

2Peter 11-12-16b

We're back in 2 Peter chapter 3, moving from verse 9 to verse 10. There is an application, I would like to point out, for the statements that Peter makes in verse 9. It is clear that God is being wrongly and falsely accused. His character is being impugned.

He has made a promise, but he's not keeping it. He should be doing something that he's not. These hegemony have set themselves up and have decided that God is slow.

God is somehow delayed or delaying, and there is an implicit accusation here. Either an accusation toward God Himself or toward those who believe in Him and for those who wait for Him. If you are waiting on the Lord, as Scripture says we should, they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

Wait, I say, on the Lord. Those who trust Him, even when we would like for provision to come sooner, we would like deliverance to come sooner, we would like answers to come sooner. But the nature of that delay, the time of that delay is the occasion for faith and patience.

If God always answered before we asked, if He always met every need before we were conscious of it, we would never need to trust. We would never need to endure. We would never need to be patient.

And we would be completely and totally unprepared for any service, any function, anything that requires strength of character in the future. This, by the way, is one of the difficulties with our generation of youth. And it has been true now for some years that as the biblical foundations and the Judeo-Christian ethical understandings that used to characterize the civilization in this country have eroded away, parents have become more and more anxious to meet their children's every need.

It begins in the cradle. It begins when you first bring the baby home from the hospital. Now, apologies, I have no idea what anybody other than us did with their babies.

I don't mean to step on anybody's toes. I can only tell you from my own experience with two little ones that very early, I had researched this and made sure that it was medically safe and everything else. But when the babies came home, I thought, you know, this standard expectation and truism that new parents are baggy-eyed and ragged and up all night, this isn't going to happen.

We have got to get our children on a schedule. I run this house. The child is coming to my house.

The child is going to adjust to my schedule. I am not going to wreck myself and my wife and my entire existence because this child wakes up and decides to cry. And it is difficult, you know, especially when you're new at it.

But if you research it and you discover that it really is healthier for the child to eat at regular intervals and to have their digestion work in predictable ways and predictable times, it's easier on everybody. It is better for the child. It is infinitely better for the parents.

And so from the time that the newborn comes home, you develop a schedule. And initially, for the first night or two, yes, the child is just going to cry on a whim. They're going to get hungry and demand something.

But you wait. You say, look, every two hours, start them out on a two-hour schedule. And it's miraculous.

Within two days, both of our daughters had adjusted to a two-hour schedule. And you know what? You get two solid hours of sleep. If you alternate getting up and, you know, depending on the logistics of what you're feeding them and where it comes from and whether the father has something with which he can feed the child or not.

I won't go into those gory details, but suffice it to say that, you know, even if you're going with an all-natural diet, there are ways that you can have that on hand and deliver it to the child. But two-hour schedule. And if you alternate, everybody gets four hours of sleep at a whack.

And you're not baggy-eyed. You're not ragged. You're not short-tempered.

You're not cranky or irritable. You're not having trouble recovering because you bring the child into a system and their system adjusts to the system. It's predictable.

They cry when you expect them to cry. They eliminate when you expect them to eliminate. It's just so infinitely easier.

You have to teach the child to wait. You teach the child from inception of life on this planet that you don't get everything you want when you want it. You've got to wait.

There is no point in screaming bloody murder because the bottle ain't coming until the two-hour time hack hits. And if you start this way and see the success of it and come to believe in it, then as you raise your child through toddler phases and older and older, they learn that just because they see a thing doesn't mean they must have it and that they are going to get it. They learn patience.

They learn discipline. They learn trust. I will give you something to eat as soon as we get home.

I will trust in that promise. My parents have made this kind of promise before and they've always come true. I have no reason to think that if I'm not patient, if I don't discipline myself to wait, that I will not get a nice tasty meal when we get home.

There's no need to cry. In fact, it's counterproductive because I'm going to receive discipline if I

make a nuisance of myself and throw a tantrum because I'm cranky and I'm tired and I'm hungry. Hey, I'm sorry, but you're living in my house, my car, my world, and you will have to adjust to my schedule.

And if we have an unexpected delay, you have the tools to cope with it. And if you train up a child in the way that they should go when they get to adulthood, they have the tools to cope with the unexpected, with unfortunate and unavoidable delays. They don't scream at a stewardess or a pilot because their expectations weren't met on the airplane.

