THE ELEMENTS SHALL BE DISSOLVED (2 Peter 3:10)

Prologue:

This article is not dealing with all the judgments that are said to occur, it is dealing in particular with one verse that many claim the elements that Peter is writing of are the literal heavens and the earth, which many believe, and teach will be destroyed (annihilated).

I believe God created the heavens and the earth, and when they were created God said “It is Good”. He also did not create them to be uninhabited. Nor did He create the earth, which is His footstool, or the heavens, which is His throne (Isaiah 66:1), to annihilate them, leaving absolutely no trace of their existence. He, will, purge them of all the elements that have drawn humankind away from Him, by His righteous fire. It will be a shaking (not literal).

Several prophecies have been written (and some have been fulfilled) about God shaking the heavens and the earth.

Haggai wrote of a time when:

“For thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord of hosts. The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,’ declares the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the Lord of hosts.” (Haggai 2:6-9)

We also read of something similar after the shaking in Revelation 21:22-24, which will occur on the new earth:

“And a temple I did not perceive in it, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lambkin. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon, that they should be appearing in it, for the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lambkin. And the nations shall be walking by means of its light, and the kings of the earth are carrying their glory into it.”

I believe God’s process that brings about the New Heavens and Earth, are the elimination of certain elements that prevent every man and woman (all His creation) from truly realizing God’s love, Who God is, and what He through His Son Christ Jesus have accomplished for all, and once these elements are destroyed (dissolved) that hinder us all, all will know Him, and God will be All in all.

OBLITERATED OR CLEANSED

There is a teaching throughout Christendom that would have us believe that God is going to destroy this planet, totally obliterate it into a vapor, and at the same time He is going to do the same to the heavens. Here are a few of the verses used to prove this teaching:

“Now the day of the Lord will be arriving as a thief, in which the heavens shall be passing by with a booming noise, yet the elements shall be dissolved by combustion, and the earth and the works in it shall be found.” (2 Peter 3:10)

As well as this verse from Zephaniah:

“Therefore wait for Me,” declares the Lord, for the day when I rise up as a witness.  
Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.” (Zephaniah 3:8)

And from the Gospel Accounts:

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33)

Here are a few verses that say the opposite:

“A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever (eonian).” (Ecclesiastes 1:4)

“He hath founded earth on its bases, It is not moved to the age and for ever. (Psalm 104:5 Young’s Literal Translation)

“He has founded the earth on its bases, it shall never slip for the eon and further” (Psalm 104:5 CLOT)

“He has founded the earth on its bases, it will never glide eonian and for witnessing time.” (Psalm 104:5 Dabhar Translation)

“And He built His Sanctuary like the heights of heaven, like the earth that He founded for the eon.” (Psalm 78:69 CLOT)

“And He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He has founded forever.” (Psalm 78:69 NASB)

So what is it, will it all be obliterated, or will all be preserved?

GONE!......REALLY?

“And I perceived a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth pass away.” (Revelation 21:1)

How do we get to this new heaven and new earth?

What has to happen in order for that era (age-eon) to commence?

Will the earth now, and the heavens now, both simply be obliterated to make way for the new heavens and earth?

What happens to all the inhabitants on the earth, and above the earth, when this event is said to occur?

Also, there are many that believe in a literal Lake Of Fire, and those who are cast into the Lake Of Fire are there for eternity, or are annihilated, either permanently, or, until the consummation of time (the eons). So, is the Lake Of Fire the only thing that God does not annihilate, because when we read Revelation 21:5-8, 24-27, 22:12-15, it is still in operation on the New Earth.

The verse that ignited the fuse among Christendom, that the earth and the heavens are going to be obliterated, comes from 2 Peter 3:10. Here is how it is quoted to prove that all is obliterated:

“Now the day of the Lord will be arriving as a thief, in which the heavens shall be passing by with a booming noise, yet the elements shall be dissolved by combustion, and the earth.” Here is where most stop quoting. The last part of the verse is ignored by those who are trying to prove this teaching. Here is the rest of the verse:

“and the works in it shall be found.”

