

SELECTIVE MEMORY

2 Peter 3:3-7

Most people struggle with the problem of selective hearing:

We hear what we *WANT* to hear.

My father-in-law: "I didn't hear you until the second time you called!

Observing people, I'm learning: not only do we struggle with selective *hearing*, we also struggle with selective *MEMORY*:

We remember what we *WANT* to remember.

What we don't want to remember, we soon forget! We shut it out of our minds.

We've been considering what God's Word says about creation.

Biblical teaching isn't limited to one solitary O.T. passage.

People fail to realize how **integrated** the creation account is

with the rest of Scripture –both **Old Testament and New Testament**.

Teaching of Genesis 1-5 is reenforced in other O.T. passages.

In addition, **N.T. integrates Gen. 1-5 with N.T. doctrinal teaching.**

Jesus Himself, along with N.T. writers –inspired by the Holy Spirit!–

affirm Gen 1-5 is historical record of what actually happened.

GENESIS 1-5 IS INTEGRATED INTO ...

* **The definition of faith**–prime example of what faith is. Heb. 11

Faith is believing that God spoke and the world came to exist. **Gen. 1**

* **... The nature of marriage.** Matt. 19; Eph 5

Jesus *and* Paul affirm the permanence of marriage based on **Gen. 2**

* **... The doctrine of salvation**

Man's sinful condition results from his rejection of creation. Rom. 1

Imputation of Christ's righteousness–Rom. 5

Teaching us: God sees us in Christ –we're declared righteous in Him–

God's grace through Christ is compared to Adam's fall in **Gen. 3**.

Adam's sin affects all creation; it brought death into the world.

All creation suffers the consequences of Gen. 3.

* **... The Person of Christ** John 1, Rom. 11, => **Col. 1**

Affirms Jesus is God, because of His role in creation **Gen. 1-2**

Jesus is God, the Creator and Sustainer of the world.

He carried out **Gen. 1**–He spoke, and everything came into existence.

2 Pet. 3 integrates Genesis 1-5 with

* **... The Doctrine of the Second Coming and God's Judgment**

Strikes directly at reason people reject Genesis account of creation.

Gen. points so directly at that future that Peter prophesies–2,000 years

before it happens–that people will deliberately forget the evidence.

Selective memory. They don't WANT to remember what God did in Gen!

Peter is writing to God's people, scattered throughout Asia Minor.

They've demonstrated their trust in God, in the midst of fierce persecution.

Now they're struggling against a new enemy: false teachers

Peter wants us to continue developing the virtues taught in God's Word.

to reject false teachers who are contradicting the truth we've been taught.

He exhorts us to grow; *NOT* to let false teachers hinder

our development as followers of Christ.

Since God is going to intervene and judge the world,

His people should remain faithful to Him

and focus our attention on our spiritual growth.

To stand firm before false teachers and scoffers, we must understand God's plan.

EXHORTATION CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN 3:1-18

OUR THINKING MUST BE STIRRED UP

SO WE'LL REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS SAID 1-2

That thought was first introduced back in 1:12-15: "*So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. 13 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, 14 because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.*"

This is information they already know.

Nevertheless he reminds us—it's too important to risk that we might forget!

He writes twice—so we remember what prophets said

and what the Lord commanded. 1-2 "*Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. 2 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.*"

Paul too has written—though sometimes he's hard to understand—people twist

his words 15-16 "*Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.*"

16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

They already know this! 17 "*Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.*"

Why is this so important? Because, . . .

A correct understanding of what God is doing,

causes right thinking—in midst of doubt and confusion!

PEOPLE ARE GOING TO MAKE FUN OF CHRIST'S COMING 3-7

Scoffers will come in the last days. 3

"First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires."

Scoffers make fun of idea God will intervene by coming to judge the world.

Current result of false prophecies concerning the Lord's coming!

That gives them an excuse to defend their own predisposition!

They're busy pursuing what they want out of life 3

They think God has never intervened 4

"They will say, 'Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.'"

"God never has intervened – God never will intervene!"

So they go about doing whatever they feel like!

No fear! God's a long way off.

They deliberately ignore the times God has intervened 5-7

Ignorance concerning God's intervention in the past 5-6

"But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being, and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed."

Scoffers deliberately ignore **2 times God DID intervene:**
creation and the flood.

They don't reject it because of evidence. They don't want to believe.

They want to ignore it! It's selective memory! They do it deliberately!

Fox News on Friday reports on 41 scientists writing in *Science*:

Dinosaurs wiped out by 9-mi-wide **meteor**, striking Mexico 65 million yrs ago.

