

2Peter 12-01-06b

Let's pick up our study now in 2 Peter chapter 3 verse 10 says but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the elements or The heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements will melt with fervent heat Both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up in our first Lesson this evening. We looked at and kind of brought ourselves back up to speed on the context of this Statement many times people just jump to this verse without really Seeing it in its context. Why is Peter even bringing this up? He is at the end of his life Right.

He's making this exhortation, saying don't get distracted and Live too much in this world. I'm stirring up your pure minds by way of reminder of what your life is truly all about. False teachers are going to come in and try to distract you, try to deflect you. They will consciously or unconsciously obscure the plan and purpose of God for faithful Christians, and we see it all around us.

You, the the best thing that has ever happened to Christianity is also the worst thing that has ever happened to Christianity, and that is modern media: Television, radio, and the Internet. The latter most of all these days have made the best and the worst of Bible scholarship, or lack thereof, ubiquitous; it's obtainable anywhere.

Now I was working on a project over the weekend, and it was something where I didn't really have to think too much, kind of a manual labor thing. So I got one of my old laptops and fired it up and pointed it at a particular ministry and just listen to eight or ten 20 minute Bible classes from this particular teacher on a book that we have already covered together. I was just interested to see what his take was. He's, he's got a pretty good reputation as a Bible teacher, and there's always insights that you can glean. But that's available.

I mean, you think about it. You can pick a prominent Bible teacher and within a few minutes you can be listening to any selected passage you want. When has that been possible in the history of the world? In the hit listen to me. When in the history of the world has it been possible at any moment to hear a Bible class on exactly the passage you want to learn about? When has that ever been possible, if you think about it?

It's only been in the last 50 years that that things like cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes have been obtainable and and playable, but you would have to order the tapes, you'd have to wait for them to come, maybe pay a little bit for them to cover the costs, and, you know, spool through and listen. Siri autumn, just in the last really 15 years, since the Internet is kind of matured and begun to support Christian ministries with downloadable mp3s and and streaming videos and this sort of thing.

You think about it: nobody, nobody in thousands of years, nobody since Adam and Eve and Seth and Noah and Ham Shem and Japheth and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the twelve tribes in the nation of Israel. Nobody in the history of the human race has had access to the teaching of the Word of God, the Explanation of the Word of God, the presence of the Word of God. Any passage you can find online; resources totally for free that will give you lexicons and concordances and commentaries and an infinitude of resources on Demand.

You can wake up at 2 15 in the morning with the wide-eye and say, well, since I can't sleep, Let me redeem the time. You can get on your laptop and in five minutes, you can be deep in the Word of God five minutes now. It I say that, and you know, it seems like a triviality. Well, of course, I mean we take it for granted. You stop and think about two things. First of all, how amazing that is, and secondly, What kind of people should we be? What sort of standard will we be judged by given the gifts that have been placed at our disposal?

I Can understand Somebody not being educated if they have no access to school or books.

I don't expect an Australian Aborigine to have a master's degree. I Just don't expect that Doesn't mean They're not able that an average Aborigine isn't smart enough. They probably are in many ways.

They're smarter than us They can last a whole lot longer living off the land than any of us can They've got a different kind of knowledge. They've got a degree in a different sort of science but Look at what is available. What excuse can we offer at? the judgment seat of Christ for not Living in the light of God's Word My pastor wasn't smart enough.

He didn't teach well enough That's not an excuse. You've got access to virtually every pastor that has preached in the last 50 years and good ones better ones than yours truly with more letters after their name and longer time in the word and and probably, you know greater insights and and more Meditation time. I mean there is no excuse.

This is my point What excuse can you offer to God that? Well, I didn't quite understand the plan I didn't quite have the the grasp of what was important. There has never been anybody in the human race that has less excuse for maxing out You look at people like Moses and Daniel and David and the Old Testament Saints who with very little information and sporadic interventions and divine revelations spaced decades apart who were faithful and dedicated and Abandoned everything they knew and traipsed across the desert to go to the place that God had called them to you look at that level of commitment in that level of faith and you look at us who have Limitless and and that's just not an exaggeration. That's not hyperbole.

