

2 Peter Chapter 3

Verses 1-2

Peter clearly places the “holy prophets” of the Old Testament on the same level of inspiration and authority as “the apostles” of Christ in the New Testament, emphasizing the inspiration of all Scripture.

2 Peter 3:1 "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in [both] which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:"

“This second epistle”:

That is (second to 1 Peter).

“Beloved”:

This attitude toward the readers of his letter reflects Peter’s pastoral concern (1 Peter 5:1-4).

“Your pure minds”:

A good commendation which demonstrates that Peter surely believed that his readers were genuine Christians.

“Sincere”:

This means uncontaminated; unmixed by the seductive influences of the world, the flesh, and also the devil.

How different the true believers were from the corrupt apostate false teachers (2:10-22).

Peter sought to impress on his readers the truth they already knew so that their sanctified reason and spiritual discernment would be able to detect and refute the purveyors of false doctrine.

The Christian has the blessing of the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:16 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?

But we have the mind of Christ."

It is the Holy Spirit of God who brings things to our remembrance.

John 14:26 "But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Our mind is like a giant computer.

Everything we learn is recorded.

The Spirit helps us recall the things which are beneficial to us when we need it.

2 Peter 3:2 "That ye 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:"

“Holy prophets”:

The Old testament prophets are in view, who were holy in contrast to the unholy false teachers.

God’s Word was written by those prophets in the Scriptures.

In particular, those prophets warned about coming judgment (Psalm 50:1-4; Isa. 13:10-13; 24:19-23; Micah 1:4; Mal. 4:1-2).

“The commandment ... of the Lord”:

Peter is referring to the warnings which he and the other apostles had written regarding judgment (Jude 17).

“The apostles”:

The apostles of Christ filled the 260 chapters of the New Testament with about 300 references to the second coming.

New Testament revelation about the Christ coming to gather His own, warnings about eschatological judgments, information about the establishment of His kingdom, and teaching concerning God’s bringing in eternal righteousness, are the irrefutable proof for the second coming of Christ and the judgment of the wicked.

We have spoken in many of the lessons how the apostle is like an ambassador of the Lord.

They are a glorified message carrier.

The message is not their own, but Christ's message who sent them.

These prophets were moved upon by the Holy Spirit of God.

The message was placed in their mouths by the Holy Spirit of God.

You can easily see the importance of taking notice of the message God sent.

The commandments, spoken of by the apostles and prophets, are sent by the Lord to His people.

Verses 3-7

“Knowing this first”:

After describing the proliferation of false teachers to take place during this dispensation, Peter then stresses the importance of being aware of “scoffers,” or those who would cast doubt on whether the Second Coming will truly happen.

While the expression “in the last days” is used to characterize the entire period between Jesus’ first and second advents, scoffers of our own time fit Peter’s description particularly well.

Ridicule and mockery arise from willful rejection of truth rather than any presentation of facts.

The present popular theory of history is based on the supposedly scientific idea of uniformitarianism, which teaches that geological and biological phenomena have operated uniformly since the universe began.

Peter accuses such scoffers of ignoring the biblical account of the original creation (Gen. 1), when the earth was formed out of water and in the water.

Those same waters prominent in the original creation also covered the earth and destroyed it in the Noahic Flood (verse 6; Gen. 6-8).

Peter further warns that in the “last days” of the church age, “scoffers” (literally mockers) will ridicule the “promise” of Christ’s second coming.

He further states that arguments based on supposedly unchanging processes since “creation”, fail to recall the severity of the flood of “water” upon the “earth.”

Just as God once destroyed the world by water; so it is now “reserved unto fire” until the “day of judgment.”

2 Peter 3:3 "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,"

“Knowing this first”:

“First” here means the preeminent matter, not the first in a list.

Peter’s priority in this section of his letter is to warn Christians about how the false teachers would try to deny this judgment and steal the hope of believers.

