

Defined by the Day of the Lord

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- [0 : 00] I invite you please to go to 2 Peter in your Bibles, chapter 3. Here is a man who walked with Jesus for three years.
- His life changed forever by that experience with the Lord. A man who failed Jesus miserably and was restored in the love of Christ and by the grace and patience of Jesus and used for several decades now in service to the Lord.
- He's come to the end of his life. He knows he's about to be murdered. He's about to martyr himself for the sake of the God. Burning concern in his heart.
- He wants God's people that he's writing to to understand the ferocity and horrific nature of what God is going to bring in judgment on the earth.
- And as he closes his letter, he wants that reality to sober them into the kind of people they need to be living as in light of that coming reality.
- [1 : 40] Now that sounds heavy. It is. And Peter meant it to be. And this is just where we find ourselves in the scriptures as we work verse by verse through different books of the Bible.
- We can't skip anything. We wouldn't have integrity if we did that. This is perhaps one of the most technical sermons I've ever preached. And yet, I've labored very intently through the week to try and unburden you from the technicality so that you won't miss the main point.
- So I'm going to try to remind us this morning a number of times about what the main point is that Peter is driving home as he presents this material.
- Now, at the outset, I'll tell you. This particular verse of scripture, just one again this week that we're going to look at, deals with what we refer to as eschatology.
- Eschatology is a Greek word that has to do with the end times. So this is a message about what is going to happen in the future at the end.
- [2 : 44] Now, there are all kinds of ideas. There are all kinds of models and teachings and doctrines that revolve around issues of the end times or eschatology.
- So regardless of where you may stand or what position you may take about the timing of these certain events, please don't allow what I present this morning as what Greg and I believe and what we believe and teach here at Grace to stand in the way of seeing Peter's main point.
- wherever you come out in all of that, whatever label you go by or particular issue you move in with regard to how this is going to work out at the end, please hear what Peter has to say about what's coming.
- Because regardless of the timing, it is coming. And that's what we want to hold on to. So the title of my message for this morning, a little different from last Sunday when I preached about being delivered from the day of the Lord.
- This time, it's all about being defined by the day of the Lord. And this is a very, very sobering issue. Let me say some opening remarks here, and we'll read the passage together.

[4 : 04] Everything that the Bible teaches helps us to understand that planet Earth is, quote, being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

That's Peter. The spiritual deceivers in our context for our passage who are mocking Peter openly then discredit Scripture's teaching about what Peter is referring to as the day of the Lord.

He is drawing that phraseology from the Old Testament. Old Testament prophets coined this term throughout their writings. Sometimes the day of the Lord reflected very recent or very soon to happen judgments that God would bring.

And so some of these issues on the day of the Lord have been fulfilled in their time. Many of them have not. Those are the ones Peter is dealing with in our text.

So the day of the Lord can reflect judgments that are more recent in the times of the prophets. They can also reflect the foretelling of events still to come in the future, the distant future.

[5 : 21] That's what we're dealing with in our passage when we talk about the day of the Lord. The false teachers and deceivers that Peter is dealing with maintain that all of the talk the prophets and apostles make about Jesus coming again to judge the world is just that.

It's just talk. Don't define your life by this coming judgment. Don't worry about it. It's just talk. And they're mocking.

That's why Peter says in verse three of chapter three. Know this. First of all, in the last days, the last days are all the days that we're living in beyond the cross, beyond the crucifixion and resurrection and before Jesus coming again.

Those are the last days. In the last days. Notice mockers will come with their mocking. And what will they be saying in verse four?

Where is the promise of his coming? Ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation. Now, we've dealt with all of that up to this point in several messages.

[6 : 32] False teachers openly and deliberately defy and defame God and his ways. And unbelievers. Listen to this now. Unbelievers mock the Lord's future wrath by simply living their lives as if God and his judgments do not matter.

They just they're apathetic. They just go about their lives as if there is no God and there is no coming judgment. Now, I realize that in preaching messages from Scripture that deal with judgment and the kinds of things I'm going to talk about and read to you this morning can be kind of a downer.

