

Sunday March 13th 2011
The Second of Peter
Part Fourteen

1). 2Pe 3:8 ¶ *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 ¶ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 ¶ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons 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 dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?*

a). We will remember that the scoffers of these last days have willfully forgotten the great foundational truths laid out in the opening chapters of scripture of 6 days of work followed by a 7th day of rest and rulership within a marriage relationship and as a consequence of this deliberate forgetfulness they then deny the fulfillment of the purpose of God to which these foundational truths point.

b). And then as we look at the opening verse of our scripture here in 2 Peter we see that Peter's readers had begun to overlook something that if continued to be overlooked would set them on a path to destruction that could only be the same as the scoffers – they had started to overlook something they already knew, which was that each of the 6 days of restoration presented in Genesis corresponded to the restoration of fallen man, but instead of God working in 24 hour days, as in Genesis, He was now working in periods of 1000 years giving us 6000 years of restorative work to be followed by 1000 years making up the 7th Day, the Day of Rest, the Millennial Kingdom - Re 20:6 *Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

c). And as the warning is given to Peter's readers, 'do not forget this one thing', we must make sure that we do not forget this one thing either. The scriptural foundation upon which all our study is to be based must be firmly in place so as to give us the proper context and the proper perspective for all that the Holy Spirit would teach us. Without this foundation we would then be subject to the vagaries of the thoughts of men rather than the revelation of God's eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord - Eph 3:8 *To me, who am less than the least of all*

the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

d). We had also seen in our study last week that at the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom the heavens and earth ‘which are now’ will experience a destruction that is paralleled in the destruction of the heavens and the earth which ‘were of old’ as recorded in - Ge 1:2 *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.*

Jer 4:23 *I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form, and void; And the heavens, they had no light.*

e). In both these destructions, at the beginning and the end of scripture, it is the heavens and the earth which are destroyed, but in the previous destruction recorded in Genesis it is a destruction by water whereas in the destruction to come at the end of the Millennial Kingdom it will be fire that is the destructive agent. And this is what we have just read about in Peter, in v12, where ‘the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat’.

2). 1Co 15:24 *Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.*

a). Re 20:13 *The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

b). Death and Hades being cast into the Lake of fire is tremendously significant as it marks the moment, in the expanse of time that goes all the way back to Satan’s rebellion, in which sin will no longer be in existence.

c). However, as we consider the enormity of this it might be helpful for us to give this event a little more context and to clear up some possible misconceptions concerning the Millennial Kingdom.

d). The very fact that Death and Hades are not destroyed until the end of the Kingdom Age would make it clear for us that sin will still exist on the earth throughout this 1000 years. Rather than a time of unparalleled bliss the Millennial Kingdom will be a time when those dwelling on the earth will experience God’s

righteous judgment through His Son, as His Son and His Son's joint heirs rule the earth from the heavens. And of course through Israel on the earth.

e). We might remember that not only is the following scripture given with respect to Christ and the Kingdom, but a part of it, v9, is also quoted as an overcomer's promise in the judgment of the 7 churches in Revelation –

f). Ps 2:6 *"Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."*

7 ¶ "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'" 10 ¶ Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

g). Re 2:26 *"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations-- 27 'He [the overcomer] shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' --as I also have received from My Father;*

h). We also see this with regards to Christ's Millennial reign in –
Ps 110:1 ¶ *<<A Psalm of David.>> The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! 3 Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. 4 The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." 5 ¶ The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. 6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.*

