

Metro Women's Bible Study **2 Peter 3:1-9**

Lesson 6

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise to return, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to perish, so he is giving more time for everyone to repent. 2 Peter 3:9 NLT In this week's study we will be dealing with *scoffers* who reject the truth of Jesus' return. Begin this week's lesson with a prayer asking the Lord to *stir up your mind* to remember and rejoice in the *promise of His return*.

DAY ONE: Read 2 Peter 3:1-9

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase.

OPTIONAL: At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

Used in previous lessons: *God* and *Jesus*

New to this lesson: *forget*

OPTIONAL: Now using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 2 Peter 3:1-9. Remember, as you mark the words *God* and *Jesus*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Them.

2. Peter used the contrasting term *but* three times (verses 7, 8, and 9). Choose one of them and record the contrast that Peter made.

3. Notice the key word *forget*. What did the *scoffers willfully forget*?

a. What are we not to *forget*?

DAY TWO: Read 2 Peter 3:1-2

1. In contrast to the graphic terms in chapter 2 describing the false teachers, Peter's language softens as he addresses his readers in chapter 3 as *beloved*; those that are dear to his heart & very much loved. According to 2 Peter 3:1, why did Peter write this letter to the *beloved*?

a. How does he say he will do this?

b. Look up the word *stir up* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Stir up-

2. According to 2 Peter 3:2, what two things should believers be *mindful of*?

3. Do you remember Eutychus who fell asleep listening to surely one of the most erudite, anointed preachers who ever lived? Read Luke's records of the event in Acts 20:7-10.

Acts 20:7-10

a. If you've been a believer for any length of time, you are all too painfully aware of how easy it is to become accustomed to God's truth and to take it for granted to the point that we are lulled to sleep by it rather than stimulated to love and good deeds by it! Has there been a time when this has described your state? How did you come out of it?

b. Do you have a friend, parent, sibling spouse, or child that fits this state of sleepiness? What can you do to help them awaken out of this state?

4. Here we see Peter's purpose for writing this epistle -- **to stir up his readers**. This is the second time Peter uses this word. Reread 2 Peter 1:12- 13.

5. Peter tells his readers, that they have a pure mind. Look up the word *pure* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Pure-

How different the true believers were from the corrupt and apostate false teachers in chapter 2. Such a dramatic contrast to the deceived minds of the false teachers!

6. Believers of all people are to have "sun (Son) tested" minds that are morally and ethically pure and free of sensual thoughts and passions. What were Paul's words to the saints at Philippi in Philippians 4:8?

7. Living in this age of information overload, how do you keep your *pure mind stirred up to remember* the truth that protects you from error?

Someone said, "Men more frequently require to be reminded than informed! Note the prefix of the Greek word for remembrance: "hupo" which means "under". The idea is that once they were awakened, everything that they had previously learned gets under them continues to keep them stirred and continues to keep them stable. How is Peter going to "STIR THEM UP"? By reminding them!"

a. How many times do we need to be reminded of the things God has already taught us?

8. Verse 2: ***The words which were spoken before by the holy prophets*** is a reference to the Old Testament, and ***the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior*** refers to the New Testament. Peter's purpose in this third chapter is to awaken the reader's *pure minds* to what the *holy prophets* and *apostles* taught and commanded, so they would be able to recognize the errors of the false teachers and scoffers. Look up the words *Holy & prophet* in your Concordance and write out the English definition.

Holy-

Prophets-

****These men of the Old Testament were set apart from the secular, profane and evil in this world and dedicated to the service of God. Their setting apart was in marked contrast to the "unholy" false teachers who instead of being set apart for God were in fact set against Him and His truth.**

DAY THREE: Read 2 Peter 3:3-4

1. Write 2 Peter 3:3 phrase by phrase.

a. Underline the words *last days*. The *last days* refers to the time beginning with Christ's first coming and will end with His second coming. We have been in the *last days* for two thousand years.

2. What does verse 3 say will happen in the *last days*?

3. Look up the word scoff in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Scoff-

a. Use synonyms for the word *scoff* to define what a *scoffer* does.

b. Describe the lifestyle of the *scoffers* from verse 3. (see also Jude 1:10,17-19)

4. To begin with you know that mockers will come with their mockeries in the last days. **Mocking** implies an underlying unyielding pride and a hardness toward God and His holy word. The scoffer refuses to submit to God's Word and stirs up trouble wherever he goes. How does Proverbs 22:10 instruct us to deal with the scoffer?

Proverbs 22:10

5. We also learned from verse 3 that these mockers will *follow after their own lusts*. Define the word *lust* from your dictionary or your Concordance.

Lust-

a. What a person believes is intimately related to how he or she lives. If one refuses to follow Christ, the only other option is to follow self. And so Peter explains why they "mock" -- they want to continue living in their sins. Mockery and lust will go together. Peter says that these things are a sign of **the last days**, days when men's and women's own pleasure is the sole "law" governing. They follow **after their own lusts** because they are unrestrained by a reverential, holy fear of God. Do you know people who fit this description? Was this you before you became a Christian?

6. Notice the contrast the walk of the *scoffers* with the walk of those who are looking forward to Christ's return in 1 John 3:2-3. What affect does this *hope* have on both their lifestyle?

a. How does this speak to you about the necessity of *keeping your minds stirred up* by way of remembrance?

7. What would the *scoffers* be saying? 2 Peter 3:4

a. In verse 4 Peter tells us that the mockers say that everything on earth is the same as it has been since the world began. According to verse 5-6, is that true?

8. The *scoffers* were aware of the *promise* of His coming. Choose one of the following references and write the *promise* next to it.

