

TITLE: "Armed for Suffering" (Part 7)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 4:6

THEME: *The time for sinning is past, the time for suffering is now, so suffer well!*

NUMBER: 10081Pe4.6(88)

DATE: October 12, 2008

{{Read Passage}}

[i] Refocus our attention to the main point of this passage

We took a bit of a detour t/past three times we've been in this text - universalism. That study was a by-product of v.6 which is one verse that universalists attempt to use in their contention that there is some sort of 2d chance for salvation after death.

While we're done with that aspect of our study there is one loose thread that I left hanging. If you don't mind, I'd like to take out my scissors & snip it off.

One reason why universal salvationists appeal to v. 6 of this chapt. is because they draw a line in their Bibles from 3:19. They connect these two verses {universalists' argument}

One popular universalist author writes of 3:19 ==>

"These words amount to a complete overthrow of the popular view of the state of the sinful dead [i.e. "hell"]; for plainly they assert a process of redemption as going on after death. Remark, carefully, who they were to whom Christ took the Gospel, and whom, as the following passage shows, He saved. They were those who had sinned against the greatest light known in their day, and DIED IN THEIR SINS."

If you were here when we studied that text, you know that it has

nothing at all to do with Christ taking the Gospel to men who died in their sins.

[ii] Review of 3:18-22

"Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation"

I. Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation (18-22)

A. Christ's Victory Came Through Suffering

He triumphed through suffering & t/connection is that our vict/tri. comes t/same way.

Christ suffered for a time so that we could be saved for eternity

a. The Fact of Christ's Suffering (18a)

For even Christ suffered . . .

(1) Might remember that there is a textual variant here

Some translations have "died"; others have "suffered." Not a trans. issue, but a textual; one. Two different words.

I think t/reading "suffered" is preferred. Peter never uses the word "died" but 11x he uses this word for "suffer."

Not a big deal: either way, the meaning remains t/same because t/word "suffered" points toward X's death.

That was t/fact of Christ's suffering. He suffered. We cannot think of our Lord's earthly ministry w/o thinking of t/intense sufferings he experienced.

b. The Nature of Christ's Suffering

... concerning sin ...

(1) Christ Suffered for Sin and Because of Sin

(a) Not His Own Sin (He was Sinless)

1 Peter 1:19 - "The Lamb unblemished and spotless"

(2) His Suffering was Unique and Unrepeatable

For even Christ suffered once for all concerning sin ...

(a) περὶ (concerning) ἁμαρτιῶν (sin/sins) points to a sin offering

Get that? When these two words for t/phrase "concerning sin" a sin offering is in mind. Peter is thinking of X's death in terms of a sin offering. Also used that way in Heb. 5:3 and 10:26.

(b) Not just any sin offering - unique sin offering

Unique in that it is final, sufficient, unrepeatable. There is no other suffering, no other offering that can make atonement for sin. We do not suffer for sin; our suffering is not expiatory (doesn't remove our guilt).

That it is unrepeatable is clear from the words used ==>

For even Christ suffered once for all concerning sin ...

(c) It was a ἄπαξ (HAPAX)

Word refers to something that is unique and unrepeatable.

Here's t/contrast. The OT sacrifices were repeatable.

The tabernacle & temple in Jerusalem had regular sacrifices for sin that were going on all the time. Some, like the DOA, were repeated yearly.

All of these repeated bloody sacrifices foreshadowed a final bloody sacrifice that would be a ἄπαξ !!! The sacrificial death of Christ (was for sin, it was t/just for the unjust, it was to reconcile us to God) was sufficient. It can never be rivaled or repeated. It's done!

Sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for our sin. We can't add to it and we can't take away from it. It is perfect.

Not only was X's suffering for sin and unrepeatable, it was also ==>

(3) . . . Vicarious

(a) "Vicarious" is a Latin term that means "in the place of" or "a substitute"

JC suffered, died, & was resurrected, not for Himself, but for whom? Us! For His CH, for t/elect.

Christ suffered once for all concerning sin, the just for the unjust... (or "the righteous" for the unrighteous" would be another way to translate it).

(b) He is the just, or the righteous one

(c) We are the unjust or the unrighteous ones

Peter takes the same word for righteous δίκαιος & adds the prefix "a " to it (that's called an alpha privative) which makes it not δίκαιος (righteous), but ἀδίκος (unrighteous). We are t/opposite of righteous. We are anything but righteous.

