
RYAN P. JUZA
ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

This study proposes that the writer of 2 Peter has echoed the narrative tradition of Sodom and Gomorrah in 2 Pet 3:7–13. After their destruction in Gen 18–19, these cities were developed in subsequent literature into archetypes of wickedness and judgment and eventually were applied eschatologically to the day of the Lord. The writer signals his use of Sodom and Gomorrah as a prototype for God’s eschatological judgment and salvation of the cosmos in 2:6–8. Numerous corresponding words, phrases, and themes demonstrate the echo and provide fresh insights into many of the vexing questions associated with 2 Pet 3:7–13.

Key Words: 2 Peter 3, Sodom and Gomorrah, intertextual echo, judgment, salvation, cosmos, typology

INTRODUCTION

The issues presented by 2 Pet 3:7–13 have generally raised more questions than answers. How does Peter’s response to the mockers (3:5–10) relate to their objection? Does Peter intend the account of the flood (3:6) to be seen as parallel to the “day of judgment” (3:7)? How has Peter employed Ps 90:4 in his response to the mockers (3:8)? What is the meaning of στοιχεῖα (3:10c)? Does the best reading of 3:10d include εὑρεθήσεται, given the multiple variants and proposed emendations? What does it mean to be “waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God” (3:12)? How are we to understand Peter’s vision of “a new heavens and a new earth” (3:13)? What is the relationship between cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology in these verses?

Looking at the history of interpretation, the majority of scholars base their answers to many of these questions on a conceptual framework that lies behind the text. Two routes are normally taken. The majority of

1. I will use Peter to identify the implied writer. The issue of authorship remains an open question.
scholars argue that Peter was dependent on various Jewish apocalyptic ideas. Others have disagreed and suggest instead that Peter was harnessing the well-known philosophical ideas of the Stoics. While there is a growing consensus that the ideas do not have to be mutually exclusive, a brief glance at several commentators reveals that most still feel compelled to choose one over the other. Further complicating the matter is that neither conceptual framework (as currently advocated) seems able to provide thoroughly convincing answers to many of the interpretive questions associated with 3:7–13. Overall, 2 Pet 3:7–13 remains an elusive text. The theme of the passage seems clear enough (eschatological salvation and judgment), but from where does the writer draw his ideas?

I would like to offer a new solution to this question, namely, that Peter echoes the narrative tradition of Sodom and Gomorrah (S & G) in 2 Pet 3:7–13. In other words, the catastrophic events depicted in 3:7–13 are best understood in light of God’s historical judgment against S & G, a judgment that the writer universalizes in scope to encompass the entire cosmos and applies eschatologically to the day of the Lord. This proposal is based on three arguments. (1) By the time 2 Peter was written, the tradition of S & G had developed into an archetypal story for eschatological judgment associated with the day of the Lord. (2) The contextual evidence from within 2 Peter itself points to the story of S & G as the primary conceptual framework behind 3:7–13. (3) The writer of 2 Peter uses a number of key terms, phases, and themes that correspond to essential components of the S & G tradition. Together, these three arguments offer compelling evidence that the story of S & G provides the best conceptual framework for understanding the language and imagery of 2 Pet 3:7–13.

**THE TRADITION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH**

Genesis 18:16–19:29 presents the dramatic story of God’s salvation and judgment in S & G. The tradition was continually developed in the rest


5. Overall, this thesis still locates 2 Pet 3:7–13 within the realm of Jewish apocalyptic thought but focuses it on a specific tradition, thus offering a more precise identification of the conceptual framework behind the text.
of the OT and other Jewish literature into a prototypical example of two themes that appear in 2 Peter. First, S & G came to be seen as a prototype of divine judgment. Weston Fields explains that S & G was a model of judgment as (1) coming suddenly and in spectacular fashion, (2) being utterly devastating, and (3) being perpetual in nature. For example, Lam 4:6 recounts that Sodom “was overthrown in a moment,” and Zeph 2:9 proclaims, “Moab shall become like Sodom and the Ammonites like Gomorrah, a land possessed by nettles and salt pits, and a waste forever.” Second, S & G became known as archetypes of wickedness, which were characterized by (1) arrogance and inhospitality and (2) sexual impropriety. Comparing the wickedness of Jerusalem to Sodom, Ezekiel writes, “This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy” (16:49). Other texts reference S & G’s “promiscuity” (T. Benj. 9:1) and “fornication” (Jub. 20:5).

Developing these themes, the writers of the NT began using elements of S & G’s story in eschatological settings. The cities are mentioned in contexts related to “the day of judgment” as models of wickedness. For example, Jesus says in Matt 10:15, “Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town” (cf. Matt 11:23–24; Luke 10:12). Another example is Luke 17:28–30, which states, “Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all of them—it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.” An important aspect of this passage is that Luke 17:20–37 compares the “day” of the Son of Man with the judgments in the “days” of Noah (water) and Lot (fire). Reference to judgment by water and fire was a familiar pattern for talking about eschatological judgment during this period (cf. Wis 10:4–7; 3 Macc. 2:4–5; T. Naph. 3:4–5; L.A.E. 49:3). Thus, the writer of 2 Peter was working with an established conceptual framework when he invoked the twofold pattern (2:5–8; 3:6–13).

Summing up, the story of S & G was a well-known narrative that developed its own tradition in subsequent literature. It was understood as a...
prototype for divine judgment of the ungodly, and by the time of the NT it was being used eschatologically. Thus, an eschatological judgment utilizing elements of the S & G tradition was an established idea prior to 2 Peter.

**Contextual Evidence: 2 Peter 2:4–9 and 3:6–13**

2 Peter 3:6–13 is not the first text in 2 Peter to mention a twofold judgment by means of water and fire. It reinforces a sequence already outlined in 2:5–8. Even though Peter does not mention S & G in 3:7–13, its position following a reference to the flood in 3:6 makes it highly probable. Even a majority of commentators attest to this connection. However, no one carries the allusion to S & G any further than 3:7, which I think requires careful reconsideration.