[Previous speculation: it was by **volcanic action in India**].

Impact a billion times greater than atomic bomb that struck Hiroshima.

Atmospheric conditions created an ice age that enveloped the earth.

Selective memory—easier to believe, than believe nearly contemporary accounts
—found all over the world—by descendants of people who were at the flood.

It's "inconvenient truth" to believe God intervenes to create and judge the world.

We'd prefer to blot that idea out of our minds.

God spoke and created the world 5

God spoke and destroyed the world with a flood 6

People reject creation and flood, because they don't want to believe God will intervene and judge when Christ comes.

If Gen. 1-5 isn't historically true, Peter's argument is nonsense!

If it's true that Jesus is coming again and God will judge the world, there's no reason to deny the reality of account in Gen. 1-5.

The two events are based on the same assumptions:

God is sovereign. He controls the world.

He's able to intervene in history and judge His creatures.

Ignorance concerning God's intervention in the future 7

"By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

As they're ignorant of God's intervention in the past, they're ignorant of reality of God's future judgment, which will be caused by the same Word of God.

Just as God intervened in creation and flood, He can intervene today.

God will speak again to judge the world and the ungodly

Though people mock in unbelief, it doesn't change what will happen.

Man's laughter won't change God's plan:

What matters is ***"Who laughs last?"***

Ps. 2—man plots to stop God from having His way=> God laughs!

GOD WILL SURELY HAVE HIS DAY 8-10

In spite of scoffers' denial, God's going to judge the world.

Why is it taking him so long? God's in no big hurry 8

"But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day."

It doesn't matter to Him whether it takes a day or a thousand years!

God isn't slow to get around to it! 9a

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness."

People see how long it takes and think, "Man, God is sure slow!"

But God doesn't see it that way! He's not slow! He's in no hurry.

God is patient to give people time to repent 9b ***"He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."***

Don't get the wrong idea! God will have His day! 10 ***"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare."***

"The Day of the Lord WILL come!"

Don't misjudge God's patience! God won't wait forever!

God's day will come like a thief!

God will judge suddenly, like thief in the night (unexpected; without notice).

God's day will bring total destruction

When He judges, everything will be destroyed; it'll be too late to repent.

HOW SHOULD WE THEN LIVE? 11-18

Awareness of the suddenness and severity of God's judgment

ought to produce a change in the lifestyle of God's people.

Our view of creation, and of Gen. 1-5, is *NOT irrelevant!*

It's not just a curious point for theological discussion!

What we believe about God's intervention in Gen. 1-5 affects how we live.

If God can't create and judge the world, He has no right to rule.

He's no threat to my life!

If God did create the world by His Word, He has the right to rule my life.

He has power to judge.

Peter assumes this is true, because he believes Gen. 1-5.

Because this is true, . . .

We should live holy and godly lives. 11

"Since everything will be destroyed in this way,

what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives."

Swindoll: "A telltale sign of heresy: a ministry that emphasizes the Lord's return,

but that doesn't, with equal gusto, emphasize a godly life."

We should eagerly await His coming 12-13

"As you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

God's plan for earth's future ought to produce eager anticipation, as we

look forward to creation of new home characterized by righteousness.

We're watching for that day 12a

We're doing everything we can to hasten that day 12b

Though it's a day of judgment, it's His day. We're excited about it!

If we know He's waiting for people to turn to Him,

we want to help speed up the process!

We're looking forward to new heavens and new earth,

filled with righteousness 13

We don't cling to the old world that will be destroyed!

We should strive for holiness 14

“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”

We should understand God’s purpose 15-16

“Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, . . .”

We should recognize **purpose** behind God’s patient waiting to judge earth.

God’s concerned about saving people

God’s desire should make US patient

God’s desire should make us concerned for salvation of others

We should avoid the error of the lawless 17 *“Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.”*

Peter urges us not to be misled by the false interpretation which lawless people have drawn from God’s patience.

They have interpreted God’s lack of action as a lack of interest.

God isn’t waiting due to lack of interest. God *will* judge the lawless.

Therefore, we ought to remain faithful.

We should grow spiritually 18

*“But **grow** in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.”

We should use our time wisely and dedicate ourselves to growth as we wait for His coming.

This challenge brings us back to **purpose of the book:**

If God’s going to intervene and judge the world,

We should understand His plan.

We should seek to keep growing spiritually.

Keep growing in virtues presented in His Word. Christ is coming soon!

[Eat dessert first!]

Are WE going to join the world—try to blot it out of our minds? Selective memory.

God WILL have His day! Will we be ready?