

The Fate of a Wolf, Part 1

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2 Peter 2 2:4-10a
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As we get back into 2 Peter where we were just a few weeks ago, I want to help us dive back in with a full perspective of where we've been and where we're going. I would also encourage you if you've missed any of this series or any of our series, you can go on our website or our app or our YouTube page, and they're all categorized by series. So as you see who's coming up next to preach or maybe you've missed something from a series, you can go back and catch up. This will help to really bring clarity to your own personal understanding of these various studies.

And so as we get back into 2 Peter, we want to remember that chapter 1 Peter was giving a final sermon, a final farewell address to his church, really describing the nature of the Christian life, all established in the glory of the person and word of Christ. Chapter 2, Peter is teaching the church a warning against false teachers, showing us what they look like, how they operate, and what is their ultimate destiny and what is the destiny of those who follow them in their rebellion. Finally, in chapter 3, Peter wants to establish the church in the hope of the return of Jesus Christ to the world, showing us that false teachers and false Christians are going to mock this teaching and they're going to deny that he's coming back and deny any consequences for their rebellion.

Last time we were in 2 Peter, and really the last two times we were in chapter 2 verses 1 to 3 looking at what I call the portrait of a wolf, what that means is that this section outlines for us what false teachers look like, how they operate, how they most certainly will arise from among us in our churches. They will look to deceive the flock of God. They will encourage people to follow them into their sinful lifestyles, and ultimately in their lives they will deny with their actions the fact that they're following the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 10b through 19 will give us a far more detailed sketch of what these individuals look like. And then verses 20 and 22 will show us the finality of their fate. But interwoven into this portrait of a wolf in verses 1 to 3 and 10 to 19 is this section. This is the first part or part one of a study called the Fate of a Wolf. Though this text does describe God's overarching ability to judge both the righteous and the wicked, the context here and Peter's main argument is the focus of how false teachers will be held to account for their actions and how their followers will also fall under the heavy hand of God's judgment.

So as we move into the text for today, we're entering into some bizarre biblical waters. If you've ever read 2 Peter, you know what I'm talking about. If you've read Jude or Genesis chapter 6, you know what I'm talking about. These are some strange tales that come out of this. And really if we're not careful, they can be woven into some very heretical teaching.

Many have tried to conclude that because either 2 Peter or Jude, if either of them possibly have quotations or similar materials or parallel information to an apocryphal work, that is a non-biblical work, also called a pseudepigraphal work because it claims to be authored by Enoch, and it wasn't, called the Book of Enoch, that if this passage is quoting that book, then maybe we ought to add the Book of Enoch to scripture because if it's quoted in this passage, then maybe we should quote the whole thing. Well, we'll touch on that a little bit later.

But what is important coming out of this study, keeping the main thing the main thing is not an esoteric study of ancient world angelic theology. To do that would be to miss the point of this text. And I'll be honest with you, most of my questions at the back door were about ancient world angelic theology. So hear me when I say that. But what is important coming out of this study is this, to see that God's character is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, that God has a purpose and a plan to display his glory, his holiness, his justice, and his righteous decrees regardless of what happens in the world and in fact through what happens in this world.

From this passage, Peter is showing us that God is able, he's showing us that God is, as he's demonstrated from these past examples, going to judge righteously and hold wickedness to account. He's showing us that God's holiness, justice and righteousness will not be mocked despite what false teachers might think from God's display of patience throughout world history. And Peter does so by giving us a fascinating conditional paragraph. And what I mean by that is what we see here are four examples that show us if this happened and if this happened and if this happened and if this happened, then for sure this next thing will happen. That's the way the context is structured.

But what he's doing here is not questioning the validity of whether these historical events happened. Rather he's using this structure as an emphatic proof that they did. He is saying these things happened, and if those things happened, then most certainly verses 9 and 10 will happen. Peter is concerned with teaching the church the sure fate of these wolves, these false teachers that he has warned us will creep into our presence as a church. He wants us to see the sure fate of them and of their followers, those who follow them in their rebellion against God through these sure examples from world history that his readers including us would be familiar with from scripture.

