: Third Person Plural Present Indicative Active).

πυρὶ (πυρ || Noun: Neuter Dative Singular).

τηρούμενοι (τηρέω = to keep, hold, reserve, preserve || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural, Present Passive). Cf. 2:4 - "reserved."

εἰς ἡμέραν (ἡμέρα = day || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

κρίσεως (κρίσις, κρίσεως || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

καὶ ἀπωλείας (ἀπωλεία = destruction || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

τῶν ἀσεβῶν (ἀσεβής || Adjective: Masculine Genitive Plural).

ἀνθρώπων. (ἄνθρωπος || Noun: Masculine Genitive Plural).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But the present heavens and the earth by the same word are being stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

But the present heavens and the earth (οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ)

In contrast to the antediluvian world.

by the same word (τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ)

As in v. 5 and alluded to in v. 6.

are being stored up for fire, (τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰςὶν πυρὶ)

As per God's promise in Genesis 9:11-17. On fire, see Isa. 66:14-16; Mal. 4:1. Cf. 3:10. Also Jude 6.

Josephus claimed a tradition that Adam predicted 2 destructions of the world: "that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and another time by the violence and quantity of water." [Antiquities 1.2.3. P70]

Critics claim that this was borrowed from later Jewish thought or adopted from earlier pagan (Babylonian / Iranian / Stoicism) sources (see Kelly, 360-62). However, fire is found t/o the Bible, esp. t/OT as a symbol for judgment. Note Sodom and Gomorrah in chapt. 2. Fire is also a purifying agent. Dual purpose in God's economy of eschatology.

HEB 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire.

HEB 10:27 but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and \the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries\.

REV 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: (NASB)

REV 19:12 And His eyes {are} a flame of fire, and upon His head {are} many diadems; and He has a name written {upon Him} which no one knows except Himself. (NASB)

REV 20:15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (NASB)

REV 21:8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part {will be} in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (NASB)

JUD 1:7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire. (NASB)

JUD 1:23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. (NASB)

1PE 1:7 that the proof of your faith, {being} more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (NASB)

LUK 3:16-17 16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 "And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (NASB)

MAT 7:19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (NASB)

MAT 13:40, 42 40 "Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. . . . 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (NASB)

ISA 51:6 "Lift up your eyes to the sky, Then look to the earth beneath; For the sky will vanish like smoke, And the earth will wear out like a garment, And its inhabitants will die in like manner, But My salvation shall be forever, And My righteousness shall not wane. (NASB)

ZEP 3:8 "Therefore, wait for Me," declares the \Lord\, "For the day when I rise up to the prey. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal. (NASB)

Do not ask me what kind of fire this will be. God has all the varieties of fire that he needs for his purposes: the fire to burn wood, the electric fire of the lightning bolt that strikes in an instant in the sky, the fire that burns in the sun, the fire to change the heavens and the earth at the last day, and another most terrible unquenchable fire for the devils and the damned in hell. [Lenski, 343]

Just as the abundant presence of water facilitated the Flood, the pervasiveness of fire makes a future inferno credible. For example, the galaxies consist of billions of burning stars. Even the earth's core contains a huge volume of molten rock that may be as hot as 12,400 degrees Fahrenheit. Only a ten-mile-thick crust separates humanity from earth's blazing interior. More significantly, the entire creation, because of its basic atomic structure, is a potential nuclear bomb. The devastating power of nuclear weapons demonstrates the destructive force God has placed within the atom. When He is ready God will use that kind of nuclear energy in an atomic holocaust that will disintegrate the universe. [MacArthur, 120]

being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (τηρούμενοι εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως καὶ ἀπωλείας τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων.)

The eminent New York University philosopher Thomas Nagel, in his book ironically titled *The Last Word*, provides us with one such example:

I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God ... it's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want a universe to be like that! [cited in Helm, 249]

Aldous Huxley, the well-known agnostic, once confessed: *Is the universe possessed of value and meaning? I took for granted that there was no meaning. I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning.* [cited in Helm, 249-50]

Final judgment. Cf. Joel 2:30 ff.; Psa. 50:3. Destruction of ungodly men (in view here the false teachers but also all who die outside of Christ). Destruction doesn't mean annihilation (the earth was destroyed in the flood, v. 6, but not annihilated, cf. Matt. 10:28).

