

## A Structural Study of II Peter 3

A<sub>1</sub>) Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.

B<sub>1</sub>) a) {2} I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets  
b) and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

C<sub>1</sub>) a) {3} First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

b) {4} They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?"

c) Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

d) {5} But they deliberately forget that\_

B<sub>2</sub>) a) AA) long ago by God's word

BB) the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. {6} By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.

b) AA) {7} By the same word

BB) the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

C<sub>2</sub>) d) {8} But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:

c) With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

b) {9} The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

a) He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

B<sub>3</sub>) b) {10} But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

a) The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

A<sub>2</sub>) a) {11} Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?

b) You ought to live holy and godly lives

c) {12} *as you <wait eagerly for the day of God to come>.*

B<sub>4</sub>) a) That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

b) {13} But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

A<sub>3</sub>) a) {14} So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this,

b) make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

c) {15} *Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation,*

B<sub>5</sub>) b) just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. {16} He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort,

a) as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

A<sub>4</sub>) a) {17} Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this,

b) be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. {18} But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

c) *To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

## Thematic Summary: II Peter 3

- A)** Reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking
- a)** Reminders: “Since ...will be destroyed”
  - b)** wholesome thinking: “strive to live right”
  - c)** A special message -with a focus on time
- B)** Compare the message given
- a)** (by the holy prophets) - the coming of the day of the Lord with destruction
  - b)** (through your apostles) - the coming of the day of the Lord
- C)** Comparison between scoffers/friends
- a)** understand this
  - b)** the promised coming - when?
  - c)** the passage of time and its accounting
  - d)** forgetting

## Proximity Comparison: II Peter 3

### A)

#### REMINDERS TO STIMULATE YOU TO WHOLESOME THINKING

{1} Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.

#### REMINDERS: “SINCE ... WILL BE DESTROYED”

- a)** {11} Since everything will be destroyed in this way,
- a)** {14} So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this,
- a)** {17} Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this,

#### WHOLESOME THINKING: “STRIVE TO LIVE RIGHT”

- b)** {...11} what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives
- b)** {...14} make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.
- b)** {...17} be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. {18} But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

#### A SPECIAL MESSAGE -WITH A FOCUS ON TIME - (read them in sequence!

- c)** {12} as you <wait eagerly for the day of God to come>.
- c)** {15} Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation,
- c)** {...18} To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

### B):<sup>1</sup>

#### COMPARE THE MESSAGE GIVEN 1) BY THE HOLY PROPHETS AND 2) THROUGH YOUR APOSTLES

#### (BY THE HOLY PROPHETS) - THE COMING OF THE DAY OF THE LORD WITH DESTRUCTION

- a)** {2} I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets
- a)** AA) {...5} long ago by God's word

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<sup>1</sup> Please observe how the first two elements of both the **a)** and the **b)** sections compare most particularly (consider the highlighted phrases) and how the balance of the collection of elements does likewise. This marks the appearance of another pattern or substructure.

**BB) {...5} the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. {6} By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.**

- a) {...10} The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.
- a) {...12} That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.
- a) {...16} as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

#### (THROUGH YOUR APOSTLES)- THE COMING OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

b) and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

b) **AA) {7} By the same word**

**BB) {...7} the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.**

b) {10} But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

b) {13} But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

b) {...15} just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. {16} He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort,

**C)**

#### COMPARISON BETWEEN SCOFFERS/FRIENDS

##### UNDERSTAND THIS

- a<sub>1</sub>) {3} First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.
- a<sub>2</sub>) {...9} He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

##### THE PROMISED COMING - WHEN?

b<sub>1</sub>) {4} They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?"

b<sub>2</sub>) {9} The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

##### THE PASSAGE OF TIME AND ITS ACCOUNTING

c<sub>1</sub>) {...4} Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

c<sub>2</sub>) {...8} With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

##### FORGETTING

d<sub>1</sub>) {5} But they deliberately forget that

d<sub>2</sub>) {8} But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:

One way to look at the next block of elements is to include it in section C) by reason of its positioning at the fulcrum or apex of its introverted elements.

e<sub>1</sub>) {...5} long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. {6} By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.

e<sub>2</sub>) {7} By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

However, by reason of this block's themes and how they compare with the other themes presented in the context, it matches section B). I see no comparison between scoffers and Peter's friends made in this block, do you? Because it's positioned at the fulcrum of the unique section C), and because the theme is that of section B), a high degree of emphasis is forced upon it. For this reason, I've given the text from this block a bold typeface where it appears in section B).

Another view of the structure of verses 3-9 is as follows:

- {3} First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.
- {4} They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?  
Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."
- {5} But they deliberately forget that  
long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. {6} By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.
- {7} By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.
- {8} But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:  
With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.
- {9} The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.  
He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Further expanded to include verses 2-10, the full extent of the introversion present in the passage is evident:

- {2} I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets  
and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.
- {3} First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.
- {4} They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?  
Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."
- {5} But they deliberately forget that  
long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. {6} By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.
- {7} By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.
- {8} But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:  
With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.
- {9} The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.  
He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
- {10} But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.  
The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.