

2Peter 11-12-09b

Let's pick up our study now in 2 Peter chapter 3. What we have seen first of all is that this chapter begins with the word Beloved, and the Apostle speaks on God's behalf. We are beloved because the Lord Jesus Christ is beloved. We are chosen in Him.

He is our righteousness, our peace, our sanctification, and because God loves His Son, He loves us. In a unique way, God loves the world in a particular sense of the word, but He loves us in a special sense of the word, because we are unique. Believers in the church age are in a special category.

We are a gift from the Father to His Son, and we are beloved because He is beloved. Peter is stirring up our pure minds, our best nature, the part of us that understands and is motivated to pursue the plan and purpose of God, and this is what we cultivate. There is a lot of misunderstanding about the nature of choices and whether or not you are born a certain way, or you have a deficit you cannot overcome.

All of us are a mix, and we don't get to choose the mix of heredity and environment that we end up with, the hand of cards that we are dealt. We don't get to choose that. They come as God decides, but we can choose what to cultivate.

We can choose what to pursue. I've got a dark side of my nature, and thanks to God and the Lord Jesus Christ, I've got a bright side to my nature. So which one am I going to choose to cultivate? Am I going to return to sin like a dog returns to its vomit, like these false teachers of chapter 2? Or am I going to pursue the things that God has given me in Christ, that God the Holy Spirit is seeking to cultivate and to grow? The scriptures in John, Jesus says, I am the vine, you are the branches, in John chapter 15, and he says, my father is the vine dresser, and the vine that does not bear fruit in me, he cuts off.

Notice it says, the vine in me that does not bear fruit. He's talking about believers, and we've covered the potential consequences in terms of the darkness which is outside, in terms of loss of blessing and reward that are found in scripture, and that's one of those passages. The vine, the branch in me, Jesus says, that does not bear fruit, my father will cut off.

It's not loss of salvation, but you're done in terms of provision and blessing, because you've chosen to not bear fruit, you've chosen to ignore all of the resources that come to a branch that is plugged into the vine. And you look at a little plant that any self-respecting woman knows how to grow, all women can grow plants in ways I cannot even begin to understand, but they'll look at a plant and just go up there and pluck something off, and I'll say, wait, wait, wait, why'd you pull that off? Why'd you chop that off? Well, it's about to die. Well, how do you know, it looks like it's got some green leaves on it to me? Well, women just know, they've got an intuition.

They can tell, it's got to go. And if a branch is plugged into a shrub, and it is not drawing the

nutrients and producing flowers or producing fruit or leaves or whatever it's supposed to produce, a good husbandman or husband person or wife of a husbandman is going to nip it off, chop it off. God does this, Jesus said, my Father will take branches that are in me that are unproductive and chop them off.

And he says, the branches that are producing fruit, my Father will prune so that they may bear more fruit. Now here's a branch, you're a branch, I'm a branch, believers in Christ are branches, and there's some part of us that God is going to prune away so that we can be more fruitful. You know what that tells me? Part of me is good, and part of me is not.

And if I abide in the vine, and if I am seeking to be fruitful, those areas that are fruitful God is going to preserve and nurture. And the parts of me that are unproductive, God is going to prune off and prune out. I am a mixture of good and bad things.

And if I abide in the vine, as Jesus instructed, abide in me and let my words abide in you, then these unproductive parts... Well, Peter is talking to the productive part of our mind, your pure mind, your undiluted, uncorrupted mind. You need to watch out not only for false teachers within your ranks, but for these deceivers and these intellectual misdirectors from the outside who are going to make cosmological arguments, going to make naturalistic arguments, are going to appeal to history and say, how can you have an expectation of a supernatural visitation of some divine being when all of our history that we put any credence in tells us that these things just don't happen? The miraculous is a figment of your imagination. It's mythology.

Let's look at what science can document. Well, that's actually a wonderful endeavor. Let's look at what science can document and what they can't.

