

Understanding 1 Peter 4:17 in the Context of Pesher Habakkuk Part I

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It was found that 1 Peter 4:17 is like a layer of onion underneath of which are more layers. Behind the New Testament surface was 1QHab, a commentary on Habakkuk. This Qumran text allocated a difference between the judgment for the faithful and the judgment for the evil. Two different houses are referred to: house of Judah (faithful) VII.7 which will be judged on a specific day and not an ongoing process (VI.9-10) and the house of damnation for the wicked in IX.14. So the processes are separated for faithful and the evil. God decreed times for these. It did not start yet and the periods are long. Imminent expectancy is not foremost. The role of Jubilees and Enoch indicates that they were aware of the year-day principle, the 490 years, thus the long periods of Daniel's prophecy. Since Qumran readers were aware of this principle, aware of the nearness of the First Advent of Christ on the basis of this, the question is what about the correct understanding of the other long periods like the 2300 days/years prophecy? Were the apostles familiar with this also? Since the Investigative Judgment started at the end of the 2300 years in Peter's future and also Qumran readers, does Peter echo the same expectation of Pesher Habakkuk on a specific day for Judgment of the faithful? Preterists deny that and change the reading of Peter's text here by inserting extra verbs or modify some elements in the text to download their "persecution" of the faithful explanation. But, since Peter stated that the judgment has yet to start, it was not ongoing at that time. The misreadings by the versions of 1 Peter 4:17 are also dealt with.

Keywords: *Pesher Habakkuk, 1 Peter 4:17, Investigative Judgment, House of God, Versions*

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The subject of Apocalypticism and Eschatology is presented in older handbooks suggested by Preteristic scholars.¹⁾ The earlier suggestion was shelved but it appears with the application of the inter-textual approach here, that maybe the suggestion should be taken serious again.

Analysis of the Peshar Habakkuk

The Peshar Habakkuk used the term “day of

Judgment” twice: in XII.14 and XIII.2-3. It reads: XII.14 היום המשפט ביום המשפט XIII.2-3 היום המשפט. The concept of judgment is interwoven throughout the Peshar though, since two opposing forces are presented: the righteous and elect and the wicked or damned. The wicked first entered in the Peshar at VIII.8. Before that, the righteous are dealt with. Before we make conclusions about the eschatological end of the righteous or people of Judah, it is appropriate to consider the end of the wicked in the Peshar. Citing from Habakkuk 2:10 in Column

- 1) The problem with John Collins (1998, 2014) is that despite going as thoroughly through the apocalyptic literature as possible, trying to cover all data, his axioms, prejudices, preteristic allegiance haphazardly prevents him from arriving at the correct conclusions always. What makes his work useful is that data is at hand. Interpretation of data has to be revised all the time (J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998; J.J. Collins, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014; J. J. Collins, Bernard McGinn, and Stephen J. Stein, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*. 3 vols. New York: Continuum, 1998. The problem with L. de Tommaso (2014) is that he insists to work with apocalyptic in the minimum, a typical catholic stance with Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine exemplified in Oecumenius commentary on Revelation to shrink apocalyptic thinking and eschatological thinking to the bare minimum, making it illegal (L. diTommaso, *The Architecture of Apocalypticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). If one disallows the text to say what is embedded there, the description becomes superficial. S. D. O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), is a work that is dealing with Apocalypticism in the 19th and 20th centuries and that is important since one of the most significant insights in apocalypticism and eschatology of Daniel and the heavenly sanctuary was discovered around 1850 which is crucial for a proper understanding of this topic in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics. J. Bates, “Midnight Cry in the Past.” *Review and Herald* 12 (December 1850): 63-66.

The importance of the Book of Hebrews in Soteriology took on a new meaning in Christianity never explained before in such depth. A book that is considered a second to works of Collins on this topic is that of C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002). He also focused on early apocalypticism in the Intertestamental Period and Messianism. These are suggested beginners for readers but the problem is just that: if the axioms and prejudices of the writers are passed on to the beginner readers, they take the glasses of their prime sources or “couch” and only see what they were trained to see. They become mirrors of their superiors and nothing more. They are robbed from the opportunity to stand away from the interpretation of data and consider the data by themselves without any premeditated and preteristic slanted outside influence. The work of C. Wessinger, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), should be good if it is dealing properly with Adventism and its understanding of the Sanctuary Message in Scripture. An analysis of their view in such a Handbook is a priority since it leads to a reinterpretation of data going all the way back to Old Testament times and the Umwelt due to the control checked realism of the statements. Qumran is reinterpreted, Intertestamental is looked at anew, the New Testament is looked at anew, Daniel and Revelation make more sense. If she did not discuss this aspect or these aspects, diluted waters is the only conclusion one can expect. The same can be expected with the work of J. L. Walls, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). J. Court focused on millennialism in the medieval times but one must remember that it was a time when those thoughts were suppressed by Catholic Theologians and Administrations.

IX.14 it reads: “You have planned shame / as your house: the confines of many nations and the bonds [of] your own [soul].” The interpretation by the Peshar on this line is: (B) “Its prophetic meaning is: This is the House of Damnation where / in the midst of many peoples, God will put His judgment, and from there He will raise him up for the Judgment. / Then in their midst He will pronounce him guilty and damn him with the fire of brimstone”.

This House is not the House of God but the House of Damnation. There is a judgment but not of the people of God but of the wicked. The wicked will end up in fire of damnation. The Wicked one is raised and placed in the center and then absolutely exterminated in fire of [Hell motif].

The righteous and their telic end is not described in this section but before VIII.8 which is the divider between righteous in the beginning of the Peshar and wicked in the last part of the Peshar.

In that well-known Reformation phrase cited by the Peshar: [But the righteous through their steadfastness shall live by faith] in VII.17 from Habakkuk 2:4b is interpreted as follows: (A) “Its prophetic meaning concerns all the doers of the Law in the house of Judah whom / God will deliver from the house of damnation, because of their patient suffering and their steadfast faith / in the Teacher of Righteousness.” (VIII.1-3).

Two phases, two locations, two time-zones, two kinds of people, two different verdicts, two different actions of God. It is now possible to compare the

interpretation in A and B in the Peshar regarding the judgment.

Judgment in A is deliverance from executive judgment. It takes place in the house of Judah and not the house of damnation. Judgment in A is a reward because of their suffering and steadfast faith.

Judgment in B is a guilty pronouncement and preparation for the executive judgment.

It takes place in a different setting than the first judgment since it is called a house of damnation and by logic in the first part dealing with the faithful, they are delivered from the house of damnation. It implies that the faithful do not come in the house of damnation.

Both settings are not human instrumentalities but by God Himself. It is thus more appropriate to call it a heavenly setting or a setting from a heavenly locale.

It is thus not out of place to conclude that the Peshar Habakkuk differentiates between A: the investigative deliverance judgment of the faithful in heaven by God as an action to take place before B: the executive damnation judgment of the wicked from heaven by God with the fire of [Hell] in that order.

The judgment is not an ongoing process every day or every year or every century. There is a date for it. That is why the terms “Day of Judgment” is used twice in the document. It is a specific future expected day.

The Peshar scribe and his readers all know

about a program or schedule that God has. Citing from Habakkuk 2:3b in VI.9-10; “If it seems slow, wait for it; for it will surely come and will not / be late.” Then the interpretation follows in VI.11 “Its prophetic meaning concerns the men of truth / the doers of the Law, whose arms will not be relaxed from the service of / truth, when to them the last time seems to be delayed, for / all God’s times will come in their measured sequence, just as He decreed / for them in the mysteries of His providence”.

A special word for “time”²⁾ is used here in the plural “times of God” קִצֵּי אֱלֹהִים. The New Testament era and late Inter-testamental period people did not expect that the time will be short. They expected that the time will be long. This is contrary to scholarly findings and scholarly commentaries on the New Testament so-called imminent return expectations of authors.³⁾

The Peshar Habakkuk VI.5-6 is citing from

Habakkuk 2:3a: “For the vision is yet / for the appointed time; but at the end it will speak and will not disappoint.” Then follows in VI.7-8 the Peshar interpretation: “Its prophetic meaning is that the last time will be long in coming but will excel all / that the prophets predicted, for the mysteries of God are to be surpassingly wonderful”.

The “last time will be long in coming” האחרון פשרו אשר יארוך הקץ VI.7.⁴⁾

In conclusion on the Peshar Habakkuk, not only do we have a separation between the judgment of the house of Judah or faithful and the judgment of damnation of the wicked, these users of the Peshar Habakkuk studied the prophets and came to the conclusion that God decreed His periods in time schedules. They are delayed. They are long periods. Fulfillment should not be expected imminently. The expectation of the Messiah may be an imminent expectation but the fulfillment of the last day events would be long.⁵⁾

- 2) Regular Hebrew Dictionaries will be quick to point out that the form means “summer fruits” or the like, but the context calls for “times” and secondly, “times” was spelled this way in later Midrashic Aramaic and Hebrew literature. In the N’darim of the Talmud 41a an identical form is found later reading “when has come the times [קִצֵּי] of the causing of dying”. The author of the Peshar knew the classical Hebrew spelling and used it in the citation but used here in the peshar this special form of the word. Solomon Zeitlin would have smiled and said, see “I told you the scrolls were fakes from the tenth century” but he was already proved wrong by W. F. Albright and others. I will not cite the extended literature on these debates in the sixties.
- 3) This is not the place to discuss this important issue. A later article can be prepared on this. Suffice it to say that it is a contradiction for John in Revelation 12 to talk about the 1260 years of persecution that he obviously saw in vision as well, period by period, and then to pronounce every now and then in the same book that Jesus will not delay coming, or will come soon, as scholars pulled it to their own interpretation, expecting Jesus to come in his own day. Obviously the problem lies with the reader in modern times and not the original writer.
- 4) This view of a long delay before the Eschaton is in Peshar Habakkuk also recognized by E. Regev, *Sectarianism in Qumran: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007). Regev compared the Qumran practices with later Christian movements like the Shakers and Puritans but what he did not consider, is the Millerites. Adventism brought forward a positive aspect with the millennial disappointment just like Regev wants to demonstrate at Qumran. The “Sanctuary in Heaven Doctrine” is part of this development in modern Christian biblical doctrine.

Diagram to illustrate the separation of the concept of judgment of the saints and judgment of the wicked in Peshar Habakkuk

Specific “Day” not ongoing process (VI.9-10)



Comparative Aspects between 1 Peter 4:17 and Peshar Habakkuk

First Peter 4:17 also used time in connection with the judgment and also referred to the House of God or faithful where the judgment should start. Notice that in biblical literature the eschatological judgment of the wicked is separated from the judgments of the faithful.⁶⁾ B. Gemser did enough research on this.⁷⁾ C. F. Keil in his commentary on the prophets indicated on his comments of the Book of Maleachi that the judgment of the Gentiles will be after the judgment of the house of God and he cited 1 Peter 4:17.⁸⁾

The text of Peter is very insightful since it is almost a paraphrase of the information from the Peshar Habakkuk:

ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ᾠρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ • εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ’ ἡμῶν, τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθούντων τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ;

“For [there is] the time to start the judgment from the house of God. But if first from us, what will

be the end of those who reject the gospel of God?”

