

Man's Judgment of Believers Means Nothing (v.6)

VERSE 6 **For the gospel has for this purpose been preached** (γὰρ [conj.; looks backward to v.5] εἰς τοῦτο [prep.w/pro./demonstrative.acc.nt.s.; looks forward to the “that”, or hina, clause, houtos; “for this purpose”] εὐαγγελίσθη [aor.pass.ind.3.s., εὐαγγελίζω, euaggelizo, proclaim good news; “the gospel...has been preached”]) **even [also] to those who are dead** (καὶ [conj./adjunctive {also}] νεκροῖς [adj.dat.m.p., nekros, dead]), **that though they are judged in the flesh as men** (ἵνα [conj.] κριθῶσι [aor.pass.subj.3.p., krino, judge] μὲν [part./contrast] σαρκὶ [dat./reference.f.s., sarx, flesh; “in the flesh”] κατὰ ἀνθρώπους [prep.w/acc.; according to, + n.m.p., anthropos, man]), **they may live in the spirit according to the will of God** (δὲ [conj./contrast; on the other hand] ζῶσι [pres.act.subj.3.p., zao, live] πνεύματι [dat./reference.nt.s., pneuma, spirit; human spirit] κατὰ θεὸν [prep.w/acc.m.s., theos, god; according to]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 6

1. This is a very challenging and difficult verse.
2. It has been used to teach that all will be saved, or given a second chance, which flies in the face of the body of Scripture.
3. Roman Catholic theologians of the 16th century taught that this was the occasion when O.T. saints got to hear the gospel, not having heard it in O.T. times!
4. It has also been connected with 1Pet.3:19 to teach that Christ personally preached the gospel to the O.T. saints when He descended into Sheol.
5. Any view that has Jesus Christ as the one preaching the gospel has to explain why the verb is in the passive voice and not the active voice, as would be expected.
6. In 1Pet.3:19 Christ spoke to “the spirits now in prison”, which as we saw refers to certain fallen angels.
7. In the immediate context this interpretation would be out of place and provide no immediate comfort to believers who were under verbal scoffing.
8. The whole argument extending from 1Pet.3:13 to 4:5 is that God will vindicate those who suffer and hold their detractors accountable on the Day of Judgment.
9. The use of “dead” in v.6 picks up on its use in the expression “the living and the dead”.
10. “The gospel has been preached” (aor.pass.ind., euaggelizo, proclaim good news) refers to the presentation of the salvation message to those now in Ph3.
11. “The gospel has been preached” throughout the dispensations, starting with Adam and Eve.
12. Abraham heard it in Ur (Gal.3:8).
13. So in v.6 Peter directs our attention to those who heard the gospel and who subsequently died.
14. Previous generations heard the good news that they might live forever.
15. This has always been the purpose for evangelization.
16. The potential salvation adjustment is expressed here in terms of possessing a human spirit.

17. Believers have a body, soul, and spirit (1Thess.5:23; Heb.4:12; Lk.1:46,47), while the spiritually dead have only body and soul.
18. In regeneration man is given a human spirit in which resides eternal life.
19. The spiritually dead is the natural, or soulish, man (*puscikos*; cf. 1Cor.2:14).
20. Those doing the judging are the counterparts to those who judged and maligned the recipients of 1 Peter.
21. “They are judged” refers to the believing dead.
22. The goal of salvation comes to expression in the words of 6c, “that they may live with reference to the spirit according to God”.
23. The sentence contains two contrasting parts to the *hina* clause (“that”), set in opposition by Peter’s characteristic μέν...δέ, construction (cf. 1:20; 2:4; 3:18).
24. The μέν clause is concessive: even though they are condemned in the flesh by people generally (expanded translation).
25. The *de* clause declares the potential (“live” is a pres.act.subj. of *zao*) that stood before those who had the gospel preached to them: namely, eternal life in connection with the human spirit.
26. The prepositional phrase “according to God” means according to the standard or judgment of God.
27. Peter also intends a contrast when he sets κατὰ ἀνθρώπους (*kata anthropous*) – “according to men” – over against κατὰ θεόν (*kata theon*) – “according to God” (there is also a contrast between “flesh” and “spirit” – both datives of reference).
28. The enemy judges us “in the flesh” (or “with reference to the flesh”) as mortals, and nothing more than mortals.
29. Their putdown of Christians would go something like this: “What is the gain of becoming Christians, since you die like other men?”.
30. They disparage our hope, thinking we are no better off than anyone else.
31. Peter’s readers are placed in the long tradition of those who were judged with reference to flesh according to the standard of human viewpoint reasoning, but who will live with reference to the spirit according to the standard of God.
32. How different the assessment of negative volition is to the revealed will of God!
33. “For the gospel has also been preached” refers to God’s faithful provisions of saving knowledge to those who were positive in past history.
34. “Also” means in addition to those who are alive.
35. “For” looks backward to v.5 to future judgment when God/Christ will vindicate the righteous and condemn the unrighteous.
36. “For this purpose” looks forward to the third and final observation of v.6.
37. In other words, to Peter’s expression of why the gospel has been preached to men: “that they might live with reference to the spirit according to God”.
38. “To those who are dead” refers to all believers who have entered Ph3.
39. “That” introduces a purpose clause expressed by the present subjunctive of “may live”.
40. In other words, the purpose of giving the gospel is so that men might secure eternal life with reference to the human spirit.
41. “They” refers to the believing dead.
42. “Are judged” is an aorist passive subjunctive, indicating evaluation of these believers by their unbelieving counterparts.

