

# SCOFFERS

2 Peter 3:3-7

## INTRODUCTION

- Television host, Joy Behar, a few years ago said, “It’s one thing to talk to Jesus. It’s another thing when Jesus talks to you. That’s called mental illness, if I’m not correct. Hearing voices.”
- As this present age draws to a close we should expect to see increasing ungodliness, apostasy and opposition to Christianity
  - ✓ “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12)
  - ✓ “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8)
  - ✓ “that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first” (2 Thessalonians 2:3)
  - ✓ “in the last days perilous times shall come” (2 Timothy 3:1)
  - ✓ “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13)
  - ✓ “in the latter times some shall depart from the faith” (1 Timothy 4:1)
  - ✓ “there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts” (Jude 18)
- 2 Peter is a letter of warning, preparing the saints for the devil’s concerted attack on the church, not so much from outward persecution (as in 1 Peter), but by the infiltration of error within the church
- We are engaged in a the most critical battles that has ever been waged – the war between truth and error

- The stakes could not be higher – the eternal souls of multitudes hinge on whether truth or error prevails
- It is no wonder then, that in our day the very idea of there existing such a thing as absolute truth has been abolished
- Now, even the simplest mathematical equation,  $2 + 2 = 4$ , is not an established fact, but rather the “white supremacist patriarchy”
- The same people cannot define what a woman is, and think a person’s gender is not governed by their biology, but by their feelings
- Satan knows that if he can destroy the concept of truth in the hearts of man, then there will be no place for the truth of the gospel in those same hearts
- The greatest sin a person can commit today is to be an *absolutist*, and the worst type of absolutist is a *Biblical* absolutist
- In the opening verses of this chapter, the apostle seeks to stir up the minds of the saints, calling to their remembrance the inspired words of Scripture, particularly warning them of the scoffers who would rise up in the last days
- Here we will consider these scoffers, their carnal ways, their foolish arguments and their wilful ignorance of God’s truth

## **I. THEIR BASE MOTIVATION (3)**

### **A. Knowing this first (cf. 1:20)**

1. This is of utmost importance, requiring our diligent attention
2. The Christian who knows the truth is prepared and equipped to do God’s will (2 Timothy 3:17)
3. But on the other hand, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6)

## B. Scoffers shall come

1. The scoffer is one who treats lightly that which should be taken seriously
2. Throughout history, when God's preachers have faithfully warned others of God's judgment, the scoffers have risen up to oppose them with their scorn
3. Professional "comedians" regularly make Christianity the target of their ridicule
4. They have no rational arguments against the truth so they resort to mockery

## C. They walk after their lusts

1. The driving force in their lives is not the glory of God but the satisfying of their fleshly lusts
2. Unbelievers are slaves to sin (Romans 6:17-22), and are helplessly carried along by their fleshly lusts, walking "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air...in the lusts of [the] flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind...by nature the children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:2-3)
3. Though they claim to be objective and to "follow the science", they in reality follow their carnal appetites
  - a. "Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it only because the only alternative is special creation, and that is unthinkable" (Sir Arthur Keith)
  - b. Those who truly follow the science will acknowledge God as Creator and Lord

4. To accept the truth of divine judgment would require them to repent, or to live in a state of continual dread of judgment; so they choose to reject and ridicule the truth
5. They love their sin more than they love God, the truth and righteousness (John 3:19)

## II. THEIR BAD ARGUMENTATION (4)

### A. Christ's promised coming and judgment

1. From the *proto-evangel* in Genesis 3:15, the prophets for the last 6000 years have proclaimed the coming of the Messiah to redeem mankind, and judge and punish the wicked
2. Christ himself promised he would come a second time (John 14:3)
3. The angels at his ascension promised he would return in like manner (Acts 1:11)
4. The apostles took up the theme and preached the coming and judgment of Christ (Acts 17:31; 10:42; Philippians 4:5)
5. This is the "blessed hope" of the Christian – that Jesus is coming again (Titus 2:13)
6. For the believer, this is an "exceeding great and precious promise" (2 Peter 1:4)
7. But to the unbeliever, it is a matter of scorn, contempt and ridicule