. . . the Old Testament itself associates fire with judgment, sometimes at the end of history (Deut 32:22; Ps 97:3; Isa 30:30; 66:15-16; Ezek 38:22; Amos 7:4; Zeph 1:18; Mal 4:1). We should note that the fiery judgments in the Old Testament refer to the judgment of people, not the cosmos. And yet that the world would be destroyed by fire is found in the post-biblical tradition (IQH 3:29-36; Sib. Or. 3:54-90, 4:173-92; 5:211-13, 531; Apoc. Adam 49:3; Josephus, Ant. 1.70). . . . The false teachers, unless they repented, would realize too late that the judgment was no myth and that God does intervene in the world. [Schreiner, 378]
The Danish philosopher, Kierkegaard, tells a parable of a theater where a variety show is proceeding. Each show is more fantastic than the last, and is applauded by the audience. Suddenly the manager comes forward. He apologizes for the interruption, but the theater is on fire, and he begs his patrons to leave in an orderly fashion. The audience think this is the most amusing turn of the evening, and cheer thunderously. The manager again implores them to leave the burning building, and he is again applauded vigorously. At last he can do no more. The fire raced through the whole building and the fun-loving audience with it. "And so," concluded Kierkegaard, "will our age, I sometimes think, go down in fiery destruction to the applause of a crowded house of cheering spectators."

Contrast to God's promise:

The next time that multicolored spectrum of beauty bends over the landscape, take time to view it in the light of God's promise to Noah: "The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature" (Gen. 9:16). The rainbow was a reminder of God's gracious pledge that He would never again destroy the earth with water. A worse calamity, though, is coming. Peter warned, "The heavens and the earth . . . are reserved for fire until the day of judgment" (2 Pet. 3:7). The rainbow, seen against the clouds of judgment, spoke of grace. But the rainbow fades when compared to God's grace shown at Calvary. At the cross, God's wrath against sin was placed on Jesus Christ, the believer's substitute. When the Light of the world met the storm clouds of judgment at Calvary, a beautiful bow of promise and forgiveness came into view. And one day believers will gather around God's rainbow-circled throne (Rev. 4:1-3). So next time you see a rainbow, remember God's abundant mercy and grace.

Every time I see a rainbow
Shining in the sky above,
I remember God's great mercies
And His faithfulness and love. —Peterson
[Excerpted from Our Daily Bread, April 13, 1997]

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was looking for His return and this stimulated him to write:

The darkness grows thicker around us, and godly servants of the Most High become rarer and more rare. Impiety and licentiousness are rampant throughout the world, and we live like pigs, like wild beasts, devoid of all reason. But a voice will soon be heard thundering forth: `Behold, the bridegroom cometh!' God will not be able to bear this wicked world much longer, but will come, with the dreadful day, and chastise the scorners of his Word."

If Martin Luther felt that the Lord's return was near almost 500 years ago, what should we think today who are that much closer to His second advent! [Precept Austin Website]

We look forward to a new heavens and a new earth (cf. Revelation 21:1ff).

Note Bauckham's thesis that Peter's eschatology here is dependent on Jewish apocalyptic thought (i.e. 2 and 2 Clement) summarized nicely by Peter David, 264-66.

3:8 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

Ἐν δὲ τοῦτο μὴ λανθανέτω ὑμᾶς, ἀγαπητοί, ὅτι μία ἡμέρα
παρὰ κυρίῳ ὡς χίλια ἔτη καὶ χίλια ἔτη ὡς ἡμέρα μία.