We have limitless Resources there is nothing about the Word of God that you cannot find out in a couple of minutes of Reasonable search there's nothing there's no question where you can't at least get the major positions From Different theological points of view you you can google it you can go to to Evangelical websites, you can go to Bible org you can go to To any one of a host of places and hear great Bible teaching so knowing that the day of the Lord is going to come unexpectedly and And this is not a happy unexpected thing You know, he doesn't say will come like grandma's surprise visit will come like Santa Claus with a bag of presents will come like a Shower after time of drought. I mean there's lots of things that lots of images lots of Similes or metaphors that God could have put here in his word Why doesn't the judgment come like a like a freshen of of rain from above? Why doesn't it come like? A spring of water in the dry desert. Why doesn't it come like a an oasis over the next dune? It comes like a thief It what does a thief do after he has come unexpectedly he deprives you of What you formerly had I? Had it now.

I don't have it. I had a Bicycle now, I don't have a bicycle that's happened to me twice and Thankfully that's about the worst thing that's ever been stolen from me the most valuable but I Had it now. I don't have it the day of the Lord will come like a thief You will have stuff and then suddenly you won't have it There will be a Subtraction in the day of judgment the question is

what is it that we lose? Do we lose things we value or we lose things that we could do without anyway? I would love for the thief to come and take the sin out of my nature I would love the thief to take the history of my failures away to take my shortcomings and my faults and my Harms that I've done to others my embarrassing moments my Inabilities my ineptitudes My limited intellect my limited memory thief come take those away subtract those from me I'm all for you, but what if you have spent your life? Investing in and working toward things and you value them highly and that's what gets taken The day of the Lord will come as a thief and the question is I Mean I had I had some stuff up next to the back of the house that we were fixing to throw away But we hadn't really thrown it away yet You know sometimes I cannibalize handles or hinges or something like that before we put things right out on the alley Well somebody came up and thought they were kind of stealing our stuff What they really did is they stole our trash and it kind of kind of made me smile I thought well, he's saved me the trouble of dragging it to the alley.

You know that's that's a That's that's not a bad way to be robbed If your car is on its last legs and won't pass inspection and somebody steals it and you say hey now I've got a Chance to get another car you've did me a favor. I didn't have to pay to have it all off But the day is going to come as a thief and so the question is why do we have this thief imagery? I already mentioned the passage in Matthew that the Lord Jesus Describes The master of the house being surprised Satan is going to be surprised But we also have Luke chapter 12 and verse 39 know this If the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come he would have watched and not Allowed his house to be broken into and this says it's the same as a Matthew passage. It's parallel, but it reminds us that Satan does have power God does have to maneuver Around the power of Satan.

He is the god of this world. His minions are principalities and powers and rulers Operating in the darkness of this age. They are not insignificant.

They're not something to be ignored if Satan has certain information if he is given certain access and certain knowledge He can do great harm and sometimes believers grant this Cultivate, you know Eastern mysticism and opening your mind to various things I was reading a testimony of a guy who went down kind of a psychological path and and was on one of these open consciousness quests and Suddenly discovered that he was he started sensing the presence of evil entities and it scared him and he went the other way and and it was one of the things That motivated him to get saved and get with Spiritual life, but you can you can open your mind Dave Hunt has written extensively about this. So there is a power and Jesus says if the thief is Given information if he's given access he will use it and it's something that we need to remember is we have to be on our Guard watch and pray the scripture doesn't just say pray it says be Built vigilant be watchful Your enemy Roams the earth seeking whom he may devour Well, if there was never anybody to devour in the believing world, he would stop seeking wouldn't he? Why is he seeking because there are devourable Believers because they are not diligent. They are not vigilant.

