

SCOFFERS OR SCRIPTURE ?

In 2Peter 3:1-7 the apostle talks about the "*scoffers who come with scoffing in the last days.*" They follow false teachers who falsely focus on sensual pleasures of the flesh, instead of Scriptural teachings about trusting and obeying God's Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to overcome the desires of the flesh. Likewise, these scoffers mock the promise of the second coming of Christ and the final judgment.

1- Are we in the last days? We've seen how Scripture refers to this present age as the "last days" between the first and second comings of Christ. We should expect, 2Timothy 3:1 "*in the last days there will come times of difficulty*" with false converts "*always learning but never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.*" 1Timothy 4:1, "*those who depart from the faith and devote themselves to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.*" 1John 2:18 says "*children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us but they were not of us*" - false teachers who still today seek to lead God's people astray.

Don't conflate "last days" with "the last day." When viewing distant mountains, careful study distinguishes foothills from the highest peak. Scoffers ignore perspective, and in 2Peter 3:4 say "*where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.*" With such selective thinking, they ask, is Jesus coming again? When? Acts 1:6 answers, "*it is not for you to know times or seasons the Father has fixed by His own authority*" and 1:11 "*this Jesus will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.*" Ever since, believers in dire persecution have wondered if their days are the last. Peter says "*the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials*" and "*supplement your faith*" with Christ's character, so when He comes "*there will be richly provided for you an entrance into His eternal kingdom.*" False teachers say, forget all that.

2- God's Word is true! Lloyd-Jones notes, "The doctrine of the end of time and the final judgment is as integral a part of the teaching of the Bible as is the first coming of Christ, and every other cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith. It is essentially a matter of acceptance of revelation and submission to the authority of the Word of God." The scoffers are like those in Romans 1:18 who in their unrighteousness "*suppress the truth.*" Peter says "*they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.*" Can you learn from true history? Yes!

Peter astutely connects the creation of Adam's time with the global flood of Noah's time. Scoffers were like uniformitarians of today who say earth geology and processes continue the same as always, uniform, without catastrophic changes or miraculous activity. But real science always confirms the Bible narrative of the universe created by the breath of God. Dr. Tackett of IsGenesisHistory.com says, "When accused of being unscientific for holding to the historicity of the Bible, be reassured that God's Word can be trusted and there are many good scientists looking at data that support that view." (See also Creation.com, ICR.org, and AnswersInGenesis.com). The scoffers were overlooking numerous Scriptures, including: Genesis 1, Exodus 20:11, Psalm 33:6 about creation; Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2 about sustaining the universe; Genesis 6-9 about the global flood; Deuteronomy 32:22 about fire. And many more!

3- God keeps His promises! Peter says, God created and "*by that same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and the destruction of the ungodly.*" This includes the scoffers, false teachers, and all who do not trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation, who is Creator, Sustainer, and Judge. RC Sproul says, "What God creates by the power of His word, He sustains by the power of that same word, and by that word it is being preserved until the day of judgment." Future will prove past. MG Johnston observes, "the same Word that enables us to make sense of the past enables us to make sense of the future." 1 Corinthians 10:11 says Old Testament things "*happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages have come. Therefore my beloved, flee from idolatry.*" Flee false teaching.

Don't let scoffers derail you from your trust in God's promises. As sure as the past creation and flood, is the future coming again of Christ in glory. And the judgment and consummation of all things. In God's timetable. Don't let seeming delay derail you from trusting and obeying as you wait. Think, study, believe. Apply God's Word of truth to your life by the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Because "*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us.*" Expect troubles, as God purifies and preserves His people in these last days. Be glad that God gives opportunity for repentance and faith, as we await the glorious final day of Christ's coming! ☐