

What Will Be the Outcome?

For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1 Pet 4:17)

Peter said it was hard to find out what Paul was trying to say, but now we're trying to find out what Peter was trying to say here. There's a question here that requires an answer. I guess in the context the next verse is talking about us when it says the *righteous*, and it asks another question.

And if the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner? (1 Pet 4:18)

So what is the answer to the question in verse 17? The gospel is something that has to be obeyed. You can't just "believe" it, but there's a qualification, something you have to *do*, as our Master said to the rich young ruler. He couldn't just "believe" and hold on to all his possessions, but he had to *obey* what the Master told him. What will happen to people who don't obey the gospel?

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. (Rom 1:18)

What does *suppress* mean? They consciously force it out of their mind until they regress¹ into a state of repression.² When their conscience is in a state of repression, to where they don't think about it any more, they can do anything they want to, and it doesn't register somehow that they're doing evil. They're not listening to their conscience anymore. They become calloused. That's why there are people in the world that can do certain things to others without any outward sign of regret or remorse. A serial killer is the extreme, but there are many more common examples of the unjust and filthy. God's wrath is revealed from heaven against those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

¹ Regress — revert to an earlier, less mature, and less adaptive emotional or mental level, often involving the appearance of irresponsible forms of behavior.

² Repression — The classical defense mechanism that protects you from impulses or ideas that would cause anxiety by preventing them from becoming conscious.

Everyone knows the difference between good and evil. Sin is knowing the good to do and not doing it (Jms 4:17). That sin has to be forgiven, or you die for it. The wages of sin is death — at least the first death. But if you go into a state of repression by continuous suppression of your conscience, then you go to the second death, which is never-ending. Our Master said that death is a place of torment (Lk 16:28). People choose to go there. Everyone chooses for himself his eternal destiny.

Rom 1:19-20 — What can be known about God is evident to all men. He's made it that way, so that all are without excuse. His divine nature is clearly seen in what He has made. We were feeding the goats today from the pepper tree — they love that stuff — but if it falls on the ground and I pick it up and try to feed it to them, they won't eat it. Goats won't eat something dirty. Even though they love it, they'll sniff it, and if it's unclean, they won't eat it. Why? Because our Father has made them that way so that they won't eat filth, so that we can have good milk. So anyone who knows anything about goats is going to be responsible to acknowledge the goodness of our Creator. They have to say, "Wow! The Creator of this goat loves us so much that He won't let that goat eat anything filthy, for our sake!" I even tried to trick the goats, offering something they hadn't seen fall on the ground, but they wouldn't eat it — not even the little baby — even though they would normally gobble it down.

So people are without excuse. They cannot say, "I didn't know that the sun came up every day." They complained about the sun, that it was too hot. Even if their conscience isn't speaking to them anymore, they're without excuse, because they allowed it to go into that state of repression. They didn't start out that way. It started with suppression — a deliberate act of consciously forgetting the knowledge of good and evil.

"The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" It doesn't mean that he says it with his lips, that there's no God. But he acts as though there's no God, there's no judgment, so he won't have to answer for the things he does. We see people like that every day. They drive by and throw trash out of their window, as if God doesn't see them throwing

trash all over the streets. That's just one little thing, but their life is consistent. Many of us were becoming fools, and then we heard the Good News that told us we were fools, and we were cut to the heart and repented. Somehow our consciences hadn't gone into repression yet.

Throwing trash out of the car window shows what a person's whole life is like, just as some of the little things we do as a disciple show what our discipleship is like, what we really think about our Father, as if He doesn't see us.

Rom 1:21 — “For although they *knew* God...” This is an innate knowing, not a personal or intimate knowing, such as we know Him. It's what the natural law teaches. But “... they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools...” You can see that in movie stars and models and professors in college. They suppressed their inherent knowledge of God to pursue their own selfish desires for wealth and fame.

We're looking at Rom 1:18-22 so that we can understand 2 Ths 1:8-9.

2 Ths 1:4-10 starts out talking about the Edah, about their endurance and faith, and the persecutions and afflictions they were enduring which was clear evidence of God's righteous judgment, that they would be counted worthy of the Kingdom, and that God would be justified in repaying with affliction those who afflicted them:

“... in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Sovereign Yahshua.” (2 Ths 1:8)

1) Those who *refused* to know God — the ones Rom 1:18-32 is talking about.

2) Those who do not *obey* the gospel — this answers the question of 1 Pet 4:17, “What will be the outcome of those who do not obey the gospel?” They've heard the gospel, but they refuse to believe it to the point of obeying it, just as in Jn 3:18 and 3:36. They're judged already; they don't even have to appear at the judgment, but go right on into the lake of fire, just like the Beast and the False Prophet (Rev 19:20). They are those

who have come in contact with a righteous sent one (Jn 7:18; 2 Cor 4:2), they've heard the true gospel, and they consciously reject it (do not obey the good news of salvation).

