

Sunday February 27<sup>th</sup> 2011  
The Second of Peter  
Part Twelve

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). We had seen last week that the Holy Spirit, through the pen of Peter, had seen fit to write both the epistles which bear Peter's name to stir up the pure minds of His readers so that they would be mindful of two things – ‘the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets’, and – ‘the commandments of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior’.

b). Of course both of these remain interconnected but let's begin by considering the first of the two, that ‘spoken before by the holy prophets’ - this phrase itself might bring to mind at least 2 other scriptures that make reference to the same thing. The first we will look at is found in - Heb 1:1 ¶ *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

c). And the second are the words of the Lord Himself recorded in – Lu 24:27 *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

d). Now that which is contained in the scriptures that the prophets have ‘spoken’ before would encompass the whole of the OT and can be seen in microcosm in the first Chapter of Hebrews where the writer draws on 7 OT quotations which all point to Christ and His coming Kingdom.

e). And we will remember from Luke Chapter 24 that the Lord, citing Moses and all the prophets, again the entire OT, made clear that throughout these Books would be found - Lu 24:26 *"Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"*

f). And so we can see that the whole of the OT scripture, ‘beginning at Moses’, has Christ and His coming Kingdom as its focus.

g). The very first Chapter of Genesis, the Book of Beginnings, that which is recorded by the hand of Moses, sets in foundation a period of 6 days of restorative

work at the conclusion of which a Man and a Woman in a marriage relationship are to enter the 7<sup>th</sup> Day having dominion together over the earth presenting a type of Christ and His Bride - Ge 1:27 *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

h). And it is this same foundational pattern laid out in the opening verses of God's revelation to man that was spoken before by the holy prophets all of which direct us to the fulfillment of what was written, in the antitype, when a Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and a Woman, faithful Christians making up His Bride, will after 6 days of restorative work – 6000 years – enter into the 7<sup>th</sup> Day to have dominion over the earth.

i). And it is this same foundational pattern, this scriptural focus concerning the coming Kingdom, that the Holy Spirit wants to stir up our pure minds by way of reminder to remind us of. Scripture is very clear concerning this focus making evident that all the events of man's history are marching inexorably towards the conclusion of the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ and the eternal ages that lay beyond it.

j). This being said, the scripture also clearly shows us that we need to be constantly reminded of these things for very obvious reasons – Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,*

k). Because if we don't give the more earnest heed, if we are not stirred up by way of reminder, then we may very well drift away and thereby become susceptible to the deception of false teachers – a subject that is also throughout the scriptures.

2). Now not only do the holy prophets all present the plans and purposes of God with respect to the 7<sup>th</sup> Day, but they also alongside this detail God's judgment upon His creation within the context of His purpose. And throughout the OT, presented through the types, we see the warnings of God for those who would stand away from His purpose to pursue their own, those who would stand away from the faith. This we have already seen in past weeks with those who follow 'the way of Cain', 'the error of Balaam' and 'the rebellion of Korah' as well as that described in the events of the flood of Noah, the destruction of the cities of the plain and that which we had seen last week with the golden calf incident in Exodus Chapter 32, a

chapter that presents a disturbing picture through the parallel it has with the mockers of the last days and the final condition of the ‘church’.

a). And so there is an abundance of prophetic teaching throughout the scriptures that makes the 7<sup>th</sup> Day and the events surrounding that Day the central message of all scripture, just as Peter points out in - Ac 3:19 *"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, 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. 22 "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23 'And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' 24 "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.*

b). 2Pe 1:19 ¶ *And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;*

3). Not only did Peter want to remind his readers of the things spoken by the holy prophets, but he also wanted them to remember ‘the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior’.

a). Now there are many commands spoken by the apostles that we could focus on, but within the context of false teachers in 2 Peter there is one command that seems most pertinent - the command to – ‘heed’.

b). 1Co 3:10 *According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one **take heed** how he builds on it.*

c). 1Co 10:12 *Therefore let him who thinks he stands **take heed** lest he fall.*

d). 1Ti 4:16 ***Take heed** to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*

e). Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the **more earnest heed** to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.*

f). And the reason for taking heed is because of what 2 Peter 3:3 says we must remember first of all – the same thing we have already seen in - Ac 20:28 *"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples*

after themselves. 31 "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

g). That stated in - 2Pe 3:3 ¶ *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."*

h). What we must conclude then is that the safety and protection for the Christian in pursuit of the Kingdom is a properly laid and a properly understood foundation because only that which is correctly laid in foundation will be able to support the spiritual house that is to be built upon it. If the foundation is in any way tampered with then disaster is just around the corner – Ps 11:3 *If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?*