And so as we jump into our text for today, Peter continues in his mode of being a protective shepherd. And that is why as a pastor, I want to teach you this book because this book protects you from false teachers. That's our goal as your pastoral team is to protect you from false teachers. And Peter does so by showcasing the fate of a wolf in these verses through four examples from redemptive history that demonstrates God's ability and his character and the necessity of him to judge righteously.

We're going to see four examples, three against wickedness and one for righteousness. And we'll see these examples prove God's unchanging character will demand the punishment of false teachers and their followers, a just and horrible fate for wolves and for any who fall victim to

their lies. And yet for those who resist and who follow Jesus faithfully, a just reward. And so without understanding, we're going to be in 2 Peter 2:4-10a, and if you're able, please stand for the reading of God's word. We stand for the reading out of reverence for God's word, knowing these are the most important words that we'll hear today.

2 Peter 2:4 says this, "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserve Noah, a herald of righteousness with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked, for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard; then the Lord knows how to rescue the Godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and who despise authority."

That is God's word. You may be seated. This is a bizarre passage. And in any case, we want to entreat the Lord for wisdom. We want to pray and ask for his grace, especially in a case like this. So why don't we pray before we continue? Father, this is an interesting section of scripture, and we don't want to get it wrong. It's very easy to get sidetracked with discussions about angels and sidebar conversations, but we want to understand what you want to teach us from this passage. So, I ask for you to give us all clarity and focus and understanding and that Christ would be honored in our study. Pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

So when we approach a text like this and we turn to this text, we really want to see this structure, that there are these examples given throughout history to prove a point. And that's what we see starting in point number one, in your outline, which is example #1) in verse 4, *The Angelic Judgment*, and the section really starts with the word for, which is delineating a new section and it's outlining for us that an argument is beginning. But as we approach a text like this, it's easy to jump right into verse 4 and get sidetracked and to lose context of what is the overall purpose of this text. and we can start speculating wildly.

We'll talk about what this verse means, but I want you to understand that some of the imagery that's being described here is not the main point of this text. We want to keep the main thing the main thing. Effectively this example argues from the greater to the lesser that if God indeed will judge angels when they sin, that he will remain consistent and judge all wickedness, especially that of less excellent fallen human beings. Indeed, his holiness demands that he do so.

But as we are posed with this example, this bizarre circumstance of this particular verse does call for an explanation, does it not? After all, this doesn't quite line up with what we see in Revelation 12 where we're looking back at the fall of Satan and the great tale of the dragon drags a third of the stars from the sky. This is an allusion to the fall of Satan and his demons.

No, this describes something different. Those were cast down to the earth. 2 Peter 2:4 says, 'For if God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment.' Angels you see are greater in excellence than men. They are righteous. They are magnificent. They are able to serve in the presence of holy God. And yet these angels, these clearly fell into wicked, sinful rebellion to earn this judgment.

These angels that had immediate fellowship with God, that God created to bring glory to himself and to magnify the glory of the heavenlies, these angels so grossly offended God that they are not like their demonic counterparts free to roam the earth and cause chaos. No, they were so bad that they were immediately locked away in hell. Literally the word Tartarus, a spirit prison, demonic prison designed for exactly what these angels had done. And we have to ask the question, what did they do to deserve such a fate?

But we just want to touch on this. This is not the main point of the passage. We don't want to get too off track, but I want you to understand what's going on. The Bible gives us two places where it speaks of this, Genesis chapter 6 verses 1 and following, and Jude verse 6.

Both of these passages refer to these angelic beings or sons of God who left their abode in the heavens and chose to cohabit with human women. It's my contention that it was a satanic ploy to thwart God's plan laid out in Genesis 3:15 that he would bring about a righteous seed that would destroy the serpent. So he's like, fine, then I'm going to destroy the seed. We're going to come down and we're going to pollute the human bloodline and destroy it in order to prevent this messiah from coming.

