

Sunday February 20th 2011
The Second of Peter
Part Eleven

1). 2Pe 3:1 ¶ *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."*

a). The close of Chapter 2 of Second Peter had ended the Holy Spirit's description of the nature and character of the false teachers and the mode by which they operate within the 'church' thereby warning those of the first century and by extension ourselves, as to what to look out for and what to expect.

b). Chapter 3, as we see in our opening scripture, does not move away from the subject of false teachers, but rather makes plain that the outcome of the work of the original false teachers that began in the first century will still exist right up to the close of this dispensation, to the very moment that all Christians are resurrected or raptured to the Judgment Seat and deals with a particularly disturbing attribute of apostasy that would be most prevalent in the last days.

c). In the parallel section of scripture in the Book of Jude we find this – Jude 1:17 *But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: 18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. 19 These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.*

d). And in both sets of scripture we find both writers, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, at pains to remind their readers *of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,*

e). That false teachers would come and wreak havoc amongst those trying to enter the Kingdom is not a surprise as the scriptures are replete with warnings concerning the same.

f). Warnings that began over 5000 years ago with the prophecy of Enoch, warnings presented through the types in the OT, warnings from the mouth of the Lord recorded in the Gospels, warnings continued in the epistles and warnings repeated in the events of the Judgment Seat of Christ recorded in the Book of Revelation.

g). There can be little doubt for those with eyes to see and ears to hear that apostasy was, is and remains an incredible danger to any Christian who has their sights set on the Kingdom of the Heavens.

h). And then in both sets of scripture we find the pinnacle of standing away from the faith as it will exist in the Laodicean Church of our present experience – ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’

2). 2Pe 3:3 ¶ *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,*

Jude 1:18 *how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.*

a). The first thing we will note about the ‘scoffers’/‘mockers’ is that they will walk according to their own ungodly lusts – they will follow a predetermined road of their own making that will have the appearance of spirituality but is rather totally focused on self-interest and therefore outside of the will of the Father – 2Ti 3:6 *For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, 7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;9 but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.*

b). We will also see that they come in the last days, the last time, a period that begins at the start of this dispensation and their corruption heightens to a peak of intensity as the work of the leaven increases exponentially to the close of the dispensation.

c). Now the words translated ‘scoffers’ and ‘mockers’ are in the Greek language the same word.

d). Scoffers/mockers = Greek – ‘empaiktes’, *emp-aheek-tace*’ from ‘*empaizo*’, *emp-aheed'-zo* = to play with, to trifle with, to mock, as a child at play.

e). And in this word we would see the idea of play and revelry which of itself is childish and therefore immature.

f). Now this definition is by no means insignificant for us as we come to consider the OT type that pictures for us the scoffers/mockers of the last days.

3). And so let us look at this OT type – which is, not surprisingly, the first generation of the nation of Israel to come out of Egypt. And the reason we look to them so often is because of what is recorded in scripture about them in relation to ourselves 1Co 10:6 ¶ *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we*

should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

4). To stir up our pure minds by way of reminder, let us remember that God had redeemed Israel from the bondage of Egypt for a specific purpose, a purpose which parallels our own - Ex 6:8 *'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'*

a). It was a purpose that the nation both knew and understood having been taken from gnosis on the night of the Passover to epignosis at Mt. Sinai; from the basic understanding of the application of the blood to the commandments of God to an eternally redeemed people with respect to entrance into the land.

b). They had seen God raise up Moses to lead them and had experienced the power of God through the plagues in Egypt, the night of the Passover and the Red Sea crossing.

c). They had much reason for trusting God and for relying on Him to fulfill His promises.

5). Despite this however we see an extraordinary event recorded in Exodus Chapter 32. But before we look at the event itself let's back up to Exodus Chapter 24 so as to provide the context for the event.

a). Ex 24:12 ¶ *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them." 13 So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.*

b). Moses is to go up to the mountain of God to receive the law and the commandments which God has written.

c). Before going however, he issues instructions to those who are to wait behind for his return - Ex 24:14 *And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them."*

d). The people then, under the guidance of their elders, are to wait for his return, looking for it and expecting it as he had said to them that he would return.

e). And while he is gone Aaron and Hur, the leaders of the people, have responsibility for them.

6). Moses is gone for a period of forty days and forty nights – 40 is a number of completion, showing he would be away for a complete period of time. In other words he would be gone until God determined it would be time for him to return.