Ἐν (είς, μια, ἐν || Adjective: Neuter Nominative Singular).
δὲ τοῦτο (οὗτος || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).
μὴ λανθανέτω (λανθανω = to escape notice, be hidden from || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Imperative Active. Same word used in v. 5).
ὑμᾶς (συ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Accusative Plural).
ἀγαπητοί (ἀγαπητος || Adjective: Masculine Vocative Plural).
ὅτι μία (είς, μια, ἐν || Adjective: Feminine Nominative Singular).
ἡμέρα (ἡμέρα || Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular).
παρὰ κυρίῳ (κυρίος || Noun: Masculine Dative Singular).
ὡς (ὡς = as, even as || Preposition: Adverbial Coordinating).
χίλια (χίλιοι || Adjective: Neuter Nominative Plural).
ἔτη (ἔτος = year || Noun: Neuter Nominative Plural).
καὶ χίλια (χίλιοι || Adjective: Neuter Nominative Plural).
ἔτη (ἔτος = year || Noun: Neuter Nominative Plural).
ὡς (ὡς = as, even as || Preposition: Adverbial Coordinating).
ἡμέρα (ἡμέρα || Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular).
μία (είς, μια, ἐν || Adjective: Feminine Nominative Singular).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But do not let this one thing escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

But do not let this one thing escape your notice, beloved, (Ἐν δὲ τοῦτο μὴ λανθανέτω ὑμᾶς, ἀγαπητοί,)

ἀγαπητοί (ἀγαπητος || Adjective: Masculine Vocative Plural). See my notes on 3:1. Cf. vv. 14,17.

μὴ λανθανέτω (λανθανω = to escape notice, be hidden from || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Imperative Active. See the same word in v. 5).

that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. (ὅτι μία ἡμέρα παρὰ κυρίου ὡς χίλια ἔτη καὶ χίλια ἔτη ὡς ἡμέρα μία.)

Peter alludes to Psalm 90:4. The context of the Psalm has to do with the eternity of God (cf. the theological doctrine of God's eternity as the "uncaused cause"). Cf. Hab. 2:1-3. Also see 1 Peter 1:23-25.

Schreiner quotes Bigg: "The desire of the Psalmist is to contrast the eternity of God with the short span of human life. What St. Peter wishes is to contrast the eternity of God with the impatience of human expectations." [379]

Some of the patristic writers interpreted this to mean that say "a day with the Lord is a thousand years." I.e. that human history would last six days (six thousand years), which would culminate in the millennium (the last thousand years) — cf. Barn. 15:4; Irenaeus, Ag. Haer. 5.28.3). Others used this as a formula to relegate the creation days of Genesis to 1000 years each. However, this is not what the verse is saying at all. 1000 years is "like" a day not "is" a day.

Look at an elderly person (Alice?) who lives to be 100. That's 20 lifetimes since Christ came the first time. That person who lives to be 60, 80, 100 can testify to how quickly their life has passed by. If X were to return in the next 100 yrs. that would only be a life-span of 3-4 of the pre-deluvian patriarchs!

The second response to the false teachers comes in verse 8: "But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." Here Peter is answering the criticism that Christ has delayed so long that we can't really believe he is coming back. Peter's answer is that from God's experience of time it hasn't been very long. I doubt that it is a Biblical notion that God is outside time. But since he is immortal and does not age and does not forget and sees all history at a glance, and is never bored, clearly he does not experience time like we do. But even so, since we are in God's image, there is in us something like God's experience of time. The older we get the faster it seems to go. How many older people say, "It just seems like yesterday I was in school." "It just seems like yesterday we got married." "It just seems like yesterday the kids were young." And not only age, but joy makes us experience time like God. If you are bored at a program, it seems to drag on forever. But if you go on a vacation for a couple weeks and have a terrific time, you come to the end and say, "It seems like we just got here." Every moment was rich and full of unself-conscious life (like a thousand moments packed into one) and you were so taken up in the joy and beauty and love of those weeks that you never paused to be self-conscious about the passing of time. And at the end of those weeks, it was like yesterday that you arrived. When Jesus comes back and stands on this earth to make it his own, he will say, "It just seems like yesterday that I was here." O people, do not be deceived. It is no argument against Christ's second coming that 1,950 years have passed since his departure. From God's experience of time it is as though Christ arrived at his right hand the day before yesterday. [John Piper, sermon in 2 Peter, retrieved from soundofgrace.com/piper82/060682m.htm]

Peter had not surrendered the imminence of Christ's coming here. He was scarcely arguing that Christ would not come until a great amount of time had elapsed. Second Peter 3:12 indicates an expectation that Christ would return soon. But Peter, like all the New Testament writers, did not prescribe when Christ returns or set a certain date. He preserved the tension between the imminence of Christ's coming and the uncertainty about when he will come. [Schreiner, 379-80]

Important consideration: This is not a license to make anything in the Bible that relates to a specific period of time relative. Some in the very early church who believed that the creation days were each 1000 years long and they used this verse to support that. We could turn that around to say that the 1000 years spoken of in Revelation could actually be one day long. That's not what this is saying. Context is related to time as it pertains to God (His patience). Also our understanding of that in light of His patience.

