

2 Peter

Dr. Charles “Buddy” Parrish
December 9, 2020



2 Peter 3:1-9

Vss. 1-2

- Peter here reflects on the teaching style of both the Jews and Greeks: repetition. Like Paul in his letter to the Philippians (3:1), saying the same thing over and over is for the church member’s benefit. Like a musician practicing the scales, it is necessary for Christians to hear the truths of the old, old story again and again.
- He gently but pointedly tells the church that they need a reminder. We are too easily distracted. Flashing colored lights and glitter are pretty and we always love the NEW. But as Elijah discovered in 1 Kings 19, we do not need to be distracted by powerful wind, shattering earthquakes, or dazzling fire. We need to quietly listen for the gentle breeze of the Holy Spirit’s voice. God’s people rarely need to be informed, but they often do need to be reminded.
- Peter also understands that the best lessons are flavored with sugar rather than vinegar. He compliments them on the “sincere/pure mind” they have collectively. The Greek word Peter uses here means either grain that has no chaff, stored grain that has no trash or it can mean a glass or crystal so clear and flawless it be held up to the sun to show its clarity. Plato used the same word to mean pure reason, reason not polluted by outside influences. Peter appeals to the church as having a mind unpolluted, not trashed with heresy.
- Peter reminds them of the purity and unity of Scripture. The word of God was given to the prophets, then Christ gave a new commandment, a new word to the apostles and they have given it to us, so that there is an unbroken chain of Truth from the beginning.

Vss. 3-4

- Of all the terrible characteristics of the false prophets plaguing Peter's churches one of the things about them that concerned him most was their denial of the Second Coming of Christ. Their rationale was that with the death and resurrection of Christ, everything had been set right. ALL would be forgiven for EVERY sin, so there really was no need for Christ to return. Further, there was a strong belief that Jesus was going to return in the lifetime of the apostles (Mark 13:30) and that had not happened, so the false prophets took that as proof they were right. Nothing had ever really changed in the world, they argued, since the beginning of time
- Denial is a common attack used by God's enemies. "Where is the God of justice?", evil men asked Malachi (Mal. 2:17). "Where is your God?" they asked in Psalms 42:3 and 79:10. "Where is the word of the Lord?" they catcalled to Jeremiah (Jer. 17:15).

Vss. 5-6

- Peter shoots down the suggestion that since the beginning of time, nothing had changed. He argues that the world has never been a stable place. The Genesis account tells how the earth was covered with water and God separated the waters and gathered the waters back to create dry land (Gen. 1:1-10). Further, God then used this same element, water, to destroy the world due to the world's wickedness. The false idea that God is comfortable with the world as it is fails, for at every turn in Scripture God is bringing painful correction to humanity's wickedness. The world was destroyed by flood. The people following Moses suffered snakes and died in the Sinai desert. Israel went into captivity at the hands of the Babylonians. All of this was due to God's response to human sin and wickedness. These stories of Truth bear repetition, reminder, and practice.

Vs. 7

- Peter knew well the prophets had long testified that whereas God first destroyed the world with flood, on the day of His final judgement He will destroy the world with fire (Joel 2:30; Ps. 50:3; Is. 29:6, 30:30, 66:15,16).
- Following this fiery destruction there would be a New Heaven and a New Earth. Just as God restored things after the flood, He will do so again after the fire, but it will be a final restoration.

Vss. 8-9

- Now as to God delaying, Peter points out that God does not measure time as we do. He refers to Ps. 90:4 whereas 1000 of our days pass it is just as though yesterday had passed for God. CS Lewis argues that time exists only in creation. We measure an hour by how far the sun moves across a sun dial in 60 minutes. We measure months by the movement of the moon around the earth and years by the movement of the earth around the sun. None of this matters in Heaven. God's revelation to Isaiah about the coming Messiah was given to him some 800 years before the birth of Christ. It seems God did not consider that a long time.
- Like John in Revelation, Peter sees that God's delay in ending the world was to our benefit as it buys us more time to repent. Everyday God delays is a gift of His mercy. It gives us time to consider and reconsider. Time to take stock of a sinful life and repent and be saved. To Peter, God's delay was not a concern but grace. Of all the apostles, Peter understands the value of God's mercy, grace and forgiveness and the hope that is found there.