

2Peter 3:10 "The Day of the Lord Will Come Like a Thief"

2 Peter 3:10-13 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. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² 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 melt with intense heat! ¹³ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

As we come near to the end of Peter's second letter we find that he exhorts the saints to consider God's intervention and judgment of this world, by destroying it, in light of their present life and how that understanding should affect their lives.

Peter has not simply been trying to teach us about eschatology, the study of last things, as though this was some sort of academic exercise in Theology. The Theology he teaches is meant to directly affect our lives to the glory of God.

As I've said before, if our Theology is no more than a collection of truths which we can espouse without it effecting our lives, and the lives of others, as we show the world these truths with our love and obedience to Christ, then we have a faulty Theological experience.

The truth is meant to set us free, but it's also meant to demonstrate to the world who the Creator God is and how they must come to Him to be set free from the penalty and power of sin as well, as they come to embrace Christ by faith.

And so, as Peter winds things up here in the last few verses of his letter, he wants us to realize that the teachings surrounding God's judgment of sinners and this world should have a profound effect on our appreciation of the life we've been given in Christ as our Lord has taken our judgment for sin and allows us to enjoy fellowship with our God and Creator.

And as this day approaches, where the entire world will come into the presence of God, Peter would show us that since there was a beginning to this world there will also be an end because of sin and the curse. For many, that end will result in everlasting damnation,

separated from God forever. For others, who have trusted in Christ, the end of this world will just be a new beginning with eternal life in the Savior.

And so, we come to our text this morning and consider what Peter has to say, as his desire is to help us draw close to Christ, as we appreciate the plan of God for this world and for the people in this world.

2 Peter 3:10 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

This sounds like a pretty radical way to deal with the world; burn it up and start over again. But, as we'll see it could be no other way. Let's take the first part of verse 10. "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief."

In many quarters of the "Christian camp" this expression is associated with a secret coming of Jesus Christ to *rapture* His people out of the world before the Great Tribulation begins, thus the phrase, "like a thief." Interestingly enough this passage juxtaposes two events that take place simultaneously.

- 1) The day of the Lord coming like a thief.
- 2) The heavens passing away with a roar as the elements are destroyed with intense heat.

I guess if we're going to speak of the day of the Lord in association with coming like a thief we ought to dig a little deeper into the meaning of this event.

As I mentioned a moment ago there are those who associate the phrase, "like a thief" with the concept of a secret coming of Christ, not unlike how a thief does not announce his coming before he breaks into your house.

And this is precisely what the phrase means. However, to associate this phrase with a preemptive coming of Christ to rapture His church before the tribulation and subsequent second coming of Christ to judge the world, is not to understand either the phrase or the timing of the second coming of Christ. Again, let us look at verse 10.

2 Peter 3:10 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.

How is it possible to have a secret coming of Christ, like a thief, and yet have a cataclysmic event like the end of the world at the same time? Well, if you just look at the context of this chapter of Peter he has already explained it.

He has already introduced how mockers will come in the last days to undermine the truth of the second coming of Christ.

2 Peter 3:3-4 ³ Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

And then he reminds his readers that despite all of the falsehood these mockers introduce it doesn't change the fact that God is coming in judgment. And notice what Peter uses as an example of this global judgment.

2 Peter 3:5-6 ⁵ For 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, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

And then Peter immediately uses the flood scenario to explain that in just the same way as God judged and destroyed the world through water, He will again judge and destroy it a second time with fire.

2 Peter 3:7 ⁷ 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.

And so, when we come to verse 10 with its reference to coming like a thief it must necessarily be referring to the last day which, in this case, is called the day of the Lord.

This has always been the dilemma for those who subscribe to a secret rapture of the church prior to the tribulation and great day of the Lord. It's hard to square passages found in Revelation and Matthew where Jesus speaks of the time leading up to the final judgment of the world where descriptions of the last days include such things as the sun being darkened, and the moon not giving its light, and the stars falling from the sky. (Mat.24:29)

There doesn't seem to be anything secret in these events, assuming these things could and will actually happen. (There is another Biblical explanation that does not have to include literal stars falling from heaven, and so on. That's for another study). And yet when you look at the context of Matthew 24 Jesus is actually describing the exact events that Peter is describing in our text.

