

## **The 2nd Letter of Peter (Week 3)**

### **Read 2 Peter, chapter 3, verses 1 – 18:- Encouragement and Warning!**

#### **Verses 1 – 2:-**

A simple statement that this letter is a follow-on from his first. He also claims that the apostles speak with the same authority as the prophets of the Old Testament. This places both Old and New Testaments under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **Verses 3 – 7:-**

The inevitable presence of false teachers and prophets, along with “*scoffers*” appears to be the result of a perceived delay in Christ’s return. Our Lord himself warned of this – see his words in Matthew chapter 24, verses 9 – 14. Those who were doing the mocking did not want the Second Coming to be true. Peter however goes back to the dependability and stability of God’s word as demonstrated in creation (verse 5). The judging word of God through the flood (verse 6) was, like His creating word, final!

*“The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store”* (verse 7). Kept until the Day of Judgement and the destruction of the ungodly.

#### **Verses 8 – 10:-**

The delay in Christ’s return is no proper basis for doubt as to his coming! The fact “*that with God one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day*” is taken from Psalm 90, verse 4. God does not have ‘time / space’ limitations! The delay is part of the redemptive purpose of the sovereign Lord God. He does not wish for any to perish but that all should repent.

We live in ‘The Year of Grace 2023’. There is still time and opportunity to proclaim Christ’s salvation to a needy suffering world.

Note that Peter echoes the solemn warning given by Jesus; the coming of the Day of the Lord will be sudden and without warning; see Matthew chapter 24, verses 35 – 44. Also 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 2 – 3.

#### **Verses 11 – 13:-**

Here is the key question! If the earth, with all its joys and sorrows is to pass away and our Lord Jesus Christ is to be revealed in all his glory - “*If all things are thus to be dissolved, what kind of persons ought you to be?*” Our lives must be lived in the light of eternity. “*We wait for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells*”. By our prayers and our devotion to the Gospel we look forward to and work for the coming of the Kingdom; in our praying of the ‘Lord’s Prayer’ - “*Thy Kingdom come*” and in our partaking of Holy Communion - “*For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes*” (1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 26).

#### **Verses 14 – 18:-**

There is again the warning against the wrong use of scripture; not just the Old Testament but also the writings in the Epistles. It is easy to pick out ‘proof texts’, however we are not to expound one place of scripture over against another. Doctrine must have the overall agreement of scripture and should not be changed to fit in with present culture or practices.

The final verse is the answer to how we should live! We are called to “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*”. The grace is a gift from the Lord God; knowledge has to be worked at! Our lives and the Church must witness to the glory of our Lord and Saviour.