

[*MJTM* 23 (2021–2022) 103–30]

WILL THE COSMOS BE DESTROYED AND RE-CREATED OR
INSTEAD RENOVATED?

Earl R. Bunch Jr.
Lakeland, FL

Identifying the Theological Challenge in 2 Pet 3:5–13

Peter's second epistle was written to encourage God's people to stand firm against the false teachers of his day. They were bringing harm to the church in a number of ways through their doctrinal errors. Central to this controversy was their argument that the time had passed for the return of Christ, and therefore it would never happen. As Peter responds to this heresy, he addresses several important theological issues relevant not only to the original readers of the letter but to twenty-first century believers as well. In 2 Pet 3, he speaks of the *παρουσία* (the day of the Lord). He confronts those who question the reality of Christ's return. He proclaims the certainty of a coming day of judgment. He provides a powerful account of the future destiny of God's created order, marked by colorful language of fire and destruction. Peter's words point toward the reality of eternity. At the core of this ionic climax of the ages is the fate of the cosmos. A surface reading seems to indicate a literal and complete annihilation of the created order. However, many scholars find this unacceptable, primarily because it stands in contradiction to the basic elements and principles of the doctrine of redemption. It also stands in conflict with other scriptural passages in both the New and Old Testaments.

The Problem

Scholars vary greatly in their understanding and commentary of 2 Pet 3. Peter's declaration is bold. The heavens will experience fire and fervent heat. Some teachers have challenged the translation of 2 Pet 3:10, where it reads that the earth "shall be burned up" in the KJV but "laid bare" in the NIV. Overstreet quotes from Robertson, who says quite simply that "the text is corrupt."¹ Wallace says, ". . . one of the most difficult textual problems in the NT is found in 2 Peter 3:10."² There is a discrepancy in the manuscripts. The Byzantine text contains *κατακαήσεται* in v. 10, which is translated as the familiar "burned up" Petrine doctrine. However, according to Metzger, many older manuscripts cite *εὑρεθήσεται*, including the oldest extant manuscript.³ Because of this, Overstreet makes a case that the translation should render "to find" or "shall be found" rather than "burned up." He confidently asserts that his is a majority position among modern scholars. After much discussion on the conflagration, Overstreet opts for the complete destruction and re-creation of this universe. He believes that this will occur after the millennium.

Heide picks up on the Petrine message of hope and ties it directly to the apocalyptic writings of the new heaven and the new earth. That picture provided hope for those being persecuted in the early days of the church, who were the initial readers of the letter. He quotes Rev 21 and then poses the big question: Does this ". . . mean that God will create a new heaven and earth *ex nihilo*?"⁴ Is this mere an apocalyptic talk, or is John to be taken literally? He discusses 2 Pet 3:3–13, which he says is the primary supporting passage for those who believe in the total destruction of the world and re-creation *ex nihilo*. But Paul's words on the future of God's creation as found in Rom 8 are strong enough to counter this doctrine. If Peter is teaching complete destruction, then he is contradicting a classic Pauline doctrine. "Perhaps a

1. Overstreet, "Study," 354.
2. Wallace, "Brief Note" (blog), Nov 17, 2020.
3. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 706.
4. Heide, "What Is New," 38.

better way of looking at this passage is to say that God will transform the existing creation. He will right all the wrongs that have taken place on the existing earth.”⁵

Kreider provides a set of quotes from modern teachers and scholars who favor a complete destruction of this earth. The list includes J. Vernon McGee, Hal Lindsey, D. L. Moody, and John MacArthur. These preachers make trite comments comparing this earth to the Titanic, a wrecked vessel, a sinking ship, and so forth. Before launching into his belief in renewal, Kreider makes an interesting observation about Noah’s Flood as mentioned in 2 Pet 3:5–6. Those who opt for a complete destruction of this earth imply that the last judgment of God will be worse than anything that has ever happened, even worse than the Flood. Kreider disagrees. Based upon a theology of renewal and redemption, he suggests that the flood was the worst cosmic judgment there will ever be. End-time believers “. . . can hope for a renewed heaven and earth, not an apocalyptic annihilation.”⁶ Kreider proceeds to make a powerful case around the theme of redemption. Jonathan Moo steps forward as one of the leading environmental theologians. He writes for the explicit purpose of defending environmental responsibility. He refutes those who argue that 2 Pet 3 implies the complete destruction of the universe. Rather, the fire of God’s judgment will burn away everything between heaven and humanity. All the deeds and works of men will be open to God. He uses Rom 8 to defend the redemption of this present creation. Romans 8:21 states that the creation groans under the weight of its existing condition. “It is difficult for today’s ecologically aware reader not to equate this picture of creation’s groaning with modern scenes of environmental ruin.”⁷

The Question at Hand

Second Peter is very pastoral in nature. In 2 Pet 1, he encourages the people of God, reminding them (v. 12) and refreshing their

5. Heide, “What Is New,” 48.
6. Kreider, “Flood,” 420.
7. Moo, “Continuity,” 27.

memory (v. 13) about the spiritual blessings (vv. 2–3) they have received through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Peter puts himself forward as a true messenger of God by virtue of being an eyewitness to the glory and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 16). This exhortation is in preparation of his warning against false teachers and false prophets who also present themselves as spokesmen for God even though they are actually fighting against the truth of the gospel. One of their central false teachings is to question and deny the promised return of Christ. Peter's blistering rebuke of the false teachers and scoffers covers ch. 2 and the first part of ch. 3. He then declares with bold certainty the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ which will be accompanied by a cataclysmic cosmic event. His description of the pending fiery judgment of God comes in one of the most verbally graphic and ominous passages in all of Scripture. Is the scene described in 3:10–12 *the end of the world*? Is that what Peter is depicting? Does this passage teach that the earth on which we now live will be burned up and destroyed? Will it be annihilated so that God can then start over and make a new heaven and a new earth? *Will the cosmos be destroyed and re-created or instead renovated?* Will the present heavens and earth be annihilated and then a new heaven and new earth be created *ex nihilo*? Or will this devastating event be one that somehow brings about a judgmental yet redemptive purge of the deadly effect the fall of man has rendered on God's beautiful creation? If there is to be a purging, will it then be followed by a renovation? The answer to this singular question will be sought by delving into the writing of 2 Pet, specifically 3:5–13. Will the new heavens and the new earth be new in the literal sense, or will they instead be newly renovated? That is the question at hand.