In 2 Pet 2:4–9, the writer documents three historical instances of God’s judgment and salvation in order to provide proof that God knows how to “rescue” the righteous and “keep” the ungodly for eschatological judgment. First, Peter indicates that the “angels who sinned” have experienced only a partial sentence (2:4). Thus, he emphasizes the *incomplete* nature of their judgment, because they were imprisoned but “are being kept” for the future. As a result, it is highly probable that their *final* judgment will factor into Peter’s depiction of the day of the Lord in 3:7–13. However, Peter makes no attempt to relate the two events any more than this, which suggests that the final judgment of fallen angels is not a controlling narrative for interpreting 2 Pet 3:7–13 as a whole.

The second historical example is the flood (2:5). Peter emphasizes its *past* and *comprehensive* nature by highlighting God’s acts of salvation and judgment on the “ancient world.” These characteristics are reemphasized in 3:6 when Peter sets apart the flood as having happened to “the then-existing world” (ὁ τότε κόσμος). Peter wants to be clear that the flood belongs to the past (likely because of God’s covenant not to repeat it; see Gen 9:8–17). However, he also indicates through the parallelism of 3:5–6 and 3:7 that the flood is a strong *analogy* for eschatological judgment (the points of contact being: initiation by God’s word, universal scope, and destructive outcome). Despite this, the flood does not rise to the level of correspondence in 2 Peter necessary to justify calling it a *type*.

12. It is generally agreed that these angels are the “watchers” (cf. Jude 6; Gen 6:1–4; 1 En. 6–21).
13. “Ancient” is fronted in word order, and “world” is repeated to stress all-inclusive scope.
14. The reason the flood is only considered an *analogy* and not a *type* (like S & G) is the level of correspondence between the stories and 2 Pet 3:7–13. The flood is certainly meant to be seen as a comparable event, but it is not the *source* of the fiery imagery. The *pattern* of judgment and salvation *by fire* is provided by S & G. On the development of the flood tradition, see Jack P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1978).
Peter’s third historical example is S & G (2:6–8). By elaborating on this example more than the others, Peter demonstrates his primary concern with this particular instance of God’s judgment and salvation. He comments on the devastating nature of its fiery destruction as an example (2:6), on how God rescued the righteous man Lot (2:7), and on the torment experienced by Lot as a result of witnessing the ungodly behavior of those around him (2:8). By highlighting these features, Peter underscores S & G’s present and typological nature. By describing the circumstances of his readers as similar to Lot’s (2:7–9), Peter applies the S & G story to the present situation. Furthermore, it is the “present” (νῦν) cosmos that is reserved for “fire” (3:7).

Sodom and Gomorrah’s typological nature is underscored in 2:6, “by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, he condemned them to ruin, having set them as an example of what is coming to the ungodly” (πόλεις Σοδόμων καὶ Γομόρρας τεφρώσας κατέκρινεν ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων ἁσεβέσιν τεθεικός). The key word for our purposes is ὑπόδειγμα (“example, model, pattern”), which has typological connotations. In Jude 7, the people of S & G were an “example/sample” (δείγμα) of those who experienced judgment because of ungodly behavior. However, Peter has strengthened Jude’s δείγμα to ὑπόδειγμα, increasing its typological probability by making it an explicit warning about the kind of judgment to come on the ungodly. The content of the “example” is the fiery destruction that befell the cities, which “turned them to ashes.” Thus, for Peter, God’s judgment of S & G set a precedent and pattern for his eschatological judgment against the ungodly.

In summary, the three examples of God’s judgment and salvation in 2 Pet 2:4–9 inform our understanding of 3:7–13. Eschatological judgment for Peter will involve the final judgment of sinful angels, it will be analogous

15. 2 Peter’s emphasis on S & G is also seen in its expansion of Jude 7.
16. I take “typology” to be a form of intertextuality. It is a “figure of speech” that illustrates one textual event / person in terms of another by correspondence between the two. The first textual event / person signifies itself and the second, and the second encompasses or fulfills the first. Thus, it resists becoming allegorical by maintaining the integrity of each textual event / person in the divine narrative. See Frances M. Young, “Typology,” in Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder (ed. Stanley E. Porter, Paul Joyce, and David E. Orton; BIS 8; New York: Brill, 1994) 29–48; also Michael A. Fishbane, Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) 350–79.
17. Cf. 3 Macc 2:5; Jub. 16:6. There are also two textual issues here. First, the presence / absence of καταστροφή does not have much bearing on our argument. Second, it is more likely that ἁσεβές (“to the ungodly”) is original as opposed to ἁσεβεῖν (“to act ungodly”). While the external evidence is evenly divided, it makes more sense grammatically that a copyist changed a noun to an infinitive following μελλόντων than the reverse. In addition, ἁσεβεῖν makes better sense contextually. See Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1975) 702; Bauckham, 2 Peter, 245; Davids, 2 Peter, 229.
20. See Fornberg, Early Church, 43; G. Green, 2 Peter, 257.
to the flood, and it will follow the pattern of S & G’s fiery destruction. However, given Peter’s primary concern in 2:4–9 to illustrate the details of S & G and his deliberate typological reference to the event, S & G provides the most compelling category for understanding 3:7–13 (while keeping in mind the contributions of the other two stories). The twofold judgment by water and fire in 2 Pet 2:5–8 leads to the same sequence in 3:6–13. Thus, the contextual evidence strongly suggests that S & G is Peter’s primary model for eschatological judgment by fire in 3:7–13. By implication, this contextual evidence undermines any speculation of a Stoic framework behind 3:7–13 (or at least demonstrates that it should be considered secondary in nature). In addition, it gives us a benchmark for evaluating the numerous possible Jewish apocalyptic parallels associated with 3:7–13.

**Echoes of Sodom and Gomorrah in 2 Peter 3:7–13**

We can now examine the echoes themselves. In comparing 2 Pet 3:7–13 with Gen 18:16–19:29 (and other texts that develop the tradition), we will find overlap among a variety of vocabulary and themes. This is not to suggest that 2 Pet 3:7–13 is literally dependent on any of these texts (although there may be some of these instances). The argument is that Peter was using the S & G story, a well-known and developed tradition in his day. In other words, Peter was not consulting other texts as he wrote. Instead, he was drawing on the familiar tradition of S & G and developing it for his own purposes. Parallels, then, will be shown to illustrate comparable lines of thought and similar uses of vocabulary (not to establish literary dependence). Somewhat surprisingly, several of the passages we will consider have already been suggested by others as lying behind portions of 3:7–13. What I intend to demonstrate is that S & G is the conceptual framework that joins these parallels together and that this has escaped the notice of other interpreters. Finally, our focus on S & G does not rule out the contributions of other storylines to 3:7–13. Each is useful in understanding parts of 3:7–13, but S & G is the storyline that holds the entire passage together. We will proceed verse by verse.