It's a very heavy message. It's a weighty thing. But let me say a few more things to you in this opening to help us maybe sort through that and put it in a place where we can understand what kind of effect the Lord would have it make in our lives and in our hearts.

What matters to people who live mocking God and his ways and having no regard for what's coming? What matters to them is what they can experience right now and getting as much from that as they possibly can.

In other words, unbelievers do not live by a sobering concern for God's glory or God's coming judgment, that he is a wrathful God as well as a loving God.

[8 : 02] When was the last time you watched a movie made by secular people, made by unbelievers, made by undiscerning Christians possibly, where they depicted the love of God or the character of God or the nature of God, and you saw in that picture, that movie, that whatever, God as a wrathful, vengeful, punishing God.

Most of the times it's God loves everybody. And everybody, one way or another, is going to end up in heaven because God would never send anyone to hell kind of messages. Just one of the many issues with that sentiment is just that.

It's sentiment. It's not truth. God is a wrathful God and he will, he will, in his holiness, punish sin.

He will punish sinners. It's one of the sobering realities that makes the gospel so powerful and makes the gospel so beautiful that God would rescue anyone who lives in that kind of rebellion against him.

Today we have to talk about God as a judging, vengeful God. In God's estimation of the lives of these people who live the way I've been describing, in God's estimation they are, to quote, from Romans 9, 22, vessels of wrath prepared for destruction.

[9 : 36] Do you know unbelievers? Do you have family members and friends and loved ones and you know that they're unbelieving?

Friends, what I'm going to talk to you about this morning is their destiny if they don't turn to Christ. We wouldn't wish what I'm going to preach on this morning on our worst enemy.

I wouldn't. But this judgment as vessels of wrath is exactly how God defines unbelievers.

This was my life before Christ. This was where I was headed. I have two prayerful intentions for you as you hear these final messages from Peter.

This one and maybe a couple more before we end the book. One, I hope these messages will fill your hearts with an undying urgency to share the gospel.

[10 : 45] Especially with people that you know as unbelievers realizing that they are dying under the promise of God's wrath. They are walking spiritual corpses that are headed to wrath and a devil's hell for eternity.

And we need to tell them the truth. We need to help them look to hope in Jesus. Amen? We need to help them flee from the wrath to come by turning to Christ.

Two, I hope these messages will stir up your heart in what is a lasting and loving praise to God for rescuing you from the wrath to come.

I don't ever want you to get over the gospel. It's a miracle you're saved. It is truly a miracle that I'm saved. Just think about what it took for us to be saved.

Perhaps the Lord will increase your concern and even your willingness to suffer under people who strongly oppose your views, who lobby and live for things that disgust you, and who make your life harder to live.

[12 : 08] Perhaps after hearing these messages, you'll be compassionately terrified for those who live and work alongside of you and mock God's grace and truth by simply living like God doesn't matter.

Fearing for them, I pray you will speak the truth in love to them with boldness and compassion, with gentleness and kindness.

Maybe what you hear this morning will help deepen your devotion and gratitude to Jesus for saving you from God's judgment by suffering God's holy wrath on your behalf.

Do you remember when Jesus was on the cross? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? In that moment, God was pouring out his wrath for us, toward us, on his son.

And the Bible says that he took the full cup of God's wrath. Can you imagine? All of it, all of God's holy wrath poured out on his son for all that God has chosen to be his faithful in one instant, pouring it out on Jesus.

[13 : 25] The context of this section of Scripture is one of sudden, imminent judgment rained down on earth through unimaginable, catastrophic destruction.

I'm just going to scratch the surface this morning, again, in an attempt not to go into all the details and try to convince you of a certain position, but just scratch the surface to give you an idea of what God is going to do.

There are so many things, especially in the book of Revelation, that spell out what's coming in such detail that I was even reading some of it again this morning and just, I told Suzanne some of it.

I said, this is, if I wasn't a Christian, this would be something like out of a movie with special effects. It's unbelievable if you're not in the faith.

It's astounding. Peter's tone is foreboding. And his content is terrifying as he describes the day of the Lord.

