

2 Peter Part 7 – Study Notes

Introduction

Peter said two things; firstly beware! Secondly be ready! The first chapter of his letter addressed the issue of moral purity. He urged believers to avoid the corruption of the world and reminded us of the fruitful Christian lifestyle expected of those who have been equipped with everything necessary for godliness. He encouraged believers to confidently stand strong in the truth that they had already been taught. In Chapter 2 he reminded believers of the wickedness of false teachers who strategically and cunningly brought deception. These people would face strict judgement from God. In chapter 3 Peter focused on the anticipation of Christ's return. Get ready for Jesus' imminent return.

2 Peter 3:1-2 *Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ²I 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.* Peter stated his purpose for his letter *to stimulate you to wholesome thinking*, to keep their mind set right, reminding them of something they already knew.

Be ready! Peter reminded his hearers that the prophetic teachings point to the physical return of Jesus.

In the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus called his hearers to believe in Him as being like the Father. John 10:30 *I and the Father are one.* John 14:9 *Jesus answered: Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.* The Apostles taught that Jesus is God. Jesus himself taught about His second coming when His work will be fulfilled and He will be fully revealed to the world in all His power and glory. The Apostles taught of the physical return of Jesus.

Peter reminded believers of this so that it should stimulate wholesome thinking, as they continue to stand firm in their faith.

2 Peter 3:3-4 *Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."* False prophets had already begun to challenge the Apostles about Jesus' returning in Peter's day. They began to mock and make fun of the believer's faith and to ridicule them.

Jude repeated Peter's words a few years later in Jude 17-19 *But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." ¹⁹These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.* From Jesus' time up until now cynics and scoffers have said the same and they have come and gone. They teach **uniformitarianism**, which means everything stays just the same, everything that has been will continue to be. They say that years have gone by but nothing dramatic has happened. Therefore common sense says the end of the world is unthinkable. Some believe God does not exist and others that there is no supernatural being, or God, who will interrupt the history of mankind.

In Luke 23:35 we have the account where Jesus has been crucified and we find that *the people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, he saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One.* On the cross people ridiculed Jesus. Today people still ridicule Jesus and His followers. Scoffers will increase in number until the Jesus' returns. They will boldly proclaim that Jesus is not coming back as a mighty warrior king to take His kingdom and to rule and judge the world.

As Christians we should expect these scoffers to speak out against the promises in the Bible about the Lord's return. We shouldn't be surprised or shaken by this. Their plan is to unsettle us and to question our beliefs. They will laugh at the mention of the second coming. Their strategy is to promote doubt and unbelief in

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Jesus' teaching and to destroy our faith.

Do not be put off by those who wrongly argue that God's inactivity means that He will not act. The truth is Jesus is coming back. Just like it started to rain and the heavens opened and the world was flooded. Jesus will return in the air.

2 Peter 3:5-6 *But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being 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.* Peter said, that when people said that Jesus would not return to judge the world and bring destruction that in fact they had forgotten He has already done so before when He flooded the earth and brought judgement on mankind. They have chosen to close their mind to what has happened.

Atheists teach that there is no God, that there is no creator in heaven, or in a physical place called heaven. Peter reminded his readers here that just as God intervened and flooded the world because of its wickedness, He will intervene once again. The fact that He flooded the earth makes it all the more certain He will fulfil his promise. Gods promises have been 100% truthful so far why do people think that He will not fulfil this one.

Jesus said in the gospel of Matthew 24:37-39 He will return and it will be like in the days of Noah. *As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.*

2 Peter 3:7 *By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.* This time the world will not be destroyed by water but by fire. This fire will come on a day set in the future by God. Just as the wicked were judged in Noah's time the wicked will face judgement and the righteous will be saved.

Despite all the mocking's and ridicule. Jesus will return and He wins!

One of the signs we are living in the last days is the increase of these scoffers. But the Greek word Peter used here implies more than people just using words, it implies they also bring physical persecution of the believers, which we are seeing increase. This is indeed fulfilment of Prophecy. As believers let's:

- ✚ Live every day as though it is our last as Jesus could return today. Be ready for His return now. Do not be side tracked by what scoffers have to say.
- ✚ ... and live as though he may not come today. That might sound contrary but we need to be salt and light as we share the gospel of salvation. We need to be Jesus to our community. We need to tell people how to be saved. How to get into the Ark to be saved, how to believe in Jesus to be saved.