**Reserved for Fire (2 Peter 3:7)**

As previously noted, most commentators see a reference to S & G in 3:7 because of the movement from water in 3:5–6 to fire. However, it is also worth noting that there is additional evidence that directs our attention to S & G. Peter writes that the present heavens and earth “have been stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly humanity” (τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσὶν πυρί τηρούμενοι εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως καὶ ἀπωλείας

21 Peter could easily weave traditions together. This is clear from his use of the watchers (1 En. 10:6, 13; 21:1–3), the flood (Matt 24:36–51; 1 Pet 3:20), and the language of new creation (Isa 65:17; 66:22). Merging these stories together in eschatological contexts was common practice (cf. Ezek 38:22; Sir 16:6–8; T. Naph. 3:4–5; Sib. Or. 3:689–91).
Deuteronomy 32:34 is repeatedly cited by scholars as the likely source of Peter’s “storing” language. Often overlooked is that Deut 32:32–35 likens Israel's enemies to S & G, whose wicked deeds are gathered and sealed in God's “storehouse” (θησαυρός) until the appointed time, “the day of their destruction” (ἡμέρα ἀπωλείας αὐτῶν). Furthermore, we have already mentioned that “the day of judgment” (ἡμέρα κρίσεως) appears in the Gospels in conjunction with S & G (Matt 10:15; 11:23–24; cf. Isa 34:8–10), and two obvious, although general, echoes are references to the “ungodly” (ἀσεβής; 2 Pet 2:5–6; Gen 18:23, 25), and “fire” (πῦρ; Gen 19:24).

Drawing on the analogy of the flood, Peter has universalized the scope of S & G's judgment to include the entire cosmos. Every wicked being who resides within it will be subject, including the fallen angels of 2:4 given the verbal link of “being kept” (τηρέω; cf. 2:4, 9, 17; 3:7).

**God's Perspective of Time (2 Peter 3:8)**

In 3:8–10, Peter responds to the assertion that God’s delay is a reason to question his promised return (3:4a). Peter appeals directly to his readers and quotes Ps 90:4 (89:4 LXX) in his own words to communicate that God and humanity have very different conceptions of time. What humanity may consider to be an exceedingly long amount of time may in fact be extremely short to God. The issue is perspective. Peter suggests that the mockers were viewing delay from a human perspective. However, if time were viewed from God’s perspective, there would be no problem of delay. Even though Peter does not echo S & G in 3:8, we will see that God’s nature and perspective are key aspects of the story.

**God's Patience and Mercy in Order to Save (2 Peter 3:9)**

Peter continues his response in 3:9a, “The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness” (οὐ βραδύνει κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ὡς τινες βραδύτητα ἠγούνται). Even if delay is granted, Peter charges the mockers with drawing a faulty conclusion. They interpreted delay to imply that God would not fulfill his promise, thus questioning his character and sovereignty. The majority of interpreters consider Peter dependent on Hab 2:3, which seems likely. Also sharing similar language is Isa 13:19–22, which

22. Bauckham, _2 Peter_, 300–301; M. Green, _2 Peter_, 144. Both Davids ( _2 Peter_, 272) and Neyrey ( _2 Peter_, 234–35) prefer to emphasize Philo’s reflection on Deut 32 in _Leg_. 3.104–6, which also includes a reference to God allowing an opportunity for “repentance” (cf. 2 Pet 3:9b).

23. The parallelism of “storing” is not exact. However, God gathering up evil deeds in his “storehouse” can be understood in tandem with him “storing up” his wrath.

24. Some took Ps 90:4 literally ( _Barn_. 15:4; Justin, _Dial_. 81; Irenaeus, _Adv. Haer_. 5.28.3). However, this does not make sense in the context of Peter’s argument.

25. Hab 2:3 LXX uses the word “delay” (χρονίζω), but Aquila’s version has “slow” (βραδοῦνα). Those citing this verse include Bauckham, _2 Peter_, 310–11; Davids, _2 Peter_, 278; Donelson, _II Peter_, 274; G. Green, _2 Peter_, 326; M. Green, _2 Peter_, 148; Thomas R. Schreiner, _1, 2 Peter, Jude_ (NAC 37; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003) 380; Vögtle, _2. Petrusbrief_, 231–33.
depicts the day of the Lord against Babylon, comparing its judgment to S & G with the assurance that it will not “delay” (χρονίζω).26

Peter offers his own reasons why God appears to be delayed in 3:9b: “He is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance” (μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ὑμᾶς, μὴ βουλόμενος τινς ἀπολέσθαι ἄλλα πάντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι). God has delayed because of his character and his purposes for the world. His disposition toward humanity is one of patience, expressing mercy because his motivation is salvation grounded in repentance. There is room here to view 1 Pet 3:20 as contributing to Peter’s thought as God exercised patience by delaying judgment against the watchers in order to save Noah.27 However, the tradition of S & G yields the same themes and appears to fit Peter’s argument even more.

God’s patience and mercy for the purpose of salvation are focal themes in the story of S & G. Lot’s departure from Sodom is a prime example (Gen 19:12–23). The angels implored Lot to leave the city, but he was troubled and lingered in fear. His delay was inviting his own destruction, so the angels seized him and his family and took them out of the city. Commenting on this scene, the writer says that the Lord “spared” Lot (19:16). However, Lot was still reluctant to flee as he bargained for more “mercy,” which God granted in order to “save” his life (19:17–22).

Another example comes from Abraham’s interaction with God (Gen 18:23–33). Abraham asked God to spare S & G if a certain number of righteous were found. God was patient in this interaction (Abraham asked six times), and his response indicated his mercy. God repeatedly acknowledged that he would “forgive” and not “destroy” S & G, if he found x-number of righteous people (18:26–32). The striking implication is that God was willing to pardon the whole for the sake of a part. Thus, we can infer that God’s desire was that everyone be saved (not perish). His willingness to reduce the number from 50 to 10 demonstrates this fact, but certain conditions needed to be met. He needed to find righteous people in S & G.