The Future of the Cosmos: A Case for Annihilation

God's word is powerful. It is alive (Heb 4:12). By his word, he created the universe and all things therein (Heb 11:3). By that same word of power, the cosmos exists, consists, and continues (Heb 1:3). Paul tells us that all things are held together by God's word (Col 1:17). Morris explains that the very energy by which

God created all things was woven and embedded into the fabric of creation. Hence, we live in a world where energy and power are manifested in multiple ways and form the basis for science. Light, sound, heat, and matter are all expressions of power and energy in this physical world in which man dwells. Morris says, "The concept of energy is of absolutely paramount importance in all of the great modern advances in science and engineering which have contributed so immensely to modern civilization."⁸ Morris draws a connection between God's creative power and the energy within creation, explaining the first and second laws of thermodynamics. The second law implies that there is a continual decrease of energy within a given system and believes that death and decay which came from Adam's sin are themselves examples of the deterioration of cosmic energy. This reveals a paradox. The law of energy depletion is a constant reminder that creation is under the curse, groaning under the weight of sin (Rom 8:22). However, God's word that created the universe continues forever. The grass withers and the flowers fade but God's word endures forever (1 Pet 1:25). The commandment of the Lord is pure and without blemish or depletion (Ps 19:7-8). Forever God's word is settled in heaven (Ps 119:89).

Morris argues that there is a strong parallel between scientific and spiritual principles. Light, or radiant energy produced by the sun and travelling to earth, is the source of much of the energy within the universe and is a key sustainer to biological life and the processes of nature. Jesus Christ declared himself to be the light of the world (John 8:12). God's word is a lamp and a light to man (Ps 119:105). The word of prophecy is a light shining in a dark place (2 Pet 1:19). Biological life is dependent upon the light of the sun. Spiritual life is dependent upon the light of the Son. Morris also emphasizes that atomic energy is intrinsically related to the energy of light. All of this leads Morris to 2 Pet 3. Because the cosmos was made by and sustained by the power and energy of God's word, the scoffers of 2 Pet 3 are willingly ignorant. They refuse to recognize two obvious truths: God is a God of judgment as evidenced in the Noahic flood; and God's

8. Morris, "Power of the Word," 54.

word is powerful enough to execute a future judgment, just as has been repeatedly prophesied. According to Morris, “The tenth verse of 2 Peter 3 prophesies that at the coming Day of the Lord this maintaining power of the Word of God will be withdrawn from His present activity of ‘holding together’ (Col 1:17) all material things, the binding energy will be withdrawn and all the atomic structure of the earth permitted to disintegrate . . .”⁹ Morris affirms the words of Peter that the earth will be burned up. It will be melted and dissolved. It will be annihilated.

Overstreet writes in defense of dispensational theology. He quotes from Chafer,¹⁰ Walvoord,¹¹ and even from Scofield,¹² in his exegesis of 2 Pet 3:10–13, focusing specifically on the well-documented textual problem of v. 10. There are two major difficulties for the interpreter, he writes. The first is to choose which text is correct. Does the preferred text contain *κατακαήσεται* or *εὐρεθήσεται*? Overstreet states the most modern textual critics support *εὐρεθήσεται*. This is a reference to Metzger, who writes that *εὐρεθήσεται* is the “. . . oldest reading and the one which best explains the origin of the others that have been preserved.”¹³ Even though the uncial manuscript A as well as the Byzantine text type support *κατακαήσεται*, Overstreet claims this reading simply does not have the manuscript support many would so desire. Since the passage is so heavily influenced by the fiery conflagration, it is easy to understand how an early scribe might have made the substitution, believing he was adding clarity to an obviously difficult passage. It does seem to fit in a contextual sense. However, the reverse substitution is illogical. If the earliest manuscript actually read *κατακαήσεται*, “it is harder to explain how *εὐρεθήσεται* could have crept into the text.”¹⁴ It has been argued that the insertion of the negative might be the best solution to the dilemma. Some translations, one being an Egyptian translation known as the Sahidic, render it as “will not be

9. Morris, “Power of the Word,” 60.

10. Overstreet, “Study,” 358.

11. Overstreet, “Study,” 360; Walvoord, “Prophetic Context.”

12. Overstreet, “Study,” 361.

13. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 706.

14. Overstreet, “Study,” 355.

found.” This suggests that an early copying may have accidentally added the negative participle, explaining that this is consistent with the context of the passage. Nothing will be found because everything will be burned up and completely annihilated. Overstreet points out the obvious, though. It would have been just as easy for a copyist to add the negative as it would have been to omit it.

Having come to the conclusion that the better reading of v. 10 is “the earth and the works that are therein shall be found,” he points out that in his opinion this does not make sense. It does not “. . . have any understandable meaning.”¹⁵ One possible solution is to repunctuate the Greek text. If Peter is asking his readers a thought-provoking question rather than making a declarative statement, it makes the reading much more plausible. Overstreet offers his own possible translation: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat; *and shall the earth and the works that are therein be found?*”¹⁶

What will be the extent of the conflagration? Will it bring renovation or annihilation? Overstreet argues that there will be a limited renovation at the beginning of the millennium, thus fulfilling the Scriptures about a regeneration, as was mentioned by Jesus in Matt 19:28. When the conflagration hits, which will be at the end of the millennium and coincidental with the great white throne judgment, the cosmos will be annihilated. In order to build his case for annihilation, he must dilute the scriptural basis for renovation. Even though Pss 104:5 and Ps 148:3–6 speak of the earth enduring forever, Overstreet comments that *forever* does not have to be synonymous with *eternity*. He references Ezra 4:15 where the text is rendered “antiquity” or “long history.” He further argues that topographical alterations, healings, and overall restoration of the created order will be the result of Christ’s presence in the millennial reign rather than from the renovation of the cosmos. He mentions an argument given by

15. Overstreet, “Study,” 356.

16. Overstreet, “Study,” 358.

Gill.¹⁷ The destruction of Peter's fire will be similar to that of the Noahic flood. Since the flood was actually a cosmic renovation, so will be the great conflagration of 2 Pet 3. Having documented these arguments for renovation, Overstreet states his disagreement with them, "The arguments for a renovation of the earth are thus seen to be inadequate."¹⁸ He does not believe this position satisfies the wording used here by Peter.