3). And so the Millennial Kingdom according to our scriptures, is to be a time of righteous judgment as the Lord seeks to put an end to all rule, all authority and power. And in order to see this process brought to its conclusion we need to add one more piece of information to the detail of the Millennial Kingdom –
Re 20:7 *Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. 10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake*

of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

a). The event we see here in Revelation Chapter 20 finds its parallel with the events at the conclusion of the tribulation, and the reason the nations other than Israel, signified by Gog and Magog, gather together against Jerusalem at the end of the Millennium would be for exactly the same reason that they do so at the end of the tribulation, to destroy Israel and overthrow God's purpose - Ps 2:1 ¶ *Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."*

b). Ps 83:2 *For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. 4 They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more." 5 For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You:*

c). And so at the end of the Millennial Kingdom Satan performs his last act of deception gathering the Gentile nations, who are in the four corners of the earth, together with a view to overthrowing Christ and Israel. God's response to this action is clearly seen in the second half of Revelation 20:9..... *And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.*

d). Immediately following this Divine destruction we see that, *The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

e). And it is here that we would see the end of all rule, all authority and power and it would be at this point that the end comes and Christ delivers the Kingdom to the Father.

f). Then, immediately following these events comes the Great White Throne judgment - Re 20:11 ¶ *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.*

g). This final judgment then is of all the eternally lost from the previous 7000 years – those who had failed to acknowledge God as creator and Savior

thereby rejecting the very purpose of their creation, therefore placing themselves in the same sphere of judgment as Satan with their eternal destination being the same as his.

h). Then it is here, following the Great White Throne, that Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire, followed by the eternally lost - Re 20:14 *Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

4). And it is then against this background that we see the destruction of the heavens and the earth that we began with this morning - 2Pe 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*

a). And then with all this in mind the Holy Spirit through Peter asks the question that was at the end of our study last time - 2Pe 3:11 ¶ *Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons 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 dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?*

b). In the original language the beginning of v11 has the idea of things being in the process of being dissolved and so we would see this event as not just something yet future, but something that is already in progress – all events and all human history is marching inexorably towards this point of destructive conclusion.

c). And so if everything in this present world, from rulership from the heavens, to the material creation itself, is already in the process of being dissolved, then what manner of persons ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness?

d). So the context of the question then does not limit us to just a consideration of a future event, but rather challenges us to consider our relationship to the world in the present.

e). Knowing that all things in the present world are in the process of destruction, that nothing the world values will remain and that all we have materially is destined for the fire, then how much are we still locked in to worldly aspirations, worldly values and worldly gratification – especially with respect to the manifestation of these within a religious context?

f). This question concerning our holy conduct and godliness is asked of us but it is the type of question that is called a ‘rhetorical question’, meaning a question which does not need an answer because the answer is already implied. Therefore with regards to the world, because of what lies out ahead we are obligated to lead a separated life. Separated from the world in our conduct and

separated from the world in our godliness. In fact the implied answer to our question has already been given to us in - 1Pe 1:13 ¶ *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

g). Our hope is future and our focus needs to be future therefore we need to gird up the loins of our mind and be sober in the present in order to prepare for that future; and our hope and our focus are made more certain because of God's actions in the past that show us the absolute certainty of His actions in the future. The scoffers have willfully forgotten about His past actions, but we haven't, therefore let us put our time and our effort into that which will have Millennial and eternal value - Eph 5:15 *See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

h). The Book of Hebrews admonishes us as to where our focus needs to be and gives us Christ as our example to follow - Heb 12:2 *looking [from this world] unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

i). And scripture has much to say about maintaining the right focus – Lu 9:62 *But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

Mr 10:21 *Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." 22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

Php 3:13 *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 ¶ Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind;*

5). Our Scripture in 2 Peter also directs our attention to the same thing – 2Pe 3:12 *looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God,*

a). Looking for = Greek – 'prosdokao', *pros-dok-ah'-o* = to expect, to anticipate with hope and fear

b). Again we will see here that the events of the Millennial Kingdom and the events that are beyond, resulting in a new heavens and a new earth, are to be our confident expectation. These are not a vague hope that may or may not be realized, but rather are events in which we have the opportunity to actively participate – 2Pe 1:10 *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;*

c). V12 also goes on to talk about ‘hastening’ the coming day of God, but quite clearly, given the structure of 6 days of work followed by a 7th Day of rest, there is nothing we can do to either make the day of God come faster, or slow it down for that matter. It will be when scripture says it will be. Therefore we need to understand the word ‘hastening’ as follows –

d). Hastening = Greek – ‘speudo’, *spyoo'-do* = to await eagerly

e). So then not only are we to confidently expect the coming of the Day of God, a day that only comes following the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom, but we are also to await that day eagerly, with excitement – and it is no wonder that we should considering what will take place.