This, I believe, is one of the gateway verses that leads us to and into the New Heavens and New Earth, not the obliteration of both, but one of the steps that are necessary for the time of the New Earth and New Heavens to commence (the first step being the annihilation of death and the unseen). This verse, from Second Peter, can be placed with John’s concerning the Great White Throne Judgment. When it is placed with John’s verses from Revelation we can notice the similarities:

“And I perceived a great white throne, and Him Who is sitting upon it, from Whose face earth and heaven fled, and no place was found for them. And I perceived the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. And scrolls were opened. And another scroll was opened which is the scroll of life. And the dead were judged by that which is written in the scrolls in accord with their acts….Now the day of the Lord will be arriving as a thief, in which the heavens shall be passing by with a booming noise, yet the elements shall be dissolved by combustion, and the earth and the works in it shall be found” (Revelation 20:11,12, 2 Peter 3:10)

That the verse from second Peter is after the millennium, and not at the beginning are made clear by the fact that there is no judgment of all unbelieving mankind until after the millennium, at the Great White Throne, and after, where the “judging begins”. And we read, once again from John in Revelation, a short prelude of what we read from Second Peter concerning the earth and the heavens: From John: “From whose face earth and heaven fled”; From Peter: “The heavens shall be passing with a booming noise yet the elements shall be dissolved by combustion, and the earth and the works in them shall be found.”

So now we have to answer the questions:

How can any works (acts) “in” the earth be found and dissolved if the earth and the heavens are gone?

And what are these elements that Peter is telling his readers will be dissolved?

WHERE ARE THESE ELEMENTS THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK OF FOUND

Once we leave the pages of scripture to come to conclusions, we can find ourselves in a maze of false assumptions and conclusions, predictions, and absolute confusion. I am one who believes scripture answers scripture, that is where the secrets hid in them are found.

Peter says this as well at the beginning of his epistle:

“And we are having the prophetic word more confirmed, which you, doing ideally, are heeding (as to a lamp appearing in a dingy place, till the day should be breaking and the morning star should be rising) in your hearts, knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture at all is becoming its own explanation. For not by the will of man was prophecy carried on at any time, but, being carried on by holy spirit, holy men of God speak (*and wrote of* ; emphasis mine)”

(2 Peter 1:19-21)

John says something similar in First John:

“And the anointing which you obtained from Him is remaining in you, and you have no need that anyone may be teaching you, but as His anointing is teaching you concerning all, and is true, and is no lie, according as it teaches you also, remain in Him.”

(1 John 2:27)

And of course Paul has something to say concerning this as well:

“Now we obtained, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may be perceiving that which is being graciously given to us by God, which we are speaking also, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words.” (1 Corinthians 2:12,13)

Jesus too:

“Search the scriptures, for in them you are supposing you have life eonian, and those are they which are testifying concerning Me.” (John 5:39)

So with these verses in mind, let’s see if the scriptures can help us understand just what Peter is saying, concerning these elements that are going to be dissolved, and are these elements the elements that make up the earth, or the abundance of elements that make up the heavens (Universe?), or are they something else.

We get the answer from Paul.

WHEN UNCERTAIN GO TO PAUL, BECAUSE:

“Which was granted to me to for you, to complete the word of God” (Colossians 2:25)

There are several elements that must be dissolved, and not one of them has to do with the literal earth, or heavens, they will stay intact. These elements include philosophies, principles, false teachings and god’s, as well as the rudiments of belief.

Paul writes in Galatians:

“Thus we also, when we were minors, were enslaved under the elements of the world.”

(Galatians 4:3)

These would be the elements (governing rules) that enslave us to the world and its system. Although we are children of God, we are subject to these rules.

Until He comes, and frees us from all other authority, we remain enslaved under these elements of the world, and when He comes then our true place alongside Christ will be realized.

Paul next tells us:

“Yet now, knowing God, yet rather being known by God, how are you turning back again to the infirm and poor elements for which you want to slave again anew?” (Galatians 4:9)

I believe Paul corrects himself here. He says “Yet knowing God”, then he says “yet rather being known by God,” and tells of their turning back to the infirm and poor elements, like one would do who does not know God.

False religious beliefs, their gods, as well as the law, have plagued most of Christendom ever since the time of its conception. All of the Apostles had to warn the believers of these dangers, dangers that have constantly been a threat to every believer since the evangel of grace went forth. Paul once again tells us this is so:

“But then, indeed, having no perception of God, you were slaves of those who, by nature, are not gods. Yet now, knowing God, yet rather being known by God, how are you turning back again to the infirm and poor elements for which you want to slave again anew? Days are you scrutinizing, and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, lest somehow I have toiled for you feignedly.” (Galatians 4:8-11)

Religious traditional practices (elements) are one way that religion has kept those who have a desire to know God distracted from their pursuit. Instead they are kept busy with ministries and traditions, that keep them out of the scriptures, never being able to come to a realization of the truth, that Christ may be formed in them (Galatians 4:19)

Now, Paul in Colossians tells us:

“Beware that no one shall be despoiling you through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, in accord with the elements of the world, and not in accord with Christ” (Colossians 2:8)

Human philosophy has so permeated Christendom that it now trumps scripture, for many, as the truth. Promises that are not even in the scriptures are said to be yours. Riches, material wealth, health, every seduction of the material world is yours, and all you have to do is believe it, name it, and then claim it. The line between Mediums, Channeler’s, and Pastor’s has become blurred in many congregations. It is true, God does want what is best for all, but often times what we think is best has absolutely nothing to do what God knows is best for all, and it often has nothing to do with material possessions.