[14 : 42] And he doesn't give it near as much detail as John does in the book of Revelation or even as some of what Jesus himself said, which I'm going to share with you. What Peter does in our text is provide four clarifications of God's activity in future judgment.

I'll put that up here so you can see. Four clarifications of God's activity and future judgment. We're referring to that because Peter does as the day of the Lord. Let's read in the text and catch up with where we're going to be for this morning.

I'm going to begin in 2 Peter 3, 1 and move you down into the context of what we'll deal with. This is now, beloved, the second letter I'm writing to you in which I'm stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder.

So Peter has in his heart that he would keep his readers reminded, have a heavenly mindedness about these matters he's going to discuss, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

Know this first of all, that in the last days, mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts. Here's what they'll say. Where is the promise of his coming?

[16 : 02] Ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation. Well, when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God, the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

But by his word, the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord, one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day.

The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some, the mockers, count slowness, but it's patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

I did verse nine last week, verses eight and nine. And now verse 10. But the day of the Lord will 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.

Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holiness and godliness? Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will be will melt with intense heat.

[17 : 36] But according to his promise, we we are looking for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. What we dealt with last Sunday, just in the way of a quick reminder, the first of these four clarifications was God's patience.

And I'm just going to give you a couple of brief reminders here about this and we'll move on. God's patience, God's patience that he's showing here that he's talking about, particularly in verse nine, is on behalf of his chosen ones, the ones that Peter mentioned in his first letter, right at the very beginning in the first verse.

These are the ones who are yet to be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Once all of God's chosen and cherished ones are saved, judgment will come.

And we don't know when that is. Nobody does except the Lord. False teachers maintain that Jesus coming again in judgment is nothing but fantasy.

But Peter doesn't want his fellow Christians, then or now, us, to be taken in by these lies about Jesus not coming in future judgment.

[18 : 57] So concerning God's promises, including those of future judgment, the apostle Paul, joining in with Peter as an apostle himself, said this, for the son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us, by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yes and no, but is yes in him.

For as many as are the promises of God in him, that is Jesus, they are yes. That means fulfilled. Therefore, also through him is our amen to the glory of God through us.

The point being, in and through Jesus Christ, all of God's promises are fulfilled. Jesus, even himself, said this, Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the prophets.

I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the law until all is accomplished.

Folks, this is the promise. This is the hint of what's coming. All of what's coming is coming in fulfillment of who Jesus is, both as Savior and Lord and righteous judge.

[20 : 26] all of it is being fulfilled in him. Jesus is patient and he is also coming again in judgment.

In verse 10 of our text for today, but the day of the Lord will come like a thief. In our particular verse, the Greek sentence begins like this, will come, but the day of the Lord like a thief.

That's the way it's written in the Greek. Will come. Will come is at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis. It's emphatic. What Peter's wanting to stress in verse 10 is this coming is certain.

No matter what the mockers say, no matter what the deceivers tell you, judgment's real and it's on its way. The day of God's judgment on all who are unbelieving is definitely coming.

So that brings us to what I want to deal with today. We'll only deal with this one verse in verse 10 is similar to what I did last week. And then God willing, we'll deal with the final couple of points next week and then move toward closing out the letter.

[21 : 49] But here's where we are today. We're dealing with God's punishment, moving from his patience. God is being patient with everyone because he's chosen some for salvation.

And until those people are brought to the Lord, nothing's going to change. We're going to keep continue to move in that direction. But now we need to talk about the punishment that will happen.

And if you look at the punishment in verse 10, the day of the Lord will come like a thief in which the heavens will pass away with a roar. The elements will be destroyed with intense heat and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Similarly, over in verse 12, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will melt with intense heat.

Let me define some of these terms for you just to help us kind of get a foundation for what we're discussing. In Scripture, the day of the Lord signifies the extraordinary, miraculous interventions of God in human history for the purpose of judgment culminating in his final judgment of the wicked on earth and the destruction of the present universe.

[23 : 08] And then the New Testament writers picked up on the eschatological use, that is the end times use, and applied the day of the Lord both to the judgment that will climax the tribulation period, the seven years of tribulation, and to the judgment that will usher in the new earth.