7). And so with all this in mind we come to our event in Exodus Chapter 32 – Ex 32:1 ¶ *Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."* [where is the promise of his coming?] 2 *And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me."* 3 *"So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. 4 And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"*

8). Let us note some things here –

a). Because Moses was gone for a long time the people were not content to watch and wait as they had been instructed.

b). Instead, because of their own desires they chose to recreate God for themselves in the image of the world that they should have left behind – creating a golden calf. A symbol straight out of their life in Egypt

c). In verse 4 we read - *"This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"* – The word used for god here is ‘Elohim’.

d). What they had made they called by the same name as the God who had redeemed them, but they had created an image that was an expression of their own desires. Even though they used the very name of God they had left the service of God and turned to idolatry.

e). And the idolatry resulted in festivities that scripture describes as childish, the exact attribute that we had seen contained in the word translated ‘scoffers’ in 2 Peter - Ex 32:5 *So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD."* 6 *Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*

f). Play = Hebrew – ‘tsachaq’, *tsaw-khak'* = to laugh outright (in merriment or scorn); by implication, to sport:--laugh, mock, play, make sport.

g). It is interesting to note that the leader, Aaron, the one who should have kept the people focused, chooses instead to give them exactly what they want. And as a result the people cast off restraint.

h). *Ex 32:25 Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies),*

i). In other words the people, led by Aaron, followed their own fleshly desires, instead of faithfully waiting, but called it serving God.

j). And in their own minds serving God is exactly what they were doing – but the reality was that they had willingly deceived themselves.

k). Now the word translated ‘unrestrained’ is an interesting one –

l). Unrestrained = Hebrew – ‘para`, *paw-rah*’ = to loosen, with the idea of casting off one’s garments; by implication, to expose, dismiss; figuratively, absolve, begin:--avenge, avoid, bare, go back, let, (make) naked, set at nought, perish, refuse, uncover.

m). The verse is translated as follows in the KJV - *Ex 32:25 And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:)*

n). What we see here then is that the people were ‘naked’, the people were ashamed, and Aaron is held responsible. And this of course refers to the parallel degeneracy which will exist within Christendom at the Lord’s return – the people will be naked, the people will be ashamed, and the shepherds of the flock will be held responsible.

9). Nakedness and shame are concepts that have their roots in the foundation of Genesis in connection with the creation and fall of Man. And it is here in Genesis that the unalterable pattern is set by which we must understand these concepts in scripture.

a). *Ge 2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

b). The Hebrew word translated naked here does not mean totally naked, but having a partial covering such as in wearing an undergarment. And that which they were covered with was glory in preparation for rulership, and in this condition they were not ashamed as at this point God’s plan for them could still have been accomplished. Following the fall though, through the introduction of sin, the situation is entirely different.

c). *Ge 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked;..... 10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."*

d). Now, following the fall, we find that they are totally naked, having lost the covering of glory, and are afraid, hiding themselves in shame.

e). Now we need to note here that their shame has nothing to do with the literal fact of their nakedness, nor does it have anything to do with the relationship between the Man and the Woman – their shame and fear are there because they know that they cannot know fulfill God’s plan for them and are therefore ashamed of their actions that have brought this about and they are fearful of what God will now do because of it – remember that He had told them ‘for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’.

f). Nakedness and shame then, from a scriptural perspective, are an expression of the condition of those who through their choices find themselves excluded from God’s purpose for them – the purpose of rulership.

g). Following this event, giving us the foundational picture of redemption, God alone takes action in order to deal with this nakedness - Ge 3:21 ¶ *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

h). Now if we take this picture forward in time with respect to the Children of Israel we will remember that on the night of the Passover a lamb was slain for a household just as an animal was slain to provide tunics of skin for Adam and his wife; the death and shed blood providing a covering for the total nakedness of the people who were dead in trespasses and sins and therefore in no position to fulfill God’s purpose for them – rulership at the head of the nations within the Land.

i). Through the burial and resurrection of the Red Sea passage we would know that the covering for their nakedness provided by the death and shed blood could never be removed in relation to eternal redemption.

j). However, in Exodus Chapter 32 we find nakedness and shame with respect to their calling, the very thing that we see in the foundational type in Genesis. Through their choices and subsequent actions of disobedience no acts of righteousness could be accounted to them and they were therefore ‘naked’. And among their enemies they were ashamed because they had proved themselves unworthy of their high calling and rather than receiving God’s blessings they would now receive His Judgment.

k). Likewise for Christians it is the death and shed blood of Christ that deals with our total nakedness before God in respect of eternal issues – something that He has done alone completely apart from us. What we receive in place of our nakedness is the imputed righteousness of Christ - 2Co 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

This we receive by faith alone because of the finished work of Christ at Calvary.

l). Although we can never again be naked before God with respect to eternal issues there can be a nakedness with respect to our calling. Beyond salvation by grace through faith there is the salvation of the soul that is brought about by works

on our part, works done in faithful obedience to the scriptures which will be accounted to us as righteousness – the very thing that will make our wedding garment so that we will not be naked – Re 19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."* 8 *And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

If through our choices though we do not perform ‘acts of righteousness’ and we therefore prove ourselves to be unworthy of the Kingdom, then in that Day we will be both naked and ashamed - Re 3:17 *"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked - 18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed;*

m). The apostate church of these Laodicean last days is characterized by the ‘scoffers’/‘mockers’ who display the very same attributes we find displayed by apostate Israel in the wilderness in Exodus Chapter 32.

n). As it is in the type so it must be in the antitype, as it is set in the foundation so will it be throughout scripture.