They do not watch and That thief can come and take what is ours and we don't grant him access. We don't grant him The opportunity to seize on weakness and we do that by laying hold of what Christ has given us so The day the Lord will come as a thief in the night It will come unexpectedly and there's going to be loss involved in the day of the Lord Everybody is going to lose something in the day of the Lord. Whatever judgment you're a part of you're gonna lose

something Nobody is gonna stand there with a great smile on his face While his entire pile of nothing but gold silver and precious stones resists the fire Everybody's got wood.

Everybody has got hay. Everybody has got stubble. It's a question of how much And is there some gold and silver and precious stones to offset it? The day will be a day of loss.

There are things we want to lose and there are things we don't.

In which the heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements the word elements here is the Greek word stoic aah and There are some English words that are derived from this we talk about Stoicastic things, but nobody knows what those mean.

So it doesn't help me to point that out that that it's used in English but these have to do with structural things and in in in Greek in secular Greek the the stoic aah were common references to the heavens the fixed elements in the heavens the navigational stars the constellations the The cosmos the world as it is the fixed Elements of Existence not elements in the sense of the periodic table, you know the lead and the antimony and the you know Barium and the thorium and the you know, they're not that the copper and the iron.

This this means those fixed reliable Expected elements of life the the world as it is the Fixed nature of the physical world is going to melt With fervent heat the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Now Look at the order there. If you circle the things, what do you see? It is the heavens the Elements, this is your you know your land and your sea Yeah, your lights in the sky This is the earth and the works that are in it, it's almost the reverse what is Genesis 1 1 say What did God create in the beginning in the beginning God created? the heavens and The earth at the end what is going to go away the heavens and the earth?

What is the rest of the next couple of chapters of Genesis detail? Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 God putting works in the earth.

Later on you have man putting works in the earth planting vineyards building towers founding cities learning skills and trades and Here Peter says The ending will be like the beginning and those same things will disappear God put them in place God will take them out of place.

And it's interesting that science has confirmed Everything that we can ascertain the hot Big Bang model is the best explanation of how the universe got here and it started with a Molten plasma like beginning and space and time and matter and energy all sprung from this incredibly superheated Almost unknowable before the laws of physics can even be laws before time can be measured that's where it came from and Peter's description is as accurate a Description of the end as it would be of the beginning.

This would be the hot big implosion model It's all going to go away the same way it came into existence.

Let me digress for just a moment.

This is like a minute and a half digression To say this if you ever run across this this argument, which I've recently been Refuting that well You can't Talk about a cause for the Big Bang, you know for that. You can't talk about a cause for the universe This is an argument against God One

of the oldest arguments for the existence of God is the first cause argument everything that we observe As by way of an effect has a cause well If you go back and trace back through the effects and through the causes and through the effects of through there's had to be a first cause something had to start it all something had to be the uncaused cause and That is an argument that is used for the existence of God. Well People and you'll hear this if you talk to any informed atheists for more than about ten minutes about the origin of things They're gonna say well Occam's Razor says that instead of having an uncaused God causing a universe Occam's Razor means the simplest answer is usually the best and by the way, it doesn't mean that every simple answer is the best I Wanted the Sun to come up and so it did that's a simple explanation Occam's Razor says I wanted it to happen and it happened.

Well, that's the cause well No, it isn't. So don't be buffaloeed by these things But they say well, it's no different having an uncaused universe. Why complicate things by saying? well, the universe was caused by a God who himself was uncaused and The argument is there can't be anything before time There can't because cause Is antecedent to effect and so if you're at at time zero nothing can have caused time Because nothing can come before the first instant of time you see the argument there's kind of a Almost a semantic argument.

Well, here's the thing. It's an easy. It's an easy thing to dismiss and brush away this is like a Really wet bug on your windshield that that can easily be be washed away In this day and age think about your computer Any program you want to name Microsoft Word your email client your browser some game that you play Solitaire, let's just talk about solitaire.