They don't make a nuisance of themselves and a pest of themselves and cause problems for themselves because they lack discipline and the ability to wait. It is a spiritual skill. And if you've learned it in the physical realm, when it comes time to trust God, to pray and wait on the Lord, be of good cheer and he shall strengthen thine heart, you know about that.

It comports. It is a part of life that you have already lived. Waiting is a necessary part of life.

It is good for us to wait, to trust, to be patient. The trial of your faith worketh patience. Let patience have its perfect work in you, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

We cannot be perfect. We cannot be complete. We cannot be whole and have no missing elements if we have not gone through those situations that require waiting, that require patience, that require faith.

It is an integral, important part of the plan of God. This is why we have passages, we saw this in Isaiah, back in Isaiah chapter 40, verse 28. Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, not just the physical ends, but the chronological ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary.

His understanding is unsearchable. His plan is inscrutable sometimes to the human mind. His understanding is way beyond ours.

We cannot search out the understanding of the Lord. Who has known the mind of the Lord? Who has been his counselor? Well, Lord, I know you are running this universe you created and all, but let me give you a few tips on how you can do it better. Who has been the Lord's counselor? His understanding is unsearchable.

He neither faints nor is weary. The arm of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save. His ear is not heavy that it cannot hear.

If he is delaying, if he is waiting, if he is impugning, it has a purpose, a wise and divinely understanding purpose, and it is up to us to trust that he knows more than we do. So, when these self-appointed hegemony decide that God is being slow, that God is being delayed, that there's something wrong with the schedule, he is being impugned. Non-understanding people, God is wiser and smarter.

This is like a two-year-old stamping their foot and saying, I've got the stupidest parents because they're not giving me what I want, when I want it, all the time. When, in fact, the parents are exceedingly wise because they are giving this child equipment for life, teaching them skills that will serve them, and it is necessary. The parent knows a lot more than the two-year-old.

Well, just be aware also, not only is this truth at the divine level, but many times we as believers have our motives impugned, have our decisions and our actions criticized and ill-spoken of. People who set themselves up as hegemony decide that we don't know what we're doing, that we are befuddled and benighted and confused and unskilled and silly and foolish in some of the things we do, and yet we are operating on biblical principles, on divine wisdom that is hard won, that we have earned and learned over time, and we are waiting on the Lord. We are not throwing ourselves in the way of God's plan and purpose.

We are not elbowing the Holy Spirit out of the way and trying to do His work. We are doing what we should do based on what we know of the Word of God, and there are people who will badmouth us for it. Just remember, Jesus said, if they hate me, they're going to hate you.

If they attack me, they will attack you. The servant is not better than his master, and if they're giving the master a hard time, you can hardly expect to be exempt as the servant. So the next time you start getting static and flak and criticism and frowns and stares, and this happens occasionally when families get together, and somebody somewhere in the family is raising a critical eyebrow at somebody else in the family somewhere.

I don't think it happens to anybody here, but hypothetically speaking, in the abstract out there in the world, it can happen. Just remember, if you're ever the recipient of criticism, and you always need to consider this, you know, have I missed something? Is this legitimate? Is this God's way of waking me up to something? But if you realize that this arises from misunderstanding and misapprehension and a miscasting and in some cases a deliberate bad reading of things, they put the worst possible face on something, not feeding your child at the moment. You know, wait till you have somebody in the house and the baby is crying and you don't immediately rush to address its needs.

And there's a peripheral person. Well, aren't you going to do something about the baby? What kind of a parent are you? What kind of unfeeling, insensitive? And you know what you're doing. You know why you're doing it.

The child shall not die. You know that it's not the time for a diaper. It's not the time for a burp.

It's just, you know, 15 minutes from feeding time. I'm not going to go in there 15 minutes early. I'm not going to let this baby start dictating to me when we're going to do what we need to do.

But somebody might be critical. Somebody might say, oh, you unfeeling, insensitive, heartless.

What kind of a parent are you? You know, if it's a parent, you know, did I raise you to be such a, this sort of thing? Just remember, people have been doing this to God since Cain.

And will do it till the end of time. And will do it till the last creature goes into the lake of fire at the great white throne. They will still be shaking their fist at God, believing that it's somehow His fault.

And this is why God's got to purge the eternal future of those who refuse to understand. But this verse, when you see it, just remember, there are people that are, if you can believe it, they are accusing God. They've got it figured out better than God.

Their timing, their plan is superior to the very creator of the universe, who hung the worlds in space. They've got a better idea. And they're looking down their nose at God.

Well, if they do it to God, don't be surprised when they do it to us. And we've got to steady our course. We've got to live our lives as unto the Lord, not unto men.