Having provided what he believes is a refutation of a renovation, Overstreet explains the true extent of the cataclysm, which is the annihilation of the cosmos. He ties *παρέρχομαι* ("will pass away") with its usage in Rev 21:1, a clear reference to the white throne judgment. The first heavens and earth are passed away, John writes. They are gone. What will pass away (i.e., be annihilated)? The *στοιχεῖα*, which in addition to the heavens and earth includes the four elements: fire, air, earth, and water. This destruction will come with the sound of a great noise, which is likely to be a catastrophic explosion. "If man, in his finite ability, can do such powerful things with nuclear fission, then surely when God Himself causes this [the conflagration] the heavens and the earth will flee away . . . they shall be annihilated."¹⁹ Even though nuclear fission leaves behind a residual of waste, the destruction of 2 Pet 3:10–13 ". . . will be complete and total, far greater than any nuclear reaction that man has ever known."²⁰

A Case for Redemption, Re-Creation and Renovation

Heide discusses prophetic and apocalyptic language as it pertains to the new heaven and the new earth described by John in Rev 21. He addresses the very question at hand by asking pointedly, "Does John, and Isaiah before him, mean that God will create a new heaven and earth ex nihilo? Will the new earth be a reproduction of the original creation, or will it somehow be a renewal

17. Overstreet, "Study," 363.

18. Overstreet, "Study," 363.

19. Overstreet, "Study," 365.

20. Overstreet, "Study," 365.

of this present earth?”²¹ Can the normal use of history and grammar be applied to such apocalyptic language? Heide notes that commentators are split on this question. Some believe John’s vision to be a literal physical vision, while others believe it to be spiritually or politically representative. Too many Christians are quick to criticize the environmentalists as being unspiritual or liberal. But Heide admits they are rightly concerned with this creation and cosmos. A number of passages point to a continuity between the old earth and the new earth, identifying several that speak about the future of this world in God’s great plan of redemption (Hos 2:14–23; Rom 8:18–25; Col 1:16–20). If God is going to redeem this creation, then Christians should be greatly concerned about its care and preservation.

Heide is concerned with two primary Scriptures. The first is Rev 21. Following the cataclysmic judgment described in Rev 20, John begins Rev 21 by looking at the new heaven and new earth. God declares that he will make all things new. But does “. . . this necessarily mean that he is going to begin again from scratch?”²² One of the stumbling blocks in this passage is the phrase “passed away,” which has a very direct implication of death in modern terminology. Scholars draw a parallel between the first few verses of Rev 21 and Isa 65:17, although Heide believes there is a greater resemblance with 1 En 91:16.²³ It seems more likely that this may be a reference to the words of Jesus when he stated that heaven and earth would pass away but God’s word would never pass away (Mark 13:31; Matt 5:24; 24:35; Luke 16:17). However, ἀπέρχομαι is better seen as “to depart, go away” rather than “to die.” Perhaps John was saying that in his vision the first heaven and earth were no longer in view; they were gone away. God’s judgment has ended. He is not making all things brand new but rather making all things as new—that is to say, like new. Heide believes that references to the sea are highly apocalyptic, stating that John uses both “sea” and “earth” in opposition to God, who is of heaven. The two beasts came up

21. Heide, “What Is New,” 38.

22. Heide, “What Is New,” 42.

23. Heide, “What Is New,” 42.

out of the sea and the earth (Rev 13), and the great harlot was seen sitting on many waters (Rev 17). Such language leads itself to the belief that the sea, the first earth, and the first heaven have passed away—not because they are annihilated but rather because they are judged and put away by God’s hand.

In his attempt to resolve the tension between the earth’s destruction and the future redemption of creation, Heide advances to his second key Scripture, 2 Pet 3:10–13. He notes that cosmic judgement and the eradication of the sun, moon, and stars are a common Old Testament theme (Isa 13:10; 24:23; Ezra 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15–17; Amos 5:20; 8:9; Zeph 1:14–18) and also found in some non-canonical sources (2 Esd 6:20; 1 En 1:6). However, the most forceful scriptural reference is found in 2 Pet 3. Heide says, “2 Peter 3:3–13 is the primary passage used to support the view of total obliteration and re-creation *ex nihilo*.”²⁴ Using such verbs as “destroy,” “burn,” and “melt,” the writer seems to offer little hope for the future of the cosmos. This rationale suits the theology of some scholars who believe that this obliteration is necessary in order to fully remove the stain and corruption caused by sin and the fall of man. Such doctrine concludes that new heavens and new earth are just that, *new*. However, Heide objects to this because of its contradiction with Paul’s teachings about creation and its future.

Heide suggests a better interpretation might be that God will transform the cosmos from old to new. It will be released from corruption. Perhaps it will undergo a transformation such as the body of our Lord at his resurrection. The old was not destroyed, but rather transformed. It is the same body, but in a new and supernatural state. The heavens and earth will be transformed (*μετασχηματίζω*) like our bodies will be at the resurrection (Phil 3:20–21). Based upon this, Heide says, “I think it is most likely that this creation is a transformed creation returned to a likeness of its original state (cf. Rev 21:5; 22:1–5).”²⁵

A closer look at various uses of “fire” in Scripture can show the refining and purifying effects of fire. Only the impurities and

24. Heide, “What Is New,” 46.

25. Heide, “What Is New,” 48.

dross are burned away, as gold tried in the fire. Fire and judgment are used by both Peter (1 Pet 1:7) and Paul (1 Cor 3:10–15). The same fire that eradicates the stain of sin and impurity from the earth could be seen as cleansing power rather than one of disintegration and destruction. Heide draws a strong parallel between 2 Pet 3 and the Pauline theology of Rom 8:20–21. The point of the judgment is not one of annihilation but one that will release the world from the ever-decaying effect of sin and death. Heide closes his exposition of this passage with the following words: “The main point of this study has been to demonstrate that the creation in which we now live has a future.”²⁶ The remarkable event of 2 Pet 3 “. . . will be a transformation and renewal rather than a re-creation *ex nihilo*.”²⁷

