

## 2 PETER 2

*“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:...”*

### I. Peter’s Warning About False Teachers

#### A. There were false prophets... - Peter continues to reference Israel’s history

1. Example: Hanniah - Jer. 28; stated that the Jewish exiles would not remain in captivity for 70 years
2. How to know a false prophet? - Deut. 18:21-22; if their prediction does not come to pass the prophecy is not from God

#### B. Even as there shall be false teachers among you...

1. Peter warned these believers that false teachers would enter in among them in the future
  - a) False teacher - take the message communicated by God to the Apostles and the NT prophets and twist it, make it say something it was not intended to say
    - (1) The “*unlearned and unstable*” wrench Paul’s writings out of joint, leading to their own “*destruction*” - 2 Pe. 3:16-17
    - (2) Certain ones have veered away from the truth only to speak empty words, desiring to teach law even though they don’t know what they are talking about - 1 Ti. 1:6-8
    - (3) False teachers twisted the grace of God into a license to sin and resist Christ’s authority - Jude 4

#### C. Who privily shall bring in damnable heresies...

1. Privily - *parexisaxousin* - lit. Shall be smuggling in
2. “The leading characteristic of the heresies... they led men to ‘destruction’” - Cambridge Bible

#### D. And many shall follow their pernicious ways...

1. Pernicious - *exakoloutheō* - to imitate, obey, yield to - Strong’s
  - a) Peter warned that these false teachers would gather a following
  - b) Their teaching would give cause for others to speak ill of the Christian life

#### E. And through covetousness...

1. Covetousness - *pleonexia* - lit. Greed
  - a) One of the key motivations of false teachers is greed
    - (1) “...*supposing that gain is godliness*” - 1 Timothy 6:3-5
    - (2) The legalizers in Galatia wanted to glory in converting these believers to Law - Gal. 6:13
  - b) The one teaching God’s word should not be motivated by financial gain - 1 Pe. 5:2
2. Feigned words make merchandise of you...
  - a) Feigned - *plastois* - lit. Molded; suave
  - b) Merchandise - *emporeusontai* - lit. They shall be trafficking; to pedal, impart for sale
    - (1) These false teachers look at people like they are buying and selling products on Amazon
    - (2) They choose carefully crafted words with the design to have maximum affect

*“...whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;”*

## II. False Teachers Face Certain Judgment

- A. Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not... - their judgment is coming... *you'll see!*
- B. Peter reminds the audience of God's track record of dealing with ungodliness in the OT
  - 1. God did not refrain from judging the angels that sinned
    - a) Only certain fallen angels are presently in hell, the rest await future sentencing - Ma. 8:29
    - b) God judged those angels, "*which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation*" - Jude 6
    - c) Which angels were prematurely sentenced to eternal damnation? - Gen. 6:2
  - 2. God judged mankind with the flood - "*every imagination of the heart of man was wicked*"
    - a) God provided them with a warning - Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness
    - b) The ungodly - "not merely irreligious and destitute of reverential awe towards God but acting in contravention of God's demands" - Gen. 6:5

*"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations..."*

## III. False Teachers Face Certain Judgment But God Delivers the Righteous

- A. Turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes... - these cities experienced cataclysmic judgment
  - 1. "*But the men of Sodom [were] wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.*" - Gen. 13:13
  - 2. Judgment was the result of wholly giving themselves over to sexual perversions - Jude 7
- B. And delivered just Lot... - *Just Lot!?! Seriously?*
  - 1. Lot does not appear to behave righteously
    - a) Lot seemingly chose the lands around Sodom and Gomorrah for material gain - Gen. 13:10
    - b) Lot offered his daughters to the sexually perverted crowd surrounding his home - Gen. 19:9
    - c) Lot's sons-in-law mocked him when he warned them about God's judgment - Gen. 19:14
    - d) Drunken Lot committed incest with his daughters - Gen. 19:30
  - 2. Lot's righteousness was based on faith
    - a) Abraham was counted righteous by God when he believed His promise - Gen. 15
    - b) Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness - Gal. 3:6
    - c) At some point in his life, Lot believed the promise God had made to Abraham and it was counted unto him for righteousness too
- C. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations... - those declared righteous by God will not experience God's judgment upon the lost
  - 1. See Noah - v. 5
  - 2. See Lot - v. 7
  - 3. "*For God hath not appointed us to [THE] wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,*" - 1 Th. 5:9
  - 4. "*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*" - 1 Cor. 11:31-32