And just remember, the Lord Jesus said, you can expect this. Many times, there's a different motivation. Are these people that are criticizing God genuinely concerned about the schedule? Or are they looking for an excuse to impugn the very idea of God? There is an underlying motive.

It's not like, well, my goodness, the schedule just doesn't seem to... I'm real concerned about your salvation, and you don't seem to be getting... That's not their idea. They're looking for an excuse to rail against the creator, to belittle the faith of believers. That's their real agenda.

And many times, when there's criticism coming toward us, we have to decide, is this somebody that's really just looking for some occasion against us? Or is this really a well-meant observation designed to somehow help us? We can sort that out. But that's a little bit of application from verse 9. It is not God's will. And notice, it is the best of all motives.

God is trying to deliver people. God is trying to avoid destroying people by waiting, by giving them every possible opportunity. God is stretching to the very limits of His divine nature to bring about salvation for as many people as possible.

And what does He get for it? Abuse. Criticism. Mocking, deriding, arrogant criticism for it.

And nothing is harder to endure than when you are actually doing something out of generosity of spirit, out of love, out of patience and long-suffering, and you get criticized as though you're messing up. It's very, very hard to take. You are righteously indignant over this.

Here I am, trying to do something good, and no good deed goes unpunished, kind of a thing. Well, then we come to verse 10. But the day of the Lord will come.

And you can stop right there. The day of the Lord will come. Where is the promise of His coming? All things go on as they have from the beginning.

The day of the Lord will come. Now, for Peter to move into this realm, he's got a lot of Old Testament Scripture supporting his idea. In Habakkuk, chapter 2, verse 3, he says, The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak.

There are prophetic visions. This, by the way, completely, I don't know how this happened, but when I was in seminary, there was this fashionable idea that there could be no meaning in an Old Testament Scripture that the Old Testament author did not himself understand. If Daniel said a thing, if Moses said a thing, if David said a thing, it could not have any meaning that he himself could not understand.

When David wrote the Psalms about, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? You can't really apply that to Jesus, because David didn't know Jesus was coming. I know, it's just incomprehensible. Well, there is biblical refutation for this goofy idea.

Of course prophets could write things that God, in inspiring wisdom, with all 66 books and a lifetime to study them, we can't figure out what's being said. How can we expect the Old Testament authors to know exactly what they were saying when they set down Holy Spirit-inspired truth? They didn't have to understand it, they just had to set it down. And what does it say in Habakkuk? The vision is for a yet-appointed time, for a future-appointed time.

This is Habakkuk 2, verse 3. But at the end, it will speak. At the end, it will make sense. At the end, it will communicate.

I'm setting the vision down now for a future time, and when that time comes, this vision is going to come alive and speak. It's going to communicate. Its import will become clear at that appointed time.

And it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it. Though it tarries, wait for it.

Because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Did you hear that? Though it tarries, wait for it. Because it will surely come and will not tarry.

Though it tarries, it will not tarry. Wait for it. It will surely come.

So, it's tarrying, but it's not tarrying. How do we reconcile this seeming contradiction? Who is he talking to when he says, wait for it? Wait for it. Wait for it.

Who is he talking to? Human beings. Human beings have to wait for it. Because the human thinks, well, why not now? Sorry, not yet.

Wait. Well, how about now? No. Wait.

Are we there yet? No. Wait. When will we get there? Not yet.

Wait. From the human point of view, we think, well, this would sure be a good time. Lord, you know, if you could come and save us this whole election fiasco and this whole economic downturn, and if I didn't have to try to figure out what to do over these next few months and years, this would sure be a convenient time for that.

Wait. Wait. It will surely come.

It will not tarry. If it comes exactly at the appointed time, God has appointed this episode that this vision represents at a specified time, and it comes right on time. It's not late.

You see what he's saying. It's not tarrying. If it came any sooner, it would be early.

It's not going to be early, and it's not going to be late. It's going to come exactly at the precise instant in history that God has scheduled it. Not a millisecond too soon.

Not a millisecond too late. It will not tarry. You think it's tarrying from your point of view.

Just wait for it. It will come when it's supposed to. Habakkuk 2.3. Wonderful, wonderful passage.

Luke 18.7. Shall God not avenge his own chosen ones, his own elect, who cry out day and night to him, though he bears long with them? It's taking a long time. They're crying out in the day. The cry is not answered.

They cry out in the night. It's not answered. They cry out the next day.