Bauckham provides a highly detailed commentary on 2 Pet and devotes much attention to chapter 3. He makes an interesting observation about the ignorance of the scoffers who say that all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. He points out that just as there was once a great flood that brought immense destruction to the earth with much loss of life as well, that inherent in the fallen state of the cosmos is the power and capability of bringing more destruction. Mankind cannot simply pretend that the continuation of the cosmos can be taken for granted. With the acquisition of nuclear power, it must be noted that a nuclear holocaust could indeed generate the conflagration described by Peter (3:10). From a religious perspective, all Believers acknowledge God has the supernatural power to send fire and destruction upon the earth. Whether by man’s own evil deeds or by the very hand of God, there is no assurance about the continued sustenance of the universe.

Bauckham discusses Peter’s warning. The day of the Lord will indeed come as a thief in the night. There is no time for sinners to delay because His coming is going to be sudden and without notice. God’s forbearance is no reason for man to delay in terms of repentance. There are numerous New Testament usages of this metaphor, all taken from Jesus’ parable (Matt 24:43–

26. Heide, “What Is New,” 55.

27. Heide, “What Is New,” 55.

44; Luke 12:39–40). The day of the Lord will arrive and suddenly all forbearance will end. Judgment will come. At that time the heavens will *παρελεύσονται* (“pass away,” cf. Matt 5:18; 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 16:17) with fire and a great noise. The fire will be so intense that the heavenly bodies will melt—be dissolved—in the heat. Bauckham explains the three possibilities of *στοιχεῖα*. It can refer to the elements of which all physical things are composed: water, air, fire, and earth. This does not seem appropriate, according to Bauckham.²⁸ The second option refers to the sun, moon, and stars, which is the one favored by most commentators. The third is a reference to the angelic and spiritual powers over nature. While this is a common Pauline usage of the term (cf. Gal 4:3; Col 2:8, 20), Bauckham sees this option as secondary and if applicable at all then an add-on to the sun, moon, and stars.²⁹

Bauckham then tackles the textual challenge of this passage, centered around the last word in the Greek reading of v. 10. There are various renderings for this: “will/shall be burned up” (KJV; NASB); “will be laid bare” (NIV); “everything in it will vanish” (GNT); or “will be exposed” (ESV). Bauckham explains that there are three basic interpretations of this problem: there is support for variant readings; there are emendations of the text; and there are attempts to make sense of *εὐρεθήσεται*. He rejects *κατακαήσεται* (“will be burned up”) because he believes this is incompatible with other readings. Some texts contain *οὐκ* along with *εὐρεθήσεται*, which he likes. He says this may be a reference to a Hebraism or Septuagintalism meaning “to not exist” or “to cease to exist.” This is the best solution unless sense can be made of *εὐρεθήσεται*. The emendations were brought on, says Bauckham, because the context of the passage seems to require a word denoting destruction. He lists a plethora of possible emendations, but once again comes to his point: “Some of these proposed emendations are more plausible than others, but we should

28. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 316.

29. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 316.

not resort to emendation unless *εὐρεθήσεται* proves incapable of a satisfactory sense.”³⁰

Bauckham then discusses *εὐρεθήσεται* and clearly prefers this option. “Will be found” seems to indicate the God, the Judge of the earth, will discover all of man’s works of darkness, which in this world so often seem to be hidden. They “will be found,” “will be discovered,” or “will be made manifest” before the eyes of God. Bauckham searches for an Old Testament reference as a reason for Peter’s choice of this word. A criminal, when captured, is said to be “found,” “detected,” or “discovered,” even sometimes caught in the act (Exod 22:8; Deut 22:22, 28; Jer 50:24).³¹ Although this is an intriguing analogy, it may be a stretch. There is no exact Old Testament parallel to this phrase. Bauckham quotes from Wilson,³² who offers the following: When the heavens are burned away, the earth and all of man’s works and deeds will be visible to God. This will be bad news for the wicked who attempt to run hide from God (Isa 2:19; Hos 10:8; Rev 6:15–16). The “being found” is not so much the act of judgment itself but rather a state of being that leaves the wicked completely and absolutely exposed to the light of God’s all-seeing eyes. Bauckham notes that the *παρουσία* is not as much concerned with the destruction of the cosmos as it is to bring judgment to the wicked.

Bauckham concludes his thoughts on the fate of the cosmos with a discussion of vv. 11–13. This warning of God’s coming judgment demands a response from believers. Since this present world of wickedness will soon disappear, so his readers should put away all wickedness and unrighteous living and bring forth a lifestyle of holiness and righteousness in order to be prepared to dwell in a new heaven and new earth that is filled with righteousness (v. 11). This will require patience on the part of God’s people (“. . . waiting for,” v. 12) as well as “hastening” (v. 12) the day. This indicates a form of activity that can help bring about that day. This, along with v. 9 where God is not willing that any

30. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 318.

31. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 319.

32. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 319.

should perish, shows two activities that God may be waiting for. These two include the repentance of many sinners and a life of holiness and good works by the believers. It can be argued that these two human works can possibly expedite the day of the Lord. That is to say, the delay may be God waiting for these things to happen. Peter writes that God's people are waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, which Bauckham identifies as that described in Isa 65:17.³³ Bauckham was in fact quoted by a number of other scholars considered by this study:

The cosmic dissolution described in vv. 10, 12 was a return to the primeval chaos, as in the Flood (3:6), so that a new creation may emerge (cf. 4 Ezra 7:30–31). Such passages emphasize the radical discontinuity between the old and the new, but it is nevertheless clear that they intend to describe a renewal, not an abolition, of creation (cf. 1 Enoch 54:4–5; Rom. 8:21).³⁴

Pastoral Implications—Caring for the Cosmos

Joe Biden served as vice president of the United States for eight years under President Barack Obama and became President himself after winning the election of 2020. On his campaign website, he made the following statement: “Climate change poses an existential threat . . .” and “. . . there is no greater threat facing our country and world.”³⁵ Climate change has become a political term synonymous with man's environmental responsibility. The cosmos is on a collision course with destruction unless man takes action to save it. Even though the loudest voices on the subject seem to be those from the political realm, there are a number of Christian teachers and scholars who vocalize concerns as well. The issue of environmentalism is at the center of world politics and news. Coupled with the cosmic conflagration that is at the very heart of this paper, it seems appropriate to briefly address it

33. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 322.

34. Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*, 322.

35. “Biden Plan.”

from a scriptural perspective. What are the spiritual truths and scriptural foundations for man's ecological and environmental responsibility before holy God?

Moo points out that many critics of Christianity do so on charges of anthropocentrism. Many Christians have an exalted view of humanity which comes at the cost and even neglect of the non-human creation. Some modern environmentalists actually call for the replacement of Christianity by an alternative ideology that will address the eco crisis rather than add to it.³⁶ Even some theologians are sympathetic with this thinking, pointing out that the New Testament is concerned only with the salvation of the soul and the *world* is viewed with open negativity. Moo concedes that there is an element of truth in this criticism, although most references to the "world" point more to the world system of living rather than the natural order of God's creation. Moo goes on to affirm that the redemption of human beings is definitely at the center of God's plan but that does not mean it is an either-or choice when discussing evangelism and environmentalism. The New Testament as well as the Old Testament put forth the importance of the created world in the plan and purposes of God. Moo contrasts biblical theology from systematic theology. There must be the exegesis of studying Scripture in its historical context to determine what it meant when it was written, but there must also be application. What does it *mean* to the reader in a contemporary sense? The environmental crisis has forced theologians to take a second and third look at the biblical passages dealing with creation and its place in the Christian life as well as its eschatological role. Moo prefers to use the term "nature" rather than "creation" because he believes it better describes the sub-human dimension of God's creation. Creation is more of a universal term whereas the term "nature" carries with it self-expression of all created things non-human.

Moo then discusses Scriptures that are part of what he calls ". . . the not yet of eschatological fulfillment."³⁷ The two most cited texts on the subject on Christian environmentalism are Rom

36. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 450.

37. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 459.

8:19–22 and Col 1:20. The creation is groaning and waiting with a sense of expectation at a time of future glory. Interpreters point out that in the text the term “creation” usually refers to the entirety of the created universe. The transition from v. 22 to v. 23 in Rom 8 excludes believers from the scope of creation. In a manner consistent with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the psalmist, Paul personifies nature in this passage. Moo notes that Paul makes three significant observations about creation. First, creation is in a state of bondage and frustration that is likely a reference back to the curse of Gen 3:17–19. Human sin led to a change in creation itself, and that is evident. Moo suggests that this frustration could be the result of nature no longer yielding to man’s dominion over it, a dominion that was in part forfeited by man’s fall. It is clear Paul is not disparaging nature because he often speaks of its goodness, grandeur, and glory (Rom 1:19–22; 1 Tim 4:4). Moo asks rhetorically, “How should this impact our view of the created order and our responsibility to be stewards of nature?” Because nature has the hope of future liberty, Christians should have a proper respect and concern for nature itself.

This brings Moo to his next point. Since creation was adversely affected by man’s sin long ago, it will be positively impacted and blessed by man’s future redemption and deliverance from the curse and effect of that sin. The reversal of the effects of sin includes both humans and non-humans—yes, all of God’s creation. The glory of the resurrected bodies demands a glorious environment where they can dwell. Moo adds the prophet Isaiah to the Gen 3:17–19 passage about the curse and uses it to support his understanding of Rom 8. Isaiah 24:1–13 speaks about the curse of sin in cosmic terms: “The heavens languish with the earth” (v. 4); “a curse consumes the earth” (v. 6); “the earth is defiled by its people” (v. 5).

Moo then comes to the matter of the renovation and restoration of the cosmos. He writes, “The hope for the liberation of creation that Paul expresses in Rom. 8 clearly implies that the destiny of the natural world is not destruction but transformation.”³⁸ Moo acknowledges that this concept is in tension with

38. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 463.

certain prophetic passages, specifically Rev 21 and 2 Pet 3. He discusses the fire, melting, and destruction of 2 Pet 3 but then makes the following statement: “A close look at the passages suggest that what is envisaged is not annihilation and new creation but radical transformation.”³⁹ When God declares that he is making everything new (Rev 21:5), he does not say that he is making new things. Rather, “The language here suggests renewal, not destruction and recreation.”⁴⁰ Moo comments that John’s language in Rev 21–22 portrays a reversal of the curse of sin and an actual return back to the paradise of Eden. He devotes specific attention to 2 Pet 3:10–12. He mentions, as has been previously discussed in this paper, that the “burned up” of v. 10 can be rendered “laid bare” or “shall be seen,” showing that all things will be laid bare before the eyes of holy God. The language of fire and burning can also be read against the backdrop of Old Testament prophecies where this type of language is often used metaphorically. In closing, Moo affirms the strength of the language of Rev 21–22 and 2 Pet 3. They clearly indicate a radical transformative experience for the cosmos. He repeats himself to say that he does not believe these passages teach that the world will be completely destroyed and then replaced. Rather, these passages communicate quite strongly “. . . the idea of renovation rather than replacement.”⁴¹

In another paper, Moo also discusses the cosmos. When Paul claims that Christ has reconciled “all things” to himself (Col 1:20), this must include the cosmos as well as humans. It includes all things in heaven and on the earth. As believers now belong to God’s new creation, the transforming power of this new creation must be allowed to help express love and concern for both other people and the resources of the earth and environment. There has traditionally been a theological indifference to the future of the cosmos. This is wrong according to Moo. There will be some level of continuity in the transition between this creation and the one to come. Moo asserts, “The cosmic aspect

39. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 465.

40. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 466.

41. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 469.

of new creation is not a ‘creation out of nothing’ (*creatio ex nihilo*) but ‘a creation out of the old’ (*creatio ex vetere*).⁴² Believers are helping God accomplish his eternal purposes by ministering to others as well as caring for the creation.