Peter also makes a separation between a judgment of the faithful and a judgment of the wicked. Henry Hammond in 1653 made a comment about this verse that one should separate the judgment of the saints with that of the evil.⁹⁾ Origen also placed the judgment in the context of the good in his commentary on Romans.¹⁰⁾ Bad experiences will make the good better, he thinks.

Preteristic Commentaries on 1 Peter 4:17

Preteristic commentaries of the Victorian age inserted their interpretation as “For [now is] the time to start”¹¹⁾ This rendering is accepted by most Society of Biblical Literature consensus and then they are trying to link the judgment event to the Temple destruction of 67-70 A.D.

The first problem with this kind of reasoning is that Peter was already dead in 64 A.D. He did

5) It is interesting that working separated from a source in 2009 that also considered the same topic as is done here, the same conclusions were derived by me as by the author in that year. It is almost as if this author is just rewriting what he already said. See A. L. A. Hogeterp, *Expectations of the End: a Comparative Traditio-historical Study*

of *Eschatological, Apocalyptic, and Messianic Ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*. Studies on the Text of the Desert of Judah. Vol. 83. (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2009), 74. The author wished to work with a comparative study of eschatological ideas in Qumran and in the emerging Christianity. He did so by considering the integration of Qumran eschatology into Late Second Temple Judaism (19ff.): eschatology and scripture (transmission history of the text); eschatology in Non-sectarian Qumran texts (31-42); eschatology in sectarian Qumran texts like 4QMMT; The Damascus Document; the Serekh ha-Yahad; The Rule of the Congregation; 1Q/4QHodayot; early Pesharim (59); the midrash on eschatology (65); the War Scroll (68); late Pesharim (69); sapiential and poetical texts (74); sectarian writings (75). Then he also studied the Umwelt to Qumran eschatology for example: epigraphical and papyrological evidence (76); Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (78); Philo; Josephus; New Testament; Hippolytus; Early Rabbinic literature. When he came to this part of his study he made some evaluations and conclusions (106-112): that there are common features of Jewish eschatology in the Second Temple Period; that he noticed distinctions between the pre-70 CE Jewish eschatologies (109). He also tried to explain Qumran eschatology in its exegetical and historical context (112). When he entered the study of the emerging Christianity and eschatology (115) he wondered about the sources and their order and also about first-century Christian eschatological ideas and scripture: Isaiah (117); Psalms (119); Minor prophets (121); Daniel (124); Genesis (126); he considered the gospel of Mark (127-131); the so-called Q sayings (154); Matthew (163); Luke (174); Gospel of Thomas (186ff); John (194); Pauline letters of I Thessalonians (207); I Corinthians (213); Romans (217); Acts (230). An evaluation that he made is worth noting: eschatology in first-century Christian communities and intra-Jewish dimensions to first-century Christian eschatological ideas (244). To fast forward in his research he focused on early Jewish Apocalyptic tradition and scripture (342): 1 Enoch; Jubilees; Daniel and the Qumran Daniel cycle (353); also on Qumran apocalyptic texts and early Jewish apocalypticism (357); predestination and periodization of history (357); cosmic dualism (362); apocalypticism and ideas of war (370); visions of final judgment (374); wisdom and apocalypticism. The Jesus movement started with the baptism of Jesus by John (382). He also focused on the final judgment in the apocalyptic ideas of Jesus (397). There is the Marcan eschatological discourse (400); Paul and apocalypticism (410); the post-Pauline letters (413); and also the Apocalypse of John (414). There are many scholarly treatments of Daniel 9 with the 490 years [year-day principle] and Qumran and the New Testament times and Intertestamental sources and many of them are salted scholars who sifted through almost all corners. But here is the principle: If the starting point of the date for the beginning of the 490 years is not correct, does not have an absolute test control for verification, then no matter how long, how many, how far one has thought about the issue and its sources, the explanations of them are diluted waters that remains dirty, clouded in mystery, unresolved matters, strange positions, basically leaving all researchers with a frown on the head. Three dates among many, are allocated for the starting point: 538; 444 and 457 BCE. Unless it is 457 BCE, no matter the prestige of the university, the Research institute, the qualifications of the scholar, his fame abroad on the overall topic, his/her conclusions are wrong because they all fell short of the correct context. The Wise Men of the east looking for a king to be born in Herod's day, was informed not vaguely but precisely so that the calculations of 490 years prophecy of Daniel, providing that key, should be also precise and expected by Qumran and others calculating to have worked with the same principle as the Wise Men from the East. Some preteristic scholars wants to start the date at 605; 587 (F. F. Bruce); 538; 444 or 445 but all of them are going to look for an "Anointed One" way too early to be exact in line with Jesus the Messiah. If Jesus was the Son of God, if He did exist before, if He supplied to Daniel the exact mathematics of His first coming, if those prophecies talked about Christ as He claimed they did, then preteristic shortsightedness is not a scholarly approach that we recommend here. Anyone who accepts the 490 years for the 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9, has already broken the rules of preterism since this is already historicism in making. Unless, one wants to say that preteristically a later fake group added calculations retrospectively stretching precisely and concocted a relation that was not originally in Daniel. When one argues in this last form of manner, it is no longer Theology but secular opinions or secular theology with a small humanistic "t."

- 6) The rib-judgments are God wanting to conduct a legal suit with His sinful remnant. It is a striving or fault finding talk. It is taking one's part as in 1 Samuel 24:15. It also means to plead as is used by Moses in Job 13:8. It is sometimes a case at law as in Exodus 23:2-3, 6. The place of rebellion of the people of God is called "Mariba". In Deuteronomy 19:17 it is a dispute as to the guilt. This is an Investigative Judgment to get to the bottom of the problem. The Executive Judgment is a case of punishment because of the findings in the Investigative Judgment. It takes place within the context of Covenant of God with His people and their worship of Him. Faithful obedience

to His Torah and revealed will is the norm at this judgment. The rib-judgments appear in Genesis, Job, Amos, Micah, Isaiah, Hosea, and Jeremiah. There are more and God is desiring to talk to His people and sort out their problems of sin to come in line with His covenant with them.

- 7) B. Gemser, (1955). *The Rib, or Controversy, Pattern in Hebrew Mentality*. Supplement to Vetus Testamentum 3, 120, 37
- 8) Keil said: "Because the fullness of salvation, which the earlier prophets had set before the people when restored to favour and redeemed from captivity, had not immediately come to pass, they [in the Time of Nehemiah and Maleachi] began to murmur against God, to cherish doubts as to the righteousness of the divine administration, and to long for the judgment to fall upon the Gentiles, without reflecting that the Judgment would begin at the house of God [Amos iii.2; 1 Peter iv. 17]." C. F. Keil (1878), *The Twelve Minor Prophets Vol. I*, in Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament Vol. I by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (Edinburg: T. and T. Clark), 428.
- 9) "For there being two parts of God's *κρίμα*, or judgment, the one tolerable, the other intolerable; the one for advantage of the sufferer, the other for the greatest disadvantage; the one here called *ἄρξασθαι κρίμα*, the beginning, or τὸ πρῶτον, first part, of the judgment, the other τὸ τέλος, the end, or tail of it; the one assigned to pious men, the οἶκος θεοῦ, house of God, the other to the impious, obdurate, ἀπειθοῦντες, disobedient, it must needs be looked on as an happy condition, and that which is matter of joy and not of sorrow to any that they have their part in the former of these, and not in the latter of them." H. Hammond (1845), *A Paraphrase and Annotations upon all the Books of The New Testament briefly explaining all the difficult places thereof* Vol. V. (Oxford: At the University Press, originally 1653), 423. This scholar is very surprising for his sensitivity to nuances in the scriptures. He translated wrongly that "this is the season of judgments beginning at the house of God" since there is no plural judgment(s) in the original. Hammond, like his contemporary Hugo Grotius was a preterist that tried to allocate all passages referring for example to the papacy as Little Horn or Antichrist, to the time of the writing of the book under discussion, contrary to the Reformers exegesis of similar passages. It is a pluralizing of a singular noun "judgment" that is partly responsible for the misinterpretation of daily persecution or daily judgments of God for faithful people connected for this passage in 1 Peter 4:17. However, in Hammond's understanding, the umbrella statement "judgment" had two phases clearly distinguished. Huhner in 1887: 824 tried to camouflage the distinction by substituting "judgment" with "suffering" and then led all suffer but Christians less than the other evil ones who will suffer later with severity. Huhner then felt that *πρῶτον* is used by Peter "because he wished to lay stress on the fact that the Christians had to suffer only the beginning of the judgment, not its close" (Huhner 1887: 824). He regarded it as a "pleonasm". Thus, in his view it does not mean really "first" chronologically separating two events, but only as a way to separate the beginning and end of the same event. Pleonastic or dummy subject is explained as a case like "It seems that the cat caught the mouse" but "it" has no functional relationship and thus no role (K. Malmkjær and J. M Anderson, *The Linguistics Encyclopedia* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 494. Preterists prefer to view *πρῶτον* as superfluous as far as time-reckoning is concerned. They wish to keep to their presentistic "suffering" of Peter and Christians superimposition in their semantics of "judgment" and thus deflate "first" from its time-chronological relationships. If this verse was the only verse that Peter ever wrote or spoke, then they may have had a point. Huhner said that the function of *πρῶτον* is "intensifying the idea *ἄρχεται*". Here lies the second problem of these preteristic interpreting scholars: the text does not use the Indicative Present 3rd person, but an Aorist Infinitive Middle *ἄρξασθαι* which does not emphasize time [past or already happened] but rather a punctual aspect, that it will happen only in one point in time. God has a date for starting it and finishing it. That is why it is "the time" and not just any time.
- 10) Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* Book 2 "Let no one think then that he can escape God's judgment. As the prophet says, "Where shall I go from your Spirit and where shall I flee from your presence?" And because these things are being spoken especially to those who are presiding over the judgments of the peoples, for that reason it says elsewhere, "Judgment shall begin from the house of God." The Lord says the same thing in another passage, "Among those who draw near me I will show myself holy." This was accomplished in the case of Nadab and Abihu when they offered strange fire, that is, unholy fire, on the divine altars. Therefore judgment begins with the sons first; for God scourges all whom he receives among the number of his sons. It is my opinion, in fact, that even if someone could escape God's judgment, he ought not desire to. For not to come to God's judgment would mean not to come to correction, to the restoration of health and to that which heals." Origen, *Commentary*

not live to talk about 67 or 70 A.D. in present context. The second problem is that none of the two judgments have taken place yet and Peter knows that the one is before the other. There is no mixture of faithful and wicked in one overall judgment. It is not present in the Peshar Habakkuk and also not present in Peter.¹²⁾ B. Weiss connected Peter here, like other scholars before him, with Ezekiel 9 and other Old Testament texts.¹³⁾ In an attempt to show the strong link between Peter and

on the Epistle to the Romans, Translated by Thomas P. Scheck (Washington DC: CUA Press, 2001), Book 2 chapter 3, 104-105.