*"...and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord."*

#### IV. God Knows His a Plan for Judging the Unrighteous

- A. And to reserve the unjust... - those that have not been declared righteous by faith are reserved to judgment
- B. But chiefly... - especially those
  - 1. Walk after the flesh in the lust of concupiscence - lives dominated by their sin nature's appetite for defiling; often with emphasis sexuality
  - 2. Despise government - think little of those in God's established authority over them - Ro. 13
    - a) Presumptuous - *tolmetes* - "shameless and irreverent daring" - Vine's
    - b) Self-willed - *authades* - "denotes one who, dominated by self-interest, and inconsiderate of others, arrogantly asserts his own will, 'self-willed'" - Vine's
  - 3. These individuals are not afraid at all to talk poorly about those in authority
- C. Whereas angels... - Peter sets forth a contrast
  - 1. While these individuals bad mouth earthly authority
  - 2. The angels in heaven, who are much greater and more powerful, do not bring accusations about these ungodly before the Lord - the angels know their place, God is the Judge

*"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceiving while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:"*

#### V. Peter's Continued Commentary on these False Teachers

- A. Natural brute beasts... - the false teachers were governed by base natural instincts, like wild animals
- B. Speak evil of of the things that they understand not...
  - 1. These individuals are proud ignoramuses speaking authoritatively about subjects of which they have no knowledge
  - 2. The only thing they are good for is being destroyed
- C. And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness... - judgment
- D. Sporting themselves with their own deceiving while they feast with you
  - 1. Reference to the "Love feast" connected to the Lord's supper
  - 2. These false teachers were luxuriating themselves and feasting sumptuously with other believers, while they spouted off their twisted perversion of God's truth
- E. Having eyes full of adultery...
  - 1. Eyes full - *mestous* - distended
    - a) The eyes of these teachers were bulging out of their head looking for opportunities to take advantage of unsuspecting and spiritually immature women
    - b) *"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,"* - 2 Ti. 3:5-6
  - 2. That cannot cease from sin... - no control over their sin nature
- F. Beguiling unstable souls...
  - 1. Beguiling - *deleazontes* - lit. Enticing into a trap; catch by bait
  - 2. Unstable souls
    - a) *"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."* - James 1:8; a two-souled individual lacks stability in the Christian life
    - b) These false teaches plied their trade by playing upon the emotions of spiritually unstable believers

- (1) They entice through the desires of the flesh - 2 Pe. 2:18
- (2) The desires of the flesh wage war on the soul - 1 Pe. 2:11
- c) Cursed children... - born ones possessing a curse
- G. An heart they have exercised with covetous practices... - these teachers are well-practiced in the art of deception and preying upon the spiritually unstable

*“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet”*

#### VI. Parallels between OT false prophets and NT false teachers

- A. Which have forsaken the right way... - these teachers have left alone, or disregarded, The Way of Truth
- B. Peter points back to Israel’s history
  - 1. Balaam was motivated by greed to curse Israel - Nu. 22:32
  - 2. Greed is a common motivation for false prophets and false teachers in both Testaments - 1 Ti. 6:3-10

*“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”*

#### VII. More Characteristics of False Teachers

- A. Wells without water... - wells promise the prospect of life giving water and refreshment and yet these teachers are empty
- B. Clouds carried with tempest... - storms that have the driving power of wind - the haziness of their teaching
- C. To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever... - separation from the life of God
- D. They speak great swelling words of vanity....
  - 1. These teachers are impressive orators who bait individuals by appealing to their sin nature
  - 2. These teachers hold out the prospect of a freedom from restraint to those that have been previously freed from the sin nature
    - a) Twisted perversion of grace - Jude 6
    - b) Some have mistakenly concluded that God’s grace is best on display when we sin - Rom. 6:1-2
- E. Peter warned that some believers, who had been freed from the power of the sin nature, would be deceived

*“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to here wallowing in the mire.”*

#### VIII. The Fate of Believers Influenced by False Teachers

- A. For if after that have escaped...
  - 1. For - gar - because; Peter stated what would result in the lives of those lured into a life dominated by their sin nature

2. They have escaped - refers back to a point in time when they had “*escaped the pollutions of the world*” by the power of another
  3. Knowledge of the Lord - experiential knowledge - *see* v. 2 Pe. 1:3; 3:18 (grow in grace and peace by the experiential knowledge of the Lord)
- B. They are again entangled therein, and overcome
1. Entangled - *emplakentes* - lit. To weave in
  2. Overcome - *hettontai* - “it signifies to be overcome, in the sense of being subdued and enslaved.” - Vine’s
  3. Peter referring to believers who have become entangled and increasingly overcome by the appetites of their sin nature
- C. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness
1. To have known - Perfect tense - known with the result they continue to know
  2. Way of righteousness
    - a) Christ’s death for sins so that believers “*should live unto righteousness*” - 1 Pe. 2:24
    - b) Peter and all believers have “*obtained like precious faith*” by righteousness of Christ - 2 Pe. 1:1
  3. Warning to those believers who had an experiential knowledge of how to live in a manner that honored God well
    - a) Not all believers have that understanding
    - b) God holds those with this experiential knowledge to a higher degree of accountability
  4. Turn - *epistrepsai* - lit. To cause to return, to bring back
  5. Peter used a disgusting metaphor to liken the behavior of the individual who forgoes “the way of righteousness”