4). And here in 2 Peter, where we find the very zenith of apostate teaching, teaching which has resulted from the working of the leaven placed in the 3 measures of meal, is the question and the statement that seeks to destroy the very bedrock foundation on which the church is supposed to stand. And so all pervasive has the work of the leaven been that the church of these last days, as a whole, is completely devoid of the foundation that is supposed to support it.

a). So how could the foundation which is central to God's revelation to man be destroyed? Well scripture tells us – 2Pe 3:5 *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.*

5). According to our scripture 'they [the scoffers] willfully forget' KJV says, 'they are willingly ignorant of'.

a). Forget/Ignorant = Greek - 'lanthano', *lan-than'-o* = to escape notice or be hidden.

b). In other words they have willingly allowed that which scripture has to say concerning its central message to escape their notice, to be hidden from them.

c). They are in a position to understand the word of God as they have a redeemed spirit, which is able to receive spiritual truth. They also have the indwelling Holy Spirit who is able to guide them into all truth. But rather than following the leadership of the Spirit they chose instead, as we have already noted, to follow the leading of the carnal, soulical man, and as a result have willingly allowed a veil to be placed over their eyes.

d). 2Co 4:3 *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest*

*the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.*

6). The essence of the ‘scoffers’ message is that there is no promise of His coming because they claim that the world from its creation onwards has continued in an uninterrupted way.

a). What the scoffers willfully forget is then the clear evidence of Biblical history and Biblical prophecy that clearly teach that there has been Divine intervention with respect to the earth in the past just as there will be Divine intervention with respect to the earth in the future.

7). The first thing our 2 Peter scripture draws attention to that the scoffers have willfully forgotten is - *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.*

a). These verses are a reference to the creation and subsequent ruin of the perfectly created earth and heavens in eternity past which led to the restoration of that creation recorded in genesis, which marks the beginning point of time as we know it.

b). The heavens and the earth ‘of old’ is a reference to –  
Ge 1:1 ¶ *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.....*

c). Joh 1:1 ¶ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

8). At an unspecified point in eternity past – ‘in the beginning’, in Genesis, ‘of old’, in 2 Peter – God created the heavens and the earth – and this creation was perfect.

a). Between that recorded in Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 something happened though that caused the earth to become without form and void.

b). We know this to be true by comparing scripture with scripture.

c). Isa 45:18 *For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other.*

d). Our scripture in Isaiah, providing God’s own commentary on Genesis 1:1, states categorically that God did not create the earth in vain.

e). The word translated ‘vain’ is the same word translated ‘void’ in Genesis 1:2 – the Hebrew word – *tohu*.

f). So in Genesis 1:1 we read that God created the heavens and the earth and then at the beginning of verse 2 we read that the earth was ‘tohu’.

g). In Isaiah, however, we read that the earth was not created ‘tohu’

h). And so the clear evidence of scripture is that in eternity past God created a Divinely perfect heavens and earth and that subsequent to that creation something happened causing both the heavens and the earth to become ‘tohu’ – to become ruined.

9). Just as an aside – knowing God’s affinity for numbers - it might interest us to know that the opening verse of Genesis consisting of ten words in English, is a translation of only 7 words in the Hebrew.

a). 7 is God’s number of completion of that which is in view, and we would understand it to be completion in a perfect sense.

b). Not only that, but these 7 words comprise of 28 letters – 4 sets of 7.

c). 4 is the number of creation with respect to the world – 4 seasons / 4 points of the compass / 4 elements etc. And again 7 is the number of perfect completion pointing to a perfect creation.

10). What the ‘scoffers’ willfully forget is that after the perfect creation there was a subsequent Divine intervention by way of judgment in the affairs of the world for a specific purpose and therefore all things did not remain the same.

11). And we find this judgment affecting both the heavens and the earth.

a). Jer 4:23 *I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form, and void; And the heavens, they had no light.*

b). The Sun, Moon and stars of the original creation had been blotted out leaving an all-enveloping blackness and the earth itself was completely covered by a flood of raging waters - 2Pe 3:5 *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.*

c). Ge 1:2 *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.* [Lit. – the face of the raging waters]

12). So let’s stir up our pure minds by way of reminder and remember what the holy prophets have said with respect to the events of Genesis 1:1 -2.

13). The creation of the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1:1 was not an arbitrary event. As one of what we must assume to be many provinces in God’s universal

Kingdom, the earth was created to be administered by a being created for that purpose, under the authority of God. Overseeing an administration that would take place from the heavens connected with the earth - Da 4:26..... *the heavens do rule.* Rulership of the earth was not an afterthought on God's part it was His primary thought.