43. “In the flesh”, or “according to the flesh”, refers to their earthly existence that culminated in death.
44. The words “as men” is, literally, “according to man”, meaning that they were judged by men as to only what the natural man was capable of (cf. 1Cor.2:14).
45. Principle: negative volition is incapable of evaluating positive volition since they are without the necessary knowledge arising from GAP (1Cor.2:6-16).
46. Verse 6b (“that though they are judged in the flesh....”) is concessive, meaning “even though...”.
47. “As men” is an accusative, which should be translated “according to men”.
48. Even though men harshly and falsely judged them, such assessment is meaningless because God will put all negative volition to shame when He raises and judges the living and the dead.
49. The eternal purpose of proclaiming good news to positive volition is “that they might live with reference to the [human] spirit according to God”.
50. The present active subjunctive indicates linear action in present time.
51. The present tense is progressive, and the subjunctive mood is one of contingency, based on the response to gospel proclamation.
52. So “may live” recognizes volition.
53. The whole verse, with translation and explanation: “For (because of the prospect of final judgment) the gospel has been preached (evangelization of the living) for this purpose (i.e., to provide E.L.) to the dead (now in Ph3), that even though they have been judged with reference to the flesh (their earthly existence and demise) according to man, they may live with reference to a spirit (human) according to God.”

Modus Operandi as the End Approaches (vv.7-11)

An Announcement and a Call (v.7)

VERSE 7 [Now] **The end of all things is at hand** (ὅτι [conj., but; now; not translated] τὸ τέλος [def.art.w/n.nt.s., telos, end] πάντων [adj.gen.nt.p., pas, all; “all things”] ἤγγικεν [pf.act.ind.3.s., ἐγγίζω, engizo, come or draw near; “at hand”; this form occurs 14X: cp. Mt.3:2; 26:45,46; Mk.1:15; Lk.10:9,11; 21:8,20; Rom.13:12; Jam.5:8]); **therefore, be of sound judgment** (οὖν [conj./infern.] σωφρονήσατε [aor.act.imper.2.p., σωφρονέω, sophroneo, be sensible or serious]) **and sober spirit** (καὶ [conj.] νήψατε [aor.act.imper.2.p., νήφω, nepho, be sober; 6X: 1Thess.5:6,8; 2Tim.4:5; 1Pet.1:13; 4:7; 5:8]) **for the purpose of prayer(s)** (εἰς προσευχάς [prep.w/acc.f.p., προσευχή, proseuche, prayer]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 7

1. The short, generalized commands that characterize this section suggest that Peter may be bringing his letter to a close (cf. 1Thess.5:12-24; Jam.5:12-20), an impression that seems to be confirmed by the doxology and the “Amen” of v.11b.

