

November 7, 2021
Angels Who Sinned
2 Peter 2:4

By way of review, we should consider what subject 2 Peter is addressing. The main subject is the gospel of our salvation; the Apostle Peter wrote this letter to the Church to ensure that we remain strong in the faith and faithful to the gospel. In chapter one, he confirms the solid foundation upon which our beliefs are built, and then, in the opening verses of chapter two, he warns of false teachers. False teachers are a certainty; false teachers will be among us until Christ returns.

In chapter two, verse three, he says of false teachers, "...for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber."

2 Peter 2:3 (NKJV) By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

The verses following this declaration cover the subject of the judgment and destruction of false teachers. The judgment and destruction of false teachers are one and the same. In other words, the judgment of false teachers has already been decided, and the judgment is their destruction.

However, Peter assures us that their destruction has not been idle. This assurance is necessary because it appears to the human eye that their judgment is idle—[*Idle means motionless (at rest); doing nothing (inactive)*]. If we look back through history, we see many false teachers that have lived long lives, and some of these have had plenty of money. It is just as 2 Peter 3:4 says. People adopt the attitude that says, "Ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

In answer to such thinking, the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Peter, gives us four examples of situations where judgment seems to wait. Today, we are going to look at the first of these examples. We are going to consider what Peter says about angels who sinned.

2 Peter 2:4 says:

2 Peter 2:4 (NKJV) For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

First, we will need to consider who we are talking about. Who are these angels?

Understanding what Peter is saying about these angels will help us figure out who these angels are. First, they were cast down to hell in the past. Second, they are in chains of darkness. And, finally, they are reserved for judgment.

When the Bible says they were “cast down to hell,” it uses the word “*Tartarus*.” In other places, the Bible uses the word “*Hades*” to speak of the place where the unrighteous dead await the final judgment. Then, the Bible uses the word “*Gehenna*” to refer to the lake of fire where death, hades, and the devil will be thrown after the final judgment. Thus, three different words are translated as “hell.”

Tartarus is a special holding place for angels (*demons*) who did not stay in their own realm but committed a particular class of sin. Jude references the sin and the holding place of these demons when it says:

Jude 6 (NKJV) And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

Since these demons are in chains of darkness, they cannot function in or disturb our world. As 2 Peter 2:4 says, they are reserved for judgment. They, like all of creation, await the final judgment. At that time, these particular demons will be cast into the lake of fire along with the devil, death, and Hades.

Peter says that these angels sinned and are held, reserved for judgment, nothing more. However, Jude adds to this that these angels (*demons*) did not keep their proper (*own*) domain and then says they left their own “abode.”

A domain is a realm, a place that a king or prince has dominion over. An abode is a dwelling place or house. The word for abode that is used in Jude 6 is also used in 2 Corinthians 5:2.

2 Corinthians 5:1–2 (NKJV) ¹For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our **habitation** [*abode*] which is from heaven,

These demons did not stay in their own abode. In Corinthians, “abode” is used of the human body. (The root word is “*oikos*,” which translates as “house.”) Therefore, we can assume that the demons mentioned in Jude did not stay in the body they were created with.

In addition to their abode, Jude 6 says that these demons did not stay in the “proper realm.” The realm spoken of here is the unseen realm where spiritual beings dwell. The spiritual world is the proper realm or domain of spirit beings.

According to Ephesians 6, the spiritual realm has principalities and powers, a hierarchy, of spiritual beings. For example, in the Old Testament, we see these spiritual beings interacting with God. Job 1 says:

Job 1:6 (NKJV) Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.

Looking at this verse, we see beings called “the sons of God,” and these beings are of the same “kind” as Satan. The text says, “...and Satan also came among them.”

Humans are called sons of God. In Exodus 4:22-23, Israel is called “My son,” and in Matthew 5:9, peacemakers are called “sons of God.” Both angels and people are called sons of God because we are all created by God and bear His image. But, we should not let this confuse us about the identity of these angels.

Genesis 6 gives us this account:

Genesis 6:4 (NKJV) There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

In this verse, the “sons of God” refer to angelic beings (demons). These are the beings to which both 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 refer. These angels deserted their proper realm and took on a physical form that was not the abode they were created with, and they reproduced with human women. As Genesis 6:4 tells us, this action created the mighty men of old, the giants. The ungodliness of men and this intermixing of spirit beings with humans (hybrids) are given as the reasons God destroyed all life with a flood.

Angels have no chance for redemption. Therefore, these human offspring of angels had no chance of redemption. It was Satan’s purpose to destroy the plan of God, and God allowed Satan this attempt in order to show the extent to which God will go to keep the redeemed for Himself.

This determination of God is what 2 Peter 2:9 is referring to when it says:
2 Peter 2:9 (NKJV) then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.

The flood is proof of this statement. God destroyed all life except Noah and locked up the angels that stepped over the line. With the destruction of all life, the pollution of humanity by unredeemable hybrids was stopped.

God made these details known to us to teach us what Peter says in 2 Peter 2:9. “The Lord knows how to deliver the godly and to reserve the unjust under punishment.”

This is why I use Jude as the doxology most Sundays.

Jude 24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, ²⁵To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever.
Amen.

These verses make an essential point. Namely, glory, majesty, dominion, and power belong to God. As much as we do not acknowledge this is the extent to which we fall prey to the sin of the devil, which is pride.

In Romans 1, when the Bible tells why God judges men, it says they refuse to acknowledge Him.

2 Peter 2:10 says that false teachers are presumptuous, driven by lust, despise authority, and run on instinct like brute beasts. This is what refusal to acknowledge God looks like. And, the scriptures use the angels who sinned and the flood to show us the extent to which God will go to keep the righteous for Himself and reserve the ungodly for judgment.

There is a truth inherent in the fact that God is the creator of all things. That truth is:

Romans 11:36 (NKJV) For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Maintaining the truth, avoiding false teachers and salvation start with acknowledging God.

I am not going to ask you if you acknowledge God. What I am going to ask is in what part of your life do you not acknowledge God? Where do I hide that sin that is more valuable to you than God?

If you do not repent of these sins as the Holy Spirit reveals them to you, please realize that you are toying with destruction.

For the child of God, the one who has called on the name of the Lord, the physical body of the unrepentant will be destroyed. For the one who has not called on the name of the Lord for salvation, your soul is destined to be destroyed.

Take a moment to pray and ask God to reveal His heart and your heart, to make known to you the way of life.