“In the last days”:

This phrase refers to that entire period from the arrival of the Messiah to His return (Acts 2:17; Gal. 4:4; 2 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 1:2; James 5:3; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 John 2:18-19; Jude 18).

The entire age will be marked by saboteurs of the Christian truth and especially the hope of Christ's return.

“Scoffers”:

False teachers argue against the second coming of Christ or any teaching of Scripture through ridicule (Isa. 5:19; Jude 18).

“Walking after their own lusts”:

Peter again speaks of the lifestyle of the false teachers, which was characterized by sexual lusts (2:2, 10, 13-14, 18), pounding home his warning.

False teachers who know not the truth and know not God have nothing to restrain their lusts.

They particularly mock the second coming of Jesus Christ because they want to pursue impure sexual pleasure without consequence, or without having to face divine retribution.

They want an eschatology that fits their conduct (1 John 2:28-29; 3:2-3).

We must be aware that the world will not receive this message of God.

These "scoffers" are those who make fun of those who believe in salvation through Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

These scoffers (meaning those who have hardened their heart against God), will only laugh at those who believe.

They are so caught up in themselves that they think only of the desires of their own flesh.

They do not believe in anything they cannot see with their physical eyes.

2 Peter 3:4 "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 the creation."

“Where is the promise of his coming”:

The early church believed that Jesus was coming back imminently (1 Cor. 5:51; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 4:15-18; 5:1-2).

These scoffers have employed an emotional argument against immanency rather than any biblical argument.

Their argument played on ridicule and disappointment.

“The fathers”:

The Old Testament patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:1).

“All things continue as they were”:

This argument against the second coming of Christ is based on the theory of uniformitarianism, which says that all natural phenomena have operated uniformly since the beginning of the earth.

The false teachers were also implying that God is absent from earth affairs.

In effect, they were teaching that, “There will not be a great cataclysmic judgmental event at the end of history, because that is not how the universe works.

There never has been such a judgment, so why should we expect one in the future?

Instead, everything in the universe is stable, closed, fixed and governed by never varying patterns and principles of evolution.

Nothing catastrophic has ever happened in the past, so nothing catastrophic ever will happen in the future.

There will be no divine invasion, no supernatural judgment on mankind.”

This is probably the same type of scoffer that laughed at Noah while he was building the ark.

Their whole world revolves around the physical.

Just as it had never rained in the time of Noah and they did not believe.

They do not believe now, because they have never seen Jesus appear in the sky.

Anything that you can see with your eyes requires no faith to believe.

As I said, they have no faith.

They only believe in what they can see.

The worldly can give a logical reason (to them), why the Lord is not coming back.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

We will see later in this lesson why the Lord has not already come back.

2 Peter 3:5 "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:"

The false teachers, in their quest to avoid the doctrine of judgment, deliberately ignore the two major previous divine cataclysmic events, creation and the flood.

“By the word of God”:

Creation was God’s stepping into the emptiness and bringing the universe into existence, not by uniformitarianism, but by an instantaneous, explosive 6-day creation.

Everything has not gone along in some consistent, unvarying evolutionary process.

In six, 24 hour days the whole universe was created mature and complete.

John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The same was in the beginning with God." "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

Colossians 1:16 "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"

“Earth standing out of the water and in the water”:

The earth was formed between two realms of watery mass.

During the early part of the creation week, God collected the upper waters into a canopy around the whole earth, and the lower waters into underground reservoirs, rivers, lakes and seas.

The spoken Word "Let there be" brought everything into existence from nothing.

Being willingly ignorant of something, just means they did not choose to believe.

2 Peter 3:6 "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:"

God, by creating water above and below, built into His creation the tool of its destruction.

“Whereby the world that then was”:

This is a reference to the pre-flood world order.

This world included the physical arrangement with the canopy above, the waters in the underground reservoirs, rivers, lakes, and seas below, and the heavens in the middle

The pre-flood world, sheltered from the sun's destructive ultraviolet rays, and with a gentle climate without rain, storms and winds, was characterized by long life of humans (Genesis 5), and the ability of the earth (like a greenhouse), to produce extensively.