They've got their own mythology. Oh, well, let me tell you what happened in the days of the dinosaurs. Let me tell you what happened in the days of the pre-Cambrian rocks, and let me tell you what happened in the first 35 milliseconds of the Big Bang, and they have no idea.

It's all speculation. It is hypothesis. It is unproven and unprovable.

It is a mythology. It is a construct based on their suppositions, and constructs based on suppositions are by definition not science. Science is built on factual information or inferences that can be drawn from factual information, not extrapolations that are based on hypotheses that are based on speculations.

This is why string theory is not science. This is why anything about the origin of the Big Bang is not science. This is why abiogenesis is not science.

There is not a shred. There is not an ounce. There is not a molecule of scientifically verifiable information that supports any version of abiogenesis, life from non-life.

They've got many theories. They've got hypotheses, but there is no scientific demonstration. They say, well, we think there was a proto-RNA.

There is no evidence for proto-RNA. It's never been found in a fossilized rock. They can't synthesize it.

They can't identify its properties. They can't say how it arose. They can't say how it survived.

They say, well, we believe that simple proteins synthesize, and there was some sort of Darwinian evolution that took place. There is no Darwinian evolution that can take place at the molecular level because there is no reproduction, and there's no selective force. There's nothing to say that this should survive because it's more fit.

What says that this complex molecule is more fit than this simple molecule? Is there a predator of molecules that says, well, I can eat these simple ones, and I can't eat these complex ones, so the complex will survive, and the simple will go away? It is fantasy. It is mythology, but it is passed off as science based on suppositions. Don't let them get away with it.

It is not science, but they make these scientific arguments, and they say, your religious faith, your biblical faith, your Christian faith is illegitimate because, look at history. Since the fathers fell asleep, here are the laws that we know have pertained, and according to our scientific laws, divine beings do not appear out of nowhere, so why are you expecting a Jesus? And it says in verse 5, this they willfully forget. This they willfully forget.

The word that is translated forget here is a well-known Greek word. It is *lanthano*, L-A-N-T-H-A-N-O, *lanthano*. *Lanthano* does not mean to forget.

You've got all kinds of words for remembering and forgetting. You've got *merimnao* and *amerimnao*, they fail to remember. That's not it.

Lanthano is a word that means basically to hide. It means to hide, and it is here in the passive voice, and you say, well, so it is being hidden, if you will. But these men, these deceivers who are leading others astray have hidden something from themselves.

Now, this is translated different ways in different Bibles. The New American Standard says it escapes their notice. New King James says they willfully forget.

The RSV and the Jerusalem Bible say they deliberately ignore. Today's English version says they purposely ignore. One suggestion has been these false purveyors conveniently forget.

It's akin to Romans 1 where they suppress a truth, but *lanthano* means, and is actually translated in the New, in the King James as something being hidden or to be ignorant of something that is hidden from one, something that you are unaware of, something that you do not know. There's a bomb under my chair. I didn't know that.

It's evidently hidden. If I had seen it, I would have known it. I didn't see it, so it's a hidden bomb under my chair.

It's lanthano. But they are deliberately ignorant. They are willfully hiding the knowledge.

They are willfully refusing to consider. They are purposefully failing to acknowledge. They're hiding on purpose something.

What is this? They are willfully ignorant of the fact that by the word of God, the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of water and in the water. What is this a reference to? Genesis chapter 1, Rashi Barah, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 1, 2 says what? And the earth was without form and void.

Darkness was upon the face of the deep. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Right? So in the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, you've got heavens.

What are heavens? That's space. You've got earth. That's matter at a minimum.

And you've got water. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Virtually every civilization since ancient times has acknowledged four natural elements.

What are they? My microphone is not one of them. Earth, air, water, and fire. Right? Earth, air, water, and fire.

All four of those are given here. They willfully hide, or suppress, or put away the knowledge that by the Word of God... Now you say, wait a minute. These mockers and unbelieving deriders from the outside that are attacking and claiming these, what we would call scientific arguments, are willfully ignoring the Word of God? Well, this is your argument from design.