2. This is obviously not the case in the letter as it stands, for 1Pet.4:12–5:11 (the ending is a similar doxology) is still to come.
3. There is a thematic correspondence between vv.7-11 and 4:12–5:11: an announcement followed by instructions on how believers are to treat one another (vv.8-11; cf. 1Pet.5:1-5).
4. These instructions are reinforced with a powerful reminder of the Sovereignty of God and the necessity of glorifying Him (v.11; 5:6,7,10) and concluded with a doxology (v.11b; cf. 1Pet.5:11).
5. If Peter has focused his attention in 1Pet.2:11 through 4:6 on the question of how Christians should think and act with respect to their persecutors, he now turns to the question of how they should treat each other.
6. What prompts the change is his reminder that “the end of all things is near” (v.7; cf. v.6, where God “stands ready” to judge).
7. Both here and in 1Pet.4:12–5:11, it is the nearness of the end and the urgency of the impending crisis that demands unity and cohesion among the royal family.
8. It is perhaps this emphasis that distinguishes this passage from Paul’s words to the Roman church (Rom.12:3-13), which it resembles in certain aspects; cf. the accent on clear thinking (12:3), followed by admonitions to mutual ministry (12:4-8), love (12:9,10), and hospitality (12:13; notice also how Paul continues in 12:14-21 with commands bearing both on relationships to fellow believers and to outsiders, more in the manner of 1Pet.3:8,9 than of the present passage).
9. The keynote of this section is mutuality, expressed repeatedly by the phrase “for one another” (vv.8,9).
10. The mutual responsibility governs the imperatives of love and forgiveness (v.8), hospitality (v.9), and ministry (vv.10,11), all under God’s Sovereignty and in the interest of glorifying God (v.11).
11. The responsibilities of love and hospitality are everyone’s, while “ministry”, including that of the spoken word, is dependent upon the “gift” or “grace” of God.
12. The judgment of which Peter has been writing, however, is imminent (impending).
13. The conjunction *δέ* (but, now), which is omitted in most translations, is intended to link this section with the preceding one.
14. The notion that God “stands ready” to judge (v.5) is echoed in the statement that “the end of all things is at hand”.
15. The universality of that impending judgment of “the living and the dead” is maintained by *πάντων*, “all things”.
16. In the Greek “all things” stands in the emphatic position (first).
17. The cosmos as we know it moves ever closer to “the end”.
18. “All things” encompasses the present order that features all that is alien to the kingdom of God.
19. The kingdom of God will supplant the kingdoms of this world, ushering in the righteous new world order (Dan.2:34,35; cp. vv.44,45; 7:26-28).
20. The Millennial phase of the kingdom will be immediately preceded by catastrophic judgments upon all aspects of human life, resulting in the eradication of the wicked and their works from the earth.
21. The Millennial phase of the kingdom will be transmuted into the eternal state, which will feature a new creation in which all of the old things will be forever eradicated (death, sin, etc.; cf. 2Pet.3:10).

22. Peter's purpose here is simply to state a reality.
23. The present order of things will come to an end, and so Christians must be prepared for what follows.
24. The announcement that the inevitable event "is at hand" (or "has drawn near") is similar to the proclamations of John the Baptist (Mt.3:2) and Jesus (Mk.1:15; Mt.4:17; Lk.10:9,11) that "the Kingdom of God is at hand".
25. Hence, the call to repent and believe.
26. Peter's adoption of this expression is from the Gospel tradition and corresponds to James (Jam.5:8).
27. His meaning is that "the end has drawn near" and there is no time to squander.
28. No matter how far or near end-time events are, each believer should view the call in terms of his/her uncertain future.
29. Death ends the possibility of making the maturity adjustment.
30. Human history is inexorably moving toward "the end of all things".
31. Today we are very close indeed, making the call all the more urgent.
32. The verb "is at hand" is a perfect active indicative of *enngizo*, meaning to "draw near", or "approach".
33. It is used in this form 14X:
 - a. Mt.3:2 ("for the kingdom of God is at hand").
 - b. Mt.4:17 ("Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand").
 - c. Mt.10:7 ("And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of God is at hand'").
 - d. Mt.26:45 ("Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners").
 - e. Mt.26:46 ("behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand").
 - f. Mk.1:15 ("The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel").
 - g. Mk.14:42 ("the one who betrays Me is at hand").
 - h. Lk.10:9 ("The kingdom of God has come near you").
 - i. Lk.10:11 ("Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet, we wipe off *in protest* against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near").
 - j. Lk.21:8 ("See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and , 'The time is near.' Do not go after them").
 - k. Lk.21:20 ("But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand").
 - l. Rom.13:12 ("The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light").
 - m. Jam.5:8 ("You too be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near").
 - n. 1Pet.4:7 ("The end of all things is at hand").
34. Jesus Christ's appearance on the historical scene has cleared the way for the day of the Lord when "all things" will give way to a New Creation.
35. So in light of the impending cessation of the old order of things, believers are exhorted to mental alertness and clear thinking.
36. The first aorist imperative, "be of sound judgment", means to be serious-minded, or think sensibly.
37. This can only be done when divine viewpoint is in the frame of reference.