“Overflowed with water, perished”:

The second great divine cataclysm; that defeats the idea of uniformitarianism, was the universal flood which drowned the whole earth and altered that originally created world order.

According to (Genesis 7:11), the flood occurred from two directions: first, the bursting open of the sources of water below as the earth cracked open and gas, dust, water and air burst up.

Then came the breakup of the canopy when hit by all that upward flow, which sent the water from above crashing down on the earth.

The deluge was so cataclysmic that the inhabitants of the earth were all destroyed, except 8 people and a representation of every kind of animal (Gen 7:11-24).

Clearly, by those two great events, it is certain that the world is not in a uniformitarian process.

We have discussed in this series of lessons that God was grieved that He had even made man, because man was so wicked.

Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord, and was saved along with his family in the flood.

The "world", in the verse above, is not speaking of the physical world, but the people that is in the world.

The flood destroyed all but 8 people.

Those 8 people repopulated the world.

2 Peter 3:7 "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

“By the same word”:

The same Word of God that predicted the Flood and fulfilled it also has predicted the future destruction of this world in the Day of Judgment and the destruction of the ungodly.

The second world system is reserved for future judgment, which will come by the Word of God just as creation and the flood came.

God will speak it into existence as well, after the present order is again destroyed.

“Are kept in store”:

Humanity, since the flood, lives in the second world order.

One of the obvious differences between the two world orders is that people live 70 years in the present world not 900 years, which was a common age of pre-flood human beings.

And Peter was making the point that there is a third form of the heavens and earth yet to come following another cataclysm.

“Reserved unto fire”:

God put the rainbow in the sky to signify that He would never destroy the world again by water (genesis 9:13).

In the future, God will destroy the heavens and the earth by fire (Isa. 66:15; Dan. 7:9-10; Mica 1:4; Mal. 4:1; Matt. 3:11-12; 2 Thess. 1:7-8).

In the present universe, the heavens are full of stars, comets, and asteroids.

The core of the earth is also filled with a flaming, boiling, liquid lake of fire, the temperature of which is some 12,400 degrees Fahrenheit.

The human race is separated from the fiery core of the earth by only a thin 10 mile crust.

Far more than that, the whole of creation is a potential fire bomb due to its atomic structure.

As man from atoms creates destructive bombs that burn a path of death; so God can disintegrate the whole universe in an explosion of atomic energy.

“Against the day of judgment ... of ungodly men”:

The earth waits for the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

The godly will not be present on earth when God speaks into existence the judgment by fire (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9).

Everything and everyone are subject to the wishes of God.

Jesus is the Word of God.

Philippians 2:10 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;"

You see, all things are subject to the Word of God.

It is the Word of God that keeps the planets in perfect order.

With one word, He could destroy it all.

After the reign of Jesus on the earth, the earth we know will be destroyed by fire.

There will be a new heaven and a new earth.

2 Peter 3:8 "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years":

God understands time much differently from man.

From man's viewpoint, Christ's coming seems like a long time away (Psalm 90:4).

From God's viewpoint, it will not be long.

Beyond that general reference, this may be a specific indication of the fact that there are 1,000 years between the first phase of the Day of the Lord at the end of the Tribulation (Rev. 6:17), and the last phase 1,000 years later at the end of the millennial kingdom when the Lord creates the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 20:1 - 21:1).

God is present everywhere, and is not limited by time and space.

He is not bound by the normal flow of time, as humans experience it.

A thousand years is but a brief span to One who inhabits eternity; conversely, a day with the One who knows all things at all times, might seem like a thousand years to finite mankind.

There is no separation of time in heaven where God dwells.

There is one eternal day.

The only place where time is measured is on this earth.

God set the measure of time for the earth, Himself.

