



The Promise of Christ's Coming (Part 3)

02122Pe3.8-9(33)

2 Peter 3:8-9



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.

— 2 Peter 3:3-9 (speaker's translation from the Greek NT)

The Passage is Also Found on Page 184 of the New Testament Section of the Pew Bibles

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

- A. Where is the Promise of His Coming? (4a)
- B. The Basis for Their Argument: Uniformitarianism (4b)

Understand the prophetic presumption of the pessimists in light of the promise of God's perfect patience.

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

- A. An Answer that Looks Back to the Past (5-6)
- B. An Answer that Looks Forward to the Future (7)

☛ 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" (the verb *lanthan* , "to escape one's notice")

- b. Background to verse 8: Psalm 90:4

(1) Remember 1 Peter 1:24-25?

The contrast in 1 Peter 1:24-25 is the brevity of human life as compared to the eternity of God's Word. Here in Psalm 90, Moses contrasts the brevity of human life to the eternity of God. In 2 Peter 3:8-9 Peter contrasts the eternity of God with the impatience of human expectations (as it relates to the

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

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*]

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 . . . 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]

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. [James M. Boice, as cited by *Lawson*, *Ibid.*]

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]