- 11) Wohlenberg indicated that some manuscripts used "the time" [Codex Vaticanus etc.] while others used "a time" [Codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus]. He prefers the first one. The issue is not that crucial whether it is with an article or without. What is problematic is his understanding of the text. He placed his own interpretation in the translation: "Denn die [gegenwärtige] Zeit ist eine Zeit, da das Gericht am Hause Gottes zu beginnen hat". He felt that any suffering should be interpreted as the Judgment from God and serves a pedagogical purpose. "Hofmann wehrt entschieden dem Verständnis, als ob nach Meinung des Apostels auch die Gläubigen irgendwie, nämlich zuerst, vom Gericht betroffen wurden: nur über die unglaubliche Welt, die Gott Feindseligen, ergehe das $\chi\rho\iota\mu\alpha$." G. Wohlenberg, *Der erste und zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief* (Leipzig: A. Deicherstsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1923), 142 footnote 40. J. E. Huther indicated that the definite article in $\acute{o}\ \chi\rho\iota\mu\acute{o}s$ cannot just be ignored and neither can one just ignore the $\delta\tau\iota$ preceding that. Luther's translation that "it is time" is considered inexact by him. J. E. Huther, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the General Epistles or James, Peter, John, and Jude* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Publishers, 1887), 824.
- 12) For such a mixture without proper separation between the two parties before or at the judgment hour to start, see Gregg, B. H., *The Historical Jesus and the Final Judgment Sayings in Q*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Vol. 207 (Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 72. The unfortunate situation is that Gregg is dealing with the topic by throwing all the vegetables and fruit together and mixed them in a tank and then try to pull out of this big tank of conflicting ideas some kind of analysis that will help him understand the topic. There is a trial either on earth or in heaven of which God is the Judge and the fate of the wicked is determined. He talks about variations in possible scenarios but that is because he mixed the sources in an unfortunate way so that truth and error is mixed from the beginning. The result? A confusion of what will happen. His analysis of peshar Habakkuk is not satisfying.
- 13) B. Weiss, *Die Apostelgeschichte Katolischen Briefe Apokalypse*, in *Das Neue Testament Handausgabe Band III* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1902). "Petr.[us] setzt nach Ezech. 9,6. Jerem. 25, 29 voraus, dass es eine Zeit giebt, wo das Gericht anhebt vom Hause Gottes, d. h. von der Gemeinde ... sofern in ihm entschieden wird, wer sich seines Christennamens schämt [und abfällt] oder in demselben Gott verherrlicht und so als bewährt erfunden wird [vgl. Jak. 1, 12. Diese Zeit sieht er in den gegenwärtigen Leidenprüfungen [v. 12] bereits anbrechen, wodurch die Ermahnung v. 16 begründet wird." Page 327. Van Wyk Translation: "Peter suggests according to Ezekiel 9:6, Jeremiah 25:9, that there will be a time, when the Judgment will start from the House of God, that is from the congregation ... by which in it will be decided, who shamed his Christian name [and became wayward] or are glorified in the same God and so are found protected [compare James 1:12]. This time he saw in the present experiences of suffering [verse 12] already started, by which the admonitions of verse 16 are grounded". Weiss brought the house of God in connection with the house of spirituality in 1 Peter 2:5 but there are scholars who refuse to see the link. In context of Peter 2 there are also two stones symbolizing the good and the bad and the role of Christ is uplifted as potential to be built into this spiritual structure. But to argue that the bodies of people is the place where Christ do his priesthood for atonement is logistically and biblically not tenable since it is true that the Spirit of God works on earth as sent by Christ to do so in His absence, but Christ in Heaven has a function that is necessary to be completed as well. Moses saw the type of which the antitype is in heaven. So that priesthood on earth is fulfilled in chronological order in the priesthood of Christ in Heaven. Christ is not daily crucified but once, He entered as Priest once and according to the type once a year great Atonement at the Yom Kippur, He entered once again as Peter foresaw in the future to Judge the House of God in the Holy of Holies near the Torah or Commandments of God as essence of God's character. The faithful are judged by the Law of God and their works

Paul, B. Weiss listed all the rare words that are found exclusively either in Paul and Peter or Paul and Peter and James. The book of Hebrews, also Paul's letter to Timothy, some gospels and Peter show an interesting connecting in linguistic jargon that Weiss listed with a number of rare links.

One of the jargon links is the "house of God" expression.¹⁴⁾ The "house of God" in 1 Peter 4:17 appears also in Hebrews 10:21; 1 Timothy 3:15; Luke 6:4; Mark 2:26; Matthew 12:4. There is also the problem of the added or supplied ἐστὶν inserted by scholars¹⁵⁾ in the text and in their translations. This "is" led to "now is the time" concepts all which mislead the reader in the understanding of the context and semantics of Peter. It does not take long to realize that Peter had no intention to say what they are putting him up to say.

Views on Judgment

Reformers' View of Judgment

The Reformers worked with a very fragile concept of judgment. They lumped the judgment as one big event where good and bad will be gathered under one umbrella of doom and gloom and either be accepted or rejected.

L. Vallo in his commentary of 1526 translated it as: "Quoniam tempus est, ut incipiat iudiciu de domo dei, legedu est à domo dei, [ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου]" My translation of Vallo is: "'Seeing that it is time, to begin the judgment of the house of God', it is appointed from the house of God [ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου]".¹⁶⁾ The grammatical point of the importance of the preposition to indicate direction of the action of judgment is well taken here. It

but they are saved by faith.

A successful spiritual "build-in" of a living stone into the spiritual house of God on earth means the person becomes part of the generic term "faithful remnant" and they are the "House of God" which at a certain point in time will be judged. Adventist realized that it is at the end of 2300 days as years in Daniel 8:14 starting at 457 BCE and that there are two judgments, one of the House of God first and then the remainder are the wicked and would be exterminated in a Hell fire at a later period. This distinction between a good judgment and a bad judgment is what is also perceived by Peshar Habakkuk, in the parables of Christ, and here in 1 Peter 4:17.

If a scholar believes in the immortality of the soul he/she will have no desire to look at the Book of Hebrews that proclaims an ongoing Priesthood and a Yom Kippur future Judgment/Atonement II Phase. The Type and Antitype message will be brushed aside and it was. Hebrews was the most neglected book in the twentieth and twenty-first century. The logic of their argument is such: All their souls of the dead are already in heaven, so why do they need Christ any longer in future at such an event as the end of the 2300 days = years? So this is the key dilemma with other denominations following the Catholic doctrine of the immortality of the soul derived from the Republic of Plato chapter XII after his trip to the mystery religions of Egypt in his time.

14) B. Weiss, *Der Petrinische Lehrbegriff: Beiträge zur biblischen Theologie* (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm Schultze, 1855), 386.

15) See Huhner adding the ἐστὶν in his text (Huhner 1887: 824) "ἐστὶ is to be supplied" and led him to translate "in which the judgment is beginning".

16) L. Vallo, *Graecae guam latinae linguae do estissimi, in novum testament annotations, apprime utiles*. Basileae (1526), 327.

is correct. It is not a judgment of the house of God but from the house of God. Not the sanctuary is to be judged but from the sanctuary will be judgment. The investigative judgment in heaven does not judge God or His sanctuary. Judgment is of people from the sanctuary in heaven. As Hammond correctly indicated, the judgment did not start for Peter yet. There is thus no soul going to heaven when a person dies to appear before the judgment throne since Adam.

John Calvin suggested that the singular “judgment” is actually plural “judgments” and instead of just one time it is all time every Christian suffering by the hand of God. He said, using the plural “persecutions” instead of the singular “judgment” in the original: “Then, with more submission, ought persecutions for Christ to be endured. For except we desire to be blotted out from the number of the faithful, we must submit our backs to the scourges of God.” The plural “scourges” is supposed to be drawn out of the singular Greek word “judgment.”¹⁷⁾

A century after Calvin the ‘papist turned [attitudinal]’ Reformed theologian, Hugo Grotius rendered 1 Peter 4:17 as follows. Hugo Grotius lived a century after Calvin and said the same as Hammond of his own time, namely that great

persecution was to come to the Christians as predicted by Christ in Matthew 24:9. He said: “*Tempus imminet quo Christiani gravissima mala patiantur, praedictum Christo Matth, 24: 9.*”¹⁸⁾ He saw it as “an imminent time which Christians were to suffer heavy wrongs predicted by Christ, Matthew 24:9” [My translation of Hugo’s Latin]. If Grotius is correct and wants to pinpoint Christ’s prediction to 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem and Christians fleeing to Pella, then it still creates an imbalance why the righteous will suffer all the way from 70 A.D. and not before or during, since it was placed in the future, not a present experience. The imbalance is that Christians in his view suffer shortly but the Evil will suffer only eschatological. What if Christ’s prediction is not about 70 A.D. (or 64 A.D. with the Nero burning of Rome playing a musical instrument enjoying the fiasco as other writers suggested) but the period mentioned as 1260 years indicated by Daniel 7, repeated in Daniel 12 and also in Revelation 12, historicistically identified between 538-1798 A.D.? Grotius thought that the persecution of Jesus’ prediction is the Judgment of Peter’s reference.

The biblical data needs more attention to the nuances of judgment than what scholars or interpreters did so far.¹⁹⁾ Such attention came after

17) See the Commentary of Calvin on 1 Peter 4:17 consulted from <https://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/cal/1-peter-4.html>.

18) Hugo Grotius, (1826-1834). *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*. Groningae: W. Zuidema. Page 104.

19) Theodore G. van Raalte gave an overview of the Reformed tradition’s view of eschatology. Theodore G. van Raalte, “Eschatology, or Doctrine concerning the End Times: An Introduction,” in *As You See the Day Approaching: Reformed Perspectives on the Last Things* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, Jan 6, 2016). He indicated that eschatology entered

the Millerite failure of 1844 Second Coming realization. An understanding was born that morning, of Christ not coming, which can be termed the Sanctuary in Heaven Message.²⁰ The time that came was not the coming of Christ but Christ entering into the House of Judah for the Investigative Judgment on behalf of the believers and 1 Peter 4:17 applies here to the full. Later, after the Second Coming, resurrection, and millennium there will be the House of Damnation process or

the English language during the time of the Millerite Movements in 1841. David Fergusson said that the 20th century discovered eschatology again. Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson agreed. Albert Schweitzer as product of liberal enlightenment theology claimed that the disciples had an imminent eschatology expectation but the Jesus had been mistaken. According to Schweitzer, Jesus was not risen from the dead. Karl Barth (1886-1968) declared God's judgment on such self-assured views. "The eschaton is the existential crisis of man living constantly at the brink of God's eternity". "If Christianity be not altogether thoroughgoing eschatology, there remains in it no relationship with Christ" (Runia Eschatology page 107). Wolfhart Pannenberg (1928-2014) "He gave the future a kind of present reality, as if it exists now, though not fully. He did not want to say that God revealed himself by his past deeds as recorded in Scripture and that he continues to reveal himself through the scriptural record. This would root theology in the past and present, both which are incomplete as revelations of God. In fact, even God himself will only become fully actual or real at the end, the eschaton. Pannenberg's view is a kind of reverse causality, where the future causes the present and past. "We see the present as an effect of the future, in contrast to the conventional assumption that past and present are the cause of the future" (cited by Zehnder, "Pannenberg's Eschatology" page 125). Pannenberg put's the world's existence inside God. Klaas Schilder's (1890-1952) theology witnesses to an abiding emphasis on eschatology in terms of God's progressive revelation of himself in real human history. (Klaas Schilder, "A Letter Written in 1931 by K. Schilder about Life after Death." *Diakonia* 8.1 [1994]: 26-28). Geerhardus Vos (1862-1949) was a professor at Princeton between 1893-1932. Eschatology is a synonym for redemptive-historical. "Its eschatological, redemptive-historical orientation". In *The Kingdom and the Church* (1903) Vos indicated that "the eschatological nature of the kingdom proclaimed by Jesus as not only future but present in his person and work". "Believers in the New Testament were conscious of being in the last days or at least of living very close to them" (Van Raalte page 9). For Herman Ridderbos (1909-2007) "The great change of which Paul's preaching bears testimony is not in the first place the reversal in his mind with regard to the *ordo salutis*, but first and foremost with regard to the *historia salutis* in the objective sense of the word." Richard Gaffin (1936-) focused in his eschatology on the centrality of the resurrection. The centrality of the resurrection of Christ stands out as the great inaugural event of the eschaton. Particularly the postmillennial option and its associated question of preterism has a robust place in Reformed theology" (Van Raalte page 12). And here lies the dilemma with Reformed Theology on eschatology, namely that eschatology is wrapped up in the person of Christ until resurrection and then stop. There is no further development of the idea in periodization, in functional shifts of Christ's ministry in heaven, in typology of the Sanctuary on earth continued in the life of Christ in heaven. Nothing. The Book of Hebrews for them is a dead book. Until 31 CE is the key time for Reformed Christianity and this makes the progress in thought by Adventism since Millerism very crucial in this investigation of 1 Peter 4:17.