Everybody that's got Windows has solitaire. I think even Apple machines have solitaire All right Well just there there's a timer in there somewhere that keeps track of how long you've played any chess program It has a timer to keep track of how long you've played. So you start this program, right and There's a little time it says, you know, you've been playing solitaire for 24 minutes You ingrate you lazy no good shiftless get back to work, you know But now there's a timer somewhere that the computer knows how long this program has been running It started at time zero and even playing solitaire for 24 minutes Would anybody in their right mind argue that that there can be nothing before solitaire? Because solitaire starts at time zero there can be no cause for the solitaire game You know in the solitaire world, it's it started and solitaire has been running for 24 minutes But how can you talk about a cause for solitaire? Because you can't say anything is before the zero time when the program started Well, this is just absurd and it's equally absurd when you talk about the universe that God can boot up the universe Just like a program on on his divine computer and there can be all kinds of stuff antecedent It's just not antecedent within this universe But there is there is a complete absurdity and Almost a stupidity to say well, nothing can exist outside the universe.

That's like saying nothing can exist outside solitaire I mean, come on expand your mind a little bit think this is a dumb argument Elizabeth gave me a book for my birthday. It was my birthday, wasn't it? Christmas. Yeah, they they meld, you know, they're close together.

The book is called irreligion it's written by a mathematician that looks like our Garfunkel's younger brother and and He's a mathematician and he says well, let me go through the major arguments for God and debunk them one by one Well, I've only gotten to chapter one and this is what's in chapter one This guy who's like a math professor at Stanford or something is trying to is trying to pass this off as a as a clincher Argument that that there can be no God because and I

think You know Well, it is to laugh But it pertains because look at what Peter says here The heavens are gonna pass away the heavens and the earth are gonna pet now Let me ask you something if the heavens and the earth and all that in them is is all there is When it passes away, where are you? My my roommate at college used to tell me, you know, wherever you go. There you are Well, where do you go? To be a spectator for the passing away of the heavens and the earth and all of the works that are in them In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth Now the heavens and the earth are completely gone in a molten plasma disappearance, so where are you? Outside Outside the wrecking ball came and knocked down my house. I was outside I Was born in that house.

I've lived all my life in that house. I've never been outside the house I I was a bubble boy. I couldn't leave I was in there in there for the time.

I was born and But guess what somebody has rolled the bubble outside and now they've knocked the house down. How is that even possible? Well, you see the the kind of screwy thinking That is behind people saying your God is absurd Your God delays his coming your God is slack concerning his promise These people are the absurd ones. These are the limited thinkers They can't figure out a reason why God would delay they cannot comprehend the mercy of God They have repudiated and rejected the mercy of God.

They have suppressed the truth of God in Unrighteousness what may be known of God is manifest to them. It has been witnessed to them Sin and righteousness and judgment and they have suppressed the truth in unrighteousness and They arrogantly set themselves up to judge God God can't be this he can't do that. He cannot have started the universe in this way.

He can't exist He can't be this he can't be that They are have set themselves up as judge and jury. What is the reality? The day of it's not the day of the critics Is it behold the day of the critics cometh as a thief in the knife and then and God will disappear with? Melting with a fervent heat. I mean, it's pretty silly, right? but look at the Substitution I will be like the Most High I will raise my judgment throne above the stars of God.

I Will I will five times I will This is what God is going to eradicate at the great white throne judgment this attitude and these These Mentalities whether they are angelic or whether they're human Exist and our God abides them for a time and it is a long time. It is a merciful time it is a gracious time, but there is coming a time in the day of the Lord where Time is up. The door of the ark will shut the king will come to Jerusalem and if you're not ready to receive him, he's leaving and The kingdom does not come the opportunity is not there the blessing and the and the reward and the entrance into everything that God Wants to give it is not the will of God that any should perish but a lot are going to perish and If it's not the will of God by whose will are they perishing? This is the nail in the coffin of false theological perspectives that say that God figures out who's saved and who isn't It is not the will of God that any should perish.