Matthew 24:24-25 ²⁴ "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ "Behold, I have told you in advance.

Peter is also telling us in advance what to expect before the Lord returns and he paints a picture of false teachers and prophets and how the body of Christ needs to be discerning so as not to be misled.

The other problem with a secret rapture before the final day is the plain teaching as to when the rapture actually takes place. And remember what we are talking about when we speak of the rapture. When we use the word rapture what we are talking about is the day when Christ raises His people from the grave and gives them their glorified bodies to be with Him forever more.

Paul speaks of this when writing to the Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Here Paul makes it clear that there will be a day in which Christ comes to raise the dead unto eternal life; all who have placed their faith in Him. And the comfort that Paul extends here is that those who have died before you, (if Christ were to come in your lifetime), will not be left out of this event. In fact, they will be raised first and then you who are alive at His coming will be raised.

And we are told that all of us who are in Christ will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we shall always be with the Lord. This phrase, caught up, is the Greek word *harpazo* which means *to seize, catch up, snatch away*.

Most people who study these things understand that the word rapture does not appear anywhere in the word of God, but the concept certainly does and this is where it's found. But notice what is associated with this snatching away in verse 16 of 1Thessalonians. "...And the dead in Christ will rise first."

It seems pretty clear that we are talking about the resurrection of believers. The next question then must be when are believers resurrected from the dead? Well, according to Paul in this passage it takes place when the Lord Himself descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God.

Where else in the word of God do we see this particular event?

Well, remember we spoke of the events of the last days when Jesus described in the gospel of Matthew how the sun and the moon would not give their light, the stars would fall from the sky and so forth.

Well, immediately following this description Jesus then says this.

Matthew 24:31 ³¹ "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

This is the same event Paul is speaking of in 1Thessalonians 4:16-18 as Paul mentions the Trumpet of God. Well, what is this trumpet and how is this associated with the gathering of the elect from the four corners of the world, which is undoubtedly speaking of the resurrection of God's people at the time of this trumpet?

We know what this trumpet is and when it will sound. Paul speaks of this trumpet when he is describing the resurrection of God's people.

1 Corinthians 15:50-56 ⁵⁰ Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ⁵⁵ "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;

Again, when will the dead be raised? At the last trumpet which is a reference to the day in which Christ comes for His people.

We also see a reference to the trumpet of God, which is a sign to the world that God is announcing His coming, in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 11:15 ¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded [his trumpet]; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

Much of this chapter is couched in symbolic language describing the last days and the enemy coming against God's people. But Rev. 11:15 is describing the culmination of these events as the seventh angel with the trumpet of God sounds, and now, what God's people have been hoping for finally comes to pass; The Kingdom of God dwelling among God's people on the new earth as the kingdom of the world, (a reference to the sin filled cursed world), comes to an end, as the new kingdom of Christ takes its place.

Some might suggest that this is the 1,000 year reign of Christ on this earth, but the text does not say this. It says, He will reign forever and ever. Forever and ever is not a thousand years.

Again, all of this was spoken of by our Lord Jesus in Matthew.

Matthew 24:35-44 ³⁵ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. ³⁶ "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ "Two women *will be* grinding at the

mill; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ "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. ⁴⁴ "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*.

Notice that Jesus is speaking of His coming in reference to heaven and earth passing away. And keep in mind that He is answering a direct question from His disciples regarding the end of the age, which is another way of saying, the end of the world as our Lord returns in judgment.

Matthew 24:3 ³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

And then our Lord begins to explain those things that must take place before He comes again at the end of the age.

One of the things we see in Matthew 24 is precisely what Peter has been describing in our text, and that is the reference to Noah as God judged the entire world with a flood. And just as He brought an end to sinful man back then He will do the same in the future through fire.

2 Peter 3:5-6 ⁵ For 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, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

But notice in Matthew that Jesus explains what was going on back then and how the future coming of the Lord will be just like the days of Noah.

Matthew 24:37-39 ³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Again, keep the context of Matthew 24 in mind. Jesus is answering a direct question regarding the end of the age by His disciples. When our Lord talks about the coming of the Son of Man He is

talking about that final trumpet and that final day in which the resurrection takes place and His eternal Kingdom is ushered in.

