

November 27, 2016

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Scripture

2 Peter 3:1-10

¹This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you ²that you should remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles. ³First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts ⁴and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!" ⁵They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water, ⁶through which the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. ⁷But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the godless. ⁸But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Devotional

"The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness . . ." For most of my life the adjective "slow" was not one I wanted applied to me. "Slow" was a synonym for being stupid, unproductive, or late as in "missing the boat" on something important. I wanted to be (or at least perceived to be) smart, efficient, up-to-date, and aware of whatever was important to be, know, or do. This passage tells us God risks appearing to be "slow" about Jesus' promise to return soon because God wants to give us extra time to get ready and be prepared. Here God's slowness is a good thing, a reflection of God's patience, mercy, and grace toward us because, in the final judgment, God doesn't want anyone to be without a gift under the tree of eternal life. With multiple messages and insatiable images, the secular world issues increasing demands upon us in the countdown to Christmas. Might we resist the pressure to appear smart, efficient, and up-to-date with the latest and greatest gifts, garb, and galas and opt instead to reflect God's slowness toward us and others by embracing the gift of the Advent season?

Prayer

God of a thousand years and the blink of a millisecond, grant me the willingness to cast aside the demands of this world, now in the days of these weeks before Christmas, that my heart may be humbled to receive more fully the gift of the Christ-child and my life enlarged to await more hopefully the return of my Savior and Judge. Amen.