But instead, God intervened, preventing them from destroying the bloodline. Though according to the text, they did create some bizarre offspring. We see in Genesis 6 a description of the Nephilim, these gigantes in the Greek, these giants who were in the world in that day. And according to Moses who wrote this at the foot of Mount Sinai in around 1440 BC, he's describing something that happened 2000 to 3000 years prior, and he says the Nephilim were in the earth in those days and still today. How did they survive the flood? Bible doesn't say, don't ask me, but Pastor Kevin will get into it when he's in Genesis 1 to 11.

Needless to say, these were giants who plagued the land and they were present in the land during the life of Abram. We'll talk about a story in Genesis 14 a little bit later. They were present in the land when the Israelites go into the Promised Land, they send spies. And the spies come back and say, "It's the greatest land you've ever seen, but there's giants there." And they say, "Well, then we're not going to go in." And what happened? They spent 40 years in the wilderness because of these giants, really because of their own distrust of God, but because of these giants.

And we even see it down into the life of future king of Israel, King David, when he had to contend with one of these. Peter's point though in sharing this anecdote quoted almost identically in the Book of Jude showing I think that Jude and Peter were sharing, if they were talking, conversing, sharing information is that these were indeed glorious angelic beings, greater in their

excellence and stature than man, certainly worthy from God of deliberation and possibly mercy, right?

But regardless, they were destroyed for their wickedness. God's judgment on them was swift, righteous, and necessary. Through their rebellion, they attempted to thwart God's plan of salvation and their planned destruction still sits in waiting as they are still bound in chains of gloomy darkness.

Lots more could be said about this passage. We could camp here for a while. Lots more could be said about whether or not this is an example of the Book of Enoch being quoted. I don't believe it was. I think Jude and Peter were sharing information that was shared with them by the Holy Spirit. But lots could be asked about whether if this was a quote from the Book of Enoch, if that means because one verse was quoted that we should add all of the verses of the Book of Enoch to what we consider the inspired canon of scripture. The answer by the way, is an emphatic no.

Now, one of the reasons we know that is because when you read the Book of Enoch, the rest of it, it contradicts the rest of scripture. So, you can't have God's truth contradicting itself. Also, we understand its formulation and its foundation. Much of it was written as ancient Jewish mythology around the year 300 BC, a time by the way, when there was no prophets giving revelation from God. So this is not directly from the mouth of God, which automatically disqualifies it as being canonical.

Also, they took the name Enoch who lived around 3000 BC, not 300 BC. So, we're taking a book that has stolen another author's name and automatically lied about who wrote it. That's not a good start, is it? Sounds kind of like something that false teachers would do. Hey, you remember that really fun, interesting, weird story from the Bible? I've got the rest of it, and yet it contradicts everything about the Bible.

The bottom line is this. We want to remember this about this text, and it's a good governing principle. This passage was not written to prove any theology about that story. It was simply written to prove that it happened, and that God's judgment resulted. So, we don't need to go off on a tangent and really explain in depth what is actually going on here. And by the way, scripture is silent on some of that. This passage was written as a proof for God's unchanging character and need for divine justice. And it's given to show his ability to accomplish those very things even in the midst of a heavenly angelic treason.

And that leads us to example number two in your outline. We go from the angelic realm to an example in the human realm, but one of worldwide consequence, and that is example #2) ***The Global Judgment***, verse 5. Verse 5 says this, "And if he did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly." Now though this example turns from the angelic world to the human realm, it's no less significant or impactful or impressive. In fact, I would argue this one is more immediately relevant to our current context and our current condition.

After all, we look at the world around us and it's pretty rotten, isn't it? It seems like it's falling apart quickly. How often do we cry out, "How long oh Lord, until you pronounce judgment on our enemies?" In Genesis 6, God saw the wickedness of their world. That is Noah and his contemporaries, and he declared that everyone was worthy of judgment except for Noah and his family.