This is a sound and proper position for all pastors to embrace and teach. Believers have a responsibility to care for their own bodies as well as for the creation God has so beautifully made. The body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19–20). As God’s temple, one’s body no longer belongs to self but to God. The fact that it belongs to God brings with it an inherent stewardship factor. According to 1 Cor 3:16–17, God will punish those who destroy the body because it is his very temple. The same argument can be made for God’s creation. The earth is the Lord’s and everything it contains (Ps 24:1; 50:10–12). Since it, too, like the bodies of believers, belongs to God, there is also an obligation of care and stewardship due to the cosmos. The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps 19:1) and communicate his eternal power and divine nature (Rom 1:20). Not only is there a responsibility to care for the environment based on these declarations of God’s ownership of the cosmos—it displays and reflects his very greatness, glory, and power—there is a most practical aspect involved herein as well. When the environment suffers, people suffer. Soil contamination hurts crops and robs the earth of more abundant harvests. Water contamination pollutes fresh water supplies, resulting in less water for mankind. In both of these examples, vegetation and wildlife are impacted, which hurts man’s food supply. Therefore, when man provides care for the environment, God is honored and so are his eschatological plans. Both mankind and the cosmos are objects of God’s redemptive power and plan.

Summary and Conclusions

According to Silver, one out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament has to do in some fashion with the rapture and/or

42. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 60.

the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴³ It can be argued that one of the most engaging, most colorful, and most provocative of such passages is the text put forth by this writer as the focus of this paper. Second Peter 3:7–13 describes a very significant eschatological event. At that time, there will be a great noise. There will be an explosive flash of fire, one so great and so fantastic that the heavens will be ablaze. The heat will be so intense that the elements of this creation, possibly including the sun, moon, and stars, will literally melt. It is redundant to say that all of this will come with much devastation and destruction. But what exactly will be destroyed? Will the entire cosmos be annihilated? Will there be the total decimation of God's original cosmos that was so beautifully created as recorded in Gen 1–2? Or will this incredible revelation of God's judgmental power somehow renovate the cosmos and supernaturally transform it into a state of eternal glory and splendor? *Will the Cosmos be destroyed and re-created or instead renovated?* Will the present heavens and earth be completely annihilated and then a new heaven and new earth be created *ex nihilo*? That is the question under consideration in this writing.

The Question at Hand Discussed

Peter's reason for penning this passage was to counter false teachers who were proclaiming that there would be no return of Christ. According to their narrow perspective, time was marching forward, and all things were continuing as they had been since the beginning of creation. In 2 Pet 3, he addresses this in detail. The delay is not a function of God's laziness or inability to act. It is rather an expression of his grace, compassion, mercy, and patience, all of which proceed from his desire for more and more people to be saved (v. 9). There will be a soon-coming judgment that will bring about the destruction of evil and the revelation of God's eternal kingdom. In the same way that God waited 120 years in the days of Noah before sending the judgment of flood waters, so now mankind is in the waiting period

43. Silver, *Lord's Return*, 29.

before God's final judgment, which will come as surely as did the Noahic flood. God has ordained it. The heavens and the earth are already judged. They have a reservation with God's judgment (v. 7), one that will not be with water but will instead be of fire. This fire is to be the judgment of God upon "ungodly men" (v. 7). This may be a reference back to 2:6 where Peter says that the fire and brimstone that fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah was an example of God's judgment upon the wicked and the ungodly. Peter then affirms both the certainty and the nature of the coming judgment ("the day of the Lord will come," v. 10). God's children can rest assured in this and all promises of God. It will happen. Scoffers and unbelievers will be caught off guard because it will come "as a thief in the night" (v. 10), which is likely a reference to what Peter first-hand heard the Lord teach (Matt 24:43) and may also be a reference to Paul's writing as well (1 Thess 5:2).

The nature of the judgment will be one of fire. There are many New Testament passages that speak of hell, the lake of fire, and eternal punishment in that fire. There are many New Testament passages that speak of Christ's sudden return. His appearing will be one of surprise like a thief in the night. However, there are only three passages that depict the judgment and return of Christ in a setting of fire. Only one of those explicitly mentions the fate of the cosmos, and that is the primary passage scrutinized by this paper. It contains the controversial translations rendered as "the heavens shall pass away" (3:10) and "the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved" (v. 12). The other two fiery passages are Pauline texts that seem consistent with the same event. In 2 Thess 1:8, Paul says that Christ's return will be one where he takes fiery vengeance upon his enemies. Even though this does not mention the destruction of the cosmos, it does mention the presence of fire at the time of the future appearing of Jesus Christ. The other are 1 Cor 3:13 and 3:15 where Paul describes how some believers will be saved as though being rescued from a burning building. Second Thessalonians 1:8 mentions a fiery judgment of the wicked, and 1 Cor 3:13–15 mentions a fiery judgment of believers. These three passages form the entire New Testament scriptural basis for a second coming

doctrine in a setting of fire. Therefore, since Paul does not specifically mention the fate of the cosmos in either 1 Cor 3:13, 15 or 2 Thess 1:8, it can be strongly argued that the entire biblical teaching regarding the complete annihilation of this existing cosmos at the return of Jesus Christ, a doctrine that is a commonly held belief by many Bible-believing Christians, is completely and solely derived from 2 Pet 3:10–12.

Conclusions

The research discussed in the paper is only a sample of the available writings on this passage of Scripture. Having done extensive research, it is clear that a majority of scholars reviewed by this writer stand on the cosmic renovation side of this debate. A minority opt for annihilation, but the majority argue for renovation. The list of pro-renovation scholars is impressive, including D. Moo, P. H. Davids, H. W. House, D. Lucas, C. Green, G. Green, M. Green, and R. Bauckham among others.⁴⁴ A summary of their theological presentations consists of six main arguments on the behalf of cosmic renovation: (1) the doctrine of redemption—God is a God who saves and redeems; (2) the doctrine of the resurrection—the resurrected body is not a completely new body but is literally a transformed body. The old is changed into the new; (3) Scripture presents an everlasting future for the earth; (4) the judgment of fire is likened to the Noahic judgment of flood waters; (5) Second Peter 3 is in essence the main Scripture used to support a doctrine of annihilation; (6) specifically, the main text used to support annihilation is arguably corrupt and an alternative translation and interpretation supports renovation rather than annihilation. Each of these six points has much scriptural support.