Those in Rom 2:7,14-16 who are judged worthy of a second life (Jn 5:28-29) had never heard the true gospel, but lived according to their conscience, according to their innate knowledge of God. They've never heard the good news and didn't know about the true Son of God, but they've lived an upright life, never letting their conscience go into repression. They felt bad every time they sinned. Even though they couldn't be forgiven, at least they could find (in a natural sense) forgiveness from the person they hurt.

So 1 Pet 4:17 is the question and 2 Ths 1:8-9 is the answer for those outside of "God's household." But what about the judgment of God's household? What kind of judgment begins with us?

1 Cor 16:22 is a judgment — whoever does not love our Master will be cut off, *anathema*, as Paul calls on our Master to come quickly and judge (*maranatha*). And then 2 Cor 5:10 speaks of a judgment of the Edah, according to whether each one of us did the works prepared for us to do, by the grace He supplies. That's the only way we can be prepared for our Master's return — by doing those works (Rev 19:8). That means we all have to be adjusted properly in the Body of Messiah so that each one of us can do the works prepared for us to do, according to our gifts and the measure of faith we have.

Baruch — Looking at the context from 1 Pet 4:12-13, we have to go through the same sufferings and struggles that He went through, and He was judged righteous by going through His sufferings without complaint, and so in the same way, when our sufferings come, maybe that's the time of judgment for the house of God. How do we respond to sufferings? Do we give into complaint, throw up our hands, prove unfaithful? Or do we respond like our Master...

Or do we endure to the end, as in Mt 24:13? There has to be a house cleansing, so we can be sure there's suffering up ahead, all over the world, in the twelve tribes. We have to be rid of the natural among us who don't know our Master, but gut it out in the flesh, always complaining, never satisfied. They try to love but there's no love in their

heart. So when the suffering comes all the thieves and robbers will be ferreted out — thieves of all our time and robbers of all our energy (Jn 10:1) — because they can't take it. But those who are genuine will endure to the end (Mt 24:13); they rejoice in their sufferings, knowing it's doing something great in their lives. And it's cleansing the house of those who don't really love our Master. That's what Paul said — let those who don't love our Master be accursed, cut off.

At the end of the age we'll go to the judgment of 2 Cor 5:10, and our reward will be according to our works, to determine our worthiness to rule with Messiah in the Kingdom Age (Rev 3:4,5,21). It's not just what we did, but how we did it, in the proper use of the glory given to us (Jn 17:22).

So you can see in Rev 3:21 that there are many things each one of us has to overcome. There's not one person here who doesn't have to overcome certain things, one at a time, to prosper in his life, advance toward the goal (Phil 3:9-15), and we can't put it off until the last minute. Did our Master have anything to overcome? He had to overcome the evil one, that's for sure. He didn't sin. He had to overcome more than we could ever imagine.

In Rev 3:20 He's talking about those who aren't in fellowship with Him, but they still belong to Him. They're going on in their own natural strength. He's knocking on the door of their heart. He desires intimate fellowship with them. He's departed from their heart, but is still *in* them. Just as it is for husbands and wives, they can be in union but not communion with one another.

So we all have many things to overcome, to win the victory over whatever would keep us from being worthy to rule with our Master in the Kingdom age. Some say, "Oh, I'll take care of that later; right now I'm just going to enjoy myself." But after every letter to the churches in Rev 2 and 3 it ends with, "Whoever overcomes..." Whoever has an ear, they need to hear what the Spirit says to the Community. This is discerning the Body of our Master.

1 Cor 11:27-32 really goes into it about judging ourselves. If you don't examine yourself, you're going to go into the Breaking of Bread and you're going to be judged, just like it says in 1 Cor 16:22.

A judgment involves a trial or testing. There are always certain situations in the Community that we're tested by. 1 Tim 6:6 — "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Wherever you're working, you're doing it in a godly way, being content, not feeling sorry for yourself, or in communion with a victim spirit, not being envious of someone else. All the things we go through continually test us and we are accountable for them in that judgment. 1 Cor 3:10-15 is the evaluation of our works — how we worked in the kitchen. Did we work in a godly way, with contentment? What we do and how we do it, and what we say and how we say it determines our inner worth or glory.

Judgment in 1 Pet 4:17 doesn't necessarily imply condemnation to us, but it does to those who don't obey the gospel. So we want to write freepaper articles about this to help others who are not obeying the gospel, to make them wake up before it's too late. And we also need to examine ourselves. We can just read 1 John and examine ourselves pretty well. We know that we've passed out of death and into life if we love our brothers. We know that our Master laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. We know we must love one another just as He loved us (Jn 13:34-35; 1 Jn 3:14,16,23). We know we can't wait for others to love us — that would be hating our brother (1 Jn 4:20).