It's not answered. They cry out in the night. It's not answered.

Will God not avenge his own elect, because they're crying out in the day, and they're crying out in the night, and the answer is not yet coming? If the answer doesn't come in the day and doesn't come in the night, does that mean God's not going to ever avenge them? God's not ever going to vindicate and answer them? He's bearing long. Luke 18.7. You go to the next verse. I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.

They're waiting through the day. They're waiting through the night. They're waiting through the day.

They're waiting through the night. They're crying out. And he's bearing long with them.

And yet Jesus says in the very next verse, I, the Lord Jesus Christ, tell you, he, God the Father, will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he really find faith on the earth? Luke 18.8. Who is it that's going to have that faith that he's looking for? Those who learn how to wait. Those who trust that God will avenge them.

They cry out in the day. They cry out in the night. But they never lose hope.

They never lose faith. They understand that in God's time and in God's perfect way, they will be avenged. They will be answered.

There will be a response. So the question is, when the Son of Man returns, will there be anybody willing to wait? The trial of your faith produces patience. Let patience have its perfect work so that you may be perfect and complete.

Will the Son of Man find perfect and complete, lacking nothing believers, when he returns to the earth? Will he find them? It depends on whether anybody will wait. Romans 13.11. Time is passing. It is getting nearer.

Every day that passes, every hour that passes, the deliverance and the fulfillment of God's promises is nearer than it has ever been. So just wait. When the time is right, it will happen.

Hebrews 10.37. How long ago was Hebrews written? 1950 odd years ago? Will not tarry. Will not delay. There is a delay that is not a delay.

There is a wait that is not a wait. There is a slowness that is not slow. Revelation 2.21. God will be able to say this for every human being that comes before him at the judgment.

I gave you time, and you did not respond. Great White Throne, when the books are opened, all of the goats that are on the left come before him. It isn't going to be, well, if you had just given me more time.

I gave you time, and you did not repent. God is long-suffering. You remember Exodus 34, one of the great Old Testament chapters.

When we went through Exodus, I couldn't wait to get to chapter 34. This is when Moses sees the glory of God. Lord, show me your glory.

God presses Moses into the cleft of a rock, and he says, don't look when I'm coming. Don't look when I'm right beside you. But after I get past, take a look, and you can see the back of my glory.

You can't look at my face. You can't look at me in profile. But as I'm departing, you can look at the afterglow.

You can see my train of glory. And the Lord passed. This is Exodus 34, 6. And the Lord passed before him, before Moses, and proclaimed.

What does God proclaim when he reveals himself in full glory to a mortal man? What does he declare about himself? The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth. Right in the middle of merciful and gracious, right in the middle of abounding goodness and truth, what do you have? Makrothumia, long-suffering. It's the central attribute of the five that are declared before Moses.

God waits. God is patient. God forbears.

God puts up with. He is long-suffering. The central attribute in the revelation to Moses.

David understood this. The psalmist understood this. Psalm 86, 15.

But you, O Lord, are a God full of compassion and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy and truth. If your Bible does not have a cross-reference from Psalm 86, 15 back to Exodus 34, 6, it should. Because it is a direct reference.

The same five attributes and long-suffering is still right in the middle. Isaiah 30, verse 18. Therefore the Lord will wait in order that he may be gracious to you.

Did you ever think about the fact that when we think we need something and we're anxious to have a prayer answered or a resolution to a difficulty of some sort, that when God waits to answer it, He is actually being gracious. He is waiting in order to be gracious. We say, well, I think the best grace would be if He would answer this prayer right now.

If you want to be gracious, give me what I need right now. But the Bible says the Lord will wait in order that He may be gracious to you. There is more grace in the delay than there is in the answer.

Why? Because everything in this life is a construct. Everything in this life is a training exercise. And the grace is not in the provision.

The provision is the end of the test. The provision is the end of the exercise. The provision is, okay, that's done with.

Now we're going to move on to something else. The grace of God is teaching us, developing us, maturing us, growing us in the faith. That's where the grace is.

Provision is effortless. God can provide instantaneously at any moment. The grace is in the delay.

The Lord will wait that He may be gracious to you, and therefore He will be exalted that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all those who wait for Him.

If you're not waiting for Him, you're missing that blessing. The blessing is in the wait. Blessed are those who wait.

Isaiah 30. Romans 2. Of course, this directly bears on our passage in 2 Peter 3. Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to metanoia? Do you despise the riches of His forbearance and longsuffering? Do you set yourself up as a hegemon and decide that God's timing is not very good? I need an

answer now. I need a provision now.

