

2 Peter 3:8-9

“Doubting the Day of the Lord (part b)”

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I. Intro

In the third chapter Peter address one of the more effective false teaching that the false teachers employed that discouraged believers. Peter quoted their false teaching in verse 4-5 “*Where is the promise of His coming*”. Their reasoning was “*For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.*” The false teachers that Peter calls “scoffers” in verse 3 saw the universe as stable, a closed system and determined that God does not intervene in human history. At issue was why this was affective, and it was because it called upon the deployment of “human reasoning” instead of trusting in “Devine revelation”. *The uncertainty of the present condition of these believers form the standpoint of human reasoning made it seem as though God was unable or indifferent to their suffering!* It is a choice we face today as we can choose to except the ideas or philosophies of men, or we can trust God’s word. These philosophies are NOT divided based upon liberal and conservative viewpoints they are far more sophisticated as their aim is to get the person away from the clear teaching of God’s Word. The world is NOT going to get better as “human reasoning” suggests but evil isn’t going win this is clear from the perspective of God’s word; God is not slack concerning His promises. There are different types of “human reasoning” some well-meaning Christian conservatives believe that their viewpoint is not only right but will win and we can legislate our way to God’s Kingdom. Oppose liberal ideology, take up arms, don’t take the vaccine...etc. It becomes an obsession “researching everything from rightwing internet sights” but all that happens is the world becomes convinced that the gospel of Christ is about what we are against and not what Jesus has finished on the cross. Any ideas or philosophies of men, that gets us away from trusting God’s word is one in which we should abandon. One of the tactics of the enemy is division as we disagree on events that are affecting all of us but aren’t the things that our heart should be focused on. To counter this Peter will set the hearts of these saints back upon God’s perspective as it relates to the adverse events in our lives.

II. Vs. 8 Do you know the time?

Vs. 8 Again Peter address his readers with the tender words of “*beloved*” to indicate his heart towards them. There are two points that Peter wants his readers to understand:

The phrase “*do not forget this one thing*” in the Greek is “*stop allowing this to be hidden from you.*” This indicates that the “*Scoffing*” false teachers were actively engaged in this deliberate deception. *The deception was to encourage the willful ignorance of how “God views His activity in time”.* First there is a difference between the “Scoffers” and the discouraged believer in their ignorance of this. The Psalms records such discouragement from honest hearts, but the nature of their question isn’t mocking faith but wondering why the delay! The Bible talks about the “SOON” return of Christ and here we are waiting 2000 years. The Christian needs to be balanced between the expectation and anticipation of Jesus’ return without slipping into the predicting of the specific time. To do this Peter says **the fulfilment is: “with the Lord”** the promise is not something that we can know nor is it something that we ought to spending all our time trying to understand when it will take place; it’s with the Lord! **When we focus our attention on prognostication we can become discouraged when our predictions don’t happen, and we can also assume that God’s delaying is somehow because of either “inability” or “disinterest”!**

III. Vs. 9 GST

The next thing Peter says is “*One day is a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*” Peter’s admonition is a quote from Psalm 90:4 where we read that, “*For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night*” The point of this quote seems to be similar to Isa 55:8-9 “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and so are My thoughts than your thoughts.*” We must always remember that we cannot by our very nature understand the mind of God! We instead must approach our discouragement with regards to what we perceive as “God’s delay” **not a problem with God but instead one of human perspective!** There is an infinite qualitative difference between how God views time and how we do. We cannot view events the same as God for four reasons:

1. God sees them from eternity, and we see them from the prison of earth. This

speaks **not of altitude of the vista** but rather what Isa 46:10 declares that God “*Declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.*”

God is above time, yet we are His creation bound by time and think and operate only in the sphere of time. So, when we think of the fulfillment of God’s promise and purposes we must be careful NOT to ascribe to God our understanding and limitations. To God, Peter reminds us that, “*One day is a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*” In other words, **God does not LIVE at all in the realm or terms and conditions of the process of time!**

2. The second point is also found in the above statement out of Psalm 90:4 and that is **God is above time but acts in time!** Although, **God does not LIVE at all in the realm or terms and conditions of the process of time,** He clearly has chosen to operate in this realm, He created it as He began it by creating the world in a moment in eternity and so doing started the clock of history! Though he is above it He set time in motion! God, the Watchmaker made the watch but doesn’t ware one but makes sure that the one that we are all waring functions perfectly just as He made it too and everything in the world of time happens perfectly according to His plan and not always ours. **We need not worry about the events of our life, we won’t leave time one second before it is time!!!** Everything in this world and in our specific lives operates on the exact same time GST time zone, “God Standard Time”. The problem we have is that we forget that God is not bound to work in the DST or Dale Standard Time zone that I often prefer. And when God doesn’t work in my time zone I wrongly doubt the events of my life as if he is either “**unable**” or “**disinterest**”. The bible records 86 times the phrase “in due time” and that is a reminder that God was telling the readers that the events of their life were “right on time”, His time! God’s watch is a “***Devine Chronograph***” that starts and stops only on His command and plans, not ours!
3. Vs. 9a The third point is one that is found in the 9th verse as we find here **what delays or stops time is far different with God than what our controls our earthly time.** “*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish*

but that all should come to repentance.” What moves the hands of “God’s watch” is what we are told in Genesis 6:3 “**My Spirit shall not strive with man forever.**” The moral conditions of when man no longer was heading the opportunities to get back in right relationship with Him. As it relates to His 2nd coming He will come back when humanity again as Genesis 6:5 says of the days of Noah a time when “***The Lord sees that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only on evil continually.***” That is not a fixed date on our calendars, but it is one that is fixed on His! He isn’t looking at a watch He is looking at the hearts of humanity and that will determine the fulfilment of time! We can pick a date on a calendar, but God is not obliged to keep it as He alone as Hebrews 4:12 reminds us “***is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart***”.

4. Vs. 9b Finally Peter reminds us that God “***is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance***”. He is not “tardy” with regards to His coming, He has made a promise and He will keep it perfectly. God is greater than His promises especially the way we wrongly interpret them. **What has caused the “delay” from our perspective is not incompetence, but instead LOVE for the LOST.** Had God not delayed from our perspective I would never had the opportunity to know His love for me. Oh, how we all should praise the seeming delay! God is always willing to save a person, but people are not always willing to be saved! He respects the wills of His creation even those who are fighting against His Love for them, and His seeming delay is not tardiness to keep His promises but rather patience with fallen humanity giving them every opportunity that His love demands through history, but His justice is also on that same watch and only He knows when the two hands will meet!