Black holes and the space time dilation.

Our perspective of time also seems not to be static. Children on a trip: "Are we there yet?" As we grow older, time seems to go by much more quickly. My fascination / obsession with "time." Cf. 1 Peter 1:24.

Thy years neither come nor go; whereas ours both come and go. Thy years stand together, because they do stand; nor are departing thrust out by coming years, for they pass not away; but ours shall all be, when they shall be no more. Thy years are one day; and Thy day is not daily, but Today. [for] Thou hast made all things; and before all times Thou art. [Augustine, Confessions]

Since now in God's sight there is no reckoning of time, a thousand years must be with him, as it were, a day. Therefore the first man, Adam, is just as near to him as he who shall be born last before the day of judgment. For God sees not time lengthwise but obliquely—just as when you look at right-angles to a long tree which lies before you, you can fix in your view both place and parts at once—a thing you cannot do if you only look at it lengthwise. We can, by our reason, look at time only according to its duration; we must begin to count from Adam, one year after another, even to the last day. But before God it is all one; what is long with us is short with him; and again, with him there is neither measure nor number. So when man dies, the body is buried and wastes away. It lies in the earth and knows nothing. But when the first man rises at the last day, he will think he has lain there scarcely an hour, when he will look about and become assured that so many people were born of him and have come after him, of whom he had no knowledge at all. [Luther, 283-84]

3:9 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

οὐ βραδύνει κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ὡς τινες βραδύτητα ἡγοῦνται, ἀλλὰ μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ὑμᾶς, μὴ βουλόμενός τινας ἀπολέσθαι ἀλλὰ πάντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι.

οὐ βραδύνει (βραδύνω = to be slow, tarry || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active).

κύριος (κύριος || Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular).

τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (ἐπαγγελία || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Adverbial Genitive of Reference.

ΤΙΝΕΣ (ΤΙΣ = some || Indefinite Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Plural).

βραδύτητα (βραδύτης = slowness || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

ἡγοῦνται, (ἡγεομαι = to count, reckon, consider || Verb: Third Person Plural Present Indicative Middle/Passive).

ἀλλὰ μακροθυμεῖ (μακροθυμεω = to be patient || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active).

εἰς ὑμᾶς (συ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Accusative Plural). Textual variant followed by the TR = ἡμᾶς. Cf. Metzger's TC, 636.

μὴ βουλόμενός (βουλόμαι = to will, wish, desire || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular, Present Middle/Passive).

ΤΙΝΑΣ (ΤΙΣ = any || Indefinite Pronoun: Masculine Accusative Plural).

ἀπολέσθαι (ἀπολλυμι = to perish, die || Verb: Aorist Infinitive Middle).

ἀλλὰ πάντας (πας || Adjective: Masculine Accusative Plural).

εἰς μετάνοιαν (μετάνοια || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

χωρῆσαι. (χωρεω = to come, reach || Verb: Aorist Infinitive Active).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

The Lord is not slow about His promise, (οὐ βραδύνει κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας,)

The Lord (probably God, as per the context, but perhaps Christ). On ἐπαγγελία see vv. 4,13.

Promise goes back to the Patriarchs, esp. Abraham (could go into the OT but here are other uses of the same word ἐπαγγελία):

ACT 7:17 "But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, (NASB)

ACT 13:23 "From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, (NASB)

ACT 13:32 "And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, (NASB)

ACT 26:6 "And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; (NASB)

ROM 4:13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. (NASB)

ROM 9:9 For this is a word of promise: "\At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.\" (NASB)

GAL 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as {referring} to many, but {rather} to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. (NASB)

For them it was yet future:

HEB 11:13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

Promise is related to the Holy Spirit (the agent of regeneration / connected with our glorification as we are sealed with Him). This is not some sort of Pentecostal 2nd blessing.

ACT 2:33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

ACT 2:39 "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."