- 20) The Millerites never developed this doctrine but especially in Adventism this doctrine is cardinal. It is built from a number of items from the Old and New Testaments. The Tabernacle service and its purpose and true meaning for salvation by God and in the light of the role of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God is fundamental here. The three sections it is divided in as three separate functions at three time zones. The Tabernacle was shown to Moses from a real one in Heaven thus a heavenly sanctuary. Salvation is from the Heavenly Sanctuary and all actions of God is directed to or from that zone. R. Adams did a doctorate on the three divergent and convergent views of Uriah Smith (1832-1903), Albion Fox Ballenger (1861-1921) and Milian Lauritz Andreassen (1876-1962). Adams concluded that "while it would be possible to combine the views of Smith and Andreassen into a coherent Adventist theology of the sanctuary, the position of Ballenger represents too radical a departure to be included in such a merger." R. Adams (1980), "The Doctrine of the Sanctuary in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church: Three Approaches" (Th.D. dissertation, Andrews University), reviewed in *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 19/2 (Summer 1981): 155-156.

Hell when the wicked would burn in fire.

Adventist View of Judgment

Though Adventists are against ecumenism of truths in one basket, they are “ecumenical” in their methodology of allowing any denomination’s scholar outlining the reasons for truth that is biblical.²¹⁾ There are fixed periods in prophecy by

God but preteristic commentators are only willing to allow that fixed period to be until Christ and the following examples are listed: 1 Corinthians 10:11 τὰ τέλη των αἰώνων; Ephesians 1:10 πλήρωμα των καιρων; Galatians 4:4 του χρόνου; Titus 1:3 καιροί ἴδιοι. 2 Peter 3:3 is talking about the ἐσχάται ἡμέραι. Some try to argue that Hebrews 1:1 using the same expression ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου των ἡμερων is trying to admit that the eschatology has come with

21) For example: It was Catholic scholars in the Reformation debates against Luther and later that explicitly said that the New Testament only knows of a seventh-day Sabbath and that there is not a single text supporting Sunday worship. They also make it clear that it is their denomination, the Catholic Church, that by tradition over the biblical text, created Sunday as a day of worship. It is so general a stance by the Catholic scholars, that references and discussions about it lies outside the parameters of this paper. Adventists are seventh-day keepers and thus cannot ecumenically go along with any denomination clinging to Sunday as a day of worship because it is methodologically anti-biblical. The Trinity was the best discussed by Catholic scholars and any modern attempt to deny the Trinity or create a Binity or Monism like Judaism did, is a denial of nuances in the Old and New Testament explaining the correct doctrine of the Trinity. Here Adventists are allowing Catholic scholars to outline biblical truth because it is biblical not because it is Catholic. Adult baptism rather than infant baptism and by immersion is a doctrine that is found also outside and prior to Adventism with scholars and those scholars’ positions are correct because the methodology is biblical truth. The main point is: although Adventists are against the World Council of Churches objectives and ecumenical councils’ ratio decidendi, they separate because of the anti-biblical stance of it, yet, scholars from any denomination, Catholics included, that do present biblical truth, are embraced as if they are their own scholars. The Millerite Movement that preceded Adventism actually operated with exactly the same mood and tenure in their methodology of interpretation of Scriptures. They were in many denominations and it was about historicism as method versus preterism as method of interpretation of the Bible that brought about the great Advent expectation of pre-1844. This explains why H. Hammond in 1653 outlined truth so well as opposed to great scholars like Weiss, Meyer, Wohlenberg, on 1 Peter 4:17. Weiss (1855); H. A. W. Meyer (1867), *Kommentar über das Neue Testament* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht’s Verlag); Wohlenberg (1923). They emphatically tried to “curtail” the stances of the post-millerite interpretation because the historicism of the Millerite Movement firstly, was a failure and thus the baby with the bath-water needed to be thrown out. A strict preterism application had to be returned to blurring the biblical stance with outside traditions or views to take out the wind from the truth balloon. Honest scholars, though, in some denominations, remained with the text as opposed to expounders of their own Confessions and either saw it exactly as the post-Millerite interpretation or very near to it. The Peshier Habakkuk methodology is a surprising close link to a theology of that of the post-Millerites with this connection, that just a Peter understood the Qumran position and answered it with the correct one fulfilled in Christ and His work, with His work continuing in heaven according to the Book of Hebrews, that Peter also linked up with, in the same manner post-Millerites developed Christian interpretation by realizing the built-in nuances of the Most Holy function of Christ since 1844 [terminus ad quem] based on the 2300 years prophecy of Daniel 8:14 starting the terminus pro quo date in 457 BCE with the work of Ezra. This is a stance that no other denomination present and they actually neglected eschatology (Klaus Koch 1970) and also to study the Book of Hebrews. Type and Antitype was not investigated and linked with historicism of the functions of Christ in Heaven prior to His Second Coming. Adventism thus adds to the history of interpretation in Christianity. The modern trends, utilizing historical-criticism methodology, led to nihilism, secularism, anti-biblical stances that is based on feeling, subjectivity, consensus of populism, images of popularity and actually a rejection or carelessness with the Word of God. Biblical interpretation suffers in modern Christianity.

Christ. But look at it this way: the audience had the false perception that the suffering Messiah and glorified Messiah are one event and one person and mistakenly thought as Judas Iscariot and others that the Suffering Messiah will immediately bring with it the Glorified Messiah so that if they with a civil right movement “push the hand of God” that time will be quicker. Thus, referring their mind to their own false perception, Paul starts to clarify the issue properly in Hebrews indicating that the Messiah had two Advents, first suffering and then glorification with a specific function in between. Paraphrased Paul said to them: “the Messiah of your last days, did indeed come, is God, did die, was resurrected and is functioning in Heaven right now as the Antitype of the Type and will come again after completion of the functions.” B. Weiss indicated that there is a link between Peter and Hebrews. A similar expression is thus also in Peter in 1 Peter 1:20 *ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου των χρόνων*. With these times, it is not the “End of the World” scenario that Peter had in mind, but the First Advent of Christ and the fixed periods of Daniel 9:24-26 with his word *χρόνων*. That is why the preposition used by both Hebrews and Peter refers to a fixed time arrival “upon the end of times.” *Χρόνων* is plural because Daniel was not only speaking of one period but calculated two periods in this prophecy. It was the fixed time of Christ’s baptism (27 C.E.), fixed time of His death (31 C.E.) and the fixed time of the death of

Stephen (34 C.E.), thus plural or “times”.

The expression in Hebrews 9:26 *συντέλεια των αἰώνων* is in fulfillment of Daniel 9:24-26 and that definite long predicted period [actually at least three periods in one prophecy as was indicated already] with the year-day principle of a year as 360 days, recognized in the history of interpretation by a host of scholars and emphasized by Adventist scholars, is at play here for Paul as well. It was also at work at Qumran as scholars have indicated there. It was emphasized at Qumran the century before Christ came, in the apostles’ works around the time that Christ first came, by many scholars through the centuries and in these days especially by the historicist interpreters who are Adventist scholars, namely, as essential parts of their doctrine. When it comes to the issue of the judgment, the Book of Hebrews also mentioned it: Hebrews 6:2 *και κρίματος αἰωνίου*. The “judgment of eternity” [literal translation respecting the genitive] is time-wise after the resurrection. Thus, after the Second Advent. Not prior. The resurrection of 1 Peter 4:17 is not the judgment of eternity of the Book of Hebrews. The split in two judgments is inevitable if harmony is part of the ingredients of logics in interpretation.

Peter’s Eschatology is clear in his speech in Acts 3:19-26. Repentance and atonement is necessary with the blotting out *εις τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι* of sins (verse 19) in order to be a partaker in coming times/future blessings *ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσιν*

καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου (verse 20) “when times of refreshing shall come from before the Lord.” They have already experienced the Early Rain Holy Spirit event of Acts 2 but not the Latter Rain Holy Spirit event predicted at the end of time in even our future, also by Joel. These are referred to by Peter but before that time they must repent. What the prophets foretold about the Messiah to come as sufferer was fulfilled, said Peter but then Peter ends this section with the words: ὑμῖν πρῶτον ἀναστήσας ὁ θεὸς τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν εὐλογοῦντα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἀποστρέφειν ἕκαστον ἀπὸ τῶν πονηριῶν ὑμῶν (verse 26) “Unto you first, God raised His Son, sent Him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” They were the generation that saw Christ raised, [went to heaven, functions there] and God the Father will send Him [not to earth, but in a special function in the Most Holy] to bless you. How is this blessing gained? The *modus operandi* is “turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” The Trinity works for the salvation of souls. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin. Christ atones for the sin. The Father shows grace abundantly. But there are angels who are eager to understand the mysteries of God and they need to know why Christ had to die. Peter calls this work: Ὁ δὲ θεὸς πάσης χάριτος, ὁ καλέσας ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ [Ἰησοῦ], ὀλίγον παθόντας αὐτὸς καταρτίσει, στηρίξει, σθενώσει, θεμελιώσει. “But the God of all grace, who

has called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while [endure the history of this world with the roaring lion Satan running havoc and chaos] make you perfect, stablish [Most Holy function since 1844], strengthen [for the Time of Jacob’s Trouble before the Second Advent that Daniel 12:1-2 is talking about], settle you [Second Advent to take them to their home in heaven].”

The Little Horn or Antichrist threw down the *makon* מַכּוֹן of Daniel 8:11 and that had to be restituted by Christ during the Most Holy phase. Peter is fully aware of the nuances of these words in the prophets. *Nakon* or *kun* means to “establish”. The sanctuary shall be cleansed after 2300 evenings and mornings = years and that cleansing was restitution of what Satan threw down through his agencies for 1260 years as well. Daniel 7:22 where “judgment was given to the saints of the Most High” means judgment was given on behalf of the saints מִן הַקְּדוֹשִׁים לְקַדְּשֵׁי עִלְיֹנִין. This is the phrase foremost in Peter’s mind here in 1 Peter 4:17. It is a fixed period. It is future. It did not happen yet. It is anticipatory. His audience was like people from Qumran who thought it was in their day and thus he had to spell out a longer period than what they anticipated. That is why this is a reference from a source.

