

1 PETER 4:17-19 | ADVICE ABOUT THE END TIMES

Note: in verse 7 Peter says that **the end of all things is at hand**. He now concludes his thoughts concerning the End Times.

- Verse 17 –
 - Peter says that **judgment must begin at the house of God**.
 - The term **house of God** is used 81 times in the Scripture. It always means *Temple* or *dwelling place* of God, or in a larger sense of *the people of Israel*. It *never* means the church.
 - Peter says that when judgment begins, it is centered around the Temple and the nation of Israel, for this is the only **house of God** of which the Scripture speaks.
 - Here are a few examples:
 - Genesis 28:17 - Jacob hears directly from God and calls the place **the house of God** and names it Beth-el.
 - Judges 18:31 speaks of the time the **house of God was in Shiloh**, referring to the Tabernacle.
 - 1 Chronicles 6:45 refers to the Levites being appointed to **service of the tabernacle of the house of God**.
 - 2 Chronicles 3:3 refers to **the building of the house of God**, in reference to the Temple built by Solomon.
 - 2 Chronicles 36:19 says that **they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem**. A reference to the destruction by the Babylonians.
 - Matthew 12:4 is the words of Jesus referring to David entering **the house of God** where **he did eat the shewbread**.
 - Hebrews 10:21 refers to **the house of God** either as the Temple itself or, more likely, in the broad sense of “the people of Israel.”
 - The common usage of this passage to refer to *the local church* is simply not in line with Scripture.
 - Even without a review of the **house of God** scriptures, it should be readily known that *those under the blood of Christ are not under judgment*. See, for example, Romans 8:1 or 2 Corinthians 5:20.
 - The Greek word ἀπό [apo] is here translated **at** (twice, **at the house of God** and **at us**).
 - Bullinger says that *apo* “denotes motion from the surface of an object” (*The Companion Bible*, Appendix 104, iv).

- This is important because it tells us that judgment does not begin *on* the **house of God** but **at the house of God**, and it moves from there to the world. Compare Amos 1:2 and following.
 - Peter speaks of the destruction of those that **obey not the Gospel of God**. I believe that **the Gospel of God** is *the Kingdom Gospel*, chiefly based on Romans 1:1-2, which reveals that this gospel was **promised afore by his prophets**, something which cannot be true of the *mystery* gospel.
- Verse 18 –
 - The first phrase is very revealing, **if the righteous scarcely be saved**.
 - The word **scarcely** is μόλις [molis], translated **we had much hard work** in Acts 27:16.
 - Thus *the righteous have to work very hard and then are barely saved*.
 - Adding to the intrigue, this *if/then* statement is one in which the Greek *assumes the criteria to have been met*. In such a case, one can translate the *if* as *since*.
 - How can Peter say such a thing, especially in light of Ephesians 2:8-9? He can *only* say such a thing if he is talking about *the kingdom gospel* rather than the Pauline/mystery gospel. This helps confirm our position of **the Gospel of God** in the previous verse.
 - Since **judgement must begin at the house of God** (v. 17) and **the righteous scarcely be saved**, then the natural conclusion is **where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?** That is, *will there be any place for them?* The rhetorical question elicits the clear negative answer.
- Verse 19 –
 - This is yet another works-based message from the Apostle Peter.
 - The wording is difficult, but the message is clear: *those who are suffering in doing God's will should commit the keeping of their souls...in well doing*.
 - That is, the **well doing** is “part and parcel” of the **keeping of their souls**.