Sometimes we get into a "poor me" mode, sulking, thinking that no one is loving me so I'm not going to love anyone else. I'm just going to wait until someone loves me. You'll never prosper like that. You have to overcome that victim spirit. To ignore someone is the highest form of hatred. What about that brother that you deliberately ignore? You don't like being around him. You may make fun of him in a spiteful way. You might reason, "I don't like that brother; he's pretty carnal." Well, you're pretty carnal, too, for not loving him enough to go tell him his sin. You're probably more

carnal. You're not discerning the Body. You can think you love everyone except that one brother, but maybe he's the one that shows you haven't passed out of death and into life. We know we've passed out of death and into life because we love the brethren — not just the ones you choose, who are easy to love.

Kepha Masse, in the very beginning of Island Pond, would quote 2 Chr 16:9, that our Father's eyes are going to and fro throughout the earth seeking and searching for those whose hearts are toward Him. He's still doing that. He has eyes, but where are His arms and legs? He's in a higher place, but He's got to have arms and legs to carry out His will. Have you ever seen a person that our Father was looking for, who was willing to do His will? And you went up to that person and brought him home? Our Father needs some arms and legs to do that. What if His eyes are looking to and fro, but He doesn't have anyone to bring them home? "We know the way, we'll bring you home."

So we have to be *with* our Father. It's His ministry, and He gives us that same ministry. He has the eyes, and we have the feet and hands. He's a little bit higher up so He can see. He could see Damien³ on the streets. He knew he was willing to do His will. So we have to be led by the Spirit. If we're not led by the Spirit (Rom 8:14), we're not the sons of God, are we? We have to be concerned as much as our Father is concerned — with Him in His concern for those His eyes are searching for. That's how all of us were added all over the world.

Keli — I can see that in what you read in 1 Pet 4:17 why it's so important that we obey Him, because it doesn't do any good for Him to have the eyes if He doesn't have those that obey Him, that are the arms and the legs. If there aren't those that obey Him, then the One with the eyes can never get to the people He's found that need Him. To be one who knows Him but doesn't obey Him is deserving of judgment. My abba (Kepha Masse) lived in Island Pond, Vermont, the end of nowhere. So the reason why it struck him when he read 2 Chr 16:9 is because somehow our Father was

³ Yônêq had found Damien in downtown Fort Myers and brought him home. He was saved a week after this teaching.

obviously looking from somewhere and saw him way up there in Island Pond, and He had arms and legs that could come and find him.

It became a glorious community up there, a model for us. We had fifteen households. We didn't complain when it was cold. We were just thankful when our Father warmed us up with the stoves He provided for us. Someone sold a car and we got some stoves.

David Zerubbabel — It's so ironic, talking about the fools who say in their heart that there is no God (Ps 14:1), to see how so many of the Christians were at the Billy Graham Crusade in New York City. We went there because we believed that there are some who are disillusioned in that system, who if they could just meet us and hear the gospel — not the watered-down gospel, but hear what our Master did for them and the cost of following Him — they would come. And we brought some people home, and I'm sure there will be more to follow. But so many there say with their *lips* that there is a God and they are saying, "Praise the Lord" all the time, but in their *hearts* they say that there's no judgment for them, that it doesn't matter how they live their life, even as a so-called Christian. It's a masterful deception. It's not that they say it with their *lips*, but they say in their *heart* that there's no God. It doesn't matter what they do, because they've got their ticket to heaven, so now they can just coast along and it won't make any difference in that day.

That's why we have to write about verses like 1 Pet 4:17 so that people who are sensitive can be shaken from their false confidence. What does it mean that judgment begins in the household of God? What is that judgment, and what does He judge by, and what are the consequences of coming up short? What is the household of God anyway?

David Derush — It says, "If the righteous are scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" I know our Father's heart is that He sent His Son to save the ungodly and the sinner. It says in Rom 5:8 that God showed His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. It seems that there's an exhortation in this for us not to be "scarcely saved." Because if we're "scarcely saved," how will the ungodly and the sinners find salvation? The standard of judgment for the household of God is to be so much more than "scarcely saved." In 1 Pet 4:1 it says how our Master suffered in the flesh, so therefore we're supposed to arm ourselves with the same attitude, and then in verse 7 he says the end of all things is at hand, therefore we're supposed to be a certain way. Then he lists a half

a dozen things that would seem to be the standard for judgment of the household of God. The only way you can live up to that standard is to walk in the Spirit. If we who have the Spirit don't truly surrender ourselves and walk in it, if we're content to be "scarcely saved," then how is our Father going to shine a light bright enough to give faith to the ungodly and the sinner?