First of all, throughout the entirety of Scripture, God reveals himself as a God of redemption. The living God, the creator of all things, is a God of salvation. He is a God who saves. He is the

44. See Davids, *Theology*; Green and Lucas, *Message of 2 Peter & Jude*; Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*; Green, *2 Peter & Jude*; House, “Creation and Redemption”; Bauckham, *2 Peter and Jude*.

God who takes back his own from the grasp of the enemy. The things that come against his people for the purpose of harm, pain, and suffering are redeemed and used for his good and perfect ways (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28; Ps 68:20). God's purposes are eternal. He repeatedly declared that his creation was good (Gen 1). Satan's plan to disrupt and defeat the word of God indeed brought both man and earth into a fallen state. But just as God redeems fallen man so will he redeem the fallen creation. Satan is a liar. Satan devises plots, plans, and schemes to work against God and his children (2 Cor 2:11; Eph 6:10–18). However, God has prevailed (1 John 3:8b). In addition to saving mankind from their sins, God's plan of redemption also includes renovating the cosmos. The old will be transformed into the new.

The second argument is that of the resurrection. The resurrected body is not a completely new body in the sense that it has been re-created from nothing. It is transformed from the old into the new. In 1 Cor 15, Paul provides the most extensive explanation of the resurrection found anywhere in Scripture. He includes a number of word picture examples, and even mentions the sun, moon, and stars. Before a resurrection must come a death. The old body dies and is buried. It is then raised a new and eternal body. The old is weak and lacks honor. The new is one of glory and power. The context of 1 Cor 15 is to prove the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some were claiming that Jesus had not been resurrected. Paul declares that Christ is indeed alive from the grave and in the same way that Jesus has been resurrected so it is the hope of all believers to also be resurrected from the grave. On that first Easter morning, Mary Magdalene found the tomb empty (John 20:1). Peter and John verified that it was empty (John 20:5–9). It was not empty because someone had taken away the body of Jesus. Rather, it was empty because Jesus was resurrected from the dead. The same body which was placed into that tomb by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus was the same body which came out—only transformed. It was Jesus himself, yet gloriously transformed. It was him. He was able to pass through locked doors (John 20:19) but was clearly recognizable. The disciples were ecstatic when they saw him. They recognized him. A week later, he appeared again to reveal himself to

Thomas. He again passed through locked doors without opening them. It was the same body that hung on the cross because He had the nail scars in his hands and the spear scar in his side. Thomas fell before him and worshipped him. In that resurrected body, Jesus ate fish and honeycomb (Luke 24:42–43). Not only does God redeem the old to use for his divine purposes, he takes the old and transforms it into the new, the eternal. The old is changed from a state of decay and death into a state of immortality and glory. The research considered by this writer shows that the same doctrine can be applied to the cosmos. The old is in a state of corruption and will one day pass away. It will be judged. It will die, so to speak. But it will not be annihilated. It will instead be transformed from the old into the new. The new heavens and the new earth will not be created *ex nihilo*. They will exist as the transformed, renovated, and eternal heavens and earth. The old will pass away and the new will be resurrected.

The third argument is a simple one yet important because it comes from the very lips of Jesus Christ. In the Beatitudes at the opening of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth” (Matt 5:5, NIV). He did not say they would inherit a new earth. He did not say they would inherit another earth. He said they would inherit *the* earth. They will *κληρονομέω* the earth. The word is used eighteen times in the New Testament as it pertains to inheriting eternal life, salvation, and the kingdom of God (e.g., Mark 10:17; Heb 1:14; 1 Cor 15:5). The meek—the children of God—will obtain something that already exists. They will receive a gift. They will be given a blessing. It is reserved for them to inherit at some future date. This is highly consistent with Old Testament theology as seen in the Psalms. It is possible that Jesus had in mind this passage when he spoke in Matt 5:5 (cf. “the meek will inherit the land” [Ps 37:11a, NIV]). The psalmist repeats it several times in Ps 37: “those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land” (v. 9b); “those the Lord blesses will inherit the land.” (v. 22a); “the righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever” (v. 29); “hope in the Lord and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are destroyed, you will see it” (v. 34). It is mentioned five times in this one Psalm and Jesus reiterates it in

the New Testament. The very word “inheritance” carries with it a sense of value. Parents lay up treasure as an inheritance for their children and grandchildren. So, it is that the heavenly Father, the God of creation, has reserved this very earth to be given as a treasure for his children. He places great value on his creation. It is not something to be thrown away. It will never be annihilated. It will be renovated into a state of spectacular grandeur and glory and will be gifted to God’s children. Those who are able to obtain that inheritance are described by Jesus to be *blessed* (Matt 5:5).

The fourth argument draws an analogy between the ancient flood in the days of Noah with that of the coming fiery conflagration Peter so vividly describes. Peter mentions the flood in both 2 Pet 2 and 3. In ch. 2, he is countering the false teachers who are denying the coming judgment. In addition to the judgment of fallen angels and the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, God brought the flood upon the ungodly of Noah’s generation. Peter states that the ancient world was “deluged and destroyed” (3:6, NIV). Although the world was indeed ravaged by the flood, it was not utterly and completely destroyed. It was the ungodly people and their ungodly works that were destroyed. They were judged and perished. It therefore seems logical to make the same application to the coming judgment of fire. God judged the ancient world by water. It was a cataclysmic and traumatic event for the cosmos. However, the cosmos was not annihilated. The flood waters rescinded. Noah and his family came through the flood safely and inherited the earth and lived in a time of great prosperity and blessing. They entered into a new day of covenant with God Almighty. The cosmos after the flood was superior to the one prior to the flood. Likewise, the coming judgment of fire will bring about a literal meltdown to the elements of the cosmos. However, the cosmos will not be annihilated. The fire will burn away the dross and chaff, and a new—renovated—heavens and earth will emerge. It will be a place of beauty and splendor as described by Isaiah (Isa 65) and John (Rev 21–22). God will save his creation. He will redeem his creation, and the redeemed from all nations will enter a new day of living and among other tremendous blessings will inherit the earth.

