**The Last Day Scoffers**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**2 Peter 3:1-9**

**Wednesday Evening**

**April 21, 2021**

**2 Peter 3:1-9**

1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,

6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

**1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder),**

Saints, Peter’s purpose was to remind the believers that their lives ought to be characterized by wholesome thinking (meaning sincerity or purity of understanding). Plato had used this phrase to refer to pure reason uncontaminated by the senses. The thinking and intentions of God’s people must be able to stand up under scrutiny and not be led astray by immoral desires.

**Philippians 4:8-9**

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

**2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,**

Saints, the way to maintain “wholesome thinking” is to remember and understand Scripture.

The holy prophets had written about the coming of the Messiah, and what he would command through his apostles. Most likely this refers to the law as upheld by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and propagated by the apostles.

The Holy Spirit unified the prophets and apostles in an unchanging message of hope and truth. The prophets had written of the Messiah, who would come to bring judgment and restore the Kingdom; those words had come to pass.

The apostles had spoken and written that Jesus the Messiah would return to bring judgment. Thus believers should live expectantly, knowing that those words will also come to pass.

**3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,**

Saints, we, along with the first-century believers, ought to be prepared for anything because we have been warned what to watch for and how to live. Peter wrote that in the last days there will be scoffers. The “last days” began with Christ’s resurrection and will continue until his return, when he will set up his Kingdom and judge all humanity.

Jesus and the apostles warned that during that interim, including the time period we live in, scoffers will laugh at the truth.

**1 Timothy 4:1-2**

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron…

**2 Timothy 3:1-5**

1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Saints, once again, Peter was referring to false teachers who deny Jesus Christ and thereby deny his second coming. These false teachers will laugh at the truth of God’s word and instead do every evil thing they desire.

Peter called the believers to remember the Scriptures and to live to please God; but the false teachers will scoff at the Scriptures and will live to please themselves and their sinful desires. Ironically, the very presence of these men who scoffed at prophecy was itself fulfillment of prophecy.

**4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."**

Saints, the false teachers’ scoffing focused on Christ’s second coming. Jesus had promised that he would come back, but many years had passed and nothing had happened.

**Mark 13:24-27**

24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in heaven will be shaken.

26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.

Saints, the scoffers based their argument on the fact that everything has remained exactly the same since the world was first created. Many first-century Christians believed that Jesus would come in their lifetime. When Christians began to die without experiencing the Lord’s return, some began to doubt.

Saints, these were prime targets for the false teachers, who pointed out that perhaps it was all a lie and Christ was never going to return. The false teachers argued that ever since creation, the world has continued in a natural order, a system of cause-and-effect.

Saints, they did not believe that God would intervene or allow anything out of the ordinary (such as miracles) to occur. Therefore, they scoffed at teachings about a Second Coming and the end of the world.

**5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.**

Saints, what these scoffers were forgetting in their argument (that the world had remained unchanged since creation) was that God made the heavens. The Creation disproves their “all things continue” argument because the creation of the earth was an imposed change on the formless void.

**Genesis 1:1-2**

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Saints, the very reason the world was continuing on in a stable, predictable pattern was because God, in his grace, had created it that way. However, this stability should not be taken for granted. The false teachers deliberately forgot that God also had destroyed the evil world with a mighty flood.

**Genesis 7:23-24**

23 So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. 24 And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

**7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.**

Saints, as God destroyed the earth before, he has also commanded that the heavens and the earth will be consumed by fire on the day of judgment. In Noah’s day the earth was judged by water; at the Second Coming it will be judged by fire.

**Isaiah 66:15-16**

15 For behold, the LORD will come with fire And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. 16 For by fire and by His sword The LORD will judge all flesh; And the slain of the LORD shall be many.

**Malachi 4:1**

1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.

**Revelation 20:12-15**

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Saints, judgment has already been decided. Ungodly people will perish; it is only a matter of God’s timing. Scholars have debated whether Peter was referring to a literal fiery destruction of the entire universe with new heavens and earth to follow, or to “fire of judgment.” Second Peter is the only New Testament book that says the world will actually be destroyed by fire.

**2 Peter 3:10-11**

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness…

Saints, the passages cited above refer primarily to the fire of God’s judgment. If taken that way, the fire purifies the earth, burns up the Lord’s enemies and the futile works of humanity, and makes the earth new for Christ’s eternal reign. Peter’s point was that destruction would come, and the godless (those who have not believed) will not escape.

**8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.**

Saints, Peter had made his point that Christ would certainly return and bring judgment, but the question still remained, “Why was the Lord delaying so long?” Peter offered two reasons in 3:8-9. First of all, the Lord does not count time as people do. He is above and outside of the sphere of time.

**2 Peter 3:8-9**

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Saints, God sees all of eternity past and eternity future. Indeed, to him a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like a day.

**Psalm 90:4**

“For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night”

Saints, God may have seemed slow to these believers as they faced persecution every day and longed to be delivered. But God is not slow; he simply doesn’t operate according to our timetable.

**9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.**

Saints, the second reason for the Lord being slow about his promise to return was his patience. He does not want anyone to perish, so he is giving more time for everyone to repent. He wants as many people as will to come to faith in him.

**Acts 3:18-20**

18 But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before…

God is not “slow” at all; rather, according to his timetable, he is being exceedingly patient, giving people time to turn to him. Love is the reason that he delays the destruction of the world.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

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**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**