EPH 1:13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

1JO 2:25 And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

Romans 9:8 - We are children of promise (contrast there to children of the flesh).

ROM 9:8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. (NASB)

GAL 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (NASB)

GAL 4:28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. (NASB)

Promise is related to grace; it's not according to the law, but received by faith in God the promise-giver and promise-keeper.

ROM 4:14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; (NASB)

ROM 4:16 For this reason {it is} by faith, that {it might be} in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (NASB)

GAL 3:14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (NASB)

GAL 3:18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. (NASB)

GAL 3:22 But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (NASB)

Motivation toward godly living (cf. 2 Peter 3:13-14):

2CO 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (NASB)

Already and not yet:

HEB 6:12 that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

2 Cor. 1:20 (Christ?) For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.

as some count slowness, (ὡς τινες βραδύτητα ἡγοῦνται.)

Clearly a reference to the false teachers who accused God of being slow. Elijah in reverse (1 Kings 18:27).

But in the world of 2 Peter the Epicureans were arguing that the delay of the judgment was in fact an argument against the idea of God's providence. Thus Plutarch in his work *De sera numinis vindicta* (*Moralia* 548-68) begins his critique of the Epicureans with, "The delay and procrastination of the Deity in punishing the wicked appears to me the most telling argument by far."³⁶ Thus this argument of delay was being used against the idea of divine providence. It is no wonder that Matt 24:48 characterizes the *wicked* servant as saying, "My master is staying away a long time," using the same word for "staying away a long time" that the LXX uses for "delay" in Hab 2:3, the point being that he never expects to be called to account for his actions because the delay indicates that the coming will never happen. [Davids, 278]

Habakkuk 2:3 "For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal, and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay.

but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

(ἀλλὰ μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ὑμᾶς, μὴ βουλόμενός τις ἀπολέσθαι ἀλλὰ πάντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι.)

μακροθυμει (μακροθυμew = to be patient || Verb: Third Person Singular Present Indicative Active).

ἀπολέσθαι (ἀπολλυμι = to perish, die || Verb: Aorist Infinitive Middle). As in John 3:16; 10:28; 17:12; Rom. 2:12; 1 Cor 1:18; 15:17-19.

Herein is God's mercy, grace, forbearance, patience. Cf. Num. 14:18; Jonah 4:3. 1 Peter 3:20 - forbearance evident. To be ours also (2 Cor 6:6; Gal 5:22; Eph 4:2; Col 1:11; 3:12; 1 Tim 3:10; 4:2; Heb 6:12).

The same principle at work in Christ's first coming will be at work in His second (Gal. 4:4).

1 Tim. 2:4 - not every single man, but every class, a view that goes back to Augustine (cf. Weber, Dogmatics, 2:468.)

Finally, there is the statement of 2 Peter 3:9 which the universalist alleges also teaches a universal saving will in God: "[The Lord] is patient with you, because he *does not want* [μη βουλομενος, *me boulomenos*] any [τίας, *tinias*] to perish, but all [παντας, *pantas*] to come to repentance." Again, the contextual universe will allow no such conclusion. In 3:8 Peter addresses those to whom he is writing as "Beloved" (ἀγαπητοι, *agapetoi*), a term everywhere acknowledged to be a term for Christians or God's elect. Then to them he says: "[The Lord] is patient with you [ὑμᾶς, *hymas*]" (referring to the (Christians he is addressing), offering as his ground for this reassuring promise to these Christians the axiomatic truth: "because he does not want any [of you elect] to perish, but all [of you] to come to repentance." Clearly the referent of his "any" is the Christian elect to whom he has been speaking and his "all" refers to the elect of God in their entirety; and his point is God's concern for the church: the Lord, he says, is delaying his coming in order that he might bring the whole elect of God to repentance. To argue to the contrary, that is,

to argue that because God would have none of those to perish, but all of them to come to repentance, therefore he hath the same will and mind towards all and everyone in the world (even those to whom he never makes known his will, nor ever calls to repentance, if they never once hear of his way of salvation), comes not much short of extreme madness and folly. [Robert Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 695, quoting John Owen, *The Death of Death*, 236. Calvin argues that what Peter means here is that God wills that those be saved whom he brings to repentance, and then he argues that God, in whose hand resides the authority to grant repentance, does not will to give repentance to all men without exception [*Institutes*, III.xxivi6)].