This same word is translated "wicked" in Acts 24:15. To be ἀδίκος is

to be in t/final analysis "wicked."

c. The Purpose of Christ's Suffering

(1) Christ's Suffering Reconciles us to God the Father

... in order to reconcile us to God-

JC satisfied the just penalty of the broken law which we incurred by our disobedience. He removed t/barrier that barred our access to God. By faith & repentance we are led into the presence of God the Father by God the Son, dressed in the righteousness of JC Himself. That is not merely good news, that's great news!

Peter goes on ==>

B. His Suffering Ended With His Death

He who was put to death in the flesh . . .

C. His Suffering was Vindicated by His Resurrection

... but made alive by the Spirit.

1. Some translations have "made alive in the spirit"

This could be translated either way. 1) made alive in the spirit; 2) made alive by the Spirit. Ancient MSS didn't have capitalization. Would have been all capitals (uncials) or all lower case (miniscules). Interpretive issue.

Contrast is between his death and His resurrection. And we know that t/H.S. was an agent of His resurrection.

He was resurrected "according to the Spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4). Romans 8:11 talks about "the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead."

Therefore, the idea is that he was made alive by the Holy Spirit resulting in His resurrection from the dead.

1 Timothy 3:16 **And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit . . .**

("flesh" = body, as here, and "Spirit" refers to the Holy Spirit, as here).

2. There is a contrast that we'll see later to 4:6

|| put to death in the flesh || made alive in the Spirit

3. The thought here in v. 18 is:

He [JC] who was put to death in the flesh [He died a real death - why he became man so that he could taste death for us], **but made alive** [resurrected] **by the Spirit** [Holy Spirit].

This leads right into verses 19 and 20 ==>

D. The Triumph of Christ's Suffering (19-20)

"By which" goes back to the word "Spirit" in verse 18. IOW

By which [Spirit] also He went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison.

1. Note that it says that He went and preached

a. To whom did He go?

. . . to the spirits in prison.

b. Who are "the spirits in prison?"

Universal salvationists contend that they are men who died during the time of Noah. Men from the wicked generation.

Remember our universalist authority who appeals to this passage==>
"Remark, carefully, who they were to whom Christ took the Gospel,
and whom, as the following passage shows, He saved.

They were those who had sinned against the greatest light known in
their day, and died in their sins."

(1) That's clearly not the case

If Peter wanted to say that Christ preached to men who had died, he
would have used the word for man - αντηρωπος - or perhaps t/word
ψυχαι (souls) as he does in v. 20.

Rather, he uses a word that's almost w/o exception used of angels or
demons when it's in the plural as it is here.

Only one exception in the NT and that's when it's used with a Genitive
as in Heb. 12:23. Every other occurrence is of angels or demons, and
there are many examples of that.

**c. BTW - the word used in 4:6 of preaching the Gospel in
evangelism is not the same word used here**

This is X declaring His victory, not X proclaiming the Gospel.

D. The Triumph of Christ's Suffering (19-20)

So, if this verse means that JC went somewhere and proclaimed victory
over spirits whom we know aren't men, but demons, where did He go
and who were these spirits?

1. First of all, you might notice that they are imprisoned

... the spirits in prison

These are imprisoned angels. Demons.

a. Remember (we looked at this last time) angelic beings fall into two basic categories

(a) Holy elect angels (1 Tim. 2:4) -

these are those angels whom God created in a state of confirmed holiness. They did not join t/rebellion of Satan.

(b) Evil, fallen angels (demons)

And these fallen angels may be sub-categorized into two: 1) Bound; 2) Loosed. Demons are either bound or loosed. IOW - they are either imprisoned or they are free (under t/sov. control of God, but free).

b. These are imprisoned demons that Peter is talking about

2. Question is, why?

Who are they and why are they imprisoned? Answered in next v. ==> **who formerly were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built . . .**

a. This brings us back to time of Noah, before Great Flood

This is same group that Peter refers to in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude in v. 6.

2 Peter 2:4-5 **4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; 5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;**

(1) This is a direct parallel to 1 Peter 3:19 and 20

Same elements are there: Noah, t/flood, & imprisoned, disobedient spirits (clarified here as angels). Not men, but fallen angels or demons.

(a) As a result of their sin or disobedience they were cast into **ταρταρος**

- a pit of darkness where they await final judgement.

Jude 6-7 6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day. 7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

Couple of things you need to note here: Again we have angels, demons, who are imprisoned. Reason? They did not keep their own "domain" and they abandoned their proper "abode." Verse 7 - they ISW as S&G indulged in "gross immorality" & "went after strange flesh."

