

## PETER'S EPISTLES: PREPARING FOR ETERNITY

### XXIX. Living In View Of The Future Universe

(2 Peter 3:14-18)

#### I. Introduction

- A. Before the Apostle Peter began to minister for the Lord in the Church, his outlook was impacted by Christ's prophecy in John 21:18-19 that he would be crucified for Christ. Eternity was thus often on Peter's mind.
- B. In accord with this theme, and in view of the opposition of false teachers to the righteousness of God that will mark the future universe (cf. 2 Peter 2:1-22), Peter in 2 Peter 3:14-18 directed that his readers live lives that reflect the righteousness of God's future universe in which they will live.
- C. We view this passage for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

#### II. Living In View Of The Future Universe, 2 Peter 3:14-18.

- A. To "show that one's behavior is linked to his expectation of the Lord's coming," the "paragraph" that begins with 2 Peter 3:14 begins with the inferential conjunction **Dio**, "for this reason, therefore" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 812; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 197). Thus, the end of the current universe that is marked by the presence of sin with its traumatic passing away with a great noise and fervent heat followed by God's creation of a new universe in which God's righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:10-13) indicates that the believer's departing from sin and living righteously is immensely important to the Creator God Himself! Thus, it only follows (**Dio** in 2 Peter 3:14a) that we believers should seek to be viewed by our Creator God as spotless, blameless and at peace in our lives, 2 Peter 3:14b!
- B. To counter the mockers whom Peter foretold would arise, we should view the seeming long delay of Christ's return not as reason to doubt that Christ would return like God predicted but as evidence of His longsuffering in delaying His expression of wrath, for God wants the lost to trust in Christ to be saved, 2 Peter 3:15a KJV.
- C. Peter claimed that the Apostle Paul wrote of this longsuffering by God, and Paul's claim of this truth appears in his epistle of Romans at Romans 2:4 (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 878).
- D. Peter then exemplified what he taught, exhibiting spotlessness, blamelessness and peace in 2 Peter 3:15b-16:
  1. First, Peter exemplified spotlessness, blamelessness and peace in relating to the Apostle Paul, 2 Pet. 3:15b:
    - a. Decades years before this epistle was written, "Paul had severely rebuked Peter (Gal. 2:11-14), but this did not sever their love and respect for each other" (Ibid., p. 434, 878).
    - b. Also, Peter in 2 Peter 3:15b referred to Paul as literally "our beloved brother Paul" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., loc. cit.), indicating his continued high regard for and love for this fellow brother in Christ.
    - c. Furthermore, Peter wrote that Paul had written with the wisdom God had given him, recognizing Paul's spiritual gifting and calling of the Lord, 2 Peter 3:15b.
    - d. In addition, Peter added that Paul wrote the same way in all of his epistles, speaking of these things and that Paul's letters contained some things that were hard to understand so that ignorant and unstable people distorted them, 2 Peter 3:16a,b NIV. In other words, Peter defended Paul's writings from his critics.
    - e. Finally, Peter highly elevated Paul's epistles, writing that they were divinely inspired Scripture along with the rest of the divinely inspired Scriptures, 2 Peter 3:16c. We explain:
      - i. When Peter wrote about the "other" Scriptures besides Paul's letters, the Greek word for "other" is **loipas**, meaning "remaining," that is, others of the **same kind** (Arndt & Gingrich, op. cit., p. 481).
      - ii. Had Peter meant that Paul's letters were "other" of a **different kind** than the divinely inspired Scriptures, he would have used the Greek term **allos** for the English word "other" (Ibid., p. 39).
      - iii. Thus, Peter wrote that all of Paul's epistles were Scripture **along with the rest** of the Scriptures, so "Paul's writings were then considered authoritative Scripture" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., loc. cit.).
  2. Second, Peter exemplified spotlessness, blamelessness and peace in warning his readers to be on guard against the false teachers to come that they not fall from their lofty spiritual lifestyles into sin, 2 Peter 3:17.
  3. Third, Peter exemplified spotlessness, blamelessness and peace in urging his readers to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory both now and forever, 2 Peter 3:18.

***Lesson:*** In view of the high priority of overcoming sin to live righteously in God's view as noted in His one day catastrophically destroying the current sin-tainted universe to create a new one where righteousness dwells, we believers are to live righteous, spotless, blameless and peaceful lives as taught and exemplified by Peter.

***Application:*** In view of God's great desire to give us a destiny of righteousness, may we live righteously today.