10). Now we will remember that in Exodus 24 Moses said he would return, and return he does. However, upon his return, because of the actions of the people during his absence resulting in their ‘nakedness’, judgment comes upon the people.

a). Ex 32:27 *And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" 28 So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.*

b). Ex 32:33 *And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.*

c). Ex 32:35 *So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.*

d). Verse 33 here is perhaps the most chilling part of this judgment. We are of course not looking at matters relating to eternity for Israel had been eternally redeemed on the night of Passover. They had passed through the place of death in the Red Sea and could never go back. But rather than eternal issues we are looking at the loss of inheritance in the land that was promised. Eternally saved yet failing to fulfill the purpose for that salvation.

e). And we find almost the same words recorded with respect to the church in - Re 3:5 *"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not*

blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

11). Now all of this that we see with Israel is a picture for the Church from which we should learn great spiritual truth that would prevent us from entering into the same sin as Israel did.

a). For we also have been redeemed for a specific purpose –
Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you[Israel] and given to a nation[Church] bearing the fruits of it.*

12). And Christ, of whom Moses was a type, has left to go to the mountain of God and He will remain there for a complete period of time – Ac 1:10 *And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

a). Ac 3:20 *"and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*

b). Ps 110:1 ¶ <<A Psalm of David.>> *The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."*

c). Joh 14:3 *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

13). And before the Lord left He gave instructions to those who were to wait for His return, all Christians from this dispensation, shown here in the parable of the minas.

a). Lu 19:12 *Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'*

b). This is not in any way ambiguous.

c). Mr 13:33 *"Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 "It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming--in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning-- 36 "lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 "And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"*

14). But what do we find? Rather than following the instructions the Lord has given given, rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to guide Christians into all truth we find, as we saw in our opening scripture, 4 *"Where is the promise of His coming?"*

a). Rather than following the revelation of scripture, the church in a general sense has sat down to eat and drink and has risen up to play casting off all restraint, they have become naked, having been made so by their religious leaders and will in that Day be ashamed - Pr 29:18 ¶ *Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.*

b). 2Ti 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;*

c). The itching ears of the church are synonymous with the earrings of the Children of Israel in Exodus Chapter 32, creating something that goes by the name of God, having the trappings of spirituality, but is really no more than idolatry. And there is no shortage of teachers to provide a tickling for the ear and the means to scratch it.

d). For many Christians and even major denominations God has become like the genie in the bottle to be conjured up to do their bidding – like the organ grinder's monkey doing tricks for a price.

15). Christianity has become packaged, marketed and distributed according to the economics of supply and demand. It has become a multi-million dollar business with its various strands competing in the market place for the greater share of the market value. And we can include everything in this from 'Christian' TV, to books, to video, to music, to the organization of denominations and the operation of ministries.

a). And Christian leaders and self appointed teachers, the very ones who should be keeping the people focused on their preparation for the Lord's return and their appearance at His Judgment Seat, are the very ones responsible for encouraging and perpetuating this idolatry and harlotry within the church.

b). 2Pe 2:1 ¶ *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 ¶ By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.*

c). And we must be careful not to let our relationship with people embroiled in the worldliness that characterizes the church color the way we see it or even to

draw us away after their error. We must rely on the evidence of scripture and see things the way God sees them.

d). When God describes the church of these last days as –

Re 3:17b ... *wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*—

e). We must accept this as the truth, even though it will inevitably include some of those whom we know and love. And God forbid even ourselves.

f). And whenever necessary in order to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness we must follow the command of the Lord, regardless of the cost to us personally - Lu 14:26 *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.*

16). When Christ leaves the mountain of God, just as when Moses left Mt. Sinai, judgment will come upon His people.

a). 1Pe 4:17 *For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?*

b). 2Co 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

c). Jude 1:14 *Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 ¶ "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*

17). It is the one who overcomes the world, the flesh and the devil, and particularly the manifestation of apostasy within the church, which is the subject of our study, whose name will not be blotted out of the Book of Life – a Book that records the names of those who will have life in the Age to come, made up of those who are eternally saved who will not appear in His presence naked and ashamed.

a). Ps 24:3 ¶ *Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD, And righteousness from the God of his salvation.*

b). And if the Lord is willing we will continue with this next time.