So the phrase that we're dealing with, the phrase the day of the Lord or a variant of it is used 19 times in the Old Testament.

Four additional Old Testament references call this period the day of vengeance. The day of the Lord is used in four clear references in the New Testament.

And I want to just show you real quickly what those are. The first is in Acts 2.20. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come.

Now that's actually part of Peter's Pentecost sermon. And he's quoting from the prophet Joel. Another New Testament reference.

[24 : 22] 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 2. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

And then 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 2. That you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

The Thessalonians were upset. They were going through an unprecedented time of persecution and suffering and they were being told by the false teachers lies about what was going on and how to interpret it and understand it and they thought oh my goodness the tribulation time is here the rapture has already happened we missed all of that and now we're in the time of the day of the Lord and all this persecution.

And Paul is correcting that. No, no, no. We'll talk more about that in a moment just briefly. And then finally our reference from 2 Peter 3.10 Those are the four New Testament references.

In three other three other New Testament passages this particular day is called the day of wrath the day of visitation as you see it up on the screen and the great day of God the Almighty.

[25 : 58] Regardless of the passage here's the point the day of the Lord always refers to a time of wrath and judgment on the ungodly.

Every single time it's dealing with those themes. Now according to 2 Peter 3.10 This is very important.

This will be a direct intervention of the Lord in His world. In other words it's going to be a divinely designed and appointed moment in human time.

It will not be a random development due to the plans and actions of human beings. Have you ever seen these movies? I think the last one that I saw it in was I think it was Independence Day that movie about aliens coming and all that mess.

I like sci-fi but you know you gotta take it with a grain of salt come on aliens with green stuff shooting and all whatever it's entertaining but I think it was in that movie you know you see these movies about the world blowing up and we're killing each other and blowing each other to pieces and there's the guy standing on the hill of debris with the placard that says the end has come and he's got some scripture reference or something alright here's what's most bogus about that what we're talking about right now in terms of God's end judgment has absolutely nothing to do with men ushering it in we are not going to destroy our world and bring in the apocalypse through nuclear war we may kill a lot of us in nuclear war that's not the apocalypse what Peter is describing is a divine and purpose intervention of God in his world in his timing and for his purposes it is not something we're going to usher in this is all

[28 : 06] God when he decides to do it and when the time comes that's it if I could use this analogy he's the one's going to pull the pin not man so folks trust your God look to your God the next message I'm going to preach has everything to do with Peter saying this so what kind of people ought you to be that's not a question it's a statement in the Greek given what I'm going to tell you what kind of people ought you to be that's where we're headed that's what Peter's concern is as he lays this out to his readers this is always about judgment in fact God will usher in the day of the Lord he says like a thief in the night now think of this it's unexpected it's sudden people will be going about their lives so that nothing will alert them to what's about to happen that is astounding to me especially when we start to grasp what

God's going to do it's just going to happen so fast so here's where we are so far we're looking at two distinct times in God's future plans to judge the ungodly which scripture calls the day of the Lord that's what Peter is talking about here the day of the Lord then the day of the Lord refers to Christ judgment at the end of the seven years of tribulation so if you'll look with me at Revelation 19 this is John's teaching in Revelation 19 and the setting is the end of the tribulation time the seven years we'll begin in verse 11 and I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse and he who sat on it is called faithful and true and in righteousness he judges and wages war his eyes are a flame of fire and on his head are many diadems or crowns and he has a name written on him which no one knows except himself he is clothed with a robe dipped in blood and his name is called the word of

God and the armies which are in heaven clothed in fine linen white and clean were following him on white horses from his mouth comes a sharp sword so that with it he may strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron and he treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God the almighty and on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written king of kings and lord of lords then I saw an son and he cried out with a loud voice saying to all the birds which fly in mid heaven come assemble for the great supper of God so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men both free men and slaves and small and great assembled to make war against him who sat on the horse and against his army that's

