

Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 5:05 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study

Well, men, last nite we finished our study of II Peter--ironically, with our first MOB session for 2016! Peter ends his epistle with a clear statement on the reason he wrote it! As his last will and testament, so to speak, he wanted to "stir up" believers--whom he called "beloved!"--so that they would always remember some very basic and important things about God's plan and purpose for all of mankind, including some things to come in the "last days"! And he left it all with some key admonitions which certainly apply to us in these days!

Peter's last epistle has lots to say about "false teachers" who would actually be rising up within the "church" and teaching "destructive heresies"--even "denying the Lord who bought them"--living shameful lives, "bringing the truth into disrepute," and exploiting others with greed! And in this closing chapter, he warns that, among other things, they would mock and question the promised return of Christ! "Where is the promise of His return?" they would ask! For "ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation!" They were, in effect, espousing the same "uniformitarian" view held by most in the scientific community today--that everything in the world, and our universe, follows certain natural laws and processes, and has evolved over billions of years, basically by chance, without any direction or clear purpose--or intervention by God--and that it would continue to be like this in the days to come! Nothing would change!

Well, Peter didn't buy that! His response was that these false teachers were really the ones "out of touch with reality"! It somehow "escaped their notice" (KJs says they were "willingly ignorant") of some of the most basic truths about God and man that affected their life and destiny! Peter makes the point that the world hasn't always gone on as it has! In fact, in a great "cataclysmic" act, God actually "spoke" all of creation into existence! And later, during the time of Noah, in another great cataclysmic act (contrary to the uniformitarian presumption)--and as an act of judgment for sin--He destroyed the world He had created, through a great (universal) flood! And Peter then added (3:10) that "...the day of the Lord would come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up!"

Peter also spoke (in 3:12) of the coming of "the day of God (a time after the "day of the Lord")--which believers should be "eagerly looking forward to"--when there will be "new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells"! Note that Peter is not writing here of Christ's coming for the church, called the "rapture of the church" (best described in I Thess. 4:16-18), which is the next "cataclysmic" event to take place in the overall scheme of things--or even the "day of the Lord," which is commonly referred to as the "second coming," when Christ is coming back, with the "saints," to set up His millennial kingdom and then to "judge" the world! The "day of God" is after all that, when all the dust is settled and we as believers will live with God eternally! This is, in effect, the "grand finale", described in Revelation 21--something totally amazing and indescribable--"out of this world" (literally), and certainly something no one who understands it would want to miss out on! (For a better understanding of the sequence of "things to come"--including more Scripture citations--refer to the schematic handed out in our small

group session, as well as to a statement of "future" things outlined in Article V, Section 10, of IBC's Constitution.)

Well, all the above is why Peter ends his discourse with the following admonitions:

1--"Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness..." (3:11)

2--"Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation" (i.e., an opportunity to reach others for salvation) (3:14-15)

3--"...Knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness." (3:17)

4--"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity! Amen! (3:18)

Wow! Enough said!

Let's use these admonitions from Peter to establish and firm up our resolve(s) for 2016!

And with that, on to 2 John!

Lowell