In the same chapter Paul once again warns the believer of false teachings, decrees, philosophies, which are the elements of the world.

“If, then, you died together with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as living in the world, are you subject to decrees.” (Colossians 2:20)

Paul goes on to say:

“You should not be touching, nor yet tasting, nor yet coming into contact, (which things are all for corruption from use), in accord with the directions and teachings (*elements; emphasis mine*) of men? -- which are (having, indeed, an expression of wisdom in a willful ritual and humility and asceticism) not of any value toward the surfeiting of the flesh”. (Colossians 2:21-23)

THE RUDIMENTARY ELEMENTS OF GOD

This element is, by far, the one element that is the hardest to move through for most who name Christ as their Saviour. Paul, here, in Hebrews says:

“For when also, because of the time, you ought to be teachers, you have need again of one to teach you what are the rudimentary elements of the oracles of God, and you have come to have need of milk, and not of solid nourishment.” (Hebrews 5:12)

In order to mature in Christ, one has to get past the starting line. Here Paul tells the believer the rudimentary teachings of the word are another element that must be left behind in order to come to maturity.

Unfortunately the rudimentary elements of the oracles of God are not realized as an element that can hinder a believers growth in Christ. It is many peoples comfort zone. It requires no work, just sit, listen, follow and do. But, Paul tells us something different:

“Wherefore, leaving the word dealing with the rudiments of Christ, we should be brought on to maturity” (Hebrews 6:1)

All these elements are what Peter is writing about when he says:

“Now the day of the Lord will be arriving as a thief, in which the heavens shall be passing by with a booming noise, yet the elements shall be dissolved by combustion, and the earth and the works in it shall be found.” (2 Peter 3:10)

Peter is not speaking of the total annihilation of heaven and earth, he (and Paul and John) are speaking of the annihilation of every element that keeps us from coming to a complete and full understanding of God and Christ.

THIS HOUSE WILL BE DEMOLISHED

The body we now have is our worst adversary. It will lead us down so many paths that the only way we are told it can be stopped is by its being demolished. Paul promises:

“For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian, in the heavens.”

(2 Corinthians 5:1)

This terrestrial house must be demolished, because only then will we be complete in the Image we are created in. At present we are moving in that direction, but not until this mortal puts on immortality, and this corruption puts on incorruption will it be realized. These body elements must be demolished:

“It is sown in corruption; it is roused in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is roused in glory. It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power. It is sown a soulish body; it is roused a spiritual body. If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also.” (1 Corinthians 15:42-44)

A WHOLE LOTTA SHAKEN

How will this all happen?

It won’t happen by God destroying the planet and the heavens, which I assume is believed to be the entire universe. Both Paul and Peter tell us this. First Paul:

“Yet now He has promised, saying, still once more shall I be quaking, not only the earth, but heaven also, as of that having been made, that what is not being shaken should be remaining.” (Hebrew 12:26)

And Peter:

“Yet the heavens now, and the earth, by the same word, are stored with fire, being kept for the day of the judging and destruction of irreverent humans.” (2 Peter 3:7)

In Paul’s account of this shaking, he tells us something that most do not quote:

“That what is not being shaken should be remaining.”

How could anything be remaining if all is destroyed? As with Peter, Paul is telling us that it is not the material elements that are destroyed, it is the things that keep us from coming to the full knowledge of God and Christ. Those are the elements that need to be, and eventually are destroyed (dissolved). That the Lake of Fire is still in operation on the New Earth (Revelation 21:5-8, 24-27, 22:15), tells us even though the elements that have caused deception have been annihilated, the effects still linger, and must be purged before God will be All to all. As Peter tells, it is the destruction (not annihilation) of irreverent humans. It is their irreverence towards God that is being destroyed, as it is now in the believer. When this shaking, and fire (not literal fire, God’s fire; Hebrews 12:29, Mark 9:49) process has finished, its purpose will be realized, it will have dissolved all these elements that hinder all.

So we can see the elements that have deceived, and are deceiving all, and held all under their subjection in one way or another, will one day be no more. That is what Peter, as well as John are saying, and Paul verified.

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