I need an expression of divine intervention now. Do you despise the forbearance? Do you despise the longsuffering? Do you despise the enforced waiting that God has built into His plan, not knowing that it is a goodness of God and He is encouraging change of mind? We think change of mind is always away from dead works and toward faith. Our mind needs to change in a lot of ways, doesn't it? It needs to be more robust.

It needs to be more mature. It needs to be more trusting. It needs to be more heavenly minded.

It needs to be less earthly oriented. It needs to be more Christ-like. It needs to be less of the old man, more of the new man.

Less of the old sinful nature, more of the new divine nature. We have all kinds of metanoia that we need, right? It is the goodness of God leading you to a changed mind. That's what the wait does.

And God is patient. God delays. There's nothing God would like better than to just bless our socks off.

But sometimes He withholds provision or He withholds blessing because it is for our good, just like a good parent. Romans 9.22, the passage I alluded to earlier, What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? God wants to exhibit His wrath now. But He's not doing it.

He's waiting. And He's enduring with great longsuffering. He is doing exactly what He is teaching us to do.

Wait. There is a right time. There is a right place.

And this isn't it. Here's God who wants to exercise His wrath. We've seen that in Isaiah in spades, haven't we? The God of wrath.

Who is this coming from? Basra. Clothes dipped in blood. Judgment.

Swords. Vengeance. Vindication for the people.

Destruction of the enemies. Who is this? In judgment. In anger.

God says, I am carried along by my anger. There's nothing God would like better than to judge all of the evil and the heinous, catastrophic, sinful degeneracy in this world. Both at the microscopic level where it affects you and me and throughout the universe.

Nothing He would like better than to vent His wrath. But He endures with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction in order that He might reveal Himself and bless.

Romans 9. 1 Timothy 1.16. Paul, talking about himself to young Timothy, says, However, He's talking about his past life and the persecution of the church and whatnot.

For this reason I obtained mercy. For this reason God had mercy on me. Set me up as an apostle.

That in me first, Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering. Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Persecuted the church.

Hailed people out of Jerusalem. Took all of their property. Persecuted them.

Tried to bring them back from Damascus for trial and punishment. And God put up with him the whole time. I obtained mercy that in me first, Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

Look at the Apostle Paul. If this guy, who was an enemy of Christ and an enemy of Christians and an enemy of everything the Lord Jesus stood for, if God can have mercy on him, he can surely have mercy on me through Jesus Christ. And of course our passage.

And back up in verse 20. Those who were formerly disobedient when once the divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared. In 1 Peter 3. 1 Peter 3.20. Peter talking about the flood yet again.

One of his favorite subjects. I think Peter just had a fixation on water. He was a fisherman.

Grew up on the sea. Walked on the water. Sunk into the water.

Jesus pulled him out of the water. He couldn't get enough of this water theme. Once the divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah.

1 Peter 3.20. While the ark was being prepared in which a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. God waited. Gave everybody else a chance.

Nobody but the immediate family of Noah was saved. But God waited anyway. Gave them all a chance.

It is not the will of God that any of those people would perish. That they all be saved. The ark was plenty big enough.

Could have packed hundreds of people on there. Perhaps thousands. Nobody came.

Ezekiel 18. We saw this in our Ezekiel study in great detail. God speaking.

Ezekiel 18.23. Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live? Big stake through the heart of double

predestination and all such things. Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live? Verse 32 of that same chapter. Ezekiel 18.32. I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies, says the Lord God, therefore turn and live.

It's a command of God. It's an imperative. I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies, says the Lord God, therefore you turn.

You live. Doesn't get any clearer than that. Ezekiel 33.11. Say to them as I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.

Turn. Turn from your evil ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel? Well, it is not the will of God that any should perish. His long-suffering is an expression of grace.

God's waiting is an opportunity for those who need to turn to turn, for those who have turned to be patient and exercise faith. Blessed are those who wait. God's grace is in the wait.

But the day of the Lord will come. There is an end to this exercise. It is not endless.

It is not eternal. It has a finite limit and the day of the Lord will come. And it's going to come as a thief in the night.

What does it mean that something comes as a thief in the night? Jesus said, I come as a thief in the night. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. What's the problem with a thief coming at night instead of in broad daylight? How do people know that a thief came in the night? Wake up the next morning, your stereo is gone.