The passages in 1 Tim. 2:4-6, Heb. 2:9; 2 Peter 3:9 refer to the revealed will of God that both Jews and Gentiles should be saved, but imply nothing as to the universal intent of the atonement. [Berkhof, 396-97]

Grudem, Piper, John Calvin follow this course of reasoning, differentiating between God's revealed will and His secret will.

Different main views on this verse.

1. That God does not desire that any person on earth go to hell, but that all be saved.
 - 1a. God does not decree that any be saved; their salvation (and our mission) is a matter of our free choice.
 - 1b. God decrees that some be saved, not all. This verse shows another side to God's complex will: His will of "desire" or "wish." He does desire the salvation of all, even if he decrees the salvation of some. Piper; Schreiner;
2. The "you" and "any" and "all" in this verse refer to the elect. Time has passed and Christ's coming has delayed until the fulness of the Gentiles arrives.

And finally Peter responds to the problem of Christ's delay in verse 9 with these words: "The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness, but is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should reach repentance." The apostle Paul speaks in Romans 11:25 of "the full number of the Gentiles" who must come into the Kingdom before the end arrives. Therefore we should count the delay of Christ's coming as an act of mercy and patience until all the sheep are gathered into the fold and not one is lost (John 10:16, 26-30). The tragic irony is that the false teachers take God's patience, which is giving them an opportunity to repent, and turn it against God as an evidence that Christ is not coming. It will be an unanswerable indictment on the judgment day when God asks the false teachers of Peter's day and ours, "Why did you take my gift of time for repenting and use it as an argument for unbelief?" [John Piper, sermon in 2 Peter, retrieved from soundofgrace.com/piper82/060682m.htm]

Two wills in God, cf. Acts 17:30; Rom. 11:32; 1 Tim. 2:4; Heb. 2:9.

Not willing that any should perish. So wonderful is his love towards mankind, that he would have them all to be saved, and is of his own self prepared to bestow salvation on the lost. But the order is to be noticed, that God is ready to receive all to repentance, so that none may perish; for in these words the way and manner of obtaining salvation is pointed out. Every one of us, therefore, who is desirous of salvation, must learn to enter in by this way. But it may be asked, If God wishes none to perish, why is it that so many do perish? To this my answer is, that no mention is here made of the hidden purpose of God, according to which the reprobate are doomed to their own ruin, but only of his will as made known to us in the gospel. For God there stretches forth his hand without a difference to all, but lays hold only of those, to lead them to himself, whom he has chosen before the foundation of the world. [Calvin]

Death of Christ (Acts w/Isaiah); Sons of Eli in 1 Sam. 2:22-25 w/Ezek. 18:23. Amos 3:6; Isa. 45:7; Lam. 3:37-38.

Putting it in my own words, Edwards said that the infinite complexity of the divine mind is such that God has the capacity to look at the world through two lenses. He can look through a narrow lens or through a wide- angle lens. When God looks at a painful or wicked event through his narrow lens, he sees the tragedy or the sin for what it is in itself and he is angered and grieved. "I do not delight in the death of anyone, says the Lord God" (Ezek. 18:32). But

when God looks at a painful or wicked event through his wide- angle lens, he sees the tragedy or the sin in relation to everything leading up to it and everything flowing out from it. He sees it in all the connections and effects that form a pattern or mosaic stretching into eternity. This mosaic, with all its (good and evil) parts he does delight in (Ps. 115:3). [Piper, Grace of God; the Bondage of the Will, 1:126]

Cf. a judge having joy in the execution of a just sentence while at the same time being grieved in it.

NIV is a bit misleading here. "anyone" and "everyone" implies all without exception.