God’s patience and mercy for the purpose of salvation gives Peter a reason for delay. It gives people time to repent. Now, the idea of “repentance” (μετάνοια) does not appear in the MT or LXX accounts of S & G. However, as the tradition developed, repentance became a vital part of the story. In Tg. Onq. Gen 18:21, God tells Abraham before going to Sodom, “I will reveal Myself now and I will judge [תוב] whether they acted as the outcry that rose before Me. I will make an end of them if they do not repent [תוב]. If they do repent, I will not punish them” (cf. Gen 18:21 in Tg. Ps.-J.; Tg. Neof.; Gen. Rab. 49:6).28 In these accounts, God gives an opportunity for

26. Those mentioning Isa 13:22 as a possible background are Bauckham, 2 Peter, 310; and Davids, 2 Peter, 278.


S & G to repent and be spared. While we must be cautious of the late date of the Targums, we can be confident that repentance was part of the S & G tradition before 2 Peter was written. We can infer this because the same association appears in the Gospels, an issue to which we now turn.²⁹

In Matt 10:5–15 (par. Mark 6:6b-13) and Luke 10:1–12, Jesus instructs his disciples before sending them out to preach the gospel. Those who reject the disciples’ message (“Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand”) will have a worse fate than those of S & G (Matt 10:7, 14–15; Luke 10:10–12).³⁰ In addition, Jesus pronounced woes over “unrepentant” (οὐ μετενόησαν) cities, also claiming that their fate will be worse than S & G (Matt 11:20–24). These sayings bring together three components: (1) repentance, (2) the day of the Lord, and (3) the judgment against S & G. Peter likely drew on this tradition while formulating 2 Pet 3:9.³¹ His warning is that rejection of Jesus’ message will result in judgment. Repentance is what will separate the righteous from the unrighteous when God comes to judge.

Peter’s implicit call to repent is directed at those among his readers who have followed the mockers into sin. Peter identifies the “mockers” (ἐμπαῖκται; 3:3) with Lot’s sons-in-law, who thought that Lot was “joking” (γελοιάζω) when he warned them of imminent judgment (Gen 19:14; cf. “mock” [καταπαίζω] in T. Levi 14:6–8). Peter’s readers can join the mocking sons-in-law (and perish), or repent and join Lot in being saved.³² This is why Peter exhorts his readers to “consider the patience of our Lord as salvation” (3:15). Just as God’s patience allowed Lot the time to escape, it will allow those who have been led astray time to repent and be saved. Delay is for redemptive purposes.

The Events on the Day of the Lord (2 Peter 3:10)

Peter is quick to point out that God’s patience and mercy should not be taken for granted. He writes, “the day of the Lord will come like a thief” (3:10a). In other words, the day will arrive suddenly without warning (one of the prototypical themes of S & G). As pointed out by virtually all scholars, this saying is ultimately derived from Jesus.³³ But again, what goes unnoticed

²⁹. The writer was surely familiar with the Jesus tradition (cf. 2 Pet 2:20; 3:10a; Matt 12:45; 24:43).

³⁰. The word “repent” (μετανοέω) does not occur in Matt 10 or Luke 10. However, repentance is clearly implied as part of the disciples’ proclamation (cf. the parallel in Mark 6:12 which explicitly states that the disciples were to proclaim that “all should repent” as part of their mission).

³¹. One could also argue that “repentance” is derived from the flood tradition (cf. 1 Clem. 7:6; Philo, QG 1:91; Ἱερ. Ονq. Gen 6:3). However, in my judgment, these texts do not correspond as well with 2 Peter.

³². Although it was possible for the mockers to repent, (notice the scope of “all”), Peter seemed convinced that they were headed for destruction (2:2–3, 9–10, 14, 17, 20–22; 3:16). See Fornberg, Early Church, 71.

³³. Bauckham, 2 Peter, 314–15; Davids, 2 Peter, 282; Donelson, II Peter, 276; G. Green, 2 Peter, 329; M. Green, 2 Peter, 149; Kelly, Peter, 363; Neyrey, 2 Peter, 242; Schreiner, 2 Peter, 383; Vögtle, 2. Petrusbrief, 233.
is that Matt 24:36–51 and Luke 17:26–35 (partial par.) connect the “thief” saying to S & G. However, we have to draw on both accounts because of Matthew and Luke’s unique selection of material. Matthew includes the “thief” saying and compares the arrival of the day of the Lord to the flood but not S & G. Luke on the other hand does not include the “thief” saying but compares the arrival of the day of the Lord to the flood and S & G. Making use of both accounts (on grounds that they were likely derived from common tradition), Peter implies that the day of the Lord will come unexpectedly just as God’s judgment came on the generations of Noah and Lot. It will be the day on which God’s patient waiting ends.

On that day, Peter writes that three things will occur: “the heavens will pass away with a load noise” (3:10b), “the elements will be undone by being burned” (3:10c), “and the earth and the works in it will be found” (3:10d). This is one of the most contentious passages in 2 Peter. As a result, we will need to spend some extra time demonstrating how the S & G story provides surprising clarity to many of the difficult issues in 3:10b–d.

The setting of the S & G story in Gen 18 begins with Abraham sending off his three visitors toward Sodom. As they were about to part ways, the Lord divulged to Abraham their reason for going to Sodom, and the Lord said, “The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah has been increased towards me, and their sins are very great. Therefore, after going down [καταβὰς] I will see [.removeAllSimilarSiblings] if [their sins] completely correspond with the cry which comes to me, and if not, then I will know [γνῶ].” And after departing from there, the men came to Sodom; but Abraham was still standing before the Lord. And Abraham drew near and said, “Will you destroy the righteous [δίκαιον] with the ungodly [ἀσεβοῦς], and will the righteous be as the ungodly? If there are fifty righteous in the city, will you destroy [ἀπολεῖς] them? Will you not spare the whole place for the sake of the fifty righteous, if they are in it? By no means will you do such a thing as to put to death the righteous with the ungodly, and the righteous be as the ungodly: by no means. Shall not the Judge of all the earth [πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν] do what is just?” And the Lord said, “If I find [εὕρω] in Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place on account of them.” (Gen 18:20–26 LXX)

Because of the outcry against S & G, God plans to visit the cities. Implied is that he will destroy them (18:21). Abraham, being concerned for justice, implores God to be righteous as the Judge of the earth (18:25). Also being

34. Luke included the “thief” saying in the parable of watchful slaves (12:35–40), which is connected to the parable of the faithful or unfaithful slave (12:41–48). While 12:35–40 is Lukan alone, Matt has brought the need for watchfulness (Luke 17:26–35) and the parable of the faithful or unfaithful slave (Luke 12:41–48) together in his eschatological teaching section (Matt 24:36–51).

