

PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY: THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND

Houses of Light Church • October 22-23, 2022 • Pastor Netz Gómez

1 Pet. 4:6

"For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does."

I. IS THERE A SECOND CHANCE AFTER DEATH?

- A. What does ***"the gospel was preached even to those who are dead"*** mean? He is not talking about the dead having a second chance because in that case he would say ***that is why the gospel will be preached to those who have already died***. This text has caused dozens of interpretations by highly respected commentators and scholars.
- B. To better understand this text, let's see the context: Peter is giving encouragement to the Christians who are being outraged for no longer walking in the same way as their former friends and tells them: ***"...they [those who malign you] will give account to the who is prepared to judge the living and the dead" (v.5)***. The Holy Spirit is comforting those who suffer for their change of life, affirming that those who mistreat them will not get away with it even if they live their lives "thriving" while they have been miserable due to criticism or persecution.
- C. So, according to the context of the Scripture, we understand that what the apostle is saying is: ***'cheer up, not only will those who persecute you be judged, but the gospel has been preached to those of you who have already died for although now are criticized according to the criteria of men, they will live forever for God.'***

Rom. 14:8 "For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's."

II. ARE WE LIVING IN THE END TIMES?

1 Pet. 4:7 *"The end of all things is at hand..."*

- A. In order to see this kind of statement in its full biblical context, we must understand the New Testament view of the structure of history according to which there are two ages, the present and the one to come:

Matt. 12:32 *"...but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."*

Lk. 20:34-35 *"And Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage."*

- B. Then we find ourselves in this age where marriage is ordinary and then there is another age to come in which marriage is no longer going to exist. Jesus

and the other New Testament writers speak of the kingdom of God and the age to come as the same.

Eph. 1:21 *"[Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father] far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come."*

Mar. 10:17-30 *"And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?...²³ And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"²⁹ Jesus said...³⁰who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life."*

- C. The terms *"kingdom of God, eternal life, and age to come,* are terms that reinforce the two ages, the present one and the one to come.

Lk. 22:16 *"For I tell you I will not eat it [the Passover meal] until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."*

- D. So the kingdom of God is future and it is something that is coming but it is already here, this is something unique to the New Testament: the presence of the kingdom in its present stage but a future stage is coming. Some commentators have described the arrival of the kingdom of heaven as a **fulfillment that has not been fully consummated.** The fulfillment is the "Already came" and the consummation is the *"not yet completely"*.

Matt. 12:28 *"But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."*

- E. Jesus says that the kingdom of God, which is in the future, had also arrived because the King was already among them. Where the King is, the kingdom has already come.

Lk. 17:20-21 *"Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, ²¹ nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."*

- F. In the case of some recipients of the letter to the Hebrews, they had tasted the powers of the age to come, they had already experienced what is coming in the future and this is a reality that we too can experience now.

Heb. 6:5 *"and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come."*

- G. The kingdom has already come and people are experiencing the kingdom of God by testing the powers of the age to come when Jesus returns. So when Peter says *"the end of all things is near"* he refers to the time of the irruption of the kingdom of God in the second coming of Christ to earth. We live in this time of transition between the first and the second coming which is called *"the end times."*

1 Pet. 1:20 "He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you"

1 Jn. 2:18 "Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour."

- H. When the Spirit was poured out on Peter in Acts chapter two, Peter referred to it as **"the last days."**

Acts. 2:16-17a "But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: 17 "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh..."

- I. In conclusion, according to the Scripture the present age began after the fall of Adam and Eve in which there is sickness, death, marriage, ordinary business; but we are waiting for the age to come; the final return of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead, the transformation of history because the kingdom of God will be established in its fullness on earth.
- J. The essence of Christianity that separates it from Judaism and from all other religions is that the decisive work of Jesus as something that has already happened; we have been transferred from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of his beloved Son (1 Pet. 2:9) and this is where we live awaiting the age to come that will bring the return of Jesus. Many of the phrases about the end times explain that we are living in this time of transition.
- K. Of course it has come as a surprise to many that these last days have lasted two thousand years; that is a very long ending, but it is not a surprise for Peter who responds in this way to those who mock:
- 2 Pet. 3:3-8 "knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. 4 They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation... 8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."**
- L. Since the first century there were people who made fun of the fact that they had not arrived, but these two thousand years in the mind of God, actually it's like two days.

III. WE MUST HAVE A SOBER MIND BECAUSE OF OUR PRAYERS

1 Pet. 4:7 "...therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers."

- A. The Holy Spirit through Peter is telling us: use your mind to avoid being controlled by your impulses, controlling your life by evaluating with your mind what should be done and then having a clear mind because of your prayers. Let's see the connection between prayer and the mind. The phrase **"sober mind"** is used three times in the letter.

1 Pet. 1:13 *“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*

- B. These are the ways in which you must fight to have hope; if you have no hope, this is what you have to do; Prepare your mind to go into action. Hope does not come naturally, it is something that requires you to use your mind properly by putting your trust in God's promises. Meditate on the verses that speak of hope and use your mind to strengthen your hope.

1 Pet. 5:8-9a *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith...”*

- C. To resist the devil you must have a sober mind. The full use of the mind to hope allows you to pray more adequately. Hope is the secret of effective prayer (**Heb. 11:6**). This is how we stand firm in the faith and this is how we resist the devil. Do not eliminate the total use of your mind by using alcohol, or wasting your mind by watching or reading things that are not edifying.

IV. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. According to what the Scripture says, is there a second chance for the unsaved after death? Explain
2. How do we know that we are indeed living in the end times?
3. How do you use your mind to hope and pray more accurately?

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **The School for Parents has already started.** You can still register at housesoflight.org
2. **Holy58 Youth Service this Wednesday 26 at 7:00 p.m.**
3. **Hallelujah Night Family Event! Monday October 31 from 4:00 p.m.**
4. **The Restoration House Ministry is now available in person Thursday and Friday and also online.** For more information you can go to the table outside.