So if they perish whose will is bringing that about Their own it is their choice. They Actively consciously on purpose with malice of forethought impugn the character of God try to judge God themselves reject God suppress the truth about God and Push away salvation. Well, the day of the Lord is coming like a thief and it is going to take Everything it is going to take life itself away from these people and these angels all of them the elements will melt with fervent heat the stoic a the structural components of this universe this by extension is the molecular construction the

Subatomic fabric the actual space whatever it all is dark matter black holes eons and Poons and all of these other little particles.

They're trying to find with the accelerator You know gluons and all different kinds of radiation All of it is going away. This is the stoic a this is what makes up the fabric of the material universe And it is all going away Therefore and this is the point of application therefore knowing Since all these things will be dissolved What manner of persons ought you to be in? Holy conduct and godliness We're back to where we started this evening All of this is going to dissolve it is all going away every house every car every degree hanging on the wall every Accomplishment That is of a material secular time-bound mundane Nature is going away Not going to have a class ring not going to have a diamond ring not going to have a Big house not going to have a fancy car All of it is going away everything pertaining to this life is going away shelf full of awards Approbation favorable reviews Grades on papers. It's all dissolving Since this is true What kind of person should you be? Where are you going to be standing when the heavens go away? By the way, it's a really interesting word.

It's another hot pox legomena in in the Word of God the the When it says the heavens will pass away with a great noise. It's an animal poetic word it has the noise of a of a whoosh of a of a giant sucking sound and You know, they say in space. No one can hear you scream So if the heavens itself is passing away with a great noise, you know what that tells me There is another kind of space There's another kind of atmosphere and the noise of the destruction of this universe is going to be audible In that world in that Cosmos in that universe There's a universe outside this universe and this universe is going to make a noise when it dissolves We will transfer we will be inaugurated into God's world the world where the angels dwell.

It is real. It is tangible. We just don't have access to it and this Universe is going to make a noise It's the Word of God If it's going to make a noise, there's got to be something by way of audibility.

God speaks in heaven. Does he not angels? Cry out angels say holy holy holy. How can anybody hear him? There's noise in the heavenly realms Outside this universe there is spoken communication audibility of some kind on a plane and at a level probably completely beyond our comprehension, but there's there is a way to make noise What kind of people ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness? Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God now, can we hasten the day? Can we make it come more quickly? That's not what this means And there's if you've even got a copy of the new treasury of scripture knowledge look up this verse There's a great concise explanation of what hastening means here in a nutshell.

It means Looking for with eagerness Looking for it wishing it would hurry up It's like the children all snug in their beds with visions of lollipops dancing in their heads You know waiting you anticipate you can't wait. I say I can't wait. Well, of course you can wait You always wait everybody waits.

Nobody does not wait. You say oh, I can't wait Yes, you can and you do but you say you can't because you're you're hasting you're Anticipating you're longing for with great eagerness a thing to come As quickly as possible. We say oh, I want this to happen as quickly as possible Well, it's going to happen as as quickly as it happens.

You can't make the second shorter. It's a figure of speech This is a figure of speech. You cannot Accelerate God's schedule God's schedule is fixed It is known only to him and you can't say Oh God make it happen today And God says well, you know, I was gonna wait till next Tuesday But since you prayed that that's not what it means at all It means longing for anticipating Counting the minutes counting the hours until What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness? This is something we take with us.

This is a This is a possession That is transportable across the universe barrier our Selves our identity our souls are transportable and the godliness and Holy living that builds us up in the faith that produces the fruit of the Spirit that records in God's book the gold and silver and precious stones as it were this is Transportable treasure this goes with us. It's the only thing that does Righteousness by faith is Carry on baggage you can take it with you. You can keep it with you.