A critic of this development in Christian Theology of the Reformers since 1844 is D. Ratzlaff. He summarized their view as follows and a long full

citation of his summary is in place here.

Summary of the Cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary and the Investigative Judgment:

“The Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the Cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary and the Investigative Judgment teaches that at the ascension Christ entered the outer apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. From that time until 1844, he performed a ministry of intercession and forgiveness analogous to that of the earthly sanctuary’s outer apartment. In 1844 Christ entered into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary for the first time to begin a work of investigative judgment. This judgment deals only with those who have professed to believe in God. The wicked, according to SDA theology, will be investigated during the 1000 years and executed shortly after the close of the 1000 years of Revelation 20. The investigative judgment starts with the cases of the dead, reaching clear back to Adam, and reviews the life records of every person who has professed faith in God. Every deed is closely examined. Each succeeding generation is investigated and judged. At some time, none know when, the cases of the dead are completed and God then moves to the cases of the living. SDAs believe they will not know when their name comes up in judgment. Therefore, it is extremely important that they engage in no frivolous activity or sin. Every sin must be confessed.

Sins which have been forgotten and unconfessed will stand against them in the judgment. Their characters must demonstrate perfect obedience to the Ten Commandment law, especially the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Some names in this list of professed believers will be accepted, others will be rejected. When every person confessing faith in God has come up in review, Jesus then pleads his blood before the Father on behalf of those who are found worthy, and blots out the record of their sins from the books of heaven. Then, not knowing if or when the work of investigative judgment has been completed, the righteous, still in their human state, before the second coming of Christ, will have to live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. This, then, completes the atonement. Jesus then takes the sins of God’s people and transfers them to Satan, who is represented by the Day of Atonement scapegoat in Leviticus 16. Satan then bears the ultimate responsibility for all the sins he has caused the righteous to commit. He will suffer for these sins in the lake of fire and then be blotted from existence. The investigative judgment is conducted before all the intelligences of the universe. This, then, vindicates the character of God before all the unfallen beings. Then everyone will know the immutability of the law of God and the righteous character of God.”²²⁾

22) D. Ratzlaff (January, February 2004), “Review of Graffiti in the Holy of Holies Biblical Support or Obscurantism?” *Proclamation*, 14-19.

The concepts explained by the critic are done very well and there is no need to apologize or alter what he has said here.

This link of 1 Peter 4:17 to the Investigative Judgment aspect of God with the house of God or faithful first, is done in Adventism since their beginning. In a series of studies on First and Second Peter by this movement, this link between 1 Peter 4:17 and the Investigative Judgment was maintained.

Peter and Intertestamental Writings

Peter and Jubilees

A study was done of the relation between Jubilees, the book of Daniel and Leviticus by J. S. Bergsma in 2007.²³⁾

The understanding of the 490 years or 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 and the book of Jubilees was also the study of L. McFall in 2009.²⁴⁾

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- 23) "The angel Gabriel, in response to Daniel's prayer of confession fulfilling the conditions of Jer 29:12 13 and Lev 26:39 42, reveals to Daniel a period of 490 years, to ten jubilees, for the restoration of Jerusalem, at the end of which a messiah, the city, and the temple will atone for the people by "resting" in "desolation" before an implied inauguration of an eschatological year." J. S. Bergsma, *The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran: A History of Interpretation*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 115 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 232 in his conclusion.
- 24) L. McFall, "Do the Sixty-Nine Weeks of Daniel date the messianic mission of Nehemiah or Jesus?" *JETS* 52/4 (December 2009): 673-718. McFall unfortunately do rush over the correct starting date of 457 BCE in the days of Ezra but himself got stuck with 536 BCE as pivotal date in his reckoning (673) and this handicap caused him to throw up his hands in desperation saying: "If the decree was issued in Nisan 538, and the 70 "weeks" are 490 years, then a messiah should have appeared in 48 BC. No messiah appeared, therefore there was no fulfillment" (McFall 2009: 688-689). Of course there was no Messiah in that year since the starting date of the 490 years prophecy needs to be accurate and following Ezra 7, a solution that was already explained in detail by Adventist scholars like the study of Horn and Wood on Ezra 7. In the article on the starting period of the seventy weeks prophecy of Daniel, V. S. Poythress, "Hermeneutical Factors in Determining The Beginning of the Seventy Weeks (Daniel 9:25)" *Trinity Journal* N.S. (1985): 131-149, mentions that three options can be considered by conservatives: 538 BCE; 445 or 444 BCE and a third one he mentioned as "other dates have sometimes been proposed (e.g. 457 BCE) and then he set out his agenda: "but I wish at this point to concentrate on the main points" (131-132). It is this last one cut out that actually held the key to a fuller understanding. He then listed the scholars for 538 BCE: "C. F. Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (reprint; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949) 351-2; Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949) 202-3; H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg, 1949) 418-20; Meredith G. Kline, "The Covenant of the Seventieth Week," in *The Law and the Prophets*, ed. John H. Skilton (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1974) 462; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1978). Keil (Daniel 21) gives the date 536 B.C., based on the supposition that for about two years Darius the Mede ruled Babylon under Cyrus, before Cyrus took control in his own name (ibid. 192-200). Such slight differences in chronology will not concern us." The scholars for 444 BCE are: "A. C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel* (New York: Publication Office "Our Hope", 1911); Alva J. McClain, *Daniel's Prophecy of the 70 Weeks* (reprint; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969); John F. Wolvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody, 1971); Ernst W. Hengstenberg, *Christology of the Old Testament* (reprint from edition 1872-78; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1956) 178-95. The year 444 B.C., according to Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 137, is now known to be the year in which Artaxerxes's decree was issued. Arguments in older works usually base themselves on the year 445 B.C. But since the arguments are substantially the same, all our references will be to the year 444 B.C." Scholars for 457 BCE are: "457 B.C. by J. Barton Payne, *The Imminent Appearing of*

Peter and 1 Enoch

D. R. Ulrich commented on the role of Daniel and 1 Enoch by saying: “Similar, then, to Daniel’s seventy sevens, the Apocalypse of Weeks offers

hope that God will eliminate sin and establish righteousness over a long stretch of time.”²⁵⁾

The preterists trying to explain 1 Enoch have a hard time to explain Daniel.²⁶⁾

Christ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962) 148-50. See Paul D. Feinberg, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Daniel 9:24-27,” in *Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honor of Charles Lee Feinberg*, ed. John S. Feinberg and Paul D. Feinberg (Chicago: Moody, 1981) 191-95.”

- 25) For D. R. Ulrich, “How early Judaism read Daniel 9:24-27,” *Old Testament Essays* 27/3 (2014).

Ulrich indicated that some manuscripts from Qumran did make reference to the periodization of the seventy sevens period in Daniel: “11QMelchizedek expresses hope for atonement at the end of ten jubilee periods with which the anointed one in Daniel seems to be associated, but the broken state of the text prevents better understanding. Verse 18 of 11QMelchizedek says that the messenger of Isa 52:7 is ‘the anointed of the spirit about whom Daniel spoke.’ The anointed one of Dan 9:26 seems to be in view,” (at footnote 28). He also referred to 1 QS and periodization: “The final poetic section of 1QS begins with a reference to ‘the constellation of the years up to their seven-year periods’ (1QS 10.7-8).” Ulrich cited the preteristic commentator of Daniel, J. Collins as saying: “Regarding the abomination of desolation, Collins says that 1 Maccabees 1:54 “stands as the earliest interpretation of the phrase in Daniel.” The problem of Ulrich unfold itself with problematic axioms: namely that Daniel had Antiochus IV in mind. “Given Daniel’s interest in Antiochus IV, 1 Maccabees’ reading of Dan 9:27, 11:31, and 12:11 with reference to the Antiochene crisis would seem to be not just the earliest interpretation of these verses but also an indication of the original intention of the author of Daniel. 1 Maccabees 1:54 understood Daniel’s abomination of desolation with reference to the Antiochene crisis. It would seem, then, that the writer of 1 Maccabees considered the Maccabean resolution of that crisis the climax of Daniel’s seventy sevens.” Nowhere in Daniel does the word Antiochus IV appear so this would be the first error in the whole scheme by Ulrich et al including Collins. Secondly, notice that in Jesus’ use of the same phrase in Daniel, which is in the future, is placed in March 13 in the future of Jesus and not transformed into a past tense if it was to be Antiochus IV. Why did Jesus not recognize Antiochus IV as a fulfillment of Daniel? He did not say: ‘As you saw’, but ‘when you shall see’. Ulrich and Collins are obviously here not correct due to the unexplained dilemma. Jesus did not connect it to Antiochus IV because it was never meant to be connected. One should not miss the long discussion of numbers that are not correlating between Antiochus IV and Daniel and scholars like Adler, Grabbe, and Montgomery; Rösel; Spangenberg are mentioned by Ulrich and then he concluded: “It is hard to say which group of scholars has the better explanation, but the history of interpretation after the Maccabees indicates that the Antiochene crisis was not always considered the sole referent of the prophecy.” This is closer to the truth. It was the problem Jerome had in his Commentary of Daniel with Porphyry the preterist as well. Jesus knew that periodization in Daniel stretched beyond Himself. G. Athas, “In Search of the Seventy ‘Weeks’ of Daniel 9,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9 article 2 (2009): 2-20. Doi:10.5508/jhs.2009.v9.a2 where he said: “Yet if we read the phrase as part of the preceding clause, we must recalculate the period to one of sixty-nine ‘weeks’ (7 + 62), amounting to 483 years.”

- 26) In his article on Daniel and Enoch, P. M. Venter, “Daniel and Enoch. Two different reactions” *HTS* 53/1 & 2: 68-91, especially 88, he declared: “Characteristic to the Hebrew Daniel is also the speculation with numbers.” Speculation is in the eye of the uninformed or self-misinformed or wrong adopted model of interpretation of the beholder, not in the revelation of God. It is typical of preterists that they are negative of any numbers mentioned by Daniel. The reason is that they cannot properly explain it since they carry some axioms into the text before they start analysis: it has to be Antiochus IV; the book should have been composed after Antiochus IV; numbers were altered that now does not correspond to Antiochus IV. They then try to unfold Daniel and other literature related within this self-allocated time-zone before they open the text. The following scholars operated with this *modus operandi* of preconceived ideas before reading and analysis: R. Albertz, 1992. J. J. Collins 1984; P. R. Davies 1993; P. F. Esler 1993; J. Goldstein 1981; A. I. Baumgarten and A. Mendelson 1981; N. K. Gottwald 1985; R. A. Horsley and J. S. Hanson 1985; A. LaCocque 1988; 1993; J. C. Lebrun 1983; G. W. E. Nickelsburg 1983; D. Hellholm 1983; 1994; S. B. Reid 1989; C. Rowland 1982; A. Saldarani 1988; Uhlig 1984. As it is said: P. L. Redditt, “Daniel

Maccabees and Understanding of Daniel by Jesus

A classical case of the correct interpretation of both 1 Maccabees and Daniel is that of Jesus in Mark 13. The events described in the Book of Maccabees is using the past tense of the verbs but Daniel and Jesus in Mark are using the future tense. One may argue that Daniel uses the future since the so-called Antiochus Epiphanes events of 164 BC was still Daniel's future, but what to make when Jesus makes it future in Mark 13 and that unfolding the interpretation of Daniel?