God established the 24 hours we call a day, the 7 day week and so on.

This scheduled time is for the use of man on the earth.

When we are transported into heaven where God dwells, there is only eternity.

Time never ends or divides into time segments.

With God, a thousand years could be but a blink of the eye.

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

“Not slack”:

That is, not loitering or late (Gal 4:4; Titus 2:13; Heb. 6:18; 10:23, 37; Rev. 19:11).

“Longsuffering to us-ward”:

This refers to those whom the Lord has chosen and will call to complete the redeemed, i.e. meaning the “any”.

Since the whole passage is about God’s destroying the wicked, His patience is not so He can save all of them, but so that He can receive all His own.

He can’t be waiting for everyone to be saved, since the emphasis is that He will destroy the world and the ungodly.

Those who do perish and go to hell, go because they are depraved and worthy only of hell and have rejected the only remedy, Jesus Christ.

Not because they were created for hell and pre-determined to go there.

The path to damnation is the path of a non-repentant heart; it is the path of one who rejects the person and provision of Jesus Christ and hold on to sin (Isa. 55:1; Jer. 13:17; Ezek. 18:32; Matthew 11:28; 23:37; Luke 13:3; John 3:16; 8:21, 24; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; Rev. 22:17).

“That all should come to repentance”:

“All” (“you”, “any”), must refer to all who are God’s people who will come to Christ to make up the full number of the people of God.

The reason for the delay in Christ’s coming and the attendant judgments is not because He is slow to keep His promise, or because He wants to judge more of the wicked, or because He is impotent in the face of wickedness.

He delays His coming because He is patient and desires the time for His people to repent.

God is “not willing that any should perish” clearly expresses desire for the salvation of all who will trust in Him.

Salvation is equated here with “repentance.”

“Not slack concerning his promise”:

God is not late in consummating this age, since to Him it is but a brief span of time, but in His longsuffering, He continues His plan to save the lost.

In patience, He allows time for people to repent, “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Every promise the Lord made will be kept; with no exceptions.

Whatever He promised, He will do.

It may seem to us as if it is a long time coming, but the little time each of us wait is nothing compared to all of eternity.

The only reason the Lord has not already come back, is because He wants all that will come to come, to be saved.

We have only to look at the numerous times God forgave the Israelites (on their way to the Promised Land), to know just how longsuffering He is.

Verses 10-13

“The day of the Lord” here refers to the return of Christ in judgment, not the Rapture, since this day results in final apocalyptic judgment.

“The heavens” that “shall pass away with a great noise” are the atmospheric heavens.

“The elements shall melt with fervent heat” certainly could refer to a nuclear holocaust.

Thus, Peter urges his readers to look beyond this present world to the “new heavens and a new earth” characterized by “righteousness.

2 Peter 3:10 "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

“Day of the Lord”:

The “Day of the Lord” is a technical term pointing to the special intervention of God in human history for judgment.

It ultimately refers to the future time of judgment whereby God judges the wicked on earth and ends this world system in its present form.

The Old Testament prophets saw the final Day of the Lord as unequaled darkness and damnation, a day when the Lord would act in a climactic way to vindicate His name, destroy His enemies, reveal His glory, establish His kingdom and destroy the world (Isa. 2:10-21; 13:6-22; Joel 1, 2; Amos 5; Obadiah 15; Zech. 14; Mal. 4; 2 Thess. 1:7; 2:2).

It occurs at the time of the tribulation on earth (Rev. 6:17), and again 1,000 years later at the end of the millennial kingdom before the creation of the new heavens and new earth (verse 13; Revelation 20:1 - 21:1).

“As a thief”:

The Day of the Lord will have a surprise arrival, sudden, unexpected and disastrous to the unprepared (1 Thess. 5:2).

The heavens shall pass away with a great noise”:

The “heavens” refer to the physical universe.

The “roar” connotes a whistling or a crackling sound as of objects being consumed by flames.