Peter's building a proof here and giving us this example. He's measuring what God's action against one false teacher; one life might be in judgment against the judgment on the entire globe. And if God would indeed rise to judge billions for their culture of wickedness, then indeed he will also rise to judge false teachers as individuals in their practice of rebellion.

You see, the world population is vastly more valuable than one human life. But regardless that vast population was destroyed for their wickedness. Remember this principle, God's holiness, righteousness, and justice must not and cannot go unsatisfied. And this example proves it. God will hold all sinners to account.

And then this is an entire culture described this way in Genesis 6. Lest you're like, "Well, that's a little too harsh to destroy the globe," Genesis 6:5 says, "The Lord saw the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continuously." Any ambiguity there? Maybe a hint of righteousness? No. The only righteousness was found in Noah whose 2 Peter 2:5 tells us wasn't just a righteous man, but he was also a herald of righteousness.

Now, you know what word the New Testament uses to describe preachers? Herald. Noah was a preacher. Noah was in fact chosen by God to be preserved from judgment because he followed the Lord, he believed the Lord, he obeyed the Lord, and he encouraged others to do the same.

Unlike the awful and unbiblical and blasphemous film that came out a few years ago, Noah was not battling with fallen angels to keep people off the ark. That was a story from the Book of Enoch actually. He would've been preaching to them a warning to escape the judgment that was about to come, for by the way, 100 years as he built the ark. It wasn't like he went out and said it once.

But in God's sovereignty, no one listened. He rescued Noah and his family all the while bringing about a global cataclysmic judgment on no doubt, billions of people. And yes, I said, billions of people. If you don't believe me, come to the Old Testament class and I'll prove it to you. Peter's point in giving us this example and proof is to show that God's judgment will not be stayed in the life of one wicked man because this example of destruction in the lives of billions of wicked men, an argument from the greater to the lesser, proving that God's holiness, justice, and righteousness must and will be satisfied in every situation.

Well, moving along to point number three, we see another example given, this time moving from the angelic world to the global and from the global to the regional. And that is example #3) ***The Regional Judgment*** verse 6. Verse 6 says this, "If by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen

to the ungodly." Extinction sounds pretty terminal, doesn't it? What is going to happen to the ungodly sounds pretty definite, doesn't it?

This is what we need to understand though about this story in these cities. It's not some little moral tale about wickedness. It is that, but it's greater than that. But we could lose perspective on this because of the familiarity of the story. Sodom and Gomorrah along with as Jude adds in Jude 7, their surrounding cities like Admah and Zeboiim, and Zoar were powerful and wealthy city states. If you've been to the Jordan Valley at all in our day, nothing is there. You get kind of a trickle of a river; you get a big dead body of water and desert for miles.

But what we learn about this area from Genesis 13 and other places is that these cities were centered. It's like why would you build city states there? Because back then this was some of the most fertile and productive and economically valuable land in the entire region. In Genesis 13, we see Abram and Lot kind of so journeying in the Promised Land and wondering where should we settle? And there becomes tension between their camps. And so Abram says to Lot, look, you're my nephew. I love you. I don't want there to be any dispute, so why don't you pick which direction you're going to go, and I'll go the other direction.

So they're standing on the mountains, imagine you're kind of up on that mountain ridge looking southward and Lot looks down and he looks to the Jordan Valley, and he says, well, that looks like really, really good land. And it was. And so Abram said, go, go that way. Abram stayed up on the mountain ridge, he went south past where would be Jerusalem to an area called Hebron and he settled.

And in Genesis 14, we see this incredible story play out. And if you've not read this, you need to write it. If you make movies, you need to make a movie about this because this would be the greatest movie ever. Abram, he is up in Hebron and he's effectively, you can look down into the Jordan Valley, you could see the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah from there. And he sees this army incursion come in.