f). 2Pe 3:13 *Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

g). ‘Nevertheless’ – even though the present heavens and earth ‘which now are’ will be dissolved by fire, we are looking for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

h). And we look for this new heavens and new earth, not through the eyes of fancy, but ‘according to His promise’.

i). And the promise that we have is contained in the foundational pattern that we have had from the beginning – creation, ruin, restoration, rest – creation – it is contained in the words of the prophets - Isa 65:17 ¶ *"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.*

And is prophesied at the conclusion of scripture - Re 21:1 ¶ *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." 6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.*

j). God is all in all – God Himself is the fulfillment and the guarantee of that which is promised - Isa 46:9 *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'*

6). All this being so - 2Pe 3:14 *Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;*

a). Because we are looking forward 'to these things', confidently expecting them, awaiting them eagerly, because we know what the future holds and what is on offer to us within that future, we need to be diligent to found by Him, when we meet Him at the Judgment Seat, 'in peace, without spot and blameless'.

b). So how might we be diligent to be found by Him in peace? Well to answer our question we might approach it from the opposite end to discover what causes the opposite of peace – strife - 1Co 3:3 *for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?*

c). Strife, envy, divisions all emanate out of carnality, out of the dominance of the man of flesh, and the dominance of the man of flesh comes about because of one thing only – letting our will be done.

d). We can be found in peace by following the example of the Prince of Peace - Lu 2:49 *And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"*

e). Even God the Son did not presume to do anything outside of that which the Father had given Him to do - Joh 12:49 *"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. 50 "And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*

f). And then at the end of His earthly life He was able to declare – Joh 19:30 *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

g). So here is our example, we are to do God's will, to the exclusion of all else and if we are all doing our Father's will then we must be found in peace – Ro 8:6 *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

h). Those who will be found in peace who have organized their lives in faithful obedience to the great doctrines of the Kingdom will be in sharp contrast to the false teachers, most especially the scoffers of these last days, who we will remember were described as - 2Pe 2:17 *These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest,*

Jude 1:12 *These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds;*

Descriptions that show lives characterized by anything other than peace.

i). It is only by us all being conformed to His will that we will be able to be at peace amongst ourselves.

7). V14 also goes on to say that we are to be diligent to be found by Him without spot and blameless, and this description would take us once again to –

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

a). Again we will remember that it is the work of the Holy Spirit through the implanted word which is received by us in meekness that washes us and cleanses us so that Christ might present us to Himself without spot or wrinkle, in the antitype of the Woman being presented to Adam, so that we might be separated to His service and be without blemish/blameless.

b). Now even though this is a work of the Holy Spirit and not our own the cleansing that takes place through the word can only be accomplished in us if the word is received after the right fashion and if we then choose to be faithfully obedient to it no matter how difficult that may be and if we are not following the deceptions of false teaching.

c). We will remember that the false teachers themselves are described as ‘spots in your love feasts’, they are those who are never able to be sanctified and cleansed, because false doctrine is not the word of Christ and can therefore never bring about the transforming work of the Spirit as it is apart from the Spirit and this will likely result in an attempt to do God’s work for Him through our own efforts.

d). And our being found blameless would be the same as being without blemish as both come from the same root word and have to do with not being able to find fault with, and again we will realize that this is not something that can be accomplished in our strength but is the work of God in us in response to our faith.

e). Jude 1:24 *Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless [same word as ‘blameless’ and ‘without blemish’] Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.*