The role of Daniel is understood by scholars for the Intertestamental and New Testament period.²⁷⁾ For the sect at Qumran the "seventy weeks of years" were important. Why years? Because it was calculated with a year-day principle.

Preterism's Obscurantism of Eschatology and 1 Peter 4:17

Peter and Preterism in General

The understanding of preterism in Calvinism is not different from the understanding of the same in Catholicism or Judaism or the rest of Christianity. One good source for understanding it is the Appendix discussions of Thomas Myers to the Calvin's Commentary on Daniel. This was in the late Victorian Period but the modern stance on eschatology in Calvinism is said to be presented by the Title of a book, by Klaus Koch in 1970, *Ratlos vor der Apokalyptik*.²⁸⁾ Myers described a pre-Millerite Protestantism experimenting with other models of interpretation like historicism, futurism with preterism in the background but the one he favored is Idealism, the art of treating

9: It's Structure and Meaning," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 62/2 (April 2000): 236-249. "...a consensus is emerging that the prayer uttered in vv. 4b-19 was not written by the author of Daniel 9..." It is a very good thing that quantity and consensus cannot establish Truth. It merely points to popularity of opinion. The Word of God outlined and support that Saturday is the seventh day as a day to worship God, yet consensus emerged that substituted God's Word with theirs in making Sunday the day of Resurrection as the Day of the Lord for worship. Consensus over Text. Truth cannot be voted in by the voice of the majority. God does not let Himself be "judged" by humans letting their feelings, sensibility, skew ideas of morality decide over His Word modifying His revelation for their own selfish gain and purpose, albeit humane it appears to the eyes of the beholder. The Victorian author Ellen White said in her book *Great Controversy* (see online) page 595: "The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority - not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith."

27) There were multiple copies of the book of Daniel at Qumran. "Of special importance is what seems to be the sect's preoccupation with the scheme of "seventy weeks of years". For it, did not only supply the historical framework for the emergence of the sect as seen in the Damascus Covenant 1, 5-6, but, might have been utilized to readjust and meet later eschatological aspirations. See R. T. Beckwith, "The Significance of the Calendar for Interpreting Essene Chronology and Eschatology," *Revue de Qumran* 10 (1979), 179-180 (expecting the Messiah between 3 B.C.E.-2 C.E. not without significance for early Christian hopes and calculations)." (see O. Irshai, "Dating the Eschaton: Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity," in *Apocalyptic Time*, edited by A. I. Baumgarten. Leiden: Brill, 2000, 113-154., especially page 114, footnote 4).

the text like a poem: timeless but influencing. *ex eventu* books and thus they burned them. Not Eschatological understanding was suppressed in to upset the Roman emperors the catholic church the Roman period because they did not like *vaticinia* position developed a similar attitude.²⁹⁾

28) For a German work has demonstrated that apocalyptic texts have generally been avoided or ignored by biblical scholarship. The attitude of scholars is reflected in the title of Koch's book, *Ratlos vor der Apokalypik*, which, though literally translated means "Perplexed by Apocalyptic," can also be rendered "Embarrassed by Apocalyptic." John Collins has more recently observed: "Theologians of a more rational bent are often reluctant to admit that such material [i.e., the apocalyptic material in Daniel and Revelation] played a formative role in early Christianity. There is consequently a prejudice against the apocalyptic literature which is deeply engrained in biblical scholarship" (K. Koch, *Ratlos vor der Apokalypik* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1970); English trans., *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1972); J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 1. See Jeffrey A. D. Weima, "The Slaying of Satan's Superman and the Sure Salvation of the Saints: Paul's Apocalyptic Word of Comfort (2 Thessalonians 2:1-17)," *CTJ* 41 (2006): 67-88. John Collins is considered a foremost scholar on apocalyptic and eschatology but some comments suffice: In a bookreview of D. M. Slade he gave a brief overview of Collins (Slade, D. M. (2015). "Book Critique: *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*." Academia download. file:///D:/collins%20overview%20%20The_Apocalyptic_Imagination_by_John_Coll.pdf). Slade discussed the book of Collins but unfortunately from a Romantic perspective about the author. Collins is a preterist par excellence. His treatment of Daniel is denying veracity to the book, denying early authorship and side-tracking readers to Antiochus Epiphanes, something not even Jesus did in Mark 13, Luke 21 and Matthew 24. Christ was citing Daniel and talking about a future event still to come. Collins took the same citation of Christ and placed it before Christ in 164 BCE. The methodology of Collins needs serious review because the epistemology is problematic. Whether his ontology is problematic and how much alcohol and cigarettes are smoked per day, is a person matter but believe it or not, lifestyle does influence the epistemology of people and epistemology influence methodology and methodology finally leads to a deontology or end-product like the one on Apocalyptic imagination. It may be imagination for the pseudepigrapha but for the Book of Daniel, which is God's revelation in verity, not. For Collins, apocalyptic descriptions and eschatological narratives only starts in the third century BCE and the apocalyptic and eschatological references in the biblical literature since Moses in 1460 BCE in Midian, in Job, in the Psalm of Moses in Psalm 90, in the other book of the Old Testament predating Daniel, has no role to play. The wealth of eschatological and apocalyptic periodic and programmatic references of End-time events in chronological order, is overlooked by this author. The nuances of the total mosaic of the Old Testament on eschatology and apocalyptic, is not paid attention by him. This is the dilemma with preterism and the adoption of preterism and idealism as scenario after the historicistic failure of the Millerite Movement interpretations around 1844 led scholars like Thomas Myers in his commentary on Calvin at the Appendix to discuss all the schools of interpretation but create a toolbox of preterism that is pulled out at every reference to the End Time of the Second Coming of Christ and its nearness, and rationalized away with same time thinking of the authors. This methodology disqualify preterists to deal with texts of eschatology and apocalyptic properly despite the eagerness to collect all the data in the texts where they can be found. The texts are not the problem it is the interpretation of the texts and data that are done with an epistemology that is biased, lopsided, slanted and even downright out denying certain realities. That is why Collins ended up contra Christ in his interpretation in Mark 13 and the other eschatological passages in the gospels. Scholars are paying tribute to him like Slade, without even knowing the pitfalls of Collins.

29) Suggit, J. N. (2006). Oecumenius, Bishop of Tricca. [Oecumenii commentaries in Apocalypsin. English] Commentary on the Apocalypse / Oecumenius. In *The Fathers of the Church: a New Translation*. Editorial Director T. P. Halton et al. (The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), page 12 where Origen's eschatology is outlined. He was the most controversial figure on eschatology from a Catholic perspective. Origen expected that all things will return to an Eden situation and even the Devil will be converted (Halton 2006: 12). Origen expressed doubt in a bodily resurrection, see his *De Principis* 3.6.2. Justinian's eschatology was that "in the resurrection the bodies of men rise spherical" and Oecumenius in his commentary on Revelation 8.25.5 alluded to this that one of the primal elements are "circular" (Halton 2006: 12). Oecumenius indicated that the 144000 in Revelation 14 is not the same group

The Syriac tradition around the time of Jerome also was affected by Porphyry and his preterism.³⁰⁾

Thomas Aquinas on Eschatology: Catholic Example of Year-Day Principle

Aquinas provides some interesting reading.³¹⁾ A number of things are clear from the words of Thomas

Aquinas (1235-1253) as to his concept of the End of Time.

1. The Fathers interpreted Daniel 9 as showing the exact time of the First Coming of Christ. Aquinas agreed with it.³²⁾
2. Aquinas believes that Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 are important to provide signs

as that in Revelation 7 while Origen argued that they are the same (Halton 2006: 13). The opening and shutting of Revelation 3:7 is understood by Origen as methods of interpreting Scripture but Oecumenius differed and saw it as acquitting and condemning (Halton 2006: 13). Oecumenius in his eagerness to prune eschatological fever, resorted in hermeneutical method to spiritualizing the meaning of the text in the wake of 538 CE. He resorts to allegorizing the symbols and in Revelation 1:7 the clouds are holy angels and in Revelation 14:14 he thought the cloud referred to the Virgin Mary the Theotokos (Oecumenius 1.15.2 and 8.7.1-2). In Revelation 7:16 the sun is temptation (Oecumenius 5.3.10). In Revelation 8:7 the burning is temptation (Oecumenius 5.9.3). He is confused how to understand Revelation 13:3 and feels only John knew. "As it appears to me, it indicates something of this sort: the mortal blow that the Devil received in one of his heads through the pity of Israel was healed through the idolatry of the same people" (Oecumenius 7.11.11 in Halton 2006: 13-14). In Revelation 19:1 the great crowd of angels in heaven is linked to the ninety-nine sheep in the parable of Jesus (Oecumenius 10.7.1). In Revelation 13:8 Oecumenius felt in these years of Justinian that the regular use of gematria existing in those days, used by Preterism should be used but he does not applied it explicitly to Nero (Oecumenius 8.5.6, see Halton 2006: 14). De Villiers resorted to honoring the humanist B. Spinoza supporting his own stance rather than the theist I. Newton since De Villiers is already utilizing para-biblical hermeneutics, which was popular for Catholic Fathers prior to the sixth century (helping the Roman Empire including Justinian) and Oecumenius a contemporary of Justinian. Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine are all in line with the suppression of eschatology but in Jerome's commentary on Daniel, he took Pythagoras, the staunch Preterist, to task for some of his observations and obsession with Antiochus Epiphanes in everything. The prophetic periods and the years of Antiochus did not match and failed to convinced Jerome. One can see it clearly in Jerome's Commentary on Daniel 11.

- 30) J. Beggiani, *Early Syriac Theology with Special Reference to the Maronite Tradition* (New York: University Press of America, 1983). Porphyry is known also in Syriac through his introduction to the Organon. S. Brock (1977), "Greek into Syriac and Syriac into Greek," *Journal of the Syriac Academy* (Baghdad) 3: 1-17. Beggiani wishes to be silent on eschatology. As a modern Syriac theologian [he was born in 1935] he defines eschatology as follows: "eschatology speculates on the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation" (Beggiani 1983: 133). It is a rather disinterest definition.
- 31) Thomas Aquinas, "Question. 88 - OF THE GENERAL JUDGMENT, AS TO THE TIME AND PLACE AT WHICH IT WILL BE (FOUR ARTICLES)" in "TREATISE ON THE LAST THINGS (QQ[86]-99)" in "SUPPLEMENT (XP): TO THE THIRD PART OF THE SUMMA THEOLOGICA" in "Third Part (TP) of the Summa Theologica (QQ[1] - 90)" in Summa Theologica, by St. Thomas Aquinas, [1947], at sacred-texts.com. Online accessed 21st of August 2016 at http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/aquinas/summa/sum_635.htm.
- 32) Citation from Thomas Aquinas' sentences as collected by his friend Father Rainaldo da Piperno. "Whether the time of the future judgment is unknown? Objection 1: It would seem that the time of the future judgment is not unknown. For just as the holy Fathers looked forward to the first coming, so do we look forward to the second. But the holy Fathers knew the time of the first coming, as proved by the number of weeks mentioned in Daniel 9: wherefore the Jews are reproached for not knowing the time of Christ's coming (Lk. 12:56): 'You hypocrites, you know how to discern the face of the heaven and of the earth, but how is it that you do not discern this time?' Therefore it would seem that the time of the second coming when God will come to judgment should also be certified to us." The editor warned about this addition by his friend "After writing these few questions of the treatise on Penance,

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| <p>of the nearness of the Second Coming.³³⁾</p> <p>3. Since it was a long time ago that it was said to be near, it surely is nearer.³⁴⁾</p> <p>4. Christ fixed the exact date for His First Advent.³⁵⁾</p> <p>5. Augustine, and Eusebius and also Aquinas</p> | <p>are trying to softpad believers either that the signs were for the Gospel times, or that some signs were to be fulfilled surrounding the Fall of Jerusalem or that everything is unknown and not clear.³⁶⁾</p> <p>As uncertain as the Second Coming is for exact</p> |
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St. Thomas was called to the heavenly reward which he had merited by writing so well of his Divine Master. The remainder of the *Summa Theologica*, known as the Supplement, was compiled probably by Fra Rainaldo da Piperno, companion and friend of the Angelic Doctor, and was gathered from St. Thomas's commentary on the Fourth Book of the Sentences of Peter Lombard. This commentary was written in the years 1235-1253, while St. Thomas was under thirty years of age. Everywhere it reveals the influence of him whom St. Thomas always called the Master. But that influence was not to be always supreme. That the mind of the Angelic Doctor moved forward to positions which directly contradicted the Master may be seen by any student of the *Summa Theologica*. The compiler of the Supplement was evidently well acquainted with the commentary on the Sentences, which had been in circulation for some twenty years or more, but it is probable that he was badly acquainted with the *Summa Theologica*. This will be realized and must be borne in mind when we read the Supplement, notably TP, Q[62], A[1]; also Q[43], A[3], ad 2 of the Supplement." See the Source cited for Aquinas.