It will be there with you It will accompany us into the next life the next kingdom the next universe and it's the only thing So Peter says knowing this How do you think it would be a good idea to live? Do you want to keep accumulating stuff? That's going to melt or do you want to accumulate stuff that you can take? Seems like a pretty simple answer and then he repeats and this is what we're going to pick up next week He's going to go back through what he just covered about the dissolution of this universe And my question is why does he repeat that again? You know I know he said I'm going to put you by way of reminder I'm writing you the second letter. I'm but I mean he just got through saying this and then he says it again Why does God ever repeat himself? Emphasis hey hey hey Look at the nature of this world wake up pay attention. Why are you living like you're living? Why are you investing? You know this is like Importing expensive furniture on a boat that is rapidly sinking now could y'all lower that crate.

I've got a bunch of silver I'd like to unpack and put in the galley of my of my sinking boat. Oh I've got some fresh brass railing. I'm going to replace the wooden railing with brass on my sinking boat I mean, it's so absurd and yet we do this day by day by day We get so invested in the immediacies and the the short-term Things of this life and Peter says look.

I'm dying I'm heading for that place now, and I'm leaving you with this thought what kind of life you should you be living in? The light of this knowledge and he repeats it twice Because of which the heavens will be dissolved being on fire the coming of the day of God the coming of the day of the Lord The heavens are going to be on fire. Where are you going to be standing? And what will you have with you are you going to be mourning the loss of what is in the fire? Is your inheritance going to be in the fire? Will you be outside with the dogs and the fornicators and all those who love and practice a lie? Because that's where their inheritance is it's in the fire You can make a case that this universe and all that in it is is the lake of fire and That's where your inheritance is if this is where you build it up You think about that revelation chapter 20 passage read it Outside you're on the fringes of that universe you're very close to this one You didn't get very far from this one and all this is is a liquid molten plasmatic nothingness Everything that's in it is gone and people are staring back at Sodom at the fire in the brimstone saying oh my house my China my silver. Why do you think mrs. Lot looked back? Her life was in the town She saw nothing ahead she saw nothing beyond it was all behind her she turned around and You know she's an outpost She's a salt post of the destruction so Nevertheless we according to his promise look for a new heavens and a new earth.

It's new to us right in which Righteousness dwells righteousness is what we take with us the righteous will Prevail there the righteous will serve there the righteous will advance there the righteous will function there Righteousness is the nature of that Universe to which we go it's a it's a powerful powerful thought This is really what Peter has been leading up to he says don't let false teachers throw you off and distract you from the actual Truth of things this is where we are going and the only way you can be ready is not to get Distracted by false teaching not to get turned aside and deflected but to seize and lay hold of the truth of God the The purpose of our life day by day it doesn't take a lot most of our day is still spent in mundane pursuits But what's the matter with us if we don't take a few minutes? For crying out loud 10 minutes 15 minutes in a day to put something by for the future to To orient ourselves to remind ourselves of who we are and why we're here to try to redeem The rest of the time in the day so what we do we do it as under the Lord and not under men to cleanse ourselves of our old sins to lay aside the weight and the sin that so easily besets us and Press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus Why would we not do that? What could we possibly think is better than that? This is Peter's message. This is his closing Exhortation in this second great letter, and we'll pick up with it and cover this concluding paragraph next time Father we thank you for the truth of your word we thank you for the the powerful and and graphic ways that you Communicate to us and remind us of of what the Lord Jesus has given us through his work on the cross what you have given Us in in your grace and in your mercy and your compassion on us We pray that God the Holy Spirit will will make these lively and meaningful and burning truths in our souls That we will not be able to rest unless we are actively Pursuing your plan and purpose For us we pray that in all things the Lord Jesus will be glorified and that we will not be ashamed at his coming We pray it in Jesus name. Amen