And as vilified, and as mocked, and derided as it is, you cannot escape the fact that there is, there are huge amounts of complex information in the fabric of the universe. Even secular scientists that are as far removed from religion as you can get, talk about the anthropic principle. It seems mighty strange that the whole universe seems to conspire together to bring about the existence of man.

You have this Goldilocks zone where our planet resides. You have this magic area of the galaxy where our solar system can be so that we can not only exist and survive, and our solar system is not pulled apart by the gravitation of other stars, but we are in a perfect position to observe the rest of the heavens, the rest of the universe. We can see in every direction.

We stick Hubble out there, we can see light that left its source literally billions of years ago in every direction. We're not in the middle of a gas cloud. We're not in the middle of a cluster of bright stars that permanently obscure the heavens.

We are perfectly positioned to be able to see everything in the universe around us, and it is not true of most of the galaxy or of most stars and planets in other galaxies. It is true of this solar system. It is true of this Earth.

And the constants, whether they are electromagnetic, atomic, molecular, electromagnetism, or anything else, are so perfectly balanced. There's a possible range of values longer than if you stretched out a tape around the Earth's equator, and the range of effectiveness is about three inches long on a tape that long, and the constant falls right in that three inches. Read Gerald Schroeder.

Read Hugh Ross about constant after constant, value after value in physics, in chemistry, in radiation, in gravitation, in astronomy. With a slight variation in millions of a millionth of a percent at the point of the Big Bang, the whole universe would have been nothing but lead, or move it a few millionths of a millionths of a millionths of a percent, and the whole universe would have been nothing but hydrogen. It had to be so precisely balanced so that you get the stardust that reflects all of the different elements, so that you've got metals, and you've got gases, and you've got all of the necessary components for carbon-based life.

Constant after constant, and science cannot get around this. They cannot ignore it. That's why they call it the anthropic principle.

The universe seems to be organized for anthropos, for man. They cannot escape it. You know they would love to escape it.

They would love to ignore it, but they just can't. It is so overwhelming. You know it would have to be just brain-stompingly huge for them to give any sort of acknowledgement to it at all, but they can't help it.

They have to. And they talk about design. Even the guys that say, I don't believe in a god, I don't believe in a creator, I don't believe in intelligence, I certainly don't believe in intelligent design, but I can't help but notice that there is such a property of design in the universe that it seems to point to some purpose.

Read Paul Davies as one example. I was reading some of his stuff this week, and he's adamant about, oh, don't classify me as a creationist or a design guy or anything. But in another part of his writing, when he doesn't think anybody's listening, he says, you know, when I look around, I see design everywhere, and it seems to me that this design speaks some purpose.

Purpose? Does inanimate matter have a sense of direction, and I want to get something done? As soon as you say purpose, and as soon as you say design, you are saying intelligence. But boy, if you want to get the veins throbbing in a secular scientist's forehead, just mention that he's talking about intelligent design, and they just go ballistic. But I say all that to say this.

This is what Peter is talking about. He says, look, they're going to try to use these persuasive arguments to misdirect you. I have no problem acknowledging that my position is one of faith.

Can I prove that God exists? No. Can he be put into a beaker and weighed and get his atomic number or his radiation quotient or something? Of course not. Being the superior intellects that we are, we freely acknowledge that we are people of faith.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, not measured, not weighed. We recognize that there is a metaphysical component, and we can think about abstractions and about non-material things. We don't limit ourselves to the material.

Any chimp can limit himself to the material, and he doesn't believe in anything he can't pick up and fling across his cage. Well, that's great. And scientists, in the name of great advances in reasoning, limit themselves to the material.

We're the one creature on the planet who is capable of understanding, acknowledging, and dealing with non-material realities. And they rob themselves of that and say, nope, nope, I can't consider anything that I can't put a scientific equation to, although they turn right around and do it. Well, we think there was a quantum singularity.