Now why? Because the beginning of the chapter tells us that these city states, a generation prior had been subjugated in war and they were paying tribute to other kings from the east near kind of where the Tigris and Euphrates are, where Babylon was built. And these kings came, and these cities decided to stop paying tribute. So these kings came to wage war and say, no, you're going to continue paying us tribute from your riches.

And so they come, and as they're coming in it says, the text describes that they come, and they conquer all the hill tribes. You know who the hill tribes were? The giants. They come and destroy all the giants. They come down and overtake all the cities, they capture their wealth, they capture Lot and his family, and they go fleeing for home. And what we see here is something incredible. Abram shows up with 318 of his mightiest men and he goes to battle up near Damascus against these kings who just beat the whole region. And Abram takes 318 guys, and he overtakes them, he beats them, he gets everything back and he returns it to their cities. He

effectively becomes the defacto king of the region, but he rejects that title, he doesn't want that honor.

Later Lot has been returned living in Sodom, and he's overwhelmed by the grief that the sin, the atrocities against God that they're committing, he's overwhelmed. This gross immorality, sexual immorality, pride, licentiousness, greed, a lack of care for their fellow man and violence. Genesis 13:13 says, "The men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly, and they were sinners against the Lord." Genesis 18:20 says, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave." Ezekiel 16:49 to 50 describes their sin with God saying they were haughty. That is prideful and committed abominations before me.

But God looking at this incredibly valuable and lush and beautiful region could have said, well, I'm just going to take that for myself. These were city states of incalculable economic value who would use their riches to build for themselves cities where all manner of evil and wickedness could be practiced, living fat off the land, just kind of indulging the flesh in whatever way they could. But regardless of their value, regardless of their economic standing, the beauty, regardless, they were wiped out of existence for their wickedness.

Now, if God has no issue with raining down fire from heaven, utterly destroying not just cities but all their inhabitants and destroying the entire region, one of the greatest economic regions of the day. By the way, if you've been to the Dead Sea now or that region now, anyone been there recently? It's dead. It's a skeleton. It's Arizona. Sorry, I like Arizona. Some places you go though, and you're like, there's not an ounce of life here. And that's what it looks like in that Dead Sea region. And as the verse said, turning these cities to ashes and bringing them to extinction, never to return until by the way Christ returns and brings living water to that region and that entire region is brought back to life. I want to go see it then.

But if God would do that, if he would destroy these glorious cities, will he not exercise judgment on a high-handed rebellious blasphemer of his word who claims to be speaking on his behalf? Men who would lead you into sexual sin, all manner of sensuality, pride, and the theft of God's glory for themselves. The short answer is yes, God will judge them. If those cities didn't stand a chance against God's righteous judgment, then these wolves are dead where they stand. The question is why would we ever align ourselves with dead men walking? Well, coming from this regional destruction is an example that I think Peter adds to showcase that God's power is not simply a destructive power, it is a redemptive power as we see the preservation of a righteous man through trial and temptation in a wicked culture.

Now, Noah was an example of that as well being preserved, but this specifically talks about Lot being saved and rescued out of judgment. That takes us to point #4), *The Righteous Preservation* verses 7 and 8, and they say this, "And if he rescued righteous Lot greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked, for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard."

Now what word was just repeated twice? Righteous. Lots called a righteous man. Why? Certainly not because of his deeds, but because he judged the world in the same way that God did. He saw the wickedness in his culture, and it greatly distressed him, not because it was a personal affront to his sensibilities, but because it offended God. When we see the angels arrive at Lot's home in Genesis 19, Lot is greatly distressed by the wickedness of the residents of Sodom that wanted to sleep with these angelic visitors, because he knew the offense against God that they wanted to perpetrate. Lot defended righteousness in the midst of a pagan and immoral culture. Now, we must ask ourselves, when we see our culture around us falling into moral decay, are we angry for the right reasons?