John and then in Paul's teaching we've already seen this in 2 Thessalonians you'll see it here at the bottom of the screen 2 Thessalonians 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us to the effect that the day of the Lord has come it hasn't but it is coming these Christians were deeply distressed thinking that the persecution they were experiencing meant that the rapture had come now we're in a position where it's the time of the day of the Lord as I mentioned earlier but the false teachers were the people behind that they were telling them in sermons they were telling them in letters they were even misrepresenting Paul and in some instances claiming to be Paul so that they could fool these people and get them to follow them Paul said don't don't do that don't look at that kind of teaching thinking it's from us it's bogus so based on

Paul's teaching these people expected they expected to be raptured prior to the day of the Lord at the end of the seven year tribulation Paul wrote to correct the lies the false teachers were telling him about all this he not yet taken place we believe that all of this will take place in terms of the judgment after God has raptured us brought us into heaven we won't have to go through that judgment we are under no condemnation Christ has taken that judgment for us so we won't have to go through that we'll be taken out of that and then these people the unbelieving will be left to face to correct the second time period for the day of the Lord is the time of final judgment the time of final judgment at the end of the millennium this is

[34 : 11] Jesus 1000 year reign we believe literally on earth that's our passage 2 Peter 3 is dealing with that very thing that we've read already and then I want to take you to Revelation chapter 20 again now folks I don't want us to get all caught up in the details so much and get lost and now when it's going to happen when and what's going to happen at what time just hang with me and realize that going back through this many many times is going to be needed necessary for us to really grasp this and work through it together but let's hold on to the main point we see here I'm going to read actually down through verse 15 Revelation 20 verse 7 when when the thousand years are completed Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth

Gog and Magog to gather them together for the war the number of them is like the sand of the seashore and they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city and fire came down from heaven and devoured them and the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are also and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away and no place was found for them and I saw the dead the great and the small standing before the throne and books were opened and another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds and the sea gave up the dead which were in it and death and

Hades gave up the dead which were in them and they were judged every one of them according to their deeds then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire this is the second death the lake of fire and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire these are hard hard heavy realities and it's difficult at times to wrap our minds around all that this means again I'm just going to continue to bring us back to Peter's point understand please folks in the context of our passage and in the way I'm trying to preach it to you this morning Peter is not concerned with all of the timing and details that we could sit down and debate but I can't tell you how many times as a seminary student the times I've been to seminary for some reason seminary students love taking this stuff and taking it apart and arguing about it

I would see that happening and I'd run the other way I just felt like I didn't have the brain power to keep up with and I was having enough trouble learning how to parse a Greek verb for heaven sake so Peter is trying to help his readers understand the gravity of this time that's coming and how it should affect them in their faith walk with Christ in their lifetime and we don't want to miss that we don't want that to pass us by this final final judgment that Peter is talking about in our passage will destroy the current heavens and earth it will bring in the creation of the new heavens and the new earth where Peter says righteousness dwells forever now that's our hope isn't it that's our hope we're not going to live in some nebulous cloud with wings and harps floating around somewhere

God's going to make a new heaven and a new earth and give us bodies to inhabit it for eternity and we'll be on a beautiful pristine sin free unscarred brand new planet and that's where we'll live together and it'll be more beautiful than you can imagine that's our hope Mona that's where your husband is being prepared to dwell and that was his hope wasn't it to be with Jesus in that pristine place that's our hope we can summarize the day of the Lord then like this and I realize I've done this quickly but again let's not get caught up in the details we can talk about that another time let's summarize it this way first of all we can summarize it as involving judgment only not judgment and blessing so the day of the Lord is not about us being raptured the day of the Lord is about Jesus coming back to judge we can also say it's occurring twice in

[39 : 41] God's prophetic plan not once at the end of the tribulation and not throughout its duration and then occurring again at the end of the millennium the thousand year reign and not throughout its duration again that's Peter's reference in 2nd Peter 3 10 and 12 he's talking about the final judgment after the thousand year reign of Christ Dr.