The patience of the Lord is displayed toward His elect people (the "you" of verse 9). Therefore, the "not wishing any to perish" must be limited to the same group already in view: the elect. In the same way, the "all to come to repentance" must be the very same group. In essence Peter is saying the coming of the Lord has been delayed so that all the elect of God can be gathered in. Any modern Christian lives and knows Christ solely because God's purpose has been to gather in His elect down through the ages to this present day. There is no reason to expand the context of the passage into a universal proclamation of a desire on God's part that every single person come to repentance. Instead, it is clearly His plan and His will that all the elect come to repentance, and they most assuredly will do so. [James White, 147-48, THE POTTER'S FREEDOM]

4. Certain Repentance. The elect will certainly come to repentance and faith in Christ. As a result, the Lord seemingly is delaying the time of His return so that all the elect will be saved:

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
[2 Peter 3:9]

God is longsuffering toward sinners, providing time for the elect to be saved. He has set the time of the return of Christ to provide sufficient time for those chosen to come to repentance. That is to say, God is not willing for any of His elect to perish. All His chosen ones *will* be called to repent and believe. [J. Steven Lawson, Foundations of Grace, 334-35]

Boice writes, "2 Peter 3:9 is not talking about the salvation of all men and women, but only of the elect. The issue is Christ's return, and Peter is explaining that God has delayed it, not out of indifference to us and what we may be suffering, but because He wants to bring to repentance all whom He has determined in advance will be gathered in. If Christ should come now, there would be generations of yet unborn people, containing generations of Christians yet to come, who would not be in heaven. Therefore, "The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting [any of His elect ones] to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." [cited by Lawson, Ibid.]

William Barclay envisions the hope of universalism in this verse:

Ever and again there shines in Scripture the glint of the larger hope. We are not forbidden to believe that somehow and some time the God who loves the world will bring the whole world to himself. [Barclay, 343]

By extension we should understand 2 Pet 3:9 in the same way as Ezek 18:32. It refers to God's desire that everyone without exception be saved. It follows, then, that Peter spoke of the desired rather than the decreed will of God. God has not ordained that all will be saved since many will perish forever. Still, God genuinely desires in one sense that all will be saved, even if he has not ultimately decreed that all will be saved. Many object that a desire that is not decreed is nonsense and theological double-talk. I would reply that such a view is rooted in biblical exegesis, that the Scriptures themselves, if accepted as a harmonious whole, compel us to make such distinctions. Such complexity is not all that surprising since God is an infinite and complex being, one who exceeds our understanding. In other words, such exegesis is not a rationalistic expedient but an acknowledgment of the mystery and depth of God's revelation. Neither dimension of the biblical text should be denied. God really and truly desires that every person repent and turn to him. We should not retreat to God's decreed will to nullify and negate what the text says. Nor should we use this verse to cancel out God's ordained will. Better to live with the tension and mystery of the text than to swallow it up in a philosophical system that pretends to understand all of God's ways. God's patience and his love are not illusions, but neither do they remove his sovereignty. [Schreiner, 382-83]

Time to Gather the Elect, Bede:

Given that in God's eyes all time is the same, it is impossible for him to delay his promise, for in any case he already predestined it before the foundation of the world. The only reason it has not yet arrived is that he needs time to gather in all the elect, whom he also predestined before time began. Hence we read in the Apocalypse that the souls of the martyrs long day and night for the coming of the day of judgment and resurrection and have heard that they must wait yet a little while until the full complement of their fellow servants and brothers is reached. [Bede, *On 2 Peter*, as cited in ACCS, 159]

Bede the Venerable (c. 672/673-735). Born in Northumbria, at the age of seven he was put under the care of the Benedictine monks of Saints Peter and Paul at Jarrow and given a broad classical education in the monastic tradition. Considered one of the most learned men of his age, he is the author of *An Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. [ACCS, 272]

'You' refers both to Peter's immediate readers and any who will ever come to faith in Jesus Christ (cf. John 10:16). Some have argued that 'you' implies the salvation of all people. But the immediate context and comments about "the destruction of ungodly men" (v 7) clearly limits the 'you' to believers. The letter is addressed to "those who have received a faith of the

same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.... He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature" From then on, the use of 'you' is directed at believers (2:1-3; 3:2). The 'you' of 3:1 are "beloved."The words of verse 8,"do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved" . . . again link the 'you' to the beloved. The 'you' with whom the Lord is patient are therefore the same beloved ones He waits to bring to repentance. . . .

The context indicates that 'any' and 'all' are limited to the elect— namely 'all' those whom the Lord has chosen and will call to Himself. Put another way Christ will not come back until every person whom God chosen is saved. By using the term 'you' (a reference to Peter's believing readers), the apostle limits 'any' and 'all' to the realm of elect human beings.