Quantum physics explains the origin of the Big Bang. No, it doesn't. It doesn't even come close.

It doesn't even begin to. Every law you can name, even in quantum physics and quantum mechanics, began at the Big Bang. There is nothing known before then.

Well, we think that chemistry and physics made life. They have no clue. There are at least seven competing hypotheses.

And when they have, I was reading the notes of a symposium where they had one representative from each of the abiogenesis hypotheses that all got together for a symposium. And so they would say, well, here's Dr. Smith, and he believes in the RNA world theory. But the problem with that is that here we have Dr. Jones.

And Dr. Jones says, here's the six reasons why the RNA world theory doesn't work. He believes in the metabolizing thing, where you don't need any genetic code. It's just, it's all chemical reactions.

And it's just metabolizing. It's the metabolizing world. Well, but here's Dr. Green, and he says Dr. Smith's all wet, because here's the six reasons why the metabolizing thing can never get anywhere.

And what he believes in is the fat blob theory, where it was just a fat blob, and it eventually isolated some chemical reactions, and those eventually were Darwinianly selected. But here's Dr. Brown, and Dr. Brown says Dr. Green's all wet. Here's the seven reasons why his thing can never

work.

So they get this symposium together, and each of the seven shoot down the other six and claim their theory, and none of them have got a shred, not a shred, not the first scientific piece of evidence of any kind that their theory or their hypothesis has the ghost of a chance of being true. They've never gotten any proteins to self-synthesize. They've never gotten them to complexify.

They've never found any chemical brew or stew that will create a strand of RNA with any sort of complex information. And it's funny, because you'll see somebody say, well, you know, RNA world, that's the answer. And then this guy says, look, we've done experiments.

We've mixed chemicals for 50 years. We can't get three sequences to go together, and the minimum RNA strands got to have like 150. There's no way that can work, and we've given up on that.

That's why you're stuck in the past. RNA world's dead. There was no RNA world.

Well, we think that it was an oxidizing reaction. Well, the problem is, there was no oxygen back. So that, you know, round and round and round they go.

All of them have shot each other out of the water, and all of the boats are at the bottom of the ocean. But people calmly and confidently say, oh, it's obvious that nature can account for everything. Nature can't account for anything, nothing.

There's a vast, resounding, deafening silence in terms of science. But these are the men who lead us astray, because they confidently pitch these things. It's all rhetoric.

It's all artifice. It is salesmanship. It's swampland in Florida being pitched as the place you're going to build your retirement home.

And if you don't look, if you don't get a picture, if you don't go out and walk the ground, you're led to believe that there is this vast, substantial, scientifically iron clad case for these things. And when you peek behind the curtain, there's not even the Wizard of Oz back there. There is no mechanism.

It's just vacant. There's nothing. It's just a tacky poster purporting to be, you know, the mighty Oz.

So it is a deception. And these people are fooling. They're like the wise men, giving Herod the slip.

They give people the slip. And they willfully hide what is known, that there was an intelligence that spoke these things into existence. And the word just means this is the plan.

This is the purpose. This is the effective cause. What is the effective cause given in Genesis 1 for everything we see around us? God said.

What was the immediate cause? The immediate agency is not given. The effective cause is God said. I want there to be.

By the way, what is it that God speaks into existence? Let there be light. God separates the light from the darkness. God says, let the waters be gathered.

Let there be a firmament in the midst and all that. How about water? Did God say, let there be water in Genesis 1? Did God say, let there be earth in Genesis 1? In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And apparently a part of the earth is water.

Water is not specifically spoken of in Genesis 1. It just is. You've got space, you've got earth, and you've got water. And Peter knows that.

Peter's no slouch when it comes to science. Look at what he says. By the word of God, the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water.

God, that's the first thing he spoke. The heavens, the earth, and the water that the earth is partly in and partly out of. That's by the word of God.

Now, what's his point? And watch this closely. By which the world that then existed perished. Now, if you are the creator of a thing, this is like Bill Cosby's dad.

