

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

2Peter 3:11

Store In My Heart

James 1:12

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

The epistle from James is filled with wisdom that is certainly needed today. It is hard to settle on just one verse that gets this message across. This epistle was probably the first to be written after the death of Jesus. Many believe it was written by James, the Lord's brother, shortly after the events of Acts chapter 15.

No matter who or when, its message of steadfastness in trial and dependence upon God's Word is one that instructs through the ages. Knowledge and trust without action is of no use. Our faith in God must move us to action based upon what He has revealed in His Word. Listen to James and do God's Will.



The New Heavens And The New Earth

Jim McDonald

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away, and the sea is no more

Revelation 21:1

(This is a continuation of last week's article. It would probably be good to read that first half again before reading this half. DLH)

Having discussed the "world" of Noah's day, Peter next turned his attention to the "earth" of Noah's day. What will happen to that earth? Let Peter tell us: "But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (2Pet. 3:7). And again, "... the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2Pet. 3:10). Peter says, "... the earth is stored up for fire;" it will be "burned up" and "dissolved" (2 Pet. 3:11). Is this symbolism? If it is then the second coming of Christ is symbolism as well. The thrust of Peter's argument is to show that God keeps His word. Scoffers had derided and denied it, but Peter showed that God keeps His word. The world came into existence BY THE WORD OF GOD. The world of Noah's day perished BY THE WORD OF GOD. The heavens and earth were created by the same word of God, and they are destined to be destroyed by the same word. There is no symbolism there. And if God does not burn up and dissolve the earth, then we cannot believe His word. God literally created the world by His word. He will literally burn up and dissolve the earth by his word. It's that simple.

After admonishing his readers to live soberly and godly in view of the truth that the heavens and earth will be dissolved (**2Peter 3:11**), he then adds, "*according to his promise, we look for new heavens and*

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For Our Information

In addition to her other difficulties, Joyce Venable has had a rough time with stomach issues this past week.

John Venable, Bill's brother, had to have tubes in his ears before they could continue with other procedures.

Dan's Mom, Dottie, is progressing very slowly in her recovery.

Please continue prayers for all who are ill & recovering.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2Peter 3:13).

Jesus' promise to return to the earth was mocked by scoffers, but God keeps His word, just as He will keep His promise to provide *"new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."* But, where did Jesus ever mention a new heavens and a new earth? Read all the gospels and you will find no reference by Jesus anywhere to *"new heavens and a new earth,"* yet Peter said that *"according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."*

Still, there is something you WILL find connected with the promise Jesus made about His coming again. In **John 14:1-4** Jesus said, *"Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also ... and whither I go, ye know the way."* Clearly Jesus did not intend to return to the earth to remain; He intended to return to the earth to get those who served Him and then carry them with Him to His Father's house. When Jesus prayed in **John 17**, He prayed to the Father that those whom the Father had given Him would be with Him where He was to behold His glory (**John 17:24**). Once again we see Jesus' intent was not to come back to live on the earth with the redeemed. His intention was to carry those whom the Father gave Him to where He was going when He said in **John 14** that He was going away. There are two things in **John 14** we must not forget. There is the promise of Jesus' return; the return the scoffers questioned. But coupled with that was Jesus' promise that He was going to His Father's house to prepare many mansions for His own. He does not mention in the passage *"new heavens and a new earth,"* but He does mention a new order of things: God's children being carried to heaven. Friends, Peter said, *"According to his promise we look for new heavens and new earth."* Jesus' promise to go and prepare a place for His redeemed ones, then come back for them and carry them to that place so they can behold His glory IS THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH — a wondrous new order of things!

Isaiah's *"new heavens and a new earth"* in chapters **65** and **66** were not literal; they were the church that Jesus bought with His blood. Peter's *"new heavens and a new earth"* are not literal either. He tells us that the first earth and heavens are dissolved and burned up. Our earth will be destroyed; it will not be "revamped" for the redeemed to dwell on. Who doubts that the new heavens and earth John wrote about are the same new heavens and earth Peter wrote about? Peter's new heavens and earth are not literal and neither are the new heavens and earth of which John wrote. John, in symbolic language, described a new order of things: God's redeemed, through all the ages, at home in heaven with Him.

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