14). The being created for the purpose of rulership over the earth is the one we know as Satan, also know as Lucifer, along with an unspecified number of angels in subordinate positions under him.

a). Eze 28:12.... *"You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.*

b). Here then is the picture of a beautifully created angelic being whose location was – ‘in Eden the garden of God’

c). We will also note that this Eden is somewhat different to one in which we find Adam, this one being filled with minerals and precious stones.

d). And we know we are not dealing with a man here as verse 13 speaks of ‘the day you were created’ – men since Adam have all been procreated.

e). Also he is the ‘anointed cherub’ – literally a messianic angel, who was created to cover – literally to fence in and protect - in other words he was created to have dominion, under God's authority, over a territory that included Eden the garden of God.

f). And where does scripture show his territory to be? - Job 1:6 ¶ *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."*

g). Walking to and fro is an action of jurisdiction and is exactly the thing God commands Abraham to do with respect to the land of promise – Ge 13:17 *"Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."*

15). Now let's continue to read about Satan - Eze 28:16 *"By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O*

*covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. 18 "You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever.""*

a). What we see here then is that the covering cherub sinned and as a result Divine judgment came, leaving his sanctuaries, the places that had been consecrated for him to protect in a defiled, or polluted state – they became ruined – they became formless and void – they were ‘tohu’.

b). And please remember, according to scripture, that the sanctuaries that were turned into chaos were both the heavens and the earth.

16). And of course that which the holy prophets have spoken tells us the nature of Satan’s sin which resulted in Divine Judgment and the ruin of the creation.

a). Isa 14:12 *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'*

b). What we witness here then is Satan choosing to stand away from that which God had commanded him to do with respect to rulership over the earth, and choosing to stand away from the authority God had given him and therefore choosing to stand away from God Himself, even to the extent of wanting to replace Him. This would in a scriptural sense be apostasy, something that God will not tolerate. And we will note that many, one third of the angels who were with him, would follow his destructive ways.

17). In the beginning then, God created the heavens and the earth in a perfect condition and Satan was created as the ruler of this one province in God’s universal kingdom and he was given an unspecified number of angels to assist him in his task – and all of this would have to be in the context of rulership ultimately residing in God’s Son and His Bride.

a). Satan’s sin of apostasy and rebellion brought Divine intervention in the form of judgment resulting in the heavens and the earth becoming formless and void.

18). And then after the creation's destruction we find another Divine intervention, subsequent to the judgment, that marks for us the starting point for time as we know it - Ge 1:2b.... *And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 ¶ Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.*

a). What we see here beginning in the second half of the second verse of all of scripture is the beginning of the restoration of the ruined creation, a process which would require six days of work followed by a seventh day of rest –

*Ge 2:1 ¶ Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

b). Thus through this process God had set a Divinely perfect pattern for the restoration of a ruined creation, a pattern that could not be improved upon or circumvented.

c). And this is the very pattern that we need to remember that is the bedrock of our foundation.

19). And this which is stated at the very beginning of all scripture is the very thing that the scoffers have willfully forgotten.

a). It is not as simple as the words, 'where is the promise of His coming?' might suggest. What the scoffers have chosen to forget is that which is the very foundation of scripture, that which provides the skeletal framework for God's revelation to man – there are 6 days of work followed by a 7<sup>th</sup> Day of rest.

b). And as we have already said remove the foundation and nothing can be properly built and if we try to build without the foundation then disaster awaits us.

c). I am sure we can understand the seriousness that surrounds the scoffers' message as it relates to that which is taught and that which is not taught in the church today.

20). *For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."* – for the scoffers though, they deny that God has intervened with regards to the earth in the past and therefore there will be no intervention in the future – there will be no 7<sup>th</sup> Day.

22). Despite this foolishness, what does the scripture admonish us to do?

2Pe 3:2 *that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets,*

a). **Mindful** = Greek – ‘mnaomai’, *mnao'-om-ahee* = make a fixture in the mind.

b). And to help us make this a fixture in our minds 2 Peter 3:5-8 lays out the same pattern that we have looked at today

c). **Creation** - 2Pe 3:5 *....that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,*

Ge 1:1 ¶ *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

d). **Ruin** - 2Pe 3:6 *by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.*

Ge 1:2 *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.*

e). **Restoration** - 2Pe 3:7 *But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word*

Ge 1:2b.... *And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 ¶ Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.....*

f). **Rest** - 2Pe 3:8 ¶ *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.*

Ge 1:31 ¶ *Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.....* Ge 2:1 ¶ *Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. 4 ¶ This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,*

23). We will continue here next week, if the Lord is willing.