I brought you into this world, and I can take you out. And I can make another one just like you. Remember that? It's one of Cosby's oldest bits.

I made you. I can unmake you. And I can make another one just like you.

Because I'm the creator. I'm the father. Peter says, the word of God, by which the world that then existed also perished.

God made it and said, I'm going to have some earth, and it's going to stand in and out of the water. And if I speak and say, water, overcome the earth, that's what it does. And that's what it did.

The word brought them into being. The word caused everything to perish by the very same water that God controlled with his word. Because he owns it.

It's his. He controls it. He designed it.

He can do with it whatever he wants. Any good computer programmer knows exactly this feeling of omnipotence over the code, over the creation. Any artist, any sculptor, you pick up a hunk of modeling clay.

I do this every once in a while just to amuse myself. Make something out of it. I always end up

making human heads.

It's the only thing I know how to make. I can't tell you how many humans I've created and destroyed out of modeling clay. I make them.

They're usually bald men. They look like monks. And sometimes I'll get another piece of clay and make a little hat for them.

Different baseball hat, cowboy hat. I make them. They have personality.

They have uniqueness. They have individuality. No two of them have ever been the same.

I make them. And after I... There's only one that has ever survived. It's over the sink right now.

Becca cooked it before I could destroy it. But all the rest of them, after I made it, enjoyed it, I just smashed it. Mashed him back into the clay from which he came.

This is what Peter says. God spoke these things into existence and set a certain order in motion in Genesis 1. And when he was dissatisfied with the outcome by that same word, that world perished. This is the flood.

Being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word. God spoke a third time.

I will not destroy the earth again with a flood. Next time it's going to be with fire. I put my bow in the cloud.

God ordains what happens in this universe. It is intelligently designed. Now don't get me wrong.

I am not an intelligent design advocate in the classic sense of that term. Is the universe intelligently designed? Of course. But am I advocating intelligent design to be taught in schools? No.

I think it would be a disaster. I think the word of God should be taught to children at home. Don't let the public school get a hold of biblical truth.

If secularists really knew what they were doing, they would welcome the Bible in the classroom. That would be the surest way to torpedo it and totally destroy it. I'm glad they don't want it in the classroom because they can't get their mitts on it and mess it up.

But the word of God originally created the world. The word of God destroyed it with the flood. The world that now is is sustained by that same word.

Look at what he says. They are reserved. It says are reserved.

This is a perfect paraphrastic in Greek. Have been reserved already. Perfect is completed action

in past time.

It's like the lake of fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels. This world, God knew from the beginning that he was eventually going to destroy it with fire. It has already been reserved.

It's a certitude. There is a, you know, you see these science fiction things where there's clacks and horns sounding and self-destruct sequence initiated. You know, the thing is going to go off in so many minutes, so many seconds.

Well, there is a clock on the wall in heaven somewhere that is ticking down the time that is left in this universe. And when that clock hits zero, this universe has been reserved for destruction by fire. It has been reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Now, what is perdition? Elimination. Loss. No longer here.

Perder, even in Latin and in Spanish, means I lost it. Lose your phone. Lose your watch.

Lose your keys. Lose your glasses. Where are they? Don't know.

Lost them. Well, where are the ungodly men in the day of perdition? They're gone. Can't see them.

Can't find them. Where are they? Nobody knows. No longer visible.

No longer around. No longer pertinent. No longer applicable.

It's a loss. Judas is the son of perdition. He lost everything.

He was a disciple. He could have been an apostle. He could have been one of the, could have had a gate named after him in the New Jerusalem.

Lost all of that. Wounded with an ignominious splashing death, his rotting corpse falling off a tree. And he's the son of perdition.

He lost everything. Beloved, verse 8, do not forget this one thing. Beloved, don't forget this one thing.

God is outside of time. God is not subject to time. These thinkers, these deceivers, these purveyors of arguments willfully forget that God controls the universe, that God conceived of and initiated the universe.