Of course, once all of the elect are accounted for, God's patience will run out. Having given the world as much time as He has sovereignly determined, God will pour out His wrath upon the earth. While His patience currently holds back His judgment, the time of grace that mankind now enjoys, however long it seems by human standards, will not last forever (cf. Gen. 6:3). [MacArthur, 122-23]

Notes from "Armed for Suffering" (Part 6) - 1 Peter 4:6 and Selected Scriptures
[10081Pe4.6(87) | October 5, 2008]

a. 2 Peter 3:9

(1) {read 3:9 and argue from a universalist's position}

Note the background {read vv. 3-4}
{Read and comment on vv. 5-7}

(2) {Read v. 8}

Verse 8 parallels vv. 3-4 {explain}

Peter draws from Psalm 90:4 **For a thousand years in Thy sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night.**

(3) Verse 9 ==>

Lord is not slow about His promise . . .

(a) What's "His promise?"

t/Mockers and scoffers know what it is! (v. 4). What's His promise? The promise of His coming. Specifically, judgement (v. 7).

The time is coming when all things will be consummated. All t/wicked will be judged & all t/righteous will inherit t/KD. The full # of t/elect will have come to salvation.

[But, the] Lord is not slow about His promise . . . but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

(4) Typical interpretation of this passage is to see two aspects to God's will

He wills in a general way that all men w/o exception be saved. But He wills in a specific way to save only some.

(a) That may be true here; but I don't think so

If you take note of the key words in vv. 7 & 8 I think they paint a picture that Peter is not referring to all men w/o exception, but specif. to t/elect, to all who will believe.

{Note "you" and "beloved" in v. 8 & "you" "any" and "all" in v. 9}

Peter writes to believers. He's writing to t/CH. And He's in effect saying, *"Listen, I know there are those out there wondering why God's judgement is slow in coming. There are mockers saying, 'yeah, God's coming to judge. JC is returning. You Xns have been saying that for years!' But listen, God is patient toward you, beloved. He's patient toward **you**. Not one of Christ's sheep will be lost. That may take 2 thousand years to accomplish. But a 1000 yrs. is to a day to God."*

(b) Let me ask you this:

What if God came in judgement to finalize all things back in t/first century? What if, some 2000 years ago verse 7 was realized {cite}? Where would you be? You who believe? You would never have been born. You would never have come to saving faith because there would be no saving faith & no sacrificial lamb, to come to!

Listen, I'm glad "God is patient." I'm forever grateful that He numbered me among His own and waited patiently until I was born & patiently endured with me & graciously brought to be saving faith.

(c) It's like Paul in Acts 18

He's in Corinth. There are threats against his life. He was fearful. God appears to him telling him, "Don't be afraid. Keep preaching t/Gospel. For I have many people in this city." What does He mean, "I have many people in this city?" The city is full of pagans.

What He means is that there's a number whom He is going to draw out from t/rest & save. Paul persevered. God blessed. And a CH was born.

(d) It's like Rev. 13:8 and 17:8

Both talk about those who's names were written in t/Lamb's book of life from B4 t/foundation of t/world. That is, there are those who were marked out for salv. B4 they were ever born. B4 creation. In t/eternal mind of God, your name was either written there or it was not.

And God has ordained that all whom He chose would come to faith within a certain period of time. From t/beginning of history w/Adam & Eve. to t/end that's yet future, God has been at work saving men from their sin.

And if we look out to t/future, we're not aware how much more time there is. But we know that God is saying to us, *"Keep proclaiming t/Gospel, for I still have many people around t/world that I have determined to save for my glory and their joy."*

"There was never a soul yet, that sincerely sought the Savior, who perished before He (God) found him. No, the gates of death shall never shut on you until the gates of grace have opened for you; until Christ has washed your sins away you shall never be baptized in Jordan's flood. Your life is secure, for this is God's constant plan: He keeps His own elect alive till the day of His grace, and then He takes them to Himself. And in as much as you know your need of a Savior, you are one of His, and you will never die until you have found Him." [C.H. Spurgeon]

That's what I believe Peter is saying. {restate vv. 8-9}