

A STUDY THROUGH THE BOOK OF 2 PETER

BIBLE TEXT | 2 PETER 3:8-10

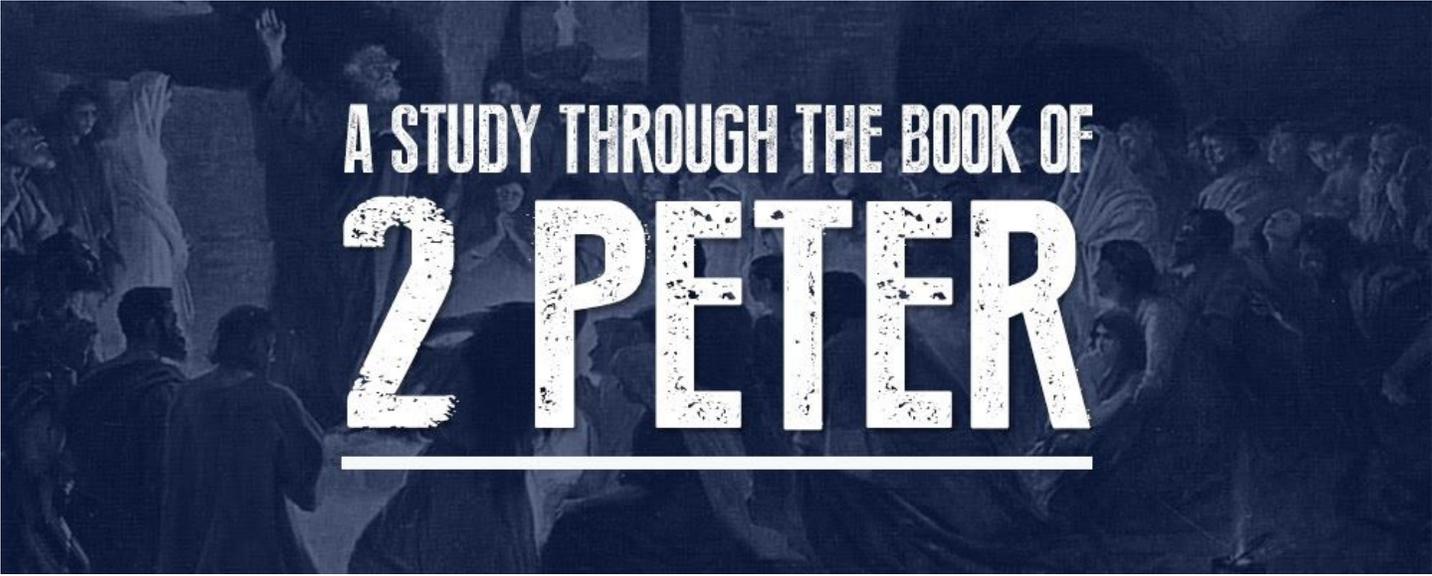
8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. **9** The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. **10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

DEVOTIONAL FOR 2 PETER 3:8-10

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How do you count slowness? Would you consider a person finishing last in a race to be slow? When compared to the speed of the person in first place I would likely say yes. But when I consider an Olympic runner, and the amount of races he or she had to win in order to qualify for the Olympics and then compare myself to them, I find myself to be the one who is slow. Further still, when compared to a child--I believe you get the point--speed, in this sense, the rate at which something happens or is done, is relative.

Our struggle today is the same as it was in Peter's day, our concept of time is not the same as the Lord's concept of time. What we attempt to do then is place him, who exists outside of time, though is ever-present in it, within our understanding of it. Peter says NO! He continues his refute of the scoffers in verse 3 with an exhortation to *not overlook this one fact* (the fact that they overlook, verse 5, then and even now), *that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*. He does not say that 'one day is a thousand years, and a thousand years are one day' as if God has no use for time, but Peter is telling us that we cannot confine him to our time schedule. What we may see as only taking a day to complete, God may take a thousand years to complete, and the reverse is true as well. Whether he made his promise yesterday or a thousand years ago, he will remain faithful to fulfill what he has promised. We should always reflect back on his character.



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Peter's statement in verse 8 does not negate the hope of Christ's return, but rather affirms it! *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, but is patient.* It is his grace and mercy that delays the coming of Christ. It is the same *patience that waited in the days of Noah* (1 Peter 3:20), *not wishing that any would perish, but that all should reach repentance.* (cf. 1 Timothy 2:4). Despite the delay, *the day of the Lord will come, and like a thief* no less. Swift, sudden, and unexpected with many looking around wondering what it was that just happened.

What is it then that we are to do in the interim? Patiently wait? Yes, but not while being idle. How is it that those that the Lord is patient for might come to repent? I am reminded of Paul's words to the church at Rome, "*How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to Preach unless they sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'*" (Romans 10:14-15) It is through the hearing of the gospel that unbelievers, scoffers even, come to faith in Christ, and it is by that faith that they come to repentance. This is the very thing that the Lord is patient for, but despite his patience the day will come when everything will be laid bare.

Not even Jesus knows *that day or that hour* (Mark 13:32) and told his disciples "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority," (Acts 1:7) but "the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations" (Mark 13:10) and "you will be my witnesses...to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). And by his commission in Matthew 28:19, we are to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations." God is waiting patiently, but will not delay forever. If indeed *one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day* to the Lord, then the day of the Lord is at hand. From this moment to the next could be the moment of his return. When we cease to count slowness by what we believe we see ahead or what we can see behind and join in the work of bringing the nations to repentance then we may very well find ourselves sooner seeing that Day!

Questions:

1. How have you viewed the Lord's "slowness"?
2. What do you know for certain about the Second Coming? How does this affect your daily living?
3. Have people scoffed at you for your beliefs? How have you responded?
4. What is your record of witnessing to others about Jesus Christ, his salvation, and his return?