38. To be in one's right mind is to follow a course of action that is in accord with the established and recognized facts.
39. A serious minded person is one who follows not his emotions but a set of rules that have been proven.
40. BD gives us the road map we are to follow and insofar as we adhere to the commandments and doctrinal precepts, we can be said to be sound thinkers.
41. By so doing, we will keep ourselves on the straight and narrow, recognizing what is at stake when we come into judgment.
42. So we must "think clearly", or "keep our heads", lest we drift off course from "the grace to be brought to us at the revelation (Rapture) of Jesus Christ" (cf. 1Pet.1:13).
43. The second aorist imperative, "be sober", suggests that we are to remain out from under the influence of STA lusts, which is the usual reason believers go astray.
44. When the ISTA and the emotions are ruling the soul, the believer is spiritually inebriated.
45. Peter's intention here is to bring his readers to a mental state that is conducive to prayer.
46. The phrase "for the purpose of prayers" is linked to both verbs.
47. Alertness and watchfulness in prayer are common N.T. warnings (cf. Mk.14:38; Mt.26:41).
48. Alert and clear-headed prayer is a key ingredient in overcoming evil (Lk.12:37; 21:36; Eph.6:18; Col.4:2)
49. Prayer is indispensable in our spiritual warfare and in meeting the trials associated with the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict.

Mutual Love (v.8)

VERSE 8 **Above all** (πρὸ πάντων [*prep.w/adj.gen.nt.p., pas; "Above all"*]), **keep fervent in your love for one another** (ἔχοντες [*pres.act.pt.n.m.p., echo, have; "keep"*] ἐκτενῆ [*adj.acc.f.s., ektene, constant; "fervent"*; 2X: Lk.22:44 - "He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down to the ground"] τὴν ἀγάπην [*def.art.w/acc.f.s., agape, love*] εἰς ἑαυτοὺς [*prep/reciprocal.pro.acc.m.p., heautou*]), **because love covers a multitude of sins** (ὅτι [*conj.*] ἀγάπη [*n.f.s., love*] καλύπτει [*pres.act.ind.3.p., καλύπτω, kalupto, cover*] πλῆθος [*acc.nt.s., plethos, crowd; quantity; population; "multitude"*] ἁμαρτιῶν [*gen.f.p., hamartia, sin*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 8

1. The "above all" which begins this verse serves to emphasize the most urgent necessity for Christians in their relationship to "one another".
2. The phrase (πρὸ πάντων) occurs here and in Col.1:17 ("And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together") and Jam.5:12 ("But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any oath; but let your yes be yes, and your no, no; so that you may not fall under judgment").
3. The prepositional phrase means "before all in order of importance".
4. That is, love is the prerequisite to all proper applications of Christian duty.
5. Love transforms all virtues into what they should be.
6. Courtesy without love is a cold thing.

