

I Peter 4:7

What End Was At Hand That Required Sobriety And Watchfulness?

I. Introduction: As we enter into our study today we have to consider some things and we will be build upon such.

A. In the context we are studying, two verses bring up the Judgment (**I Peter 4:5-6**).

1. Verse 17 in the same context can further cloud what we are about to study by two words added in the KJV and ASV 1901 [“is come”].
2. So, the work in our study to rightly divide the word of truth (**II Timothy 2:15**) is not necessarily easy.
3. As we know, just because something can be difficult, we are not excused to draw the wrong conclusions (**II Peter 3:15-18**).

B. There is a fact that we must keep in mind in this study and any that talks about “the end”. That is, no one knows when the Judgment Day and destruction of the earth is going to be (**Matthew 24:35-36** and **Mark 13:31-32**).

1. Such prophetic language (cf. **Ezekiel 7:1-6**) can be alarming if the overall context of the situation is ignored (**Ezekiel 21:2**).
2. So, we have to remember that judgment-like language doesn’t always mean the Judgment Day. Consider the prophesy of Babylon’s destruction as evidence of this (**Isaiah 13:1; 13:6-19**).

II. Body: *“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer”* (**I Peter 4:7**).

A. “The end” is used in reference to what happened in AD 70 (**Matthew 24:13-14**).

1. Such came after the Gospel was preached to all nations, which happened in the first century (**Romans 16:25-26**, **Colossians 1:5-6**, and **Colossians 1:23**).
2. An end that included flight from what was coming (**Mark 13:18-20**).
3. There is no fleeing when the final Judgment comes (**I Thessalonians 4:13-5:3**).

B. The phrase “the end of all things” is what makes this verse challenging.

1. Remember, the context of the destruction of Jerusalem uses the language of “the end” (**Mark 13:7**).
2. The same penmen later wrote about Jesus ending the world being a day wherein Christ will come as a thief in the night (**II Peter 3:9-14**).
3. The end of the temple and system that was in Jerusalem was a visible, prophesied of, highly descriptive day of Judgment coming in the first century (**Matthew 23:37-24:34**, **Mark 13:1-30**, and **Luke 21:5-32**).
4. Thus, the phrase “at hand” is very helpful for us in this study.

- C. Considering phrases such as, “At hand” or “approaching” (**Romans 13:12**).
1. This day at hand was visibly coming (**Hebrews 10:25**).
 2. It was the coming that was drawing nigh (**James 5:8-9**).
 3. This COULD NOT have been the Judgment of the world (**Matthew 24:42-44** and **Matthew 25:13**).
 4. The destruction of Jerusalem was the day approaching as it was promised upon that generation (**Matthew 24:34**, **Mark 13:30**, and **Luke 21:32**).
 5. All of this is being presented because of the mindset these saints needed in preparing for what was and what was to come.
- D. Christians must always be sober in thinking (**Romans 12:3**).
1. This word means in one’s right mind (cf. **Mark 5:15** and **Luke 8:35**).
 2. From young to old and male to female (**Titus 2:2-8**).
- E. “Watch” is defined as: “Of uncertain affinity; to abstain from wine (keep sober), that is, (figuratively) be discreet: - be sober, watch” (Strong’s # 3525).
1. Translated “sober” in other verses (**I Thessalonians 5:6; 5:8**, **I Peter 1:13**, and **I Peter 5:8**).
 2. Timothy was told to watch in all things (**II Timothy 4:5**), so this is not just about one particular thing or person to watch for.
 3. Thayer’s definition includes to be circumspect, which is about being cautious. Think of **Ephesians 5:15-17**
- F. We [saints] should be praying (**Colossians 4:2**).
1. Without ceasing (**I Thessalonians 5:17-18**).
 2. In accordance with the will of the Lord (**I John 5:14-15**) rather than our own desires (**James 4:3**).
 3. Prayer helps keep one’s mind focused on the spiritual rather than the carnal (**Philippians 4:6-7** and **Colossians 4:2**).

III. Conclusion: Our Next Study; *“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen”* (**I Peter 4:8-11**).