35. Translation follows Brenton with minor variations.

36. Gordon Wenham writes, “It is not that God needs to go down to confirm what he knows, but that he is visiting it with a view to judgment” (Genesis 16–50 [WBC 2; Dallas: Word, 1994] 50).
concerned for mercy, Abraham asks God to save the cities on account of the righteous (18:25–32). With this story in mind, let us turn to the specifics of 2 Pet 3:10b–d.

First, the heavens are affected by the coming of the Lord (3:10b). They “will pass away with a loud noise” (οὐρανοὶ ροιζηδὸν παρελεύσονται), and in 3:12b, they “will be undone by being set on fire” (οὐρανοὶ πυρὸκυμενοι λυθήσονται). 37 Two backgrounds are normally asserted: the words of Jesus concerning the “passing away” of heaven and earth (Matt 5:18; 24:35 and par.), and Isaiah’s image of the sky being “rolled up like a scroll” (Isa 34:4; cf. Rev 6:14). 38 However, given that Peter only refers here to the “heavens” passing away, Isa 34:4 is to be preferred. A close examination of the context surrounding Isa 34:4 (esp. 34:1–10) evokes images of S & G as God judges Edom. 39 Of particular importance are God’s “descent” in order to judge (34:5), the subjection of the land to “sulfur” and “burning” (34:9), 40 and the perpetual nature of the destruction (34:10).

The “loud noise” (ροιζηδὸν) is normally taken to refer to the crackling noise of conflagration. 41 However, the word was used to describe a range of vivid noises including the rumbling of thunder and the whistling of an arrow as it traveled through the air. 42 Although he did not attempt to illustrate the noise of God’s judgment on S & G, Josephus described it as God hurling an “arrow” (βέλος) at them (A.J. 1:203), which he used to explain the “thunderbolts” (κεραυνοις) that God used to destroy the cities (B.J. 4:484; 5:566; also Wis 19:13; Philo, Mos. 2:56). As the tradition of S & G developed, God’s act of “raining” fire from heaven (Gen 19:24) became associated with a devastating thunderstorm of fire and it seems that Peter is here attempting to describe the thunderous noise.

Next (3:10c), the “elements will be undone by being burned” (στοιχεῖα καυσούμενα λυθήσεται), and 3:12c, the “elements will be melted by being burned” (στοιχεῖα καυσούμενα τήκεται). There is considerable debate surrounding three possible meanings of στοιχεῖα. They are: (1) the basic elements of the physical universe (in Stoic thought: water, air, fire, and earth), (2) heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars), or (3) heavenly powers (evil spirits). Contextually, the “elements” stand between the “heavens” and “earth” (which normally refers to the totality of the cosmos as in 3:5, 13). This suggests that the “elements” are a subset or part of the cosmic whole. In addition, the “elements” are closely associated with the

37. On the parallelism between 3:10b–c and 3:12b–c, see Fornberg, Early Church, 72–73.
38. Bauckham, 2 Peter, 315; Davids, 2 Peter, 283; G. Green, 2 Peter, 329; M. Green, 2 Peter, 150; Kelly, Peter, 364; Neyrey, 2 Peter, 240–41; Schreiner, 2 Peter, 384.
40. Reference to “sulfur” and “burning” almost always refers to S & G (cf. Gen 19:24; Deut 29:22; Ps 10:6; Ezek 38:22; Luke 17:29; 3 Macc 2:5; 1 Clem. 11:1).
41. M. Green, 2 Peter, 150; Vögtle, 2. Petrusbrief, 233–34. Cf. 3:12 where the heavens “will be set ablaze.”
42. BDAG, 907; H. Lichtenberger, “ροιζηδὸν,” EDNT 3:213; Bauckham, 2 Peter, 315; M. Green, 2 Peter, 150.
“heavens” because they are (1) paired together in 3:12, (2) share destructive and fiery verbs (most notably λύω), and (3) share the same background in Isa 34:4. Thus, the “elements” are most likely a component of the “heavens.” Overall, this contextual evidence lends weight to options 2 and 3.

Similar to 2 Pet 3:10b above, the majority of scholars identify the text that stands behind the destruction of the elements (3:10c, 12c) as Isa 34:4 (which, as we have already suggested, alludes to S & G in context).\(^{43}\) The writer says that “all the powers of the heavens will melt” (τακήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν).\(^{44}\) In subsequent allusions to Isa 34:4, some authors understood “the powers of the heavens” to refer to the “sun, moon, and stars” (Rev 6:12b–13; Apoc. Pet 5:4 Eth.), while others took it to refer to “invisible spirits” (T. Levi 4:1). The reason behind these divergent allusions is that that heavenly bodies and powers were closely associated in the ancient mind.\(^{45}\) The spiritual powers were thought to dwell among the sun, moon, and stars (or the heavenly bodies themselves were conceived of as the spiritual powers). So, for God to destroy the heavenly bodies also implies his destruction of the evil spirits, which Isaiah alludes to when God says, “My sword has been made drunk in heaven” (34:5). In warlike fashion, God destroys the heavenly bodies and triumphs over the evil spirits, the idolatry-inducing gods of the nations he intended to judge (34:5).\(^{46}\)

Ultimately, the evidence from context and the S & G tradition suggest that the ambiguity between heavenly bodies and heavenly powers is best left intact. Thus, the most probable meaning of στοιχεῖα encompasses both the cosmological heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars), and the evil spiritual powers who are associated with them.\(^{47}\) This conclusion is further confirmed when compared to the tradition of the watchers. In 1 Enoch, the watchers are identified as “stars” and subjected to fiery eschatological judgment (10:6–13; 18:11–19:3; 21:1–10; 86:1–88:3). Consequently, the destruction of the “elements” is the final judgment of the fallen angels anticipated by Peter in 2:4.

