

Here Peter pauses and introduces this second epistle he is writing, even though he has already written more than half of it. It is as if he was so eager to get to his message he didn't immediately take time to formally introduce the epistle. Indeed in the first two chapters he has made a number of important points warning, preparing and encouraging the saints regarding the last days already coming upon them.

He has outlined the expected spiritual growth and development of a disciple from the initial faith of a newborn believer to a mature, godly, loving saint fully confident of his calling and election. He has presented testimony of the glory of the future appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ as seen in the transfiguration he had personally witnessed as a disciple. He also calls to attention the numerous rich prophecies presented in the Old Testament authored by different Spirit led men at different times and places but which taken all together give a comprehensive picture of events. While many have already been fulfilled many remain yet to be accomplished in God's own time and wisdom.

Given these wonderful resources the believer is well equipped to courageously walk safely through the seeming chaos that has encompassed Christendom since Peter wrote. The Holy Spirit left us with plenty of warnings and much encouragement especially in later epistles of Paul, John, Peter and Jude. Too many believers ignore these warnings and simply accept conditions in Christendom today as normal. To others, the reality that such conditions exist today is profoundly disheartening. Unless viewed in the light of scripture these times can cause great discouragement and even despair that God has lost control. Peter has assured us God is indeed in control despite the great welling up of religious humanism monopolizing the scene today. Peter has accurately predicted this. Sad to say, without much thought, one can today name names of people and groups who fit well into the graphic descriptions in Chapter 2. People who are lost yet instead of outright apostasy from Christendom they prefer to remain to attempt to destroy or desecrate that which they themselves will not accept. Peter has shown that these are reserved for judgement yet to come, and that the faithful, such as Noah or even Lot, will be preserved and enjoy eternal life. Clearly, to have any meaning at all, these warning should result in a separation between faithful believers and those recognized by Peter to be reserved for judgement.

Peter now continues with the warnings begun in chapter 2 exposing a somewhat different breed of spiritual enemy, the skeptic. Up to here we have been looking at religious impostors taking eminent roles in Christendom, drawing unwitting souls after them to doom. The skeptics of chapter 3 are aware of the warnings of impending judgement. Therefore they attempt to deflect the

threatened doom through denial, scoffing at it. The old "head in the sand" routine. Don't let them fool you.

Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

They give scientific "theories" more credence than the inspired word of God.* Peter predicted such arrogance in verse 4. The skeptics like to take refuge in a fancied stable uniformity of geologic conditions over time thereby dismissing a precedent for any universal judgement of the world they live in. But there is precedent! The Flood! The worldwide Deluge of Noah's time. Much effort is spent to debunk this annoying fact as it undermines their sense of well being, and rightly so. But there is no doubt in scriptures of the reality of the worldwide flood covering the mountains. Moses, Genesis 6-9 Job, David, Solomon, Proverbs 8:28-29; Isaiah 54:9; Ezekiel 14:14,20; Hebrews 11:7; all speak of it, not to mention Jesus Himself, Matthew 24:28 & Luke 17:26-27. And Peter refers to it more than most, 1Peter 3:20; 2Peter 2:5; and here in 2Peter 3. He gives a perspective and details perhaps not obvious in other accounts. The earth is portrayed as standing in the water and out of it. What does that mean? Science has determined that if the exposed land, mountains and all, sank again into the sea the ocean is deep enough to completely cover the land. Peter knew this from the scriptures long before men plumbed the depth of the oceans and discovered this.

Proverbs 8:29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

See also Genesis 1:9-10; Job 38:8-11; Psalm 33:6-7; 104:6-9; Jeremiah 5:22. Men have used these scriptures to claim the flood in Noah's time couldn't have been universal because God had confined the seas. But Peter, by the Spirit reveals that God made an exception and caused it to overflow the whole earth causing it to perish. He is still in control.

This was not a mere local flood. But I have heard scoffers deride Noah for his selfishness in not allowing his neighbors aboard his boat when the waters rose. No. Let's get this right! His neighbors refused his persistent pleading to come aboard his ark and escape. Had they tired of one hundred twenty years of his pleading? If this was a mere local flood why wouldn't God just warn Noah to move any endangered animals to higher ground. The truth is there was no higher ground that wasn't violently submerged. There is:

- Scientifically well documented anthropological witness of legends world wide of a worldwide Flood and the Ark story;
- Worldwide scientific geological evidence of miles deep deposits of sediments, fossils, and bones that cannot be ignored by any.

Yet they persist in their unbelief. Recently scientists discovered deeply submerged evidence of human occupation of what is now the seabed of the Black Sea. Apparently this basin was once occupied as dry land although far below present sea level. The Mediterranean Sea is said to have broken through to catastrophically drown this basin to form what is now the Black Sea. Some even speculate the Mediterranean itself was formed the same way, by the Atlantic Ocean breaking through at what is now the strait of Gibraltar. While these huge events probably actually took place they still would not account for the worldwide distribution of flood legends or for the need of an ark to rescue representatives of every animal "kind". One hundred and twenty years warning was time enough for those who heard and believed to migrate away from the danger.

These skeptics are said to hold that all things remaining the same since the "creation." Many skeptics today do not even believe in a creation, at least not one created at the command of a Creator God. The Greek word translated here is consistently translated "creation" in the NT where, from the perspective of the Spirit, an original act of the Creator is in view, whether the original physical creation of the earth or new creation of a born again person. Even though the skeptics did not necessarily accept the existence of a Creator, Peter accurately presents the foolishness of their ungodly position.

Evolutionists now believe that the early earth was bombarded by destructive meteorites and asteroids for millions of years and that these prepared it to accommodate the introduction of life. They say the building blocks of life arrived with these objects from space and evolved into what we see today. The "fossil

evidence" and geologic evidence both demand episodes of great and rapid change interrupting the slow, gradual evolution uniformitarianism once envisioned. They have called it "punctuated equilibrium." They now speculate about the apparent sudden, catastrophic mass extinction of dinosaurs, and other life forms from time to time, over periods of millions of years. (They are inexorably getting closer to the truth, which is inevitable if they maintain their integrity as scientists.) Hence the public's fascination today with the possibility of a comet impacting somewhere, destroying civilization and life as we know it on earth. So educated mankind is now ambivalent about impending doom. Recognizing the natural dangers of impacts from outer space they fear this, and even talk of developing technology to detect and ward off such threats. They accept the possibility of world wide catastrophes in ages past and years ahead. But they steadfastly deny the universally destructive Deluge in Noah's time and reject the clear warning of impending worldwide judgement from the hand of their Creator. Much less do they expect it from the meek and gentle Jesus, God's Son whom they boldly crucified. So they foolishly continue to spurn the freely offered Way of escape as their predecessors did in both Noah's day and Lot's day. The Way of the Cross! Yet their impending judgement is sure, it will be swift, it will be universal, and it will be by fire this time, not water.

We're going to the mansions! Climb aboard, before He comes and it is too late and you perish.

By Ron Canner, June 22, 2005

*Yet these "facts" are not stable. For instance, the theory of "uniformitarianism" which was widely accepted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is now being modified.