And if there is any doubt as to when this all takes place as it relates to our resurrection, again, Jesus could not make it clearer as we see in the gospel of John.

John 6:39-44 ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on *the last day*.
⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on *the last day*." ⁴¹ Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." ⁴² They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?" ⁴³ Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on *the last day*."

Are you getting the sense here that the resurrection is going to happen on the last day, which Jesus describes as happening at the last trumpet? And remember this is precisely what Paul was describing when he wrote to encourage the saints in Thessalonica.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

If we are going to exegete these passages as we compare them with other passages addressing the same thing then we need to be honest about the meaning of such passages and not impose some traditional teaching we've received and have that replace the clear teaching of God's word.

And then finally, as to this issue of the secret rapture, (resurrection), taking place apart from the final day of judgment and return of Christ at the last trumpet, let me revisit Christ's description of the end of the age with His return as we go back to Matthew 24, because this is where a lot of confusion is happening regarding this issue of the present day, popular teaching, of the rapture.

Matthew 24:37-42 ³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ "Two women *will be* grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

Let's keep the context at the forefront. Jesus is describing the coming of the Son of Man and saying it will be just like the days of Noah. Well, what were the days of Noah like? They were days leading up to the judgment of the world where all were destroyed except eight people who were saved from and through the flood. It was total and final for those people who perished.

It is not a coincidence that He uses this reference to Noah, because again, He is explaining to His disciples in a private meeting what the end of the age will look like before His return at the end of the age to set all things right through His justice to judge once and for all those who are in rebellion to Him at His return.

This is why He says in verse 39, "they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be."

It is crystal clear that the coming of the Son of Man is directly tied to His final judgment of the world in the future.

And then notice the passage that many premillennialists use to support their take on the rapture which they believe happens before the tribulation and the millennial reign of Christ, which I cannot go into here, but can show you from the word of God is not a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on a fallen world. But that's for another time.

But these advocates of a rapture before the coming of the Son of Man, which they believe is a separate event, a secret coming, will use the following passage to prove that the rapture, as they understand it, is taught here.

Matthew 24:40-42 ⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ "Two women *will be* grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²

"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

The popular teaching with these passages is demonstrated in a plethora of books and even movies, but it is not the result of sound hermeneutics or exegesis of this portion of God's word. Look at the context. It is describing of the Son of Man in judgment at the end of the age, just as in the days of Noah. And then immediately Jesus gives us the image of two different groups. One group is taken and one group is left.

For our Christian friends who believe in a secret rapture, prior to Christ's physical return to this earth in judgment, they use this passage to help establish such a teaching. But it is undeniable that the context does not allow this, precisely because the time frame in which these two groups are being acted upon by the Lord, are being acted upon on the last day when judgment happens.

This could not be more appropriate since there were always two groups that either come under the grace of God or His judgment. We need only go back to the Garden of Eden to see this.

Genesis 3:15 ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

This is where the two groups come from. One group, the seed of the serpent, is waging war against the other group, the seed of the woman.

It's been going on since the beginning of man's rebellion. God in His grace promised a Redeemer to deliver His people from their sin. But He also promised to judge the world because of their rebellion, those who belong to the seed of the serpent, what Jesus described to the Jews of His day, as being of their father, the devil.

It is not a mystery who these two groups in Matthew are. I can assure you that they are not two different groups who are either taken in the popular belief of the rapture or not, to await their coming back with Christ to defeat the enemies of God at the battle of Armageddon to then rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years on this present sin-filled, cursed world, as popular a teaching as that has become.

Unless we dismiss the context of Matthew 24 the two groups at the coming of Christ with judgment, not unlike the days of Noah, are

the two groups that are mentioned by Jesus Himself earlier in the book of Matthew.

Matthew 13:37-43 ³⁷ And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, ³⁸ 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*; ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ "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, ⁴² and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ "Then **THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN** in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

He who has ears, let him hear. Are we listening? One group will be taken to be with the Lord on the final day as they are resurrected unto life eternal to be with the Lord forever. The other group will be left, which is just another way of saying they will be left to themselves and their sin as they are gathered to be resurrected for eternal judgment.