John 14:1-3

Acts 1:6-11

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

9. Why do you think people would try to convince believers that Jesus is not coming back?

DAY FOUR: Read 2 Peter 3:5-7

****Peter is addressing the mockers who say that things will never change. He has presented the historical truths they willfully ignore that by the Word of God two great past cataclysmic events have occurred -- the Creation of the heavens and the earth and the destruction of the world by the Genesis flood.**

1. The erroneous argument these *scoffers* use is *Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.* (2 Peter 3:4b NIV) What is wrong with this argument according to 2 Peter 3:5-6?

a. What do these *scoffers* *willingly* do?

2. Reflect on the word *willingly*. What does this imply concerning these people?

3. Identify from 2 Peter 3:6, the event the *scoffers* deny.

a. Peter, in refuting their argument, refers to the flood described in Genesis 6-9. Write the words he uses to describe what happened to *the world that then existed*.

4. Review the following verses concerning the worldwide flood and record how they confirm the universality of it.

Genesis 7:19

Genesis 7:23

Genesis 7:24

a. What parallel do you see in the second coming of Christ and the flood in Noah's time? (See Matthew 24:37-39)

5. *The heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word...*(2 Peter 3:7). What word is Peter referring to? (see 2 Peter 3:5)

a. What are the heavens and the earth *reserved for*?

NOTE: Peter says the Word which created, now keeps the heavens and earth stored up for this fire. Clearly Peter wants his readers to understand that the world and all that is within it from beginning to end is dependent upon the omnipotent Word of God.

b. What do these passages say about His Word?

Matthew 24:35 –

2 Corinthians 1:20

6. What does Romans 2:5 teach about those with *impenitent* (unrepentant) hearts?

Romans 2:5-

7. In the New Testament, eternal damnation is pictured as an everlasting fire. How does the prophet Malachi describe the return of the Lord Jesus in Malachi 3:2?

8. How should the reality that the earth will one day be destroyed affect the way we live our lives from day to day?

DAY FIVE: Read 2 Peter 3:8-9

1. After Peter exposes the error of the *scoffers*, he now deals with what seems like a delay in Christ's return. What does 2 Peter 3:8 say we, the *beloved*, are not to *forget*?

a. We on earth live in the dimension of time. What do we learn about time from the eternal perspective in Psalm 90:4?

Psalm 90:4

Note: Peter wants his readers (who will surely be faced with taunts from the scoffers) to remember that God is in control and He is always on time. Scoffers would attempt to make us believe that God has fallen asleep or He is inept or He does not keep His promises. To pay attention to such lies would hardly undergird our faith, and so Peter calls for focused attention. Christians must be careful lest the propaganda of the scoffers distort their thinking.

2. We are not to use this seeming delay in our Lord's return as an excuse for not living for what is eternally important. Choose one of the following parables to confirm this statement.

Matthew 24:48-50

Matthew 25:1-13

3. Peter moves from the **timelessness** of God to the **tenderness** of God. Write 2 Peter 3:9 phrase by phrase and underline the words that speak to you.

NOTE: Peter does not dispute the mocker's claim that the Second Coming had been delayed. He uses the delay as an opportunity to explain that another reason the Lord's return seems to be so long in coming is that God wants as many people to be saved as possible.

a. How does Hebrews 10:36-37 encourage you regarding the promise of His return?

Hebrews 10:36-37

4. From our limited human perspective, it seems the Lord's second coming is *slow*. What two reasons are stated in 2 Peter 3:9 for this seeming slowness?

a. What do you learn about the heart of God from this verse?

5. The word *slack* means to *delay, tarry, or slow*. *The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise as some understand slowness* 2 Peter 3:9a NIV. How do these verses show God's heart & *slowness* in regards to His judgment?

Ezekiel 33:11 “¹¹Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’

Psalm 86:15 “But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

Isaiah 30:18 Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.

Romans 2:4 “⁴Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

6. In this verse **but** introduces the contrasting reality that God's deliberate delaying action has a wonderfully benevolent purpose. The Lord is longsuffering toward us. Define the word *longsuffering* using your Concordance.

Longsuffering

7. Please read the following and respond with what spoke to you the most about God's longsuffering.

God endures endless blasphemies against His name, along with rebellion, murders, and the ongoing breaking of His law, waiting patiently while He is calling and redeeming His own.

It is not impotence or slackness that delays final judgment but it is His attribute of patience. This attribute of God is reflected in His ability to be inconvenienced or

taken advantage of by a person over and over again and yet not manifest anger!
Amazing love and grace from an amazing God.

God's "longsuffering" was behind His delaying the Genesis Flood for 120 years,

"when the patience [makrothumia] of God kept waiting in the days of Noah during the construction of the ark in which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through the water" (see note 1 Peter 3:20)

God was not blind to the violence and wickedness of man (Gen 6:5-6) which justifiably would have warranted His immediate judgment and yet He held back His wrath, instead sending the evildoers Noah a "preacher of righteousness." (see note 2 Peter 2:5).

In the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, God patiently waited while Abraham interceded for the cities and He would have spared them had He found ten righteous people in Sodom (Gen 18:23-33).

This same longsuffering that manifested itself in the days before the world's cataclysmic destruction by water and the local destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone, is still manifest today as God holds off the coming destruction of the universe by an all consuming conflagration.

DAY SIX: Review 2 Peter 3:1-9

1. Why is it important to be reminded of the truths of God's Word?
2. What are some Biblical truths you have heard people *scoff* at?
3. In what way are *scoffers* and their lifestyle of *walking after their own lusts* another evidence of the fact that what a person believes directly influences his behavior?
4. How does the *promise of His coming* influence your life?
5. How have you personally benefited from God's *longsuffering*?
6. Record in your Worksheets what you have learned about "Truths about God, Truths about Jesus, Truths about the Holy Spirit, Truths about the Believer, and Instructions."