MacArthur soberly observed that quote these are horrifying judgments from God rendered because of the world's overwhelming sinfulness end quote does that sound familiar can you think of another time in human history when the overwhelming sinfulness of the world caused God to act in judgment the flood thank you the flood which is exactly what Peter references earlier in our context and says these mockers deliberately and willfully blind themselves to that reality and if God brought literal judgment on the earth before there's no reason for us to allegorize this and not think that it's going to be literal in the future it is a literal wrathful judgment is coming and it's going to pale make the flood pale into almost insignificance in terms of the destructive power and force that God's going to bring notice what this particular section says

I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth blood fire and columns of smoke the sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord that's actually from the prophet Joel but we can also see these same kinds of teachings throughout scripture throughout even in the New Testament Jesus himself but I want to take you to Revelation one more time here and show you at least one more time it may be more than that but Revelation 6 these are just snippets and snapshots of these two times coming into existence Revelation 6 beginning in verse 12 I looked when he broke the sixth seal and there was a great earthquake and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair and the whole moon became like blood sounds like

Joel doesn't it and the stars of the sky fell to the earth most interpreters most commentators think that's a meteor shower as a fig tree cast its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind you see that you ever walked up to a tree with fruit on it like that it all starts to you're doing this that's what it will be like only these are stars the sky was split apart like a scroll when it's rolled up and every mountain and island were moved out of their places then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in caves and among the rocks of the mountains and they said to the us and hide us from the presence of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb you see they're going to know where this is coming from aren't they this is not nuclear war this is

God for the great day of their wrath has come and who is able to stand and then if you'll turn in Matthew to Matthew chapter 13 Jesus is going to tell a number of parables here but the one that I'm going to zero in on is the interpretation he gives for the parable of the tares so we'll get the interpretation he's already told the parable and now in verse 36 then he left the crowds and went into the house and his disciples came to him and said explain to us the parable of the tares of the field and Jesus said the one who sows the good seed is the son of man and the field is the world and as for the good seed these are the sons of the kingdom and the tares are the sons of the evil one and the enemy who sowed them is the devil and the harvest is the end of the age and the reapers are angels so just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire so shall it be at the end of the age the son of man will send forth his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness and will throw them into the furnace of fire in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth then the righteous will shine forth as the sun and the kingdom of their father he who has ears let him hear then if you'll go over to chapter 24 and verse 32 let me just read this entire section now learn the parable from the fig tree when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves you know that summer is near so you too when you see all these things recognize that he is near right at the door truly

[45 : 54] I say to you this generation will not pass away until these things take place heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away but of that day and hour no one knows not even the angels of heaven nor the son but the father alone for the coming of the son of man will be just like the days of Noah for as in those days before the until the day that Noah entered the ark and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away so will the coming of the son of man be then there will be two men in the field one will be taken and one left two men will be grinding at the mill one taken one left therefore be on the alert for you do not know which day your Lord but be sure of this that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into for this reason you also must be ready for the son of man is coming at an hour when you do not think he will who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes truly

I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions but if that evil slave says in his heart my master is not coming for a long time and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkenness the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites in that place what effect should this reality of judgment to come have on us as God's people it should help us remain sober and alert and willing to suffer whatever we have to suffer to spread the word of God's salvation in Jesus Christ that people may flee the wrath to come in him to keep us vigilant to keep us focused on the main thing and not allow the things of this earth to draw us away from this primary mission of you you each of you living the life of sharing the gospel and displaying the character of

God and how you go about your daily business that's the sobering reality of what Peter's bringing the reason is because he knows he's about to die and it's breaking his heart that he's going to leave these people and realize I can't shepherd them anymore I can't be with them anymore to continue to remind them of these things and help them struggle through to keep these priorities where they need to be in their lives that's the heart of any true shepherd of God helping God's people stay focused keeping them focused on the main thing Peter is taking great labors here to do that if you go back into verse 10 with me in 2 Peter the day of the Lord will come like a thief in which the heavens will pass away with a roar the elements will be destroyed with intense heat and the earth and its works will be burned up