This is the plain teaching of the text of Matthew 24 as we compare it with other portions of God's word that illuminates it for our instruction. Matthew 13 explains Matthew 24 as does Matthew 25.

Matthew 25:31-34 ³¹ "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³² "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; ³³ and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

One will be taken and one will be left just as Jesus makes clear as He separates the sheep, His people, from the goats, the unbelieving in the world at the return of Christ at the end of the age.

And this is precisely what Paul was describing in the context of encouraging the Thessalonians regarding the coming of Christ and their resurrection from the dead.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 ^{NAU} Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.

There is this confusion regarding the coming of Christ like a thief in the night. But it doesn't have to confuse us because it makes all the sense in the world. Because just like those days of Noah, people will be pursuing the pleasures of this world as they embrace the created things of this world as their god, instead of the Creator.

And the church itself will become an abomination to the Lord in those last days as it moves further and further away from the truth of who Christ is and what He accomplished on the cross. This is also why we are warned that the coming of the Lord will not come until the man of lawlessness comes first as he ushers in the apostasy.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 ^{NAU} Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, ² that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³ Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

The man of lawlessness and the apostasy are tied together. (And again, the man of lawlessness does not have to be reduced to only one person, but because of time restraints, this too is for another study). The apostasy is, by default, a turning away from the truth and the only ones who are associated with the truth are those associated with Christ's church. Therefore, the apostasy is

speaking to that time associated with the coming of the Lord Jesus, where the church, like national Israel before the cross, has proven to be the great harlot of Revelation 19.

Revelation 19:1-3 ^{NAU} After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; ² BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." ³ And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER."

The visible church in our day is appearing to be more and more like Israel prior to Christ's first coming. Many leaders are blind guides playing to people's emotions with motivational talk and no mention of sin and the cross. They talk about Jesus but deny God's Word as absolute truth. Many who call themselves Christian are looking to build a kingdom now on this earth rather than look forward to the one Christ is preparing for His people.

They practice worldly disciplines that make them feel close to God rather than draw near to God through ongoing trust and obedience. Just like the world, they think truth is relative. If you have any doubts just consider how most seminaries have denied the plain teaching on the book of Genesis and deny that God could or would create all things in the span of six literal days.

When you undermine the book of beginnings everything that follows is up for grabs, including the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, His sinless life, His atoning work on the cross, and His resurrection. And today all of these major doctrines of the faith are being attacked, not just by the world, but by people in "the church" who claim to be "Christian."

I am fully aware that these sorts of things have been going on since the inception of the church, as Paul and Peter and Christ Himself warned us, but we are 2,000 years down the road and I can say with confidence that we are 2,000 years closer to the time of apostasy which will culminate in judgment beginning with the household of God and the final judgment of the world as the end of the present age comes to a close.

And this is the other aspect of judgment that Peter brings to bear in our text regarding the day of the Lord coming like a thief.

2 Peter 3:10 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.

Oh great, if I wasn't depressed before the start of this study I sure am now. No, not if you're one of the sheep, or the good seed sown by God Himself who will sprout up to life eternal. As we've seen so far a lot happens on this last day: the return of the Lord of glory to resurrect His people, the judgment of the world that has not believed on Christ, the eternal kingdom of God being ushered in and this is part of that plan as the Lord destroys this present world.

But He doesn't destroy it to obliterate it. And this is where we are going to pick up next week.

There is a new world coming and when we understand what this future world with Christ is all about it should turn any anxiety into joy and longing for the One who has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us, but instead promises that all that the Father has given Him He will raise up on the last day.

This last day, as Peter will explain, involves the destruction of this present world, but it is a destruction unto a glorious new world that is explained in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 21:1-5 ^{AU} Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

We'll pick up here next week to take a look at this new earth that will be raised from the ashes of the old.

May our focus be the same as we look to the future and not become trapped in the present to the exclusion of the promises we have before us. The best is yet to come, but as we await His return

we are called to give God our best to His glory. Here's the way Paul put it.

COL 3:1-4 "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."

Let me end with an exhortation Paul gives the Philippians.

PHI 3:20-21, 4:1 "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. 4:1 Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!