



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



# The Second Catholic Epistle of St. Peter

## Chapter 3

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# Introduction

- St. Peter is reminding us to give heed to the prophets and apostles of the Lord
- Scoffers will come who conveniently forget that the Word concerning His second coming
- Any delay is an indication of the Lord's longsuffering (3:1-9)
- When the Day comes, it will be unexpected like a thief in the night, so Christians are to focus on holy conduct and godliness, (10-13)



# Introduction

- We should view the longsuffering of the Lord as opportunity for salvation
- Even as St. Paul wrote in his epistles about His second coming
- St. Peter instructs us with admonitions to beware lest we fall, and asking us to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus
- St. Peter brings his second epistle to a close with a doxology to Christ (14-18)

# God's Promise Is Not Slack (3:1-9)



- This language implies a former letter written to the same persons to whom this is addressed
- In both letters his object was mainly to exhort them to holy lives
- By reminding you of the Christian teachings as shown by prophets and apostles
- Both of what was spoken by the prophets in the OT, and what of what the apostles have now spoken in NT and of course the Lord's words

# God's Promise Is Not Slack (3:1-9)



- They have reminded us that there will be scoffers following their own indulgences
- This question as though the coming of Christ was so long delayed that all hope had ended
- They take advantage of the disappointment to try to destroy faith
- The scoffers assert that the regular order of things continues right on as it was from the beginning
- They forget the flood

# God's Promise Is Not Slack (3:1-9)



- Their ignorance which causes them to speak thus is willful
- They obstinately forget all the lessons taught by the flood
- There the fixed order was interrupted
- That by the word of God Gen 1:6,9
- The heavens were of old: This alludes to the beginning of creation Gen 1:1,2
- Water is a principal element in its formation, a fact seen in three-fourths of its surface being sea

# God's Promise Is Not Slack (3:1-9)



- And water being found in the depths of the earth everywhere, and being found largely in earthly combinations
- By means of the waters of heaven and earth; the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, the old world was overflowed and perished (Gen 7:11)
- The same word of God which has always been sure, declares that they are reserved for fire

# God's Promise Is Not Slack (3:1-9)



- This destruction by fire will be when the Lord is revealed and when perdition comes on ungodly
- Delay was the objection of the scoffers, but time is no element in the counsels of God
- He has eternity in which to work out his purposes
- If he seems to us, short lived creatures, to delay, it for wise purposes Ps 90:4
- Delay is not due to slackness, but because God is long- suffering and is giving time to repentance



# The Day of the Lord (3:10-13)

- The Day of the Lord refers to the second advent
- Thief: When people are not expecting it
- The material of which they are composed will melt (Luke 21:33)
- The world shall come to an end is a scientific fact
- Science finds the elements of final dissolution in the relations of the earth and sun
- These and many other facts point to a necessary and inevitable change



# The Day of the Lord (3:10-13)

- Since we have no abiding home on this earth and seek one beyond, we should be ready
- Looking for: preparing for, and desiring the Lord's coming
- Dreadful as that day will be for the impenitent, it is a day of relief and joy to the saints
- His promise: Isa 65:17; 66:22
- The heavens and the earth are changed, purified, and made better for the home of the righteous



# Be Steadfast (3:14-18)

- Now follows an earnest exhortation to holiness in view of the coming of the Lord
- God's long-suffering is to promote salvation
- We cannot tell what epistles of St. Paul are alluded to. We have at least three which were written to the same churches St. Peter was addressing
- St. Peter knew of many epistles that St. Paul had written, and knew also that they contained some very profound argument



# Be Steadfast (3:14-18)

- The Jews especially found it difficult to understand (See for example Galatians Letter)
- Untaught and unstable: ignorant and indecisive
- Twist: Pervert and give meanings that were never meant
- The other scriptures may mean the Old Testament, or New Testament writings already written
- So, when St. Peter wrote, St. Paul's epistles were accepted as a part of the Scriptures



# Be Steadfast (3:14-18)

- Destruction: This should be a warning to all in our day who twist the Scriptures
- Know this beforehand: That there shall be false teachers; hence beware of them
- Grow: as it was shown in 1 Pet 2:2
- The two kinds of growth must keep equal pace: grace and knowledge of the Lord
- He who grows in the one will grow in the other
- Doxology of glory



# Conclusion

- Why did St. Peter write his second letter?
- What kind of people will arise in these last days? What will they be led by?
- What will these people say?
- Why is God delaying judgment?
- Because of this judgment, how then shall we live?
- When He comes, what are the three things that should characterize us?