- 33) "Objection 2: Further, we arrive by means of signs at the knowledge of the things signified. Now many signs of the coming judgment are declared to us in Scripture (Mat. 24, Mk. 13, Lk. 21). Therefore we can arrive at the knowledge of that time."
- 34) "Since then it is a long time since these things were said, it would seem that now at least we can know that the last judgment is nigh."
- 35) "At His first coming Christ came secretly according to Is. 45:15, "Verily Thou art a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Saviour." Hence, that He might be recognized by believers, it was necessary for the time to be fixed beforehand with certainty."
- 36) "As Augustine says, in his letter to Hesychius concerning the day of judgment (Ep. cxcix), "the signs mentioned in the Gospels do not all refer to the second advent which will happen at the end of the world, but some of them belong to the time of the sack of Jerusalem, which is now a thing of the past, while some, in fact many of them, refer to the advent whereby He comes daily to the Church, whom He visits spiritually when He dwells in us by faith and love." Moreover, the details mentioned in the Gospels and Epistles in connection with the last advent are not sufficient to enable us to determine the time of the judgment, for the trials that are foretold as announcing the proximity of Christ's coming occurred even at the time of the Early Church, in a degree sometimes more sometimes less marked; so that even the days of the apostles were called the last days (Acts 2:17) when Peter expounded the saying of Joel 2:28, "It shall come to pass in the last days," etc., as referring to that time. Yet it was already a long time since then: and sometimes there were more and sometimes less afflictions in the Church. Consequently it is impossible to decide after how long a time it will take place, nor fix the month, year, century, or thousand years as Augustine says in the same book (Ep. ad Hesych. cxcix). And even if we are to believe that at the end these calamities will be more frequent, it is impossible to fix what amount of such calamities will immediately precede the judgment day or the coming of Antichrist, since even at the time of the Early Church persecutions were so bitter, and the corruptions of error were so numerous, that some looked forward to the coming of Antichrist as being near or imminent; as related in Eusebius' *History of the Church* (vi, 7) and in Jerome's book *De Viris Illustribus* lii." The Preteristic nuances emphasized by Augustine, Jerome and Eusebius is clear in this statement by Thomas Aquinas. The problem with the understanding of the scholar's about Peter's application of Joel is that they thought he is saying the last days eschatology of Joel in general is now in Peter's days. What Peter was saying, if one shift from a preteristic model to a historicistic model, that this particular predicted future event of the "Early Rain = Holy Spirit 'Fire' Raining" is but just the beginning of a long succession of events in God's corridor of events, and the "Latter Rain = 2nd Holy Spirit Rain/Sealing" is to take place later. Preterists work only with on

dating by Aquinas, he did agree with the Fathers that the First Coming was calculated in Daniel 9 and if that is the case, Aquinas agreed with the Year-day principle for prophecy because how can one arrive exactly with 490 days at 31 C.E. from 457 B.C.E. unless one converts the days into prophetic years with the year-day principle? Why did Aquinas not consistently also applied this principle to the 2300 days prophecy of Daniel 8:14 starting at the same point of departure? He went to the grave without an answer.

Obscurantism of Eschatology and 1 Peter 4:17

Obscurantism is the denial of the eschaton and nearness thereof and an attempt to distract from the biblical text or cover it up with vague, generalized explanations ignoring the clarity of the text. It is thus to be expected that any recent commentaries which investigate on 1 Peter 4:17 dealing with the judgment day will try to be preteristic or apply it to the Fall of Jerusalem between 67-70 A.D. Whether it is Catholic or Protestant Commentaries, they all will have the same understanding. When one brings this state of affairs together with the understanding of eschatology and last day events in the Dead Sea Scrolls of Peshier Habakkuk, what surprises the researcher is that what is obscurantism

in the history of Preteristic interpretation is actually just the opposite in the Peshier Habakkuk.

Vibrant Understanding of Eschatology and 1 Peter 4:17

The radical transformational interpretation suggested here is this, that the Peshier Habakkuk lays the background or serves as a good example how later Inter-testamental authors understood eschatology. Unfortunately, the New Testament “immanent eschatology” as is analyzed by modern scholars, including earlier scholars like Eusebius, Augustine and Jerome, also mentioned by Thomas Aquinas, all seem to have missed a continuation of vibrant eschatological understanding from the Old Testament into the Second Temple Period and the New Testament, embedded in Peshier Habakkuk but also playing itself out in the New Testament by the authors of the New Testament. This is an excitement shared with the Peshier Habakkuk understanding by New Testament believers. That is to say, that instead of adhering to the modern superimposed model of preterism over Peter statements, it rather appears as if he was adhering to principles that the scribes and theologians in the Qumran texts also utilized: year-day-principle for prophetic days in the Book of Daniel; calculating the date of the coming of the Messiah; His baptism

umbrella of End-Time events and if something did not happen in the days of Joel but is recognized to happen in the days of Peter, then Peter is said to transform the words of Joel to apply to his own day.

date and the date of His death. Aquinas did not miss it. At least on the mainframe of his suggestions.

Correctives to Preteristic Commentaries on 1 Peter: Some Suggestions

Instead of using the Idealism model trying to place persecution in every century or in various abstract forms, or using the preteristic model to pull Peter's words past his death in 64 A.D. under Nero to the Fall of Jerusalem events of 67-70,³⁷⁾ it is more advisable to place Peter in jail with this letter, together with Paul, which would explain the common expressions, ideas and themes in the Book with Romans and Ephesians and other books of Paul.

It is also better to employ the historicistic understanding of prophetic interpretation that one finds also in Peshar Habakkuk understanding God's prophetic charts to be periods of which He knows when to switch on and switch off events. Like the Peshar expected these periods to be "long" or "extended" it is thus not wise to read into Peter's work an expectation of an imminent Advent or Judgment coming. This suggestion is contrary to the consensus of the modern scholars for many years. But there is never a time not to start learning properly. The Peshar Habakkuk with the distinction

between the Investigative Judgment³⁸⁾ and Executive Judgment forces us to challenge the consensus of the scholars' products. It is clear by this Qumran text that the last days were not just an item in everyone's own suitcase. It was beyond human control, it was well-spelled-out and well-presented in the Old Testament prophets including Daniel and his long-period prophecies arriving exactly at the baptism and death of Christ in Daniel 9:24-27.

Dealing with the Versions and Translations of 1 Peter 4:17

Vetus Latina 1 Peter 4:17 (see Sabattier Vol. 3, 1743 page 954)

quia tempus inchoationis iudicii à domo Dei. Si autem initium à nobis: quis finis eorum, qui non credunt Evangelio Dei?

Because of the time of starting of Judgment from the house of God. If it starts from us: what is their end, who did not believe the gospel of God?

Greek text of the Vetus Latina reconstructed:
ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ • εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ' ἡμῶν, τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθούντων τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ;

37) In Adventism W. H. Littlejohn, "Judgment at the house of God" Review and Herald 11 March 1884, 171 explained the passage in 1 Peter 4:17 as local persecution of Jews and Christians and not as the Investigative Judgment process in later history.

38) It is better to deal with Adventism in a separate Appendix to this article.

Vulgate 1 Peter 4:17

quoniam tempus est ut incipiat iudicium à domo Dei. Si autem primùm à nobis: quis finis eorum, qui non credunt Dei Evangelio

Seeing that it is time when to begin a Judgment from the House of God. If it [is] firstly from us: what is their end, who did not believe the gospel of God?

Greek text of the Vulgate reconstructed: ὅτι ἔστιν ὁ καιρὸς πότε τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ • εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ' ἡμῶν, τί ἔστιν τὸ τέλος αὐτῶν τῶν ἀπειθούντων τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ;

Greek New Testament with Literal Translation

ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ • εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ' ἡμῶν, τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθούντων τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ;

Literal Translation: Because the time to begin the Judgment from the house of God: but if first from us, what [will be] the end of those unbelieving ones in the gospel of God?

Manuscript Comparison of the Latin Translations of 1 Peter 4:17 to Identify the Errors

The original manuscripts utilized by the Vetus Latina and Vulgate was written in capital letters with no spaces between the letters. Copying and reading them could lead to errors of slips of the

eye, ear, hand, memory and tongue. And they did.

In the following one can see how these errors plagued the Greek Vorlage that Jerome used for his translation of the Vulgate.

Vetus: ΟΤΙΟΚΑΙΡΟΣΤΟΥΑΡΞΑΣΘΑΙΤΟΚΡΙΜ
ΑΑΠΟΤΟΥΟΙΚΟΥΤΟΥΘΕΟΥΕΙΔΕΠΡΩ
ΤΟΝΑΦΗΜΩΝΤΙΤΟΤΕΛΟΣΤΩΝΑΠΕΙ
ΘΟΥΝΤΩΝΤΩΤΟΥΘΕΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΩ

Vulgate: ΟΤΙΟΚΑΙΡΟΣΤΟΥΑΡΞΑΣΘΑΙΤΟΚΡ
ΙΜΑΑΠΟΤΟΥΟΙΚΟΥΤΟΥΘΕΟΥΕΙ
ΔΕΠΡΩ
ΤΟΝΑΦΗΜΩΝΤΙΤΟΤΕΛΟΣΤΩΝΑ
ΠΕΙΘΟΥΝΤΩΝΤΩΤΟΥΘΕΟΥΕΥΑΓ
ΓΕΛΙΩ

Original: ΟΤΙΕΣΤΙΝΟΚΑΙΡΟΣΠΟΤΕΤΟΥΑΡΞΑΣ
ΘΑΙΤΟΚΡΙΜΑΑΠΟΤΟΥΟΙΚΟΥΤΟΥΘ
ΕΟΥΕΙΔΕΠΡΩΤΟΝΑΦΗΜΩΝΤΙΕΣΤ
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ΝΤΩΝΤΩΤΟΥΘΕΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΩ

Remarks:

1. It is clear that the Vetus Latina reproduced the original Greek almost 100%.
2. The Vulgate of Jerome is based on a defective Greek manuscript with many errors due to the five slips already mentioned. These five slips are normal human activities since man is not a machine.
3. If Jerome was using a manuscript that comes from an earlier period as himself, it may have

originated in difficult copying times when they had to copy speedy, or in public libraries where access was not easy or where the reader and listener made errors not to talk about orthographical irregularities.