Resulting from God’s removal of the heavens and the elements, the earth is left exposed. Peter writes in 3:10d, “and the earth and the works in

43. Bauckham, 2 Peter, 316; Bigg, 2 Peter, 297–98; Davids, 2 Peter, 285, 291; Donelson, II Peter, 277; Forberg, Early Church, 74; M. Green, 2 Peter, 151, 154; Kelly, Peter, 364, 367; Schreiner, 2 Peter, 384, 391; Vogtle, 2. Petrusbrief, 234, 242–43.
44. This clause is contained in the LXX versions of Vaticanus (B) and Lucian (L.).
45. Oswalt, Isaiah 1–39, 609; Friedrich Spitta, Der zweite Brief des Petrus und der Brief des Judas: Eine geschichtliche Untersuchung (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1885) 265.
46. It was commonly asserted that S & G was idolatrous, worshiping the created order (including the heavenly bodies) and the evil spirits associated with them (cf. T. Naph. 3.2–4; Jub. 22.22; 1 Clem. 11.1–2; T. Ash. 6.1–7.1; Clem. Al., Protr. 10).
47. Similar to this view (although stressing heavenly bodies a bit more) is Bauckham, 2 Peter, 316; Davids, 2 Peter, 285–86; Vogtle, 2. Petrusbrief, 234. Stressing evil spirits too much is Spitta, Petrus, 260–72. Additional instances where στοιχεῖα refers to evil spiritual powers includes: Gal 4:3, 8–10; Col 2:8–10, 15–16, 20; T. Sol. 8:2; 18:2. Some argue against the meaning “heavenly bodies” because it does not appear in other literature until the second century (cf. Theophilus of Antioch, Ad. Autol. 1:4–6; Justin, 2 Apol. 5:2; Dial. 23:2–3). However, there is nothing precluding our writer from being the first to use it.
it will be found” (καὶ γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα εὑρεθῆσεται). Γῆ naturally refers to the “earth,” and its function as the dwelling place of humanity. “The works in it,” then, point to the deeds committed by humanity as residents of the earth (cf. 2 Clem. 16:3).

The main point of contention in 3:10d surrounds the verb εὑρεθῆσεται (“will be found”). The textual difficulties presented by this verb are well-known and need not be fully discussed here. A glance at the NA27/UBS4 shows 5 textual variants, and a brief survey of secondary literature reveals at least 12 proposed emendations to the text. Those who reject εὑρεθῆσεται normally argue that it fails to make sense in context (the assumption being that a more appropriate reading would include reference to the earth being burned or destroyed). However, there is a growing consensus that εὑρεθῆσεται is the strongest reading based on the text-critical evidence.

Recalling Gen 18:20–26, God divulged to Abraham that he was going to “go down” and “see” the wicked deeds of Sodom for himself. While the term “works” (ἔργα) is not used in Genesis, the idea of God witnessing S & G’s works is surely implied. In response, Abraham appealed to God for the lives of the righteous, thereby intervening for the citizens of the cities, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just” (18:25)? In response, God agreed to exercise discernment as he scrutinized the deeds of the people, judging them to be either righteous or unrighteous. The issue was whether enough righteous people “might be found” (εὑρεθῶσιν) to spare S & G. The repetition of εὑρίσκω in the dialogue between Abraham and God (18:26, 28, 29, 30 [2×], 31, 32) highlights the central importance of this theme in the S & G narrative. God’s “finding” involves the discovery of righteous and unrighteous people by judging their deeds.

Furthermore, David Wenham has postulated that 2 Pet 3:10d has its origin in the eschatological teaching of Jesus. He sees a similar usage of εὑρίσκω in Matt 24:46 (par. Luke 12:43). In the parable of the faithful or unfaithful slave (Matt 24:45–51), the master leaves his slave with the task of running his household (again, “works” is not stated but clearly implied). Jesus pronounces blessing on the slave whom the master “will find” (εὑρήσει) at work when he arrives (24:46). However, if the slave thinks the master is delayed and begins to act wickedly, the master will return


49. Εὑρεθῆσεται is the earliest reading, the most difficult, and the reading which best explains the others. See Bauckham, 2 Peter, 316–21; G. Green, 2 Peter, 331; M. Green, 2 Peter, 151; Schreiner, 2 Peter, 385–86; Vögtle, 2. Petrusbrief, 234–35.

50. As “Judge of all the earth” (ὁ κρίνων πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν), it was easy for the story to be developed eschatologically. Going against this trend, and too late for consideration here, the NA28 has unfortunately emended the primary line of the text to read “will not be found” (οὐχ εὑρεθῆσεται).

unexpectedly and judge the slave (24:48–51). The parable uses εὑρίσκω in a manner consistent with Gen 18:26–32. I think Wenham is correct in his argument, with the added qualification that Matt 24:46 informs 2 Pet 3:10d precisely because it refers to the tradition of S & G (we established this connection above in 3:10a).

Given the echo of S & G, εὑρεθήσεται must be understood in light of God’s descent on the earth to discover the righteous and the ungodly based on a judgment of their deeds. Thus, the contextual meaning of εὑρεθήσεται is that “the earth and the works in it” will be discovered to be righteous or unrighteous by God when he comes to judge. This makes perfect sense of Peter’s use of the divine passive in 3:10d and his exhortation to “be zealous to be found [εὑρεθῆναι] by him in peace, without spot or blemish” (3:14).

The scene depicted in 2 Pet 3:10b–d is of God stripping away the layers of the cosmos in order to execute judgment. The heavens and the heavenly bodies/spirits are destroyed in his wake, leaving the earth fully exposed. This theophanic descent of God, while not explicitly stated in 2 Pet 3:10b–d, is fully consistent with the biblical conception of “the day of the Lord,” the day on which God visits the home of humanity for judgment (cf. Isa 13:4–19; Joel 2:1–11; 3:11–16; Zeph 1:14–18). As a result, “being found” functions as a dramatic conclusion and climax as the Lord arrives to exercise his rule as Lord of the entire cosmos.52 William Wilson aptly summarizes the events of 3:10b–d,

52. Lordship is a strong emphasis within 2 Peter (cf. 1:2, 8, 11, 14, 16; 2:20; 3:2, 18).
Peter’s readers distinguish themselves as righteous by their “holy conduct” (ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς), which separates them from the citizens of S & G who practice “licentious conduct” (ἀσελγείᾳ ἀναστροφῆς; cf. 2:7). In addition, Peter’s readers will be saved by their “godliness” (εὐσεβεία), which was one of the reasons Lot was saved (2 Pet 2:9; cf. 1 Clem. 11:1). Given the echo of S & G we could offer a paraphrase: “Given that the heavens and the elements are going to be destroyed, and that God will come to judge just as he did in S & G (saving some and destroying others), which group will you identify yourselves with as demonstrated by your personal behavior?” Peter expects his readers to identify themselves with the righteous.

