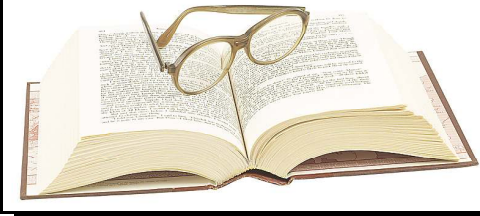


## MESSAGES FROM WAYNE'S STUDY



### Was Peter an Astrophysicist?

#0002

You may think this is an absurd question until you read today's study. Let us begin with the Scripture, always the best place to start!

***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. 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. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved,***

***what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 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? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.***

2 Peter 3:9-13 (NKJV)

As far as I am concerned, Peter has the most remarkable prophecy here in the entire Bible. It is remarkable in that Peter, who was not an astrophysicist, described the passing away of the present heaven and earth with the most accurate terms imaginable!

So now, looking at what Peter has to say, we will start with the word στοιχείων (stoicheion) which is translated "elements." These are the "ABC's" of a thing. Peter did not know about electrons and protons, etc. but men in his age did believe that if you divided something up enough times, you would reach a point where it could no longer be subdivided - an atom<sup>1</sup>, the ABC's of the universe. You probably studied the στοιχείων (stoicheion) if you took a course in chemistry.

What does Peter say will happen to these? He uses the word λύω (luo) = "will be destroyed." The word, in this form is used only here and in Revelation where it is better translated "released" (Rev. 20:7). You have all, at one time another (via photos and movies) seen the elements being "unloosed," split apart with a tremendous force and a mushroom cloud. How will the elements be "unloosed?" Peter uses, καυσώ (kausoo) = "a burning up." This word is used only here and in verse 12. It is used in medical writing of a person with a "burning fever." Suffice it to say, it refers to an intense heat. I have been told by people who have personally witnessed a nuclear explosion that, first there is a brilliant flash and, then, almost immediately, a tremendous heat wave passes over you. This is certainly an accurate description of a nuclear holocaust.

Let us back up a few words now. "The heavens will pass away with a great noise," ροιζηδόν (rhoizedon) = "Great noise" is a word that is only here in the New Testament. It is a "whizzing sound of rapid motion through the air like the flight of a bird, thunder, fierce flame" (Robertson) If a nuclear blast makes such a horrific sound, what kind of noise will result from the entire Universe being undone! I suppose, if you wish to get technical, you would say "none - does a tree make a sound when it falls in the woods and no one is around?" I will not undertake to answer that!

Next, "both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up" Two words are difficulty here. One is ἔργον (ergon) = "works" and the other is εὕρισκω (huerisko) = "will be found out"? Or "be burned up"? Or what? Its meaning is not clear. I would translate the first word as "inner workings." Then it would easily follow that they would be "discovered." Just as removing the case from a clock reveals its "works", the undoing of the earth will reveal all of its inner parts.

Peter ranks well with the astrophysicists in his description of the end of the present heavens and earth - **but he wrote his description nearly 2000 years ago!** Only by being led of the Spirit could he have done that!

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<sup>1</sup> ατόμος (atomos), "moment" in 1 Co. 15:52, the smallest time division possible