“Because the time to begin the Judgment from the house of God: but if first from us, what [is] the end of those unbelieving ones in the gospel of God?”

It is a citation from a text in the mind of Peter from the Old Testament and commonly used by popular speaking so that the audience knew what he was talking about. It is a similar sentence in Peshar Habakkuk.

Why Did Peter Use the Negative Particle ܕܐ?

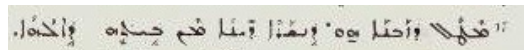
Peter knows very clearly what the end of those will be that do not believe. The Hell-event is vividly spelled out by him in other sections of his Books. If a seesaw is in mind and he sees himself on one end and the evil on the other, and the first event is that the seesaw goes up with the good ones [us] why did he use “but” for a good result

of protection, stigma removal, completed atonement, perfection qualifying process ending on his side and “but” for those on the other side? Why “but”? Is he afraid of the judgment of God in his personal life? The judgment did not start yet. If it is to begin then people since Adam until his time was not judged. If He is to start with us, is Peter’s “us” a generic term that covers all believers of spiritual Israel [Old and New Testaments until the Second Coming]? A postulating nuance would be: If it is so difficult for us who believe, (“but” if first from us), how difficult would it not be for them who did not believe?

The Vetus Latina and Vulgate left out the negative particle in their translations.

Syriac Translation of 1 Peter 4:17

Syriac Text:



“Because that the time is³⁹⁾ that shall begin⁴⁰⁾ the judgment from the house of God”.

Coptic Translation of 1 Peter 4:17

Δε α⁴¹⁾ προγοειν ωωπε⁴²⁾ ητε⁴³⁾ παπ αρχει

39) Theodore H. Robinson, *Paradigms and Exercises in Syriac Grammar* (Clarendon Press, 1915 first edition, reprint 1986), 15 for the form of the verb when it is an enclitic and also the form of the verb “to be” on the same page. Page 138 for the function as a conjunction meaning “because” of the preposition. The Syriac Dictionary of J. Brun (1911) indicated that the preposition can also mean in Latin: ob = “on account of, for the sake of,” or it can mean Latin, propter = “near, beside, on account of, by means of.” J. Brun, *Dictionarum Syriaco-Latinum*. Beryti Phoeniciorum: Typographia PP (Soc. Jesu., 1911), 292-293.

40) The form is not a Pa’al but a Pa’el Imperfect 3rd person according to Robinson (1915, 1986), 67. The preformative loses the vowel just like Robinson said. It is also not an Infinitive.

εἰς οὗτ' ἂν πῶς ἡμῶν ἔσται.

Horner's translation:⁴⁴⁾ "Because the time happened that the judgment may begin from the house of God."

All the preteristic commentaries trying to explain it as suffering like Meyer,⁴⁵⁾ Wohlenberg,⁴⁶⁾ et al. fall short of this understanding: firstly, it did not start yet; secondly, the judgment is not "on/to" us but "from" us. This cancels any presentistic suffering in the life of Peter or any of the Christians in his time. The grammar does not permit that reading. The expression ἀφ' ἡμῶν cannot mean "to us". Thirdly, the word ἔσται is not used but inserted by scholars to suggest a presentistic tense for the fulfillment of Peter's prophetic understanding. True, the scribe (and there are scholars including Jerome who suggested that two different scribes

wrote the two Books of Peter) did not use ἔσται readily. Even if ἔσται has to be inserted in the English to make sense, the word "is" can also be futuristic and in fact is futuristic for the judgment of the second group for if one group is judged [presentistically or futuristically] "first" then obviously the second group that are going to be judged will be done = ἔσται in future. The context of the syntax lays down the rules in which direction the verbal tenses should be leaning towards regardless of their form.

Another nuance is suggested here that the scholars did not think about: good works which is the basis of judgment is expected from us and that is what is difficult to render but necessary to render for sanctification. Christ will finish in the Investigative Judgment looking at all works of obedience [Torah

41) These two first particles belong together and it is a conjunction. Till indicated that it can be either ⲁⲗ ⲁ or ⲁⲗ ⲁⲗ. The translation is "with what" or "with it" or "where with." W. Till, *Koptische Dialektgrammatik* (München: C. H. Beck, 1961), 67 at number 296. The German is "damit".

42) The expression ⲙⲱⲡⲉ is a periphrastic conjunction and can be translated the way Horner did "happened" or "been" or "dwell". It is the Middle and Late Egyptian form for ḥpr = becoming, been, coming into being (see Till 1961: 42 at no. 196). From the tomb of the officer of Thutmosis III came the description of the aftermath of his death in 1450 BCE and in one sentence he is using this form ḥpr and said: "When the morning brightened, the sun ('itn) came into being (ḥpr) and the heavens shone ... Amenhotep II was established upon the throne of his father" (Sayed Tawfik, "Aton Studies," MDIK 29 [1973]: 77-86, especially page 78).

43) For the function of this word ⲡⲧⲉ with a Perfect tense in a relative sentence, see Till, 1961: 83 at number 347.

44) Horner, G. W., *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect*, vol. 7, *The Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924), 55.

45) Meyer (1867), 209-211, provides valuable data in his discussions of this verse. He disagrees with Calvin's paraphrase in Latin, but took what Calvin interpreted as "persecution" and used the word "suffer". He unfortunately connected the verse to Jeremiah, 25:29 and 49:12 as well as Ezechiel 9:6 (page 211), which is questionable because it is a reference that Peter do not mention explicitly. What is interesting is that Meyer argues that there are two judgments, one in the "house of God" from where it moves elsewhere and which is earlier with the faithful distinguished from a later judgment at the Second Coming of the wicked. The Christian will only suffer the first judgment not the second one he said (page 210). "dass die Christen nur das Erste des Gerichtes zu erleiden hätten, nicht des Schluss desselben."

46) Wohlenberg (1923).

keeping in the Peshar Habakkuk] and that is the explanation for the negative particle “but.”

The paraphrased text of 1 Peter 4:17 may mean:

Obedience in a sinful world surrounded by evil people and demons in the air and Satan next to us [as a roaring lion], how difficult must it be for those who are unbelieving approaching their part of the judgment when our part of the judgment starts first? If they have no works recorded that Christ can utilize in their favor as their Advocate in the Heavenly Court, how are they going to survive this process? Judgment without works is executive annihilation forever.

Peter knew this and said this. Here his audience do not know. We know it because he had to spell it out for them later, the Hell-burning aspects.

The audience knew about the two judgments but what they did not know is what role consecration as obedience and the essence of Torah-keeping fulfillment plays in this important final judgments: first the House of God and second, the evil ones with executive Hell fire *ad ninilo* not *ad infinitum*.

It is not thought only without actions. It is not sitting in a cave meditating God all day. It is walking and talking with people and living with

them so that the person is a mirror for God's glory.

It is thought and action. It is not only mental but also physical so that as long as the cognitive parts acknowledge God or a Higher Being then it is fine. It is holistic body and soul and spirit. It is not glorifying God as a mirror when a person is in violation of the word of God.⁴⁷⁾

How much work is needed to qualify the judgment? Almost nothing but definitely something: holistic consecration in one minute dying of cancer or like the thief on the cross unreservedly. It is your one hour laborer that will receive the same reward as the whole day worker in Christ's parable. Peter knew all this and with this frame in mind, he touched upon the issue of works for the judgment or consecration and dedication towards sanctification and perfection of the characters. Peter does not have a different gospel or eschatology than Moses, or Jesus or Paul or John but they all had exactly the same understanding. Peter and Paul sat next to each other in Rome and he read Paul's books.

47) As Calvinistic Philosopher Hendrik Stoker said summarized: the way you live (ontology) affects the way you think (epistemology) and this affects the way you do things (methodology) and finally affects your products (deontology). Lifestyle is mirrored in the products of a person. See H. G. Stoker, *Oorsprong en Rigting*. Vol. II. Capetown: Tafelberg Publishing, 1970, pages 118 and 119. Downloaded on the 24th of December 2020 from <https://archive.org/details/HGStoker1970OorsprongEnRigtingBand2>. He said: “The role of the personal factor in science, functioning in the choice of prescientific assumptions, of problems to be investigated, of methods of investigation, etc. and consequently of actualizing scientific freedom needs only to be mentioned.” (119) Also “...one's view of science (rightly or wrongly) co-determines one's choice and use of scientific method and one's view of its deontology; and the scientist is deontically answerable for his view of science” (118).

Conclusions

If what is presented is valid, it brings Christianity to the astounding realization that the defamation of the Millerites in 1844 and the discovery of an Investigative Judgment wrapped in the Sanctuary in Heaven message as an understanding for 1 Peter 4:17, is the most profound development of Reformed and Christian Theology for our times. It means the Book of Hebrews takes on new meanings, it means New Testament eschatological understanding takes on exciting investigations.⁴⁸⁾ The nuances thought to be applied to an imminent Advent understanding by the New Testament authors, are then placed under a different analysis. What moderns understood the New Testament believers knew about prophecies and prophetic periods in God's plan, is then elaborated maximally instead of minimized. This discovery is so radical that scholars need to ask themselves whether they are rejecting what was said here because of the sales (commercial grounds) of their thoughts and products

in future, their honor and prestige of the institution they are representing, or do they do it purposefully overlooking true investigated grounds and data supplied? It will require scholars to bravely jump G. Lessing's "Ugly Ditch" in acceptance of the proliferations of the grammatical-historical reading of the Greek Text rather than to *analogia entis* design modern structures to superimpose the text with and try to extrapolate only what the modern superimposed structure requires.

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48) John wrote in Revelation with the same interpretational toolkit that Peter and Qumran was using. Unless an interpreter has the following tools in his/her toolkit, problems will be experience in fully understanding Revelation 11: year-day principle for the 1260 days and 1300 days; the prophetic periodical time charts that Qumran also worked with and which was completely rediscovered in 1844 after the 2300 days as year prophecy of Daniel 8:14 by Seventh-day Adventists. Preterism will be confusion and chaotic in interpretation. Ancient Near Eastern symbolism is not rich enough to explain the Old Testament doctrines of Judgment of the Saints first and then reward allocation with Executive Judgment of the wicked to follow later. The whole measurement in the inner courts, which is the believers as opposed to the Gentiles in the outer-court, who are not measured first, is involved here. This is the Investigative Judgment doctrine of which 1 Peter 4:17 and also John here in Revelation 11 taps into Daniel 7. Another tool of the Old Testament expounded by the Book of Hebrews is the Sanctuary Message. Without a proper understanding of the Sanctuary in Heaven or City of God in heaven doctrine of the Old and New Testament, it is not possible to explain many verses in the Bible and here in Revelation 11. A more in depth analysis should be done in a proper article about these connections. Daniel 7 and 8:14 must be correctly understood within the frame of these tools. All aspects are tightly interlocked and writers are fully aware of the totality of the prophetic salvation engine of God.

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