Waiting for and Hastening the Day of the Lord (2 Peter 3:12)

Peter’s ethical appeal is grounded on the eschatological realities of judgment and redemption. His readers are to conduct themselves according to holiness and godliness while “waiting for and hastening” (προσδοκῶντας καὶ σπεύδοντας) God’s “day” (3:12). “Waiting” (προσδοκάω) must be understood both eschatologically and ethically (cf. 3:13, 14). It is not passive in nature, but active. Peter probably has in mind (again) the parable of the faithful or unfaithful slave (Matt 24:45–51; par. Luke 12:41–46), which is also suggested by some scholars. The Lord assigns responsibility to his slave and then goes away. If the slave says to himself, “My master is delayed” (which is the same false assumption alluded to in 2 Pet 3:9), and begins to act wickedly, the master will return unexpectedly (Matt 24:48–50). The wicked slave is judged for not expectantly “waiting” (προσδοκάω), because not only did he fail to complete his assigned task but he took advantage of God’s delay for evil purposes. The goal is to be “found” doing what the master assigned (Matt 24:46). Peter’s point is that proper “waiting” is evidenced by “holy and godly conduct” in anticipation of the parousia (3:11).

“Hastening” (σπεύδω) should also be understood eschatologically and ethically (cf. 3:14). As the angels in the story of S & G prepared to destroy the cities, they “hastened” (ἐπισπουδάζω) Lot to leave (Gen 19:15–16). A short time later, Lot asked to escape to a small city as opposed to the hills (19:20), and the Lord responded, “Hurry [σπεύσον]! Escape there, for I can do nothing until you arrive” (19:22). For Peter, the certainty of God’s coming judgment should dictate human behavior. It should fuel urgency among his readers to act accordingly like Lot in order to escape judgment.

54. Davids, 2 Peter, 290; G. Green, 2 Peter, 333; Karl Kuhn, “2 Peter 3:1–13,” Int 60 (2006) 312; and Neyrey, 2 Peter, 244, who cites the immediately preceding verses that also deal with waiting for the parousia.
Thus, they hasten the day of the Lord by their urgent “repentance” (3:9) and “holy and godly conduct” (3:11), which were their means of escape.

The remainder of 3:12 restates the content of 3:10b–c using slightly different vocabulary, but the general meaning remains the same. The “heavens will be undone by being set on fire” and the “elements will be melted by being burned.” These statements reflect a negative incentive for Peter’s readers to engage in ethical living, the threat of judgment.

New Heavens and New Earth (2 Peter 3:13)

In 3:13 we find the positive incentive for Peter’s readers to engage in ethical living, the new heavens and new earth. This eschatological promise is Peter’s resolution to the corruption that has entered the cosmos on account of human sin (cf. 1:4). History for Peter is moving toward not only the judgment of the world but also its renewal. By rejecting God’s judgment, the mockers had also rejected God’s promise.

Peter repeats that his readers are to “wait” (προσδοκάω; cf. 3:12, 14), by means of their ethical living, for the fulfillment of God’s promise. Returning once again to the familiar parable of the faithful or unfaithful slave, the slave who conducts himself in accordance with God’s charge will be justly rewarded when the master returns by being put in charge “of all God’s possessions” (Matt 24:47; Luke 12:44), presumably the new heavens and new earth.

However, the dominant allusion in 2 Pet 3:13 is to Isaiah’s prophetic vision of a new heavens and a new earth (Isa 65:17; 66:22). How does it relate to S & G? A glance at Isa 65–66 reveals some familiar images of S & G and its use in 2 Peter. Most significant is Isa 66:15–18, which is cited by many commentators in their treatment of 2 Pet 3:7–13.55 In leading up to the new heavens and new earth, “the Lord will come as a fire” (κύριος ὡς πῦρ ἥξει) in warlike fashion sounding like a “whirlwind/storm” (καταιγὶς). “For by the fire of the Lord all the earth will be judged” (ἐν γὰρ τῷ πυρὶ κυρίου κριθήσεται πᾶσα ἡ γῆ), and he will repay the wicked with his wrath because he “knows their deeds” (τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν ἐπίσταμαι). Much of the language sounds similar to 2 Pet 3 and the S & G tradition (esp. Gen 18:21, 25; 19:24). Finally, Peter may also allude to S & G’s restoration by referring to Isaiah’s vision of a new heaven and earth, although the connection would only be thematic.56

Peter offers only a brief description of the new world. It is a place “where righteousness dwells” (ἐν οἷς δικαιοσύνη κατοικεῖ). The central focus of God’s search in S & G was to find “righteous” (δίκαιος) people (Gen 18:23

55. Bauckham, 2 Peter, 300; Donelson, 2 Peter, 269–70; G. Green, 2 Peter, 330; M. Green, 2 Peter, 143–44, 150; Schreiner, 2 Peter, 378; Vögtle, 2. Petrusbrief, 227.

56. Cf. Ezek 16:46–55; 47:7–9, 18–20; also Loader, Tale, 62–65. In Ezekiel, the writer compares Israel to Sodom, calling them “sisters” (16:46). However, the Lord vows to “turn back” the fortunes of Israel and Sodom (16:53–55). Sodom and her daughters “will be restored as they were from the beginning.” The original description of Sodom in Gen 13:10 was that it was “like the paradise of God,” the Garden of Eden.
Following this pattern, Peter explains that the righteous will populate God’s new world. As a result, Peter draws an explicit contrast to S & G, which was the archetypal “dwelling” (κατοικέω) of the ungodly (Gen 19:25). The rabbis declared, “The men of Sodom have no share in the world to come. . . . They shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous, but they shall stand in the congregation of the ungodly” (m. Sanh. 10:3b; cf. b. Sanh. 109a–b). Thus, the promise results in a change of earth’s inhabitants. Before the day of the Lord, the righteous and the ungodly inhabit the same place (cf. 2 Pet 2:8). But after, only the righteous will dwell there. Furthermore, God himself is characterized as “righteous” (2 Pet 1:1; Gen 19:19). If we have understood 2 Peter correctly, God’s arrival on the day of the Lord is not simply to judge the world, but to rid it of wickedness so that it can also become his new dwelling (cf. Rev 21:1–3).