God will incinerate the universe, probably in an atomic reaction that disintegrates all matter as we know it (verses 7, 11-13).

“The elements shall melt with fervent heat”:

The “elements” are the atomic components, into which matter is ultimately divisible, which make up the composition of all the created matter.

Peter means that the atoms, neutrons, protons, and electrons are all going to disintegrate (see verse 11).

“The earth also and the works that are therein”:

The whole of the physical, natural earth in its present form, with its entire universe will be consumed (Isa 24:19-20; 34:4).

Just as the day of the flood finally came, the time of the end will come also.

There is an appointed time that only the Father knows.

The return of the Lord to the earth as King of kings and Lord of lords is not to be confused with the end of the planet.

The earth will be ruled by the King (Jesus), for a thousand years, then the earth will be destroyed by fire, and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

I believe the coming of the Lord and the judgment of fire on the earth itself is going to be two separate happenings.

Revelation 21:1 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

2 Peter 3:11 "[Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness,"

“What manner of persons ought ye to be”:

This is an exclamation rather than a question.

It means, “How astoundingly excellent you ought to be!”

This is a straightforward challenge for Christians to conform their lives to God’s standards in light of the reality of coming judgment and eternity (1 Cor. 4:15; 2 Cor. 5:9).

“Holy conversation and godliness”:

Conversation means conduct and this Scripture refers to the way a Christian should live life, separate from sin.

“Godliness”:

This refers to the spirit of reverence which should permeate a Christian’s attitude, that which rules the heart.

All the worldly goods in your custody today will be gone forever, someday.

We are just custodians of these things.

When we die, we take nothing of this world with us.

They are all passed on to someone who has a better use for them.

Why should we worry and fret trying to amass great fortunes, if we are going to die and leave it to the next generation?

This world and everything in it will pass away.

We should be spending our time laying up treasures for heaven.

2 Peter 3:12 "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God”:

With a continuing expectancy in our hearts, believers should continue looking for the “grand finale” of history, as divinely planned and set forth in prophetic Scripture.

“Hasting”:

This means eagerly desiring or enthusiastically anticipating the coming of the “day of God.”

Christians are not to fear the future day of God, but eagerly hope for it. (1 Cor. 1:7; 16:22; 1 John 2:28; 3:3).

“The day of God”:

The “day of God” is not the same as the “Day of the Lord.”

The “day of God” refers to the eternal state, in preparation of which the heavens and the earth are burned up and the new creation is made.

It is likely so named (because of what Paul had in mind in 1 Cor. 15:28), the eternal glory of the new creation, with God being all in all.

When the day of God comes, man’s “day” will be over.

The corrupting of the universe by man and Satan will have been terminated and judged, finally and forever.

This is not the second coming of Christ, but rather the arrival and presence of the day when God dissolves the heavens as we know them, the earth is burned up and the elements melt with fervent heat in a fiery cataclysmic event.

This earth will be completely consumed and a new earth, fresh from the Creator’s hand, will replace the old one (See Rev. chapters 21 – 22).

The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved”:

The new world in which righteousness dwells, (verse 13), requires the Lord to first destroy the old, sin-cursed universe (Romans 8:19-22).

Christians should not be caught up in the worries the world has.

We look around us and see signs of the nearness of the coming of the Lord.

The world's hearts are failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth.

The Christian should not fear, but have faith. In fact, we should see these signs and rejoice that the coming of the Lord is near.

2 Peter 3:13 "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

“New heavens and a new earth”:

The “promise” of a new universe is rooted in the Old Testament (See Psalm 102:25; Isaiah 65:17; 66:22).

The word “new” means new in quality. (i.e. different from before, not just new in chronology).

This is not the millennial earth, but a promised eternal realm consisting of new heavenly creations, pure from sin.

These consist of a new earth as described (in Rev. 21:1-6), and a new city, where the Bride of Christ will live forever, the place Jesus went to prepare for us (John 14:2-3; Heb. 11:16; 12:22-24; Rev. 21:9-14).

