

The Discourse On The Last Things, Pt 5.

An excursion to 2 Peter 3:10-13.

Sunday morning, November 9, 2008.

We have been making our way through Mark 13, and will continue to do so, but today we make a brief excursion to a parallel passage in 2 Peter 3:10-13 because these words are so well remembered by the Lord's people in the context of the last things.

I. "The heavens will pass away (dissolved, being on fire, vs. 12) with a great noise..." Vs. 10.

A. The heavens.

1. What is meant is not the dwelling place of God; not the place where the Lord Jesus ministers as our heavenly High Priest; where He is seated at the right hand of the Father; where He is accompanied by all the holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Hebrews 12:22,23.
Whatever may be shaken and dissolved and removed, the throne of God will stand unshaken forevermore.
2. What is meant is what the apostle Paul alludes to in Ephesians 2:2 and in 6:12.
"...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience."
"We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."
3. See also Daniel 10:12,13, 20 "The prince of the kingdom of Persia... the kings of Persia... the prince of Persia... the prince of Greece. These are all demonic powers that are alluded to.

B. Will pass away; be dissolved Vs. 10,12.

1. The word used in vs. 12, "dissolved" is the same word used in vs. 11, also translated "dissolved," and in vs. 10 and 12 where it is translated as "melt."
2. The Greek verb is Luo, to loose, as opposed to, to bind. It is the severing of a bond between two parties. Slaves are loosed and captives are loosed, or set free
3. What is loosed in this passage is the bond, or the grip of the powers of darkness on the earth. The earth remains; the powers of darkness are dismissed and sent on their way to their eternal doom.

C. With a great noise; being on fire.

In the midst of a great conflict.

This is the epic battle of the ages. The earth is in the grips of Antichrist, the personification of Satan himself, and the Lord Jesus returns to consume him with the breath of His mouth, and the brightness of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8. The Lord Jesus comes to loosen the bond and the grip of "the spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places."

II. The elements will melt with fervent heat.

A. What is meant by elements?

The Greek is “stoicheion.” Literally “to put elements (basic components) in a row.”

What is alluded to is the assembling of basic components to form more complex entities.

- B. This same word is used of the Mosaic system as being the basic elements from which the fullness of the gospel was composed.

Gal 4:3 “When we were children we were in bondage under the elements of the world”

Gal.4:9 “How is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements...”

Col. 2:8 “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit... according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

Col. 2:20 “Therefore if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why do you subject yourselves to regulations -- do not touch, do not taste, do not handle?”

- C. In the judgment of unbelieving Israel in 70 AD the basic elements of the Old Covenant system were loosed, or severed, dismissed, and the new covenant in Christ took on full form. They passed away in a great conflict.

So it will be in the judgment of the last day. The basic elements of which the world is made up will be loosed and dismissed.

1. A divided Kingdom into various denominations? No more!
2. A divided earth into nations and languages? No more!
3. Economic systems of capitalism; socialism, or communism? No more!
4. Governmental structures of democracy; monarchy; dictatorship etc? No more!

III. Both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

A better rendering many translations use for “burned up” is “laid bare” or literally “found.” It is a reference to the Lord revisiting, and laying bare, all the works that have been done on the earth, and canceling them out, or burning them, by doing justice to them, so that they will not need to be remembered anymore.

IV. What does all this mean for Me? Vs. 11.

“Since all these things (the heavenly powers; the elementary structures of earth, and the works of all men of all ages) will be loosed, (severed; disposed of; dismissed in the justice process) what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God?”

1. The implication of this warning is: “What kind of person do I need to be lest I also be loosed or dismissed from my inheritance in the Lord’s earth?”
2. Be rightly related to the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is all your righteousness. He is your peace and your acceptance with the Father. He is the reason you will not be severed from your inheritance. He will stand with you in the judgment.
3. Be rightly related to the Lord’s people. Not just by doing justly; that is giving them what you owe them, but also by having mercy; that is giving them what you don’t owe but what they do need. Even as Christ had mercy on you.
4. By being rightly related to the Lord’s church by profession of faith and attendance at the stated meetings of the church.