1 Pet 4:8 — There's a reason why it says "above all." You can see it also in Jms 5:19-20. "Above all have a fervent love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins." How does it cover a multitude of sins? Well, James tells us. It means that if people are just "scarcely being saved," you go to them and find out why. Their sins have piled up, because there's a sin that hasn't been confessed and everything else is piling up behind it — all their subsequent sins haven't been forgiven either. That's the "multitude of sins" that can be covered if you love him enough to go to him and help him judge himself and confess that sin that's jamming everything up. You'll save his soul from death and allow our Master's blood to cover that multitude of sins so they can be forgiven. Then you've won that brother back again, and he's not just "scarcely saved."

Deborah — It says, "if anyone strays from the truth." It doesn't say, "if anyone is caught in a sin." I thought about how years ago, Ayal gave the example of when you're on a ship and you go off course just one degree on the compass, you don't notice it, but a little time passes and you're way off course, so far from the goal. That's why it's so important for us to go quickly to someone who seems to be going off course. Then it wouldn't require such a drastic correction.

Chazaq — I appreciate Deborah sharing that, and I thought how the word *compassion* has the word *compass* in it, and how it's genuine compassion to go to your brother when you see him going off course. If we're that way, we won't have to fear judgment, if we show mercy and compassion to one another.

Baruch — I got more insight into Rom 1:22 tonight, about how suppression leads to regression, which leads to repression. In view of Dan 12:4, knowledge is increasing so fast, and there are so many professors and professions... When was the first time that someone looked at childbirth and instead of just falling on his face at the miracle that our Father caused to happen, it was a celebration of the triumphant AMA (American Medical

Association)? At some point that happened, and it's all gone downhill from there. Have you ever looked at a rainbow and thought, "Oh, that's no big deal. It's just a bunch of particles of moisture with the sun shining through it, producing a prismatic effect. It's no big deal at all"? Or looking at what a seed has to go through to become an oak tree.

When people look at those things and think, "No big deal," what is really going on? You see the suppression of the conscience and the inborn knowledge of God, and those who are the wisest of the wise by the world's standards are the ones who are making themselves into the greatest fools. Then everything the scripture says about fools will come upon them.

It's amazing the progression of what happens when people fail to see our Father in things. It starts with small things, like throwing a soda can out the window, but why didn't that person look at the landscape and have respect for it? Something failed in his human soul so that he didn't respect those things anymore. Eventually, nearly all will become fools.

Isa 24:4-6 says few are left who keep the everlasting covenant of conscience.

Natan — To claim to know our Father but not obey Him — what your life is like after that misrepresents Him. It must hurt Him to see it. There's someone desperately wanting to find Him and someone tells him to go find a Bible-believing church.

So he goes and finds a building, and the people who go to that church live ten or twenty miles away in different directions, and they drive on Sunday to get there because of some famous preacher. That's it. I hope we can write about this and wake people up, "Hello? Are you there? Wake up! Rise from the dead!"

I'm thankful we didn't have to send Damien to a brick building and let him sit out there all week long until Sunday morning. Then no one would bring him home anyway — they might possibly *take* him home (to wherever *he* lived), but they wouldn't *bring* him home (to where *they* live). I'm so thankful our Father has made a home for the lonely.

ha-êmeq — I was thinking about the judgment. There are two ideas about the word *judgment*. "Oh, they're always just bringing judgment..." But actually *judgment* is a good word. It's learning all the facts and letting you know where you're at. Like when Baruch was teaching the Black Box class, at a certain point he called on each student to share from what he'd

learned, like Hanan did the other night, and that was a judgment, and we all approved, because he'd done well. That's what a test is for, and that's why cramming for a test is bad because you didn't really learn anything.

Someone might come to you and say, "How are you doing?" and you say, "Oh, I'm fine." But you know where you're really at, and what's going on in there, what you've been giving yourself to. And the person goes away with this uncomfortable feeling that you're not really doing fine, but he tries to think the best. But if there was really a judgment, where your life was opened up and things brought to the light, then everything would become clear, and you would know where you really stand. So as 1 Pet 4:17 says, "It's time for judgment to begin now in the household of God," because we don't really want to just shine everybody on. We want to know where we're at and not be hypocrites.

"Don't tell Yônêq." Are we that way? Those kinds of thoughts show that we really don't believe our Father is watching, and that there will be a judgment. But we're not just playing around here. We want to be real, and let judgment begin with us. We have to love the way our Master loved.

I want the judgment to begin now so that we can be who we were created to be. That's what we all cried out for in baptism, to be those people.

It's going to be a rude awakening if judgment doesn't begin now (Eph 5:8-15; 1 Jn 1:6-7; Jn 8:12).