“Dwelleth righteousness”:

The universe is new in quality because righteousness has settled in and taken up permanent and exclusive residence (Isa. 60: 19-22; Rev. 21:1-7).

Abraham spent his life dwelling in tents looking for that city whose maker is God.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We should be looking for that same city.

This world is not our home.

We are strangers in this land and we're waiting for our Deliverer to come and carry us to our Promised Land.

Christians receive the righteousness of Christ when they are saved.

In the (21st chapter of Revelation), we read of the new heaven and new earth.

This is a place of peace, and rest, and no tears.

There will be no one, or nothing evil, in the new heaven and earth.

The Light is provided by Jesus.

To know the full impact of the wonders of this new heaven and new earth (read all of chapter 21 of Revelation).

Verses 14-18

Peter's reference to "our beloved brother Paul", indicates that the rift between Peter and Paul was not permanent (Gal. 2:14).

Peter further refers to Paul's "epistles" in relation to "the other scriptures" by equating them with all other Scripture, including the Old Testament.

2 Peter 3:14 "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

"In peace":

When Christ returns, each Christian should be found enjoying the peace of Christ which knows no worry or fear about the Day of the Lord or the judgment of Christ (Phil. 4:6-7).

To have this peace means that the Christian has a strong sense of assurance of his salvation and a life of obedience to Christ (1 John 4:17).

"Without spot and blameless":

Christians should have a spotless character and a blameless reputation.

These characteristics are in graphic contrast to the false teachers (2:13), but like Christ (see 1 Peter 1:19).

If we are truly a new creature in Christ when we are saved, then we should walk in the salvation He has provided for us.

We should be dead to the world and alive unto Jesus.

He washed us in His blood and clothed us in His righteousness.

We should never take the robe of righteousness off.

Our walk in life should tell the world our standing with Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [I pray God] your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

He is coming for a church that is without spot or wrinkle.

Keep your love for Him pure.

If you love Him, you will keep His commandments.

2 Peter 3:15 "And account [that] the longsuffering of our Lord [is] salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;"

“The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation”:

In addition to what he has already explained (in verse 9), about the Lord’s patience being the reason He delays judgment, here he adds that during the time of God’s patience, Christians should engage in seeking the salvation of souls.

This is related to (verse 9).

The "scoffers" (in verse 9), are wondering why the Lord has not already come back, if he is truly coming back.

In (verse 15), we see the reason for the delay.

He is waiting patiently for those who will receive Him as Savior.

He gave His body on the cross for all mankind, but we must come to Him to accept His free gift of salvation.

He cared enough for our salvation that He endured the humiliation and suffering of the cross to provide it for us.

He is now giving ample time for all who will to come to Christ.

I appreciate the recognition that Peter gives here, that the message Paul brought was true.

Notice also, that Peter says the wisdom to bring the message was given to Paul.

The Holy Spirit had given it to Paul, when he was in the desert 3 years to be taught of God.

Verses 15b – 16

“Hard to understand”:

Since Paul had (by the time Peter wrote), written all his letters and died, the readers of 2 Peter would have already received letters about future events from Paul.

Some of Paul’s explanations were difficult (not impossible), to interpret.

Nevertheless, Peter uses Paul as a support for his teaching.

2 Peter 3:16 "As also in all [his] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as [they do] also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

“Unlearned and unstable wrest”:

In Peter’s day (as today), there was a proliferation of foolish and hurtful perverting of apostolic teaching about the future (verses 3-4; 2 Thess. 2:1-5; 3:6-12).

Peter is correct in his statement that Paul is hard to understand sometimes.

He even seems to contradict himself, until you realize that he must be all things to all people that by all means he might save some.

“The other scriptures”:

This is one of the most clear-cut statements in the Bible to affirm that the writings of Paul are certainly Scripture.