### B. The object of their scoffing is the word of God

1. Satan in the Garden cast doubt on God's word, and this has been continuing throughout history (Genesis 3:1)

2. The Bible is the most hated book in the world, and despite all the efforts of Satan and his people to destroy it, it continues to be published and continues to transform lives
- C. Their argument: “As things operate now, they always have, and always will”
1. This is naturalistic uniformitarianism – there is no God, there is no divine intervention
  2. The “laws of nature” are permanent, and can never be broken; there are no such things as miracles
  3. They choose natural law over the word of God
  4. Yet even the natural laws they claim to believe in contradict their cosmology
    - a. The First Law of Thermodynamics – energy cannot be created or destroyed
    - b. The Second Law of Thermodynamics – processes tend toward decay and disintegration (entropy)
  6. Evolutionary theory is not science, it is a religious myth invented by men for one reason: to dismiss the reality that God is our Creator to whom we must give account
  7. The religion of evolution grants men the freedom to walk after their own lusts without any fear of eternal consequences
  8. Hence, there is no heaven or hell, there is no such thing as sin, there are no objective standards of morality, there is no need to repent and believe

### **III. THEIR BLIND REPUDIATION (5-7)**

- A. Their ignorance is willing

1. They *choose* to reject God
  2. The problem is not a lack of proof or evidence of God's existence and power (Romans 1:19-20)
  3. The problem isn't that the Bible has errors or contradictions or is unclear
  4. Man's problem is not intellectual, it is moral and spiritual (cf. Luke 16:28-31)
  5. Romans 1 shows how man has wilfully rejected God's light
    - a. Who hold the truth in unrighteousness (18)
    - b. When they knew God, they glorified him not as God (21)
    - c. Changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image (23)
    - d. Changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator (25)
    - e. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge (28)
- B. They are ignorant of the creation by the word
1. God made the universe by his word (Hebrews 11:3)
  2. On the second day of creation God divided the waters so that there was water upon the face of the earth and waters above the earth called the firmament (Genesis 1:6-8)
  3. On the third day God gathered the waters unto one place so that dry land appeared (Genesis 1:9-10), setting bounds for the waters (Job 38:8; Proverbs 8:29; Jeremiah 5:22)
- C. They are ignorant of the global flood

1. The flood came when God sent the waters from both below the earth and above the earth (Genesis 7:11)
2. The flood was not a random natural disaster, but a direct judgment upon mankind for his sin (Genesis 6:5-7)
3. While men say that things are the same as they ever have been, the truth is that God intervened in history and destroyed the world
4. Even the atheistic evolutionists believe there was some type of catastrophe in earth's history to try to explain the extinction of the dinosaurs

D. They are ignorant of a future judgment

1. As the former world was destroyed by water, so this present world will be destroyed by fire (v.10)
2. It is "reserved" (*thesaurus*) – stored, laid up, treasured – God is storing up the world for revelation of his righteous wrath
3. His fiery wrath is not merely for the physical planet, but for "ungodly men"
4. This is the final judgment of the great white throne (Revelation 20) which will take place at the end of the 1000 year reign of Christ

## **CONCLUSION**

1. We are seeing prophecy being fulfilled before our eyes
2. Every time a blaspheming, antichrist, child of the devil mocks and ridicules Jesus Christ, and particularly the truth that he is coming back to judge the world, then you are seeing and hearing prophecy being fulfilled before your every eyes and ears
3. These scoffers are quite properly called fools

- ✓ “Fools make a mock at sin” (Proverbs 14:9)
  - ✓ “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool” (Proverbs 28:26)
  - ✓ “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psalm 53:1)
  - ✓ Fools reject Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:26)
4. These are “men of the world, which have their portion in this life” (Psalm 17:14), and the doctrine of the Second Coming is seen as a rude intrusion into their worldly activities
  5. As God intervened in *judgment* in the past and will do so again in the future, so God has intervened in *mercy* by sending his Son to save sinners from the judgment they deserve
  6. Have you received his mercy by repenting and putting your faith in Jesus Christ?
  7. We ought to examine ourselves to see if there is any trace of these scoffers in our own hearts and lives
    - ✓ Is my walk according to the flesh or according to the Spirit and will of God?
    - ✓ Do I have doubts in my heart regarding what the Bible says will take place in the future, or do I live with confident expectation of the Lord’s soon return?
    - ✓ Have I chosen to ignore God’s truths that I disagree with, or do I “esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way” (Psalm 119:128)
  8. Those who stand for the truth of Jesus Christ can expect to receive the scorn and mockery of a wicked, antichrist world
  9. When was the last time you were mocked for your testimony of Christ?