Wake up the next morning, house has been robbed. Why do they come at night? Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. Their deeds cannot be seen in the dark.

You cannot anticipate. You can't defend yourself. You cannot prepare because you're asleep.

You are incapacitated. You can do nothing about it. So two characteristics that you can presume right off the bat about something being like a thief in the night.

A. You cannot anticipate it and see it. You don't see the thief walking down and say, I believe that thief is going to turn into my house here. I think he's going to come into my window or my door.

I think he's going to break into my car. You can't see him. Your eyes are shut.

It's night. It's dark. There's no illumination.

There's no exposure. So it is hidden. Its timing and its details are unknown.

Secondly, you can do nothing about it. If a thief comes in the night, you're asleep. You have no

recourse.

You've got to be awake. You've got to have a light and hopefully a weapon. If you're going to do something about a thief in the night.

But if it comes as a thief in the night, there's no preparation, there's no observation and there is no defense. It is going to happen. There's nothing you can do about it because you're asleep.

If you have not prepared ahead of time, if you've not secured your gear, if you've not taken steps, if you've not provided some sort of watch or some sort of security, then you're going to be robbed and there's nothing you can do about it. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. The people who are taken at that time won't see it coming, won't understand why and how it's happening and won't be able to do anything about it.

It's going to come like a thief in the night. Paul tells us, we are not of the night or of the darkness that that day should overtake us as a thief. Thessalonians, you remember? We are not of the night.

We are not of the darkness. What does that mean? We've got the light. We walk in the light as he is in the light.

We have fellowship. We know what God is doing. We expect his return.

We're waiting for his return. We're sitting up waiting for the thief. And when he comes, we're going to join him.

We're not going to be robbed. In which the heavens will pass away with a great noise. Now, did we skip something here? The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements will melt with a fervent heat.

If you want to talk about a great compression of time, the day of the Lord begins with the return of the Lord, right? And the inception of his kingdom. The kingdom goes for a thousand years. Gog Magog rebellion.

The camp of the saints is surrounded. Satan having come from the bottomless pit. God consumes them with fire.

There is the great white throne judgment. Death and hell are emptied and cast into the lake of fire. The beast and the false prophet.

And all the rest of it have been in there already. All of these things take place. Peter just collapses that whole thing.

Why? Because a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. And the day of the Lord is a thousand years. Starts with the return of the Lord Jesus and hard on the heels.

God says, you know what? That's the denouement. That is the wrap-up. That's the climax and the aftermath.

And now we're going to move into a whole new thing. The kingdom of the Father. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.

And once that happens, it is programmatically fixed. You're not going to have anybody from the previous dispensation being able to change their mind. It's over and done with.

Once the day of the Lord has come, anybody listening to what Peter has to say here, they're done. It's over with. The next thing for them is going to be the elements melting with the fervent heat.

How many unbelievers are going to see the inception of the millennial kingdom? None. Zero. Zilch.

Nada. Nobody. Unsaved.

The unsaved are removed from the earth. And so the next thing they're going to see, the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night. They're at the great white throne.

Lake of fire. Universe disappears. That's the day of the Lord for them.

The day of the Lord is the return of the Lord, the judgment of the Lord, and their elimination from the Lord, from the presence of the Lord. And the elements will melt with the fervent heat. Both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

What a great description of the reverse Big Bang. It's going to be the Big Un-Bang. The Big Disappearance.

If it started out in infinite heat and zero size, it's going to end up in infinite heat and zero size. If it was a bubble in the quantum foam, well, that bubble is going to pop. And there will be no more bubbling foam.

Well, then in verse 11 we have, Therefore, and that's what we'll pick up after the holiday season, probably somewhere in the vicinity of the 6th of January, I think will be the next time we're in 2 Peter. So, this is a good place. I think the collapse and destruction of the universe is as good a place as any to leave off for a while.

Enjoy the holidays. We'll have a little bit of a special study here on Sunday and launch us into the celebration of the Lord's birth. But we'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the comfort and encouragement, the solid direction that it gives us, how clear these things are, how clear are the mandates, the

exhortations to trust in your word and your promises to remain fixed upon our hope, to wait patiently, to experience your grace and your blessing and the fulfillment of every word that has proceeded from your mouth. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these things on us, even as we celebrate and spend time in travel and in fellowship and in festivities of this time of year, that we'll be ever mindful of our place in your plan, of the opportunity we have to learn and grow in the time that remains to us in this life, so that we can be prepared for that great eternal future that is so rapidly approaching.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.