7. Generosity without love is a harsh thing.
8. First Corinthians 13 makes this transparent.
9. Love is the principal fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22; cp. Rom.5:5).
10. The imperative “keep fervent” means, literally, “stretched out”.
11. The idea is that of a love that is intended to reach the one who is the object.
12. It is an attitude of one who, instead of living a self-centered life, gives of himself to others in accord with the teachings of Scripture.
13. The obligation of mutual love among believers was stated already in 1Pet.1:22, where the adverb *etenos*, “unremittingly”, corresponds in meaning to the adjective “constant” used here.
14. The phrase “one another” (εἰς ἑαυτοὺς), both here and in v.10, denotes mutuality.
15. The apostle’s emphasis on constancy in the fulfillment of this obligation is traceable to the fact that these believers are being tested by trials that they are now facing and will face (1Pet.1:6; 4:12).
16. Note the prediction of Jesus in Mt.24:12 in connection with the coming trials that “the love of many will grow cold”.
17. One of the manifestations of genuine love of one another is that love refuses to take into account the past failings (sins) of those we are called upon to apply towards.
18. This is the meaning of the *hoti* (“because”) clause: “because love covers a multitude of sins”.
19. This expression also occurs in Prov.10:12: “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers a multitude of sins”.
20. In other words, the one who loves does not hold a grudge, but forgives.
21. True love avoids gossip and maligning with regard to another’s past sins.
22. The words “will cover a multitude of sins” occurs in Jam.5:20: “let him know that he who turns a sinner (reversionist) from the error of his way will save his soul from death (SUD) and will cover a multitude of sins”.
23. By pointing the “sinner” (here, reversionistic believer; see v.19) in the direction of repentance, the believer who ministers grace to the one under the SUD is indirectly responsible for covering a multitude of sins.
24. Obviously it is God who forgives, and it is God’s servant who points the way.
25. The language is similar to Paul’s statement that he “saved some” (cf. Rom.11:14; 1Cor.9:22).
26. The believer acting as God has acted is credited with “covering a multitude of sins”, because apart from his counsel, the reversionist would have died the SUD.
27. But here the expression is used in a different context.
28. The sins that are covered are the sins that are not made an issue in future dealings.
29. “Sins” here refers to the sins of the one loved, not the sins of the one loving.
30. Principle: We are not to relate to another today based on the sins of yesterday.
31. This is another way of stating the doctrine of forgiveness.
32. Holding grudges and maligning are at odds with the imperative of this verse to “keep constant in your love for one another”.
33. Bringing up the past and treating others as if they were still involved in STA activity is to violate the second great commandment: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”.
34. Any revenge tactics, ostracism, etc., are at odds with the grace God has extended to the sinning saint.
35. The hearing of this kind of information is how we grow in grace.

36. God covers (forgives) a multitude of sins in every life.
37. Genuine love, which is the product of the FHS, is manifest when we do not publish others' failings, but cover them up from the sight of others.
38. Here we have an example of sanctified "cover-up".

Hospitality (v.9)

VERSE 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint (φιλόξενοι [adj.{imperative}n.m.p., philozenos, hospitable; "Be hospitable"; 3X: 1Tim.3:2; Ti.1:8] εἰς ἀλλήλους [prep.w/pro./reciprocal.acc.m.p., allelon, one another] ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ [prep., aneu, without, apart from, + gen.m.s., gongusmos, complaint; 4X: Jn.7:12; Acts.6:1; Phil.2:14; 1Pet.4:9]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 9

1. The adjective φιλόξενοι ("hospitality") functions here as an imperative, like the adjectives in 1Pet.3:8.
2. The success of early Christianity was from the start built on the willingness to extend hospitality towards missionaries and displaced believers.
3. Itinerate teachers were in need of a place to stay (3Jn.5,6; contrast 2Jn.10,11).
4. Those who were sent out by Christ were instructed by the Lord on the do's and don'ts of accepting hospitality (Mt.10:11-13,40-42; Lk.10:5-7; Acts.16:15,32-34; 21:7,17; 28:14).
5. Paul urged the Roman church to practice "hospitality" (Rom.12:13), and so did the author of Hebrews (Heb.13:2).
6. Peter urges this same application on the scattered congregations of Asia Minor.
7. In the O.T. Abraham (Gen.18) and Rahab (Josh.2) illustrate unusual circumstances out of which this application may arise.
8. The background here is not toward friends who do not need it, but toward Christians who, for whatever reasons, may be in need of food and shelter.
9. Persecution sometimes deprived Christians of the necessities of life, and such an exhortation as this was needed.
10. Gentile believers will succor Jews in the Tribulation who are being hunted down by their enemies (Mt.25:34-39).
11. Pastor-Teachers are to excel in this virtue (1Tim.3:2; Ti.1:8).
12. Peter warns against "grumbling", or "complaining", in the application of this imperative.
13. The reason is that whenever it is extended, there is always the possibility that individuals may take advantage of the one who applies.
14. We are enjoined in Scripture to make our charitable applications "cheerfully", knowing that our reward is with God (Rom.12:8; 2Cor.9:7; Phil.2:14).
15. Complaining is a sin which robs us of blessing.
16. In all of our applications we should proceed with the right mental attitude.
17. Applications of this nature are a test, but if we remember Scripture, we can overcome the STA, having our eyes on the Lord and His Word.
18. Hospitality sometimes comes upon us out of season, meaning that we have little lead-time to plan for an unexpected guest.