Reference to t/homosexuality that was rampant in Sodom. It's called "gross immorality" and an indulgence in "strange flesh." IOW - something that's strange or unnatural.

Peter and Jude are all drawing from the same Jewish tradition outlined in the book of Enoch.

Enoch was never part of the Jewish canon of Scripture. Wasn't part of the Old Testament Apocrypha. Technically, the Book of Enoch is part of the Jewish pseudepigrapha.

Among the things that t/Book of Enoch addresses are angels who

abandoned their rightful place to defile themselves with women. That's t/"gross immorality and strange flesh" that Jude talks about.

b. That account is found in Genesis Chapter 6

Satan's attempt to pollute the human race and thwart t/coming of t/Messiah. The ultimate purpose of Satan is to counter and counterfeit the plan of God, especially as it relates to the Gospel. Goes all t/way back to the fall of men into sin. "Has God said..."

Ever since that time, Satan has tried to prevent the coming of the Messiah. During t/OT he did so by means of the attempted genocide of the Jews as recorded in t/book of Esther. The attempt to destroy t/Messianic line itself during t/time of Joash.

When he couldn't prevent X from being born, he orchestrated t/events in Matt. 2 where King Herod had all t/male children in Bethlehem 2 yrs. and younger killed. Jesus escaped because an angel warned Joseph in a dream to leave Bethlehem for Egypt.

When Satan failed to have Jesus murdered as a baby, he tried to defeat Him by tempting Him to sin (Matt. 4:1-11).

(1) In Genesis 6 we have one of those early attempts to prevent the coming Savior of men

(a) It was an attempt to pollute the human race

After all, if the defeat of Satan was to come through a woman (3:15), how better to prevent that from happening than to somehow corrupt t/entire race of humans.

(b) We covered this in detail back on June 29th

This is a review. If you want t/full treatment get a copy of Message #80 in this series.

(c) Reader's Digest Version

Mankind was spreading throughout the middle-east and beyond. And what are referred to as "sons of God" came and took wives for themselves.

"Sons of God" = Hebrew phrase "bene elohim". An idiom for angels. In every place where the phrase occurs, angelic beings are to be understood.

The "Sons of God" stand in juxtaposition w/the "daughters of men." Contrast is between supernatural beings & human women.

Genesis 6:4 ==>

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

Jews understood this passage as referring to "Watchers" - fallen angels who left their proper place to marry human females, have children who were mighty warriors, & teach forbidden arts & practices.

These are shut way in a prison by God, awaiting their final judgement Book of Enoch records their judgement & Enoch who was sent to these imprisoned spirits in order to announce their condemnation.

These are demonic spirits who, entered into wicked men (just as Satan entered into an animal in Gen. 3). This is t/first recorded instance of

demon possession. They were probably powerful rulers, empowered by demons, who took women as wives. Because materially they were men, they could procreate.

We know from passages like Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Daniel 10:13 that earthly rulers/kings can have demonic forces ruling behind them. IOW their power is demonic.

This is perhaps the most heinous effort of Satan to corrupt humanity by producing an evil, demon-controlled mongrel race.

God responded by wiping out the entire race with the exception of Noah, his wife, three children and their wives.

And t/demons involved were condemned & imprisoned awaiting final judgement.

18 For even Christ suffered once for all concerning sin, the just for the unjust, in order to reconcile us to God--He who was put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit. 19 By which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison. 20 who formerly were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

Evident that Peter isn't talking about Christ preaching the gospel to people who have died so that they could have another chance to be saved.

Grammatical evidence - word "spirits" isn't normally used of t/spirits of men, but of angels and demons. Historical evidence - Peter is drawing from t/Jewish Book of Enoch & Jewish tradition.

Biblical evidence - Parallels to 2 Peter, Jude, and Genesis 6

Theological evidence - there is no such thing as universal salvation or a second chance after death. To see that here is to play fast and loose w/the Bible.

Now - refocus your attention to chapter 4...

We have titled this section (vv. 1-6) - "Armed for the Purpose of Suffering."

It's a passage that's about suffering. In fact, the main force of t/text comes right out of t/first 2 vv. ==>

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 for as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men but for the will of God.

All that Peter has to say can be related in one way or another to these 2 vv. (suffering of X; our suffering; our break w/sin; our pursuit of God's will).

We went about addressing this passage by means of t/question==>

I. What Does it Mean to be Armed for the Purpose of Suffering? Seven answers to that question . . .

A. To be Armed for the Purpose of Suffering Means We Have Clothed Ourselves With The Attitude of Christ (v 1a)

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same attitude . . .