In review of this section, we can assert that a comparison of 2 Pet 3:7–13 with the tradition of S & G is extremely fruitful (esp. Gen 18:18–19:29; Isa 34:1–10; Matt 24:37–51 and par.). I summarize many findings in table 1. Overall, the sheer quantity and quality of these echoes lend convincing weight to the proposal that the tradition of S & G is the best conceptual framework for understanding 2 Pet 3:7–13. The evidence provided by these echoes is stronger than the speculative nature of a Stoic background proposal, which suffers from an inability to draw specific textual connections. In addition, it offers greater precision than the sporadic nature of a general Jewish apocalyptic background, which suffers from an overwhelming mass of possible parallels.

**CONCLUSION**

I have attempted to substantiate the claim that Peter echoes the narrative tradition of S & G in 2 Pet 3:7–13. I have based this proposal on three main arguments: (1) that the tradition of S & G was well-known at the time of Peter’s writing and was understood as a model for eschatological judgment, (2) that contextual evidence from 2 Pet 2:6–8 directs us toward seeing the tradition of S & G as the conceptual framework for understanding 3:7–13, and (3) that there are numerous associations of vocabulary and themes between 2 Pet 3:7–13 and the narrative tradition of S & G. Taken together, I think these arguments provide compelling evidence that Peter used the story of S & G as a typological framework for writing about eschatological salvation and judgment. Thus, it seems clear that there is a greater dependence on the S & G story in 2 Pet 3:7–13 than has previously been thought. And as a result, I think this study has offered some new possibilities for answering some of the vexing questions associated with 2 Pet 3:7–13.

It appears that Peter blended the eschatological tradition of S & G’s fiery judgment with his understanding of the day of the Lord. He argued

### Table 1. 2 Peter 3:7–13 Compared with Sodom and Gomorrah

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Echo Words/Phrases /Themes in 2 Peter</th>
<th>Instances in the S &amp; G Tradition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:3 ἐμπαίκται (mockers)</td>
<td>καταπαίκτε (T. Levi 14:6–8; cf. Gen 19:14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:7 τεθησαυρισμένοι (having been stored up)</td>
<td>ἐν τοῖς θησαυροῖς μου (Deut 32:34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>πυρ (fire)</td>
<td>πῦρ (Gen 19:24; Wis 10:6; Sir 16:6–8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἡμέραν κρίσεως (day of judgment)</td>
<td>ἡμέρας κρίσεως (Matt 10:15; 11:24; Isa 34:8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἡμέραν ... ἀπολέσω (day ... of the destruction of the ungodly)</td>
<td>ἡμέρα ἀπολέσως αὐτῶν (Deut 32:35); ἁπεξῆς (Gen 18:23, 25; Wis 10:6; Josephus, B.J. 4:484)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:9 οὐ βραδύνει (not slow)</td>
<td>οὐ χρονιεῖ (Isa 13:22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theme of God’s patience and mercy for the purpose of salvation</td>
<td>theme of God’s visitation and judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἀπολέσω (to perish)</td>
<td>ἀπολέσως (Gen 18:24–32; 19:13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>μετανοιαν (repentance)</td>
<td>μετανόησαν (Matt 11:20–21); תוב (Tg. Onq. Gen 18:21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10 Ἔχει δὲ ἡμέρα κυρίου ὡς κλέπτης (the day of the Lord will come like a thief)</td>
<td>ἡμέρα κυρίου ὡς κλέπτης (Matt 24:42–43; cf. Luke 12:35–48; 17:26–35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theme of God’s visitation and judgment</td>
<td>Gen 18:20–25; Matt 24:42–43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>οὐρανοὶ (heavens)</td>
<td>οὐρανοὶ (Isa 34:4; cf. Rev 6:14; Matt 24:35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ῥοιζηδόν (loud noise)</td>
<td>βέλος (Josephus, A.J. 1:203); κεραυνός (Josephus, B.J. 4:484)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>σταχυέτα δὲ καυσούμενα λυθήσεται (the elements will be undone by being burned) and in 3:12, καυσούμενα τήκεται (will be melted by being burned)</td>
<td>τακήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐπάων (Isa 34:4); also cf. τῶν ἀοράτων πνευμάτων τηκομένων (T. Levi 4:1); Rev 6:12b–13; “the stars shall be melted by flames of fire” (Apoc. Pet. 5 Eth.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>γῆ (earth)</td>
<td>πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν (Gen 18:25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἔργα (works)</td>
<td>implied in Gen 18:20–21; Matt 24:45–46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>εὑρεθήσεται (will be found)</td>
<td>εὑρήσει (Gen 24:46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:11 ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς (holy conduct)</td>
<td>ἁγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς (2 Pet 2:7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>εὐσέβεια (godliness)</td>
<td>εὐσέβεια (2 Pet 2:9; 1 Clem. 11:1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>σπεύδοντας (hastening)</td>
<td>ἐπεσπούδασων (Gen 19:15); σπεύδασιν (Gen 19:22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καυσούμενα τήκεται (melted by burning)</td>
<td>See 3:10 above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:13 προσδοκῶμεν (wait)</td>
<td>See 3:12 above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>δικαιοσύνη (righteousness)</td>
<td>δίκαιος (2 Pet 2:7; Gen 18:23–26, 28; m. Sanh. 10:3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>κατοικεῖ (dwells)</td>
<td>τοὺς κατοικοῦντας (Gen 19:25); κατῴκης (Gen 19:29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Translation from *NT Apoc.* 2:627.
against the mockers that there will indeed be a day of judgment to come on the cosmos. God may be delayed, but this is to be taken as a demonstration of his divine patience and mercy for the purpose of salvation. Now is the time to repent of all wickedness and commit oneself to holy and godly conduct in expectation of his arrival. But if one is slow to respond, the day of the Lord will come unexpectedly. God will expose the earth and the deeds of its inhabitants by removing the heavens and the elements so that nothing can be hidden before him. The Lord will judge between the righteous and the ungodly. He will sentence the ungodly to fire, but he will reward the righteous with a new heavens and a new earth, a place where the Righteous One will live with his righteous ones.