

## Lesson Notes: 1 Peter 4:17-19 (NIV based)

TITLE: Depending on God through religious persecution in this life as well as through the judgment in the next life.

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READ: 1 Peter 4:17-19, with vv.12-16 for context

### v.17

Why bring up the subject of judgment - how does it fit in to the topic of suffering for the cause of Christ?

- - "family" (NIV) - "household" (KJV).
- - "outcome" = Strong's #5056 "end; (to set out for a definite point or goal); properly, the point aimed at as a limit, i.e. (by implication) the conclusion of an act or state (termination [literally, figuratively or indefinitely], result [immediate, ultimate or prophetic], purpose)".
- - "do not obey" = Strong's #0544 "those disobeying; to disbelieve (willfully and perversely)".

- - We believers should consider ourselves blessed that we are in the family of God - that we will surely pass successfully through the judgment.
- - This is the cause of Christ that we are being asked to suffer on behalf of - to pass successfully through the judgment.

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### vv.17-18

What are the characteristics listed here of the judgment?

- - The judgment is inevitable. (v.5)
- - The judgment of believers is, in a sense, occurring now as we face fiery trials for our cause or faith. (v.17; see vv.1:6-7; 4:12)
- - The refining-type, suffering-characterized judgment of believers prepares or readies us for God's Kingdom. (vv.13,14)
- - Obedience to the gospel is a requirement for passing successfully through the judgment. (v.17)
- - The outcome of the judgment will be far different for unbelievers as it is for believers. (vv.17-18)
- - For unbelievers, their judgment is being deferred and perhaps stored up for a future time. (v.5)
- - Failure to pass the judgment and subsequent horrible suffering for eternity is the certain outcome for the unbeliever. (implied in vv.17-18)
- - God's judgment starts from the house of God outward - judgment in the sense of purifying His people but in the sense of condemning and destroying those who are not His. (cf. Malachi 3)

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### v.18

The *NIV* and *NAS* interpret this verse to be a quote of Proverbs 11:31, but the *KJV* does not. Which is correct?

Proverbs 11:31 literal translation of the Hebrew words:

- Strong's #H2009 "Behold";
- Strong's #H6662 "the righteous";
- Strong's #H0776 "in the earth";
- Strong's #H7999 "will be repaid; to be safe (in mind, body or estate); figuratively, to be (causatively, make) completed; by implication, to be friendly; by extension, to reciprocate (in various applications)"; 'reciprocate' = (*AHD*) "To show, feel, or give in response or return; to make a return for something given or done";
- Strong's #H1571 "also";
- Strong's #H3588 "indeed";
- Strong's #H7563 "the wicked";
- Strong's #H2398 "and the sinner."

- - Closest literal translation of Proverbs 11:31 in the original Hebrew - *KJV* "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner."
- - Evidently, 1 Peter 4:18 is a rendering of Proverbs 11:31.

Why is this reference of Proverbs 11:31 inserted here?

- - To add Old Testament support to the principle(s) being promoted here.
- - To indicate that these principle(s) are not new.
- - To restate the same principle in a slightly different way for perhaps further clarification.

Does this reference of Proverbs 11:31 add any significant new information to the assertions being made in this section of 1 Peter?

- - It contains "for the righteous to be saved" in comparison to verse 17 "time for judgment to begin with the family of God".
- - Those who fail to pass the judgment will be: those "not obeying the Gospel" (v.17); those who are "sinners" (v.18); and those who are "ungodly" (v.18), - "irreverent, impious or wicked" (Strong's #0765).
- - A better translation of the *NIV* phrase "what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" of the original Greek is the *KJV* "where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?". ("where" - Strong's #4226; "appear" - Strong's #5316)
- - By implication, the "where" the ungodly and the sinner will "appear" will be in eternal punishment, and this more easily answers the rhetorical question in verse 17 "what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?". (cf. v.1:3; 2:10)

What does "it is hard" suggest in relation to the process a person goes through to get saved?

- - "hard" = Strong's #3433 "barely; with difficulty".
- - It is hard for every human to acquire the means that will secure acceptable passing through the judgment.
- - It is a struggle, difficult to achieve, not easily attained, and requiring help from God. (2 Corinthians 6:2)

- - A main reason it is hard to achieve salvation is because on Judgment Day our complete guilt for committing sins puts us humans in an untenable position to successfully defend against our deserving of eternal punishment for every sin we have committed. (1 Peter 4:3-6)
- - Another main reason it is hard to achieve salvation is because when left to ourselves, we humans naturally desire and enjoy indulging in sinfulness (vv.3-4), which of course is strongly oppositional to being open to (let alone drawing close to) what God requires for achieving salvation.
- - For the ungodly and the sinners, their final outcome or fate will be eternal punishment because in this life they each have failed to genuinely accept God's only way of getting 'remission' or pardoned from being punished for their sins and being reconciled to God. ('remission' - Strong's #0859 in verse 43 in Acts 10:39-44)

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#### v.19

What does the "so then" refer to?

- - "So then" or "so as" "indeed" refers to the principle(s) in most likely verses 17-18: that we believers are among the select few who are supremely blessed to be henceforth permanent members of the family of God, being set on the path that will lead to our successful passing through the judgment; thereby we should be extremely thankful and thus motivated to respond in the manner as summarized in verse 19. (Strong's #5620, #2532)

What is being implied or stated as to the value of this cause, "suffering according to God's will" "because of the name of Christ" (v.14)?

- - This cause is a just, eternal, and priceless cause.
- - This cause is worth suffering for.
- - This cause is a means through which God grants us more grace or undeserved favor.

What should our response be because we are especially blessed in this way of having secured acceptable passing through the judgment?

- - This is our motivation to endure suffering for the cause, bearing the name of Christ to the world.
- - We should commit and entrust not only our "soul", but ourselves, our situations, and our suffering to God. (Strong's #5590, omitted in the NIV)
- - Jesus committed and entrusted His situation, His suffering, and His soul to God, as recorded in Luke 22:42; 23:46, and reiterated in 1 Peter 2:23.
- - We should keep on doing what is good, what is right. Continuing in good works is a necessary accompanying indicator of the faith that is the essence of being a genuine Christian.
- - We can count on God, who is our "faithful Creator", to care for and get us through the rough times of suffering persecution with His 'grace' (v.5:10) and 'power' (v.1:5).
- - We should not trust in ourselves or anything else other than God.
- - God will preserve our soul even if our suffering terminates our body.
- - It is God's will that we suffer persecution.

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**BIG IDEA:** We believers can count on God, who is our "faithful Creator", to care for and get us through the rough times of suffering religious persecution in this life and likewise save us eternally in the next life.

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**IMPORTANT SUB-POINTS:** What are some other important points God is making here in these verses?

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**APPLICATIONS:** What applications can you think of for how we should respond to the concepts in these verses?

**PERSONALIZED APPLICATIONS:** From these verses, what do you think God wants you to learn, or know, or remember, or put into effect in your life? How are you going to do that?

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