1. Peter is returning to the thoughts of 3:18

For Christ has suffered for sins, once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God; having been put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.

B. To be Armed for the Purpose of Suffering Means We Have Parted Ways With Our Past Life of Sin (v 1b)

... for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

When you are willingly armed for the purpose of suffering for JC you give evidence that you possess genuine saving faith.

It demonstrates that you have counted all things as loss for His sake and that you have broken from your past life of sin.

Thirdly ==>

C. To be Armed for the Purpose of Suffering Means We Are Engaged in the Pursuit of God's Will, Not Our Own (v 2)

for as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men but for the will of God.

D. *to be armed for the purpose of suffering means* We Know the Season for Sinning is Past (v 3)

For the time already past is sufficient [for you] to have carried out the desires of the pagans, while having pursued licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, partying, drinking binges, and lawless idolatries.

Again, here is where the lines are drawn between the old life and the new. Those who are truly converted know that t/time for living a life of sin has past.

To suffer well, to be AFPOS, means that we pursue t/joy of God's will

rather than on t/fleeting pleasures of sin that once marked our lost estate.

Fifth (verse 4) ==>

E. *to be armed for the purpose of suffering means We Walk Out Of Step With the World (v 4a)*

We dance to a different tune. We swim against the stream.

When we are faithful in living lives of integrity t/response from t/world is going to be two-fold: Surprise & Slander - we see both in v. 4.

1. Surprise

In this they are ever surprised that you do not run with [them] into the same flood of debauchery . . .

IOW - those who knew you as you once were are astonished that you have changed. You no longer pursue ==>

...licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, partying, drinking binges...

But rather you pursue, you run hard after God and His will.

You're out of step. You don't live like they do. You don't
... run with [them] into the same flood of debauchery . . .

And they're shocked. They're disgusted.

Darkness hates the light, so what do they do?

2. Here's the Slander

... [and] they blaspheme [you].

Fifth Point ==>

F. to be armed for the purpose of suffering means We Endure the Scorn of Men (v 4b-5)

... they blaspheme [you].

1. Present Active Participle from βλασφημία

This isn't just one instance; this is continuous abuse. Abusive speech; gossip; insults; derogatory remarks; threats.

2. To be armed for the purpose of suffering means that we endure the scorn

Luke 6:22-23 22 “Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. 23 “Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets.

I. What Does it Mean to be Armed for the Purpose of Suffering?

A. We Have Clothed Ourselves With The Attitude of Christ (v 1a)

B. We Have Parted Ways With Our Past Life of Sin (v 1b)

C. We Are Engaged in the Pursuit of God's Will, Not Our Own (v 2)

D. We Know the Season for Sinning is Past (v 3)

E. We Walk Out Of Step With the World (v 4a)

F. We Endure the Scorn of Men (v 4b-5)

Verse 6 ==>

G. We Live in the Hope of Vindication Beyond Death (v 6)

What does that mean {restate point}?

Vindicated means to be proven right or true. To be justified.

Even as X was vindicated by His resurrection (His resurrection proved that He was who He said He was and came to do what He said He'd do), so also believers live in t/hope of vindication beyond death.

IOW - death for the Christian isn't the last word.

For this purpose, [the Gospel] has been preached even to the dead...

1. Who are these "dead?" Who is Peter talking about?

a. Three options:

(1) Christian Martyr View

Peter is talking about those who believed t/Gospel and are now dead. They may have been martyred or died by other means.

(2) Second chance at salvation view

Peter is referring to those who are dead and heard the Gospel while they were dead so that they could be saved.

(3) Figurative View

That takes the word "dead" not to be physical death, but spiritual death. IOW - Peter is talking about those who were spiritually dead as in Eph. 2 (you were dead in your trespasses and sins...). This, BTW, was t/view of Augustine and Luther.

b. As for the last view (figurative)

Peter nowhere uses the term "dead" to refer to spiritual death. The context of the previous verse refers to those who are physically dead. No evidence of a sudden shift of meaning.

c. We know from what we've studied that he's not talking about a second chance at salvation

So this isn't talking about the gospel being proclaimed to men AFTER they had died.

As I said earlier - universalists they draw a line in their Bibles from this verse to 3:19. There is a connection, but not in t/sense they see it.

It doesn't say here in verse 6 "who" preached. Simply that the gospel was (past-tense) preached.

d. That leaves us with option #1 - Christian Martyr View

I like what t/19th c. expositor Alexander MacLaren writes ==>

"Surely to say that 'the gospel was preached also (or, even) to them that are dead' is not to say that it was preached to them when [they were] dead." [MacLaren, 128]

Peter is clarifying an issue in light of his persecuted audience.