I want you to notice please if you will beloved three segments of this terrible final destruction three segments of it the first is this the heavens will pass away with a roar number two the elements will be destroyed with intense heat and number three the earth and its works will be burned up heavens can mean sky and here it encompasses the universe from our perspective it's what we can see and know about the universe from where we are roar is the Greek word roisedon roisedon it's one of those words that is supposed to kind of sound like what it describes it describes a sudden shrill rushing sound so roisedon if you say it I can't say it like a Hebrew alright but cut me some slack roisedon it's supposed to sound rushing and sudden and harsh it's a guttural sound as I listen to it pronounce pass away simply means exactly what we would think it means cease to exist so when

I read this and I started thinking about it before I was able to take some more of it apart I imagined it to be like a kind of a magnified sound of an approaching tornado you ever heard people describe that sound it sounds like a train gaining intensity on you just a great roar Suzanne and I have heard that sound before it is it's unnerving you realize what's coming and there's nothing you can do about it but actually what this is is it's this sudden rose dome that God's going to bring in these destructive moments it's actually more like the sound of a ginormous crackling popping fire when God rolls up the heavens it that's what it's going to sound like just one big fast pow like a crackling popping fire ear splitting like nothing the earth has ever heard before with that sound the entire universe as we know it will disappear in an instant it's like a giant hand is going to reach down and roll it up like a scroll and it will actually be visible to the eye in that way it will look like the universe is being rolled up on itself in an instant can you imagine that can you even fathom that kind of power

[52 : 43] I can't my brain is just not big enough to take that in but that's what Peter is describing and that's what that Greek word has in mind elements elements refers to the substances which make up the basic components of our physical universe our physical world so folks in a super heated combustive cataclysm all the physical properties of existence will disintegrate in a moment everything that we know everything that is familiar to us will be vaporized in an instant and the earth and its works will be burned up Peter says so this is the final ultimate consequence of God's judgment nothing of the life that you and I know and nothing of the life that you and I live in will remain as I said it will all be vaporized now saying that and again

I've only scratched the surface of what's coming read revelation and it's it's just man it's mind boggling the kinds of things God's going to bring reading that and knowing that what does Peter say right on the heels of that reality verse 11 since again this is not a question it's a statement since all these things are to be destroyed in this way here here then is the sort of people you ought to be in holy conduct and godliness you are people looking for and hastening the coming of the day of god the day of god is different than the day of the lord because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning the elements will melt with intense heat but according to his promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells 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 just as also our beloved brother paul according to the wisdom given to him wrote to you this is what peter wanted his readers to take to heart when jesus christ came the first time he came as a suffering servant didn't he he came as a sacrificial lamb and he died at the hands of ungodly men when he comes again he will come as a sovereign king and as the lion of judah who will wield his authority to judge and to destroy his enemies and peter tells us to be ready by being holy as we walk by faith in jesus christ this is our message and we need to tell it let's pray father lord god in the sobriety that we feel now over the truths that we've talked about they're hard and they're heavy for our hearts and in these things lord we ask you to sober us and in these matters we ask you to do exactly as peter has prescribed for us that as people who are holy in conduct and holy in heart we would seek to speak the truth in love to those who are perishing and don't know it that you would lift the veil of the blindness of sin over their hearts and minds and enlighten them as to their need for the forgiveness of

Jesus and that they would turn to him father each of us now as I say this prayer have the names and faces of many loved ones and friends and neighbors and associates that we know are not walking with you that give lip service to you at best but really have no life in you at all God we would not wish this for them we would not want this for them we would not want this for our worst enemy and so it is that we pray for all of these people in our hearts now you know them you made them in your image and we ask you that you would spare them that you would help them to see their need that you would put people in their lives who would speak this truth of your forgiveness in Christ to them and that you would help us be willing to do that knowing what they're up against being sobered by this truth

God put your kind of compassion in our heart that would make us willing to suffer any degree of mocking humiliation or persecution to bring forward this message that Jesus saves and our hope is only in him we thank you for the goodness and grace of your heart and the miracle of our salvation that you have spared us from the wrath to come by taking that wrath on yourself on our behalf thank you for this wonderful gift of your love and grace to us as your people and now we pray you'll help us to share that love and not hoard it we thank you in Jesus name and we pray this for your glory amen