Peter’s testimony is that Paul wrote scripture, but the false teachers distorted it.

The new Testament apostles were aware that they spoke and wrote the Word of God (1 Thess. 2:13), as surely as did the Old Testament prophets.

Peter realized that the New Testament writers brought the divine truth that completed the Bible (1 Peter 1:10-12).

Paul stayed within the customs of the people he was ministering to, that is where the difficulty of understanding came in.

He did not say the same thing to all people, because he was trying to reach them for Christ at the level of understanding where they were.

He also tried not to offend them in their customs and traditions, so they would truly receive the gospel message.

“Unto their own destruction”:

The fact that distorting Paul's writings leads to eternal damnation proves that Paul's writings were inspired of God.

2 Peter 3:17 "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know [these things] before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

"Seeing ye know these things before":

Since Christians now know that there will be false teachers who will appear, twisting and distorting the Scriptures, they should be all the more on their guard.

"Beware ... being led away ... fall":

Any time a believer seriously listens to a false teacher, he runs the risk of being led astray (2 Tim. 2:14-18; Titus 1:10-16).

So much of the confusion in the church over one little Scripture causes people to fall away from the church.

I personally believe the fight over denominations is the greatest tool that Satan has.

Divide and conquer.

I am not saying there should not be different denominations.

I am saying we should not argue over denominational things.

1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Hebrews 3:14 "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;"

2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in grace, and [in] the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him [be] glory both now and for ever. Amen."

"Grow in grace and in the knowledge":

Peter ends this letter with a summary statement of the same instruction with which he began it (See 1:2-11).

Pursuing Christian maturity and a deepening knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ will lead to doctrinal stability and prevent a Christian from being led astray.

We have said so many times that a Christian must grow in the knowledge of the grace of God, or he will backslide.

We never stay the same.

We are either growing, or going backwards.

The very best way to grow in the Lord is to study His Word (Bible).

You could study it every day for the rest of your life and never know all there is in the Word.

It is alive and new every time you read it.

Knowledge is accumulated learning.

It takes effort on our part to gain knowledge of the Word.

Seek, and ye shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Pray the Holy Spirit will reveal the meaning of the Word to you as you read it, and it will amaze you what understanding it will bring.

To our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be glory both now and forever more.

"Now and for, ever":

This is speaking of the eternal day where Jesus (the Light of the world), dwells.

We can say with Peter, To God be the glory, now and forever more.

“To him be glory”:

Such a call for glory to Christ demonstrates again that Peter considered Jesus Christ to be deity, equal in honor with God the Father (1:1; John 5:23).

2 Peter Chapter 3 Questions

1. How did Peter stir up their minds?
2. Who brings things to our remembrance?
3. Who is the Comforter?

4. What are we to be mindful of in verse 2?
5. What is an apostle?
6. Where did the commandments they brought originate?
7. Who will come in the last days and walk after their own lusts?
8. Who are the scoffers?
9. What are the only things they believe?
10. What are these scoffers saying?
11. If you can see something with your physical eye, it takes ____ faith to believe in it.
12. Without _____, it is impossible to please God.
13. In verse 5, we see the heavens were of old by what?
14. What 3 Words brought everything into existence?
15. Why did God destroy the world that then was, by water?
16. Who found favor with God and was spared?
17. What is our world reserved for?
18. Who is the Word of God?
19. What keeps the planets in perfect order?
20. When will the earth be destroyed by fire?
21. One day with the Lord can be as a _____.
22. What is the time in heaven?
23. Verse 9 says, the Lord is not slack, but _____.
24. The day of the Lord will come as a _____ in the night.
25. Where in Revelation, do we read there will be a new heaven and a new earth?
26. What reaction should the Christians have when they realize that the end is near?
27. We look for a new _____ and a new _____, wherein dwelleth _____.
28. Where did Paul receive his wisdom?

29. Grow in _____ and in the knowledge of our _____ and _____.