Fifth, it is extremely significant to recognize that all of the imagery of the world being annihilated by fire is based almost solely on 2 Pet 3:7, 10, and 12. Moo states it quite specifically. He writes, “Peter is the only biblical author explicitly to predict that the universe will be destroyed by fire.”⁴⁵

The sixth argument could technically be considered a continuation of the fifth. Not only is 2 Pet 3 the only biblical text used to support the doctrine of cosmic annihilation by fire, the translation of *κατακαήσεται* as “shall be burned up” (KJV and ASV) has been challenged by many reputable scholars including several as documented in this paper. Wallace states that the “earliest and best”⁴⁶ manuscripts read *εὔρεθήσεται* which is rendered “will be laid bare” (NIV, NET). At a glance, this seems difficult to understand. However, once the “burning up” of the cosmos has been placed to the side and a contextual consideration of “will be laid bare” is compared with other New Testament texts, it provides a solid framework to best envision the nature of the coming judgment.

As noted herein by Bauckham, Moo, Green, and others, the fire spoken of by Peter in 2 Pet 3:7–13 will burn away all of man’s works, devices, lies, and hiding places. Every deed and work of humanity will be laid bare before the living God. This imagery is born out in a number of other scriptural passages. For example, John says, “The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire” (Rev 1:14, NIV; see also 19:12). Daniel gives the same description: “His body was like topaz, his face like lightening, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude” (Dan 10:6, NIV). His eyes are fiery. His gaze will burn through the temporal and reveal the eternal. Man’s true deeds and motives will be exposed. No one will be able to hide anything from his eyes of fire. John says, in Rev 16:15, “Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed” (NIV; cf. Heb 4:13). Once his

45. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 200.

46. Wallace, “Brief Note” (blog), Nov 17, 2020.

fiery examination burns away the temporal, the Lord himself will likewise be visible to all of humanity. Transparency goes both ways. They will be struck with fear beyond measure (Rev 1:7; 6:16–17). Because his eyes will see literally everything, there will be no place to hide.

What Kind of People Ought You to Be?

Whether the cosmos is annihilated and re-created *ex nihilo* or instead thoroughly renovated as this paper has researched and so concluded, a more pressing and relevant truth to everyone is as follows: “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Heb 9:27, NKJV). Everyone is going to have a day of judgment, whether it is today or at the event described in 2 Pet 3. Billions have already lived and died. Eternity hangs in the balance. Hence, Peter himself continued in this dramatic passage with the following words of exhortation. In light of this pending cataclysmic event and the certainty of coming face to face with the God of creation, “what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God” (2 Pet 3:11b–12a, NIV). Jesus Christ will return in power and great glory. It *will* happen. In keeping with his promise, “we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells” (v. 13b, NIV). People can debate how the new heavens and new earth will come into being, but they cannot dispute their reality. It is certain. They will arrive. After two such admonishments (vv. 11–13), Peter gives a third. In light of the fact that the people of God are looking forward to the new heaven and new earth, they should “make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him” (v. 14b, NIV).

This passage of Scripture (2 Pet 3) may arguably be the only supporting text for the destruction of the cosmos by fire. But it is certainly not the only passage that warns people to prepare for a future day of judgment. God will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and expose the true motives of the heart (1 Cor 4:5). We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the things we have done here on earth, whether good

or bad (2 Cor 5:10). God has set a day when he will judge the world with true justice (Acts 17:31). Everyone will give an account on the day of judgment (Matt 12:36). There will be a day when God judges the secret of men's hearts through Jesus Christ (Rom 2:16). Revelation 20:11–15 gives a vivid account of the great white throne judgment. Peter, Paul, and John warned of the coming judgment. But none are more sobering than the words of our Lord Jesus Christ as he preached to his followers as well as the masses of his day: "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." (Mark 13:37, KJV).

Bibliography

Bauckham, Richard J. *2 Peter and Jude*. WBC 50. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1983.

"The Biden Plan for a Clean Energy Revolution and Environmental Justice." (Oct 2020). Online:
<https://htv-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/files/bidenclimateplan-1559610636.pdf>.

Davids, Peter H. *A Theology of James, Peter and Jude*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.

Green, Christopher, and Dick Lucas. *The Message of 2 Peter & Jude*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995.

Green, Gene L. *Jude & 2 Peter*. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

Green, Michael. *2 Peter & Jude*. TNTC. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1987.

Heide, Gale Z. "What Is New about the New Heaven and the New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 And 2 Peter 3." *JETS* 40 (1997) 37–56.

House, H. Wayne. "Creation and Redemption: A Study of Kingdom Interplay." *JETS* 35 (1992) 3–17.

Kreider, Glenn R. "The Flood Is as Bad as It Gets: Never Again Will God Destroy the Earth." *Bibliotheca sacra* 171 (2014) 418–39.

Metzger, Bruce J. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Biblegesellschaft, 2005.

Moo, Douglas J. *2 Peter, Jude*. NIVAC. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Moo, Jonathan. "Continuity, Discontinuity, and Hope: The Contribution of New Testament Eschatology to a Distinctively Christian Environmental Ethos." *TynBul* 61 (2010) 21–44.

Morris, Henry M. "The Power of the Word." *Bibliotheca sacra* 116 (1959) 51–66.

Overstreet, R. Larry. "A Study of 2 Peter 3:10–13." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137 (1980) 354–71.

Silver, Jesse Forrest. *The Lord's Return*. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1914.

Wallace, Daniel B. "A Brief Note on a Textual Problem in 2 Peter 3:10." *Bible.org*, Nov 17, 2020.
<https://bible.org/article/brief-note-textual-problem-2-peter-310>.

Walvoord, John F. "The Prophetic Context of the Millennium Part III: The Second Coming of Christ in the New Testament." *Bibliotheca sacra* 114 (1957) 193–200.