God can judge it anytime he wants. God is outside of time. So don't forget, when you're faced with these scientific arguments, you just remember one thing.

God is not subject to time. All of the scientific arguments on origins depend on time. It all depends on time.

How did the Big Bang unfold? Well, it took time. Was there time before the Big Bang? No, time was invented at the Big Bang. We don't have to talk about anything before the Big Bang because we can't talk about anything that doesn't partake of time.

God is outside of time. Peter says, Peter looks down the corridor of history 2,000 years and says, all of these naysayers and ne'er-do-wells that are attacking you from the outside with these deceptive things, you just remember one thing. God is not subject to time.

All of the scientific arguments are time-based. God's not subject to time. God's outside of time.

God invented time. God thought it up. God started it.

God can stop it. God can make the earth stick out of water. God can cover up the earth with water.

God can, you know, they say water quenches fire. Water isn't going to quench God's fire. The last thing that's going to be seen in this universe is fire.

The earth will be gone. The water will be gone. The heavens will be gone.

The last thing that will be seen is fire. Don't forget this one thing. 1,000 years and a day are equal to God.

Time is no obstacle, no problem, no limitation. The Lord is not slack concerning promise. Promise is insubstantial.

Stand up there on the wedding day, bride on one side, groom on the other. I plight thee my truth. I pledge you my truth.

On my word of honor, I will stick with you through thick and thin, sickness and health, good and bad, rich or poor, till death do us part. This is my promise. Where's the substance of that? Is that a real thing? Is it a commitment? Can science prove the existence of a promise? Of course not.

So if it's not scientific, it doesn't exist. No such thing as a promise. Science can't document it.

How about music? Is there such a thing as music? Ask a scientist to explain music or poetry or art. What is art? Is Jackson Pollock art? Scientists can't tell you. Is Beethoven's Ninth Symphony music? Science can't tell you.

I can construct a rhythmic set of sounds that's a complete cacophony. It would drive people insane and make them spill all of the truth they don't want to give up. I could torture them.

Science couldn't tell the difference between the two. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise. This promise is transcendent.

This promise is immaterial. This promise partakes of eternity, partakes of God himself. It is as good and as sure as God himself, all of which is outside of time and outside of matter and outside of the universe.

God's promises exist beyond the universe. Did you ever think about this? God has promised us eternal salvation. God has promised us rewards and blessings and opportunities in the future.

And guess what? The universe will be gone and God's promise will still be there. God's promise is beyond the universe, just like all the rest of God's word. God has magnified his word above his name.

God's name has been established in the universe. God's word transcends the universe. God's word initiated and will finalize and complete and evaporate this universe.

Nothing is more important than God's word. What is the theme of Peter's letter? Don't forget God's word. Your peace and your mercy are dependent on God's word.

By means of knowledge of God and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, everything that is worthwhile, everything that is meaningful comes to us. It transcends the mere materiality of this world. God is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

This is where we'll pick up next week. What is this notion of longsuffering? What does it mean to perish? What does it mean to repent? What is God's objective? Who is it that is going to perish? Is this a statement of predestination and limited atonement and so on? We'll fully cover this as we pick up in verse 9 next time. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the ability that you have granted to us in our souls to respond to it, to recognize it for its truth, to have it ministered to our hearts by your Holy Spirit, to partake of things that are beyond the materiality and the physicality of our bodies and our brains and the perceptions we have of things around us. We are lifted up and beyond the mundane through the truth of your word. We thank you for that.

We thank you most of all for the Lord Jesus who bridged the gap between the eternal realms where you dwell and the material realms where we dwell. And through him, we will make the transition from one to the other. We thank you for your word.

We thank you for its preservation and for this exhortation to remember it and bear it in mind to prevent ourselves from being deceived and distracted by earthly things and mortal minds. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will use these things to enable us to shine as lights in the world, to

complete those good works that you have ordained that we should walk in them, and that we will be thoroughly equipped to fulfill our calling and purpose in this life and in the ages to come. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.