

Ezekiel 9:1-11

Six men (in all probability, angels of God) were ordered by God to go through the city of Jerusalem, and to set a mark upon the foreheads of every one of God's children, upon the foreheads of every one that worships me in Spirit and in truth; those who have sighed and wept and lamented for all of the abominations that had been committed in the city.

There was a distinction made those that were genuine children of God, and those that were not unbelievers and NOT children of God; those that had filled Jerusalem with their sin, abominations, and idolatry.

In God's judgments, He always make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Genesis 18:23-26.

Exodus 12:21-23, Revelation 7:1-3

The angels (in Ezekiel 9:6) were commanded to come not near any man upon whom is the mark. And then, the most sobering words of this passage: And begin at my sanctuary.

BEGIN with the ancient men that were before the house of the LORD; commence my judgment upon those that are closest to me; those that know my Word, my law, my precepts, and my commands, but they refused to obey them!

Begin with those that have received so much of my goodness and grace, so much of my mercy and love and kindness! Judge them first! And then afterward, go out to all of the city of Jerusalem.

Now to our text: 1 Peter 4:17: For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Peter has more than once taught us about the sufferings that will come to the child of God; last week, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

In the Old Testament scriptures and in times when the Kingdoms of Israel and of Judah departed from true worship of God; when the people of God went after other gods and sinned against God, He sent sore judgments upon them. God sent the Chaldeans and Nebuchadnezzar to besiege and destroy the city of Jerusalem.

This judgment that Peter speaks of, that will take place in the church is a judgment that will happen in our day, and in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For the time IS come that judgment MUST begin at the house of God

We know that there will be a day when God shall judge the secrets of every single human that ever lived: Revelation 20:11-15

Romans 14:12: So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God

On that day when all of the nations shall be gathered to the judgment seat of Christ, He shall separate EVERY individual person one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from

the goats. And the Lord shall say to those on His right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world
And to those on His left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and His angels

But from our text this morning, Peter has written to us about a judgment from God, (in the church); it has already begun, and it will continue until the end of the age.

The time is come that judgment MUST begin at the house of God

When is that time? When is this judgment on the church going to happen? It's happening ALREADY; God will judge His church and continue to judge His church until the end of the age.

What is this judgment that will FIRST begin in the church; at the house of God, with US?

God is going to find out the sins of His children and in His church, and He is going to judge it now; He is going to purge it and deal with it NOW in this life. He will purge it from the hearts and lives of those of us that are CLOSEST to Him; in US FIRST, who profess to be saved from our sins!

Proverbs 11:31

Do not forget the design of your sufferings as children of God: Your sufferings/fiery trials are designed by God to cultivate (in us) complete dependence and trust in Him, they are also designed by God to drive sin out of our lives, and so understand that YOUR trials are for our own sanctification and holiness! 1 Peter 4:1-2

You and I are far more accountable than those that don't sit under the preaching of God's Word week after week. You KNOW God's revealed will and His commands! That's why judgment begins first at the house of God!

Matthew 11:20-24, Luke 12:47-48

Christian, you need to understand that the church is GOD'S house; called a habitation of God through the Spirit and the household of God; the church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth!

If you profess to be a partaker of the new birth and a child of God, then you also profess God to be YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER. If that is all true, and it is, then know that God, as a Father, is most certainly going to govern His house and His children. So, for all who join themselves to His church, they will be treated as His children.

Example of when my children were growing up.
Discipline/love.

If there were other children at our home visiting our children, and something happened that our children CLEARLY knew that they shouldn't do, I can remember telling them, YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER! You've been told!

Child of God, there may be sins in your life that God has clearly revealed to you, about YOU, and yet you continue to commit those same sins; you should KNOW BETTER!

Beloved, God is a Good Father; He is going to govern and His house, He is going to govern His church, and His children who

are called by His Name!
When we sin, He is going to chastise (discipline) and correct us.

Hebrews 12:1-11, 1 Corinthians 11:26-32, Revelation 3:19

God's judgments against sin will begin at the house of God (in His church), and in the lives of His own children; to those closest to God and to those who profess to know God and believe the gospel of God!

If God FIRST brings sore judgments upon His house and His own people for their sins, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

What shall the end bring to the countless millions who give no thought at all to turning from their wicked ways to Jesus Christ; what shall their end be who give no thought at all to the truth of the gospel, nor the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Your judgments and your sufferings child of God are nothing when compared to what awaits the wicked.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-12, Romans 2:7-8

(V18): And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Before I tell you (child of God) that you are scarcely saved, let me first tell you (child of God) that you are surely saved! 1 Peter 1:3-5, Jude 24-25.

On God's side, we are surely saved; on our side, we are scarcely saved.

YOU Christian will be faced with the greatest difficulties and temptations to leave your first love and to depart from the faith of Christ. Sin and the love of the world will present itself to you DAILY; the god of this world doesn't care that you're in Christ, He is out to get you back into his kingdom. Every one of us is admonished and warned over and over again in the Holy Scriptures to HOLD FAST to Christ!

Hebrews 3:6: But Christ as a Son over His own house; WHOSE HOUSE YE ARE, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end

Hebrews 3:12-14, Matthew 24:12-13, Acts 14:19-22, Luke 13:23-27

Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

If there is so much difficulty facing true and genuine children of God; if sin is still SO dangerous to the child of God, oh how dangerous is it to those that obey not the gospel of God?

As hard and difficult as the sufferings of the Christian are in this life, they are for the Christian's good and sanctification. These sufferings are conforming us to the image of Christ.

They are nothing in comparison to what is at the end of the sinners' life, who will suffer and be punished for their sins eternally and endlessly in hell.

The smoke of their torment goeth up day and night for ever and ever.

