

## **OUR DEFENSE**

### **1 PETER 3:13-22**

#### **BE READY (1 PET. 3:13-17)**

- 1. Why does Peter ask “Who then will harm you if you are devoted to what is good?” when he knows they are already being persecuted?**

Most people, including worldly people, do not have a problem with those who do good things for others. Peter knows that doing good for Christ is a source of contention for the world. He is assuring the readers that nothing can harm them if they continue to walk with God.

- 2. What do the persecutors fear the most?**

They fear what others could do to them and/ or say about them. Believers are not to fear the suffering unbelievers might administer to them. Peter is indicating that believers are to trust God to vindicate His people.

### **3. What does it mean to “give a defense to anyone who asks...”?**

This means that believers (including us) should know more than just a little about the Bible.

Greeks appreciated a logical statement as to why one held certain beliefs. The word

“defense” translates to the English word “apologetics”. God does not need defending but

He does desire a heartfelt explanation as to why we follow Him.

## **BE ASSURED (1 PET. 3:18-20)**

### **1. Why did Peter refer to Christ’s suffering?**

He was pointing out that when believers suffer for their faith it is a blessing, not a curse.

Christ suffered persecution as a human so they could relate. Christ’s death was different in

that it was complete and sufficient for the atonement for the sins of all people. Once and

for all indicates Christ’s sacrifice was the final and perfect sacrifice, ending the repeated

process of animal sacrifices.

## **2. What was the message of Jesus' proclamation?**

The nature of the proclamation could be the gospel proclaimed to those who lived before Christ or the announcement to the rebellious spirits that their power had been broken. The latter is most probable.

## **3. Who are the spirits Peter is referring to in verse nineteen?**

The answer as to who these spirits were is not clear. It is suggested that they are either the sinners who lived before Christ, or they are the rebellious spirits in Genesis 6:1-4. Likewise, the nature of the prison is not clear. It could be hell, a metaphor for the imprisonment that sin brings, or the world of spirits.

The Noah reference may help clarify the situation. The story told in Genesis 6:1-4 precedes the story of Noah. God's peoples' wickedness caused God to destroy the earth by flood. Prior to the flood the people disobeyed Noah's message of repentance. There is no reference anywhere that claims those in hell get a second chance. Therefore, it is probable that Christ preached about His triumph over the fallen angels.

## **SHOW OTHERS (1 PET. 3:21-22)**

### **1. Is Peter suggesting that baptism saves?**

Not at all! Peter is using an antitype in this situation. An antitype is an earthly expression of a spiritual reality. It indicates a symbol or picture of a spiritual truth.

### **2. So, what is the spiritual truth Peter is making?**

The fact that eight people were in an ark and went through the whole judgement, and yet remained unharmed, is a picture of the Christian's experience in salvation. Believers who are in Christ are in the "ark" of safety that will sail over the waters of judgement.

### **3. What is the significance of being at the right hand of God?**

The reference to the right hand is Psalm 110:1. The words King David wrote indicated a descendant of his would be greater—so great that David addressed Him as Lord. Jesus pointed out that the descendant would be more than a human king; he would be God himself (MT. 26:64). He is now exalted in the place of prominence, honor, majesty, authority, and power.

### **SUMMARY / APPLICATION**

This passage is one of the, if not the most, difficult texts in the New Testament to interpret. Scholars attempt to provide a clear picture of the text, but it is at times a bit cloudy. We should not worry because God is much bigger than we are. He knows everything and we do not. In this case, “I don’t know” is an excellent answer.

Peter’s message is still clear. As believers suffer, Christ still reigns and rules. He has not surrendered them into the power of evil forces. By His death and resurrection Jesus has triumphed over all demonic powers. He now sits at the right hand of God with complete power and authority.