For this purpose, [the Gospel] has been preached even to the dead, that though they are judged according to the flesh as men, they may live by the Spirit according to [the will of] God.

2. What does it mean that ==>

... they are judged according to the flesh as men ... ???

To be "judged according to the flesh as men" means that Xns die like

all men die, Christian or pagan.

Peter's talking about believers here. That's who the "dead" are. Xns who had died.

As I like to say, "This is life; no one gets out alive!"

Being a Christian doesn't mean we escape physical death.

Some of Peter's readers may have been martyred. That's not clear. What is clear is that all were persecuted and all suffered.

That would include Peter.

Remember what Jesus said to him in John 21?

John 21:18-19 18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go." 19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He *said to him, "Follow Me!"

Tradition holds that Peter was crucified upside down.

3. Saving faith in X doesn't mean we escape physical death -

It means we escape eternal death!

... that though they are judged according to the flesh like men, they may live by the Spirit according to [the will of] God.

a. This is something that happened in the past

[The Gospel] for this purpose has been preached even to the dead...

Peter isn't saying that this is something that's happening all the time. He isn't saying that this is something that will always happen, or will happen in the future (universalists' would contend).

This was done in the past. He's drawing from a real, historic example.

(1) "Has been preached" is an aorist passive

This is not preaching done by Christ, but the preaching of Christ.

This is t/proclaiming of t/Gospel by human agents, by men

Romans 10:14-15 **14 How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!"**

These 1st c. Xns had loved ones who came to faith in X and who died as believers. They were among the first saints this side of t/cross.

1:25 But the word of the Lord abides forever." And this is the word which was preached to you.

4. Remember - We're talking about suffering

G. To be armed for the purpose of suffering means - We Live in the Hope of Vindication Beyond Death (v 6)

Hope of vindication. Vindication beyond death. Context.

Peter's readers were being persecuted. As we saw in v. 4, they were being slandered.

5. One of the ways that the adversaries were maligning these believers was by saying things like:

"Yeah, you have such good news. You think you escape judgment. You say your God is great and saves you and gives you joy. All you're doing is missing out on the fun, the sex, the parties. And look, you die just like the rest of us. If your God is so great, why do you suffer? Why do you die? You see, you're no different from the rest of us. We all take the same dirt nap and are eaten by worms. So Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die!"

Peter is reminding us that regardless of the slander, we live in the hope of vindication beyond death. We fix our hope on this. Our eyes are set on JC & that arms us to suffer well!

The gospel was not preached to your dead Christian friends in vain. The reason the gospel was preached to those who have died is so that even though it looks like they have been judged like everybody else, they haven't. They are alive in the spirit.

It's not like Jack K. who answered the question, "What happens after you die?" with the words, "You rot."

God will vindicate His elect and will hold those who persecute them accountable on the day of judgement.

6. Here's the key:

Just as Peter drew from the book of Enoch in 3:18, he draws from another non-canonical source, the Wisdom of Solomon, here.

Wisdom of Solomon was written in t/2nd c. BC. It was widely read by t/Jews & Peter would have been very familiar with it.

"But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself; like the gold in the furnace He tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering He accepted them." [3:1-3]

Same threads of thought as here. The righteous who died. Mockery of unbelievers. Question of God's faithfulness.

Hope in vindication beyond death.

1 Peter 3:18	1 Peter 4:6
For even Christ suffered once for all concerning sin, the just for the unjust, in order to reconcile us to God--He who was put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit.	For this purpose, [the Gospel] has been preached even to the dead, that though they are judged according to the flesh like men, they may live by the Spirit according to [the will of] God.
Christ was crucified and died a real death; but this wasn't the last word as He was vindicated by being raised by the Spirit	Some believers had already died as all men do; but this isn't the last word as their embracing the Gospel ensures that they too will live by the Holy Spirit.
Real death, but resurrection to life	Real death, but resurrection to life.

Consolation and hope. Consolation for those who have lost loved ones in Christ. Hope for those yet alive.

"It is then a remarkable consolation to the godly, that death itself brings no loss to their salvation. Though Christ, then, may not appear a deliverer in this life, yet his redemption is not void, or without effect; for his power extends to the dead." [Calvin]

I think of my dear friends who have died in Christ.

We think of some within our own fellowship over the past few years. Why we don't grieve as the rest who have no hope.

Armed for the Purpose of Suffering....