Righteous anger, by the way, is simply being angry at what God's angry at for the reasons God is angry at it. We can have righteous indignation, right? We're angry at sin because it's an offense against God. Are we angry at our culture for different reasons? Are we mad because our country is being stolen from us and destroyed, our children's futures being robbed? Do we have the get them attitude of, well, back in my day, we wouldn't let this happen? Are we pridefully upset because of the decline of our own glorious culture? Or are we like Lot, greatly distressed at the sin that we know is a dramatic offense against God?

Remember when Abram was bartering with God over the fate of Sodom in Genesis 18. God basically shows up at his tent by the way. That would be strange, right? The angel of the Lord and two angels show up and Abram's talking with them. And he said, I'm going to go destroy Sodom. And Abram says, if I can find 100 righteous, would you stop your destroy? He said, yes. And Abraham's like, well, maybe I overshot. I'm not going to find a hundred. What about 50? God's like, okay, for 50. 40 is close to 50. What about 40? Yeah for 40. 20? Yeah, for 20. Yep. 10? Yeah, for 10. Okay, for 10. So what he's doing here though is demonstrating that he has compassion for a wicked culture. He doesn't automatically just shout condemnation and say, yes, Lord, go destroy them. He says, Lord, be merciful and show them salvation.

Guys, it's right to be upset at the decay of our culture, but only when we do it for the right reasons to see it for what it truly is, an offense against a holy God, not an offense against our sensibilities and that we want a safe, nice suburban experience. And when our grief is overwhelming because it's an offense against God, just like Lot, just like Abram, we don't call down fire onto our enemies. We don't pray they die in war. We cry out to God for mercy and grace and his transforming power of salvation in their lives.

The example of these men, Lot really showcased in particular shows us how to grieve over our culture's sin and shows us God's standard of what he deems a right attitude and disposition towards a wicked culture. Grief and despair over sin, over the offenses against God, knowing the punishment, the judgment, the fate that awaits those who are perpetrating such sin, and praying for their salvation.

Lot's example shows us one righteous man who belonged to God and who was tortured by his culture sin. And this passage shows us God's character of salvation even in the midst of

judgment, that regardless of them and what they were doing, God rescued him and preserved him from the judgment. That was so deserved. Remember when we look back at what Abram said, 50, 150, 40, all he could find was one, but God saved him.

All of these examples were given to prove a point. We don't want to lose focus of why Peter expressed these four historical examples, three wicked examples from the greater to the lesser and one righteous example from the lesser to the greater, all leading up to verses 9 through 10a, the end of the condition. If all of these things happened, which historically we know they did, then for sure verses 9 to 10a are going to happen.

So we close with point number 5, as we get to the end of Peter's conditional logic here, The Assurance *point #5) God WILL Judge in Righteousness* verses 9 to 10 say, "Then the Lord." Then the Lord, right? "If these things are true, then the Lord knows how to rescue the Godly from trials and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of the defiling passions and despise authority."

Why did they choose to smash two paragraphs together in verse 10? I don't know. The paragraph ends in 10a, that's why we break there and we'll pick up the rest of verse 10 to the end next time. But a couple of things we want to note here.

First, the argument that Peter makes in rescuing Lot, he connects to a greater argument for rescuing all of the righteous. Okay, Lot's example of rescue as an individual out of a wicked culture guarantees the rescue of the greater, the larger number of righteous of God's people. Lot was one guy. Abram said even down to 10, all he could find was one. But what did God do? He stayed his hand of judgment, warned Lot, and let him escape. He didn't just say, sorry, dude, there's only one. He rescued Lot out of that knowing he was righteous.

Now, this verse calls Lot righteous twice. Why? Why was Lot considered righteous? Was he doing all the right things? Is he accomplishing righteousness, practicing righteousness perfectly? Pretty much no. In fact, when those angelic visitors came to visit him and the men of the city wanted to sleep with them, Lot offered his daughters instead. Now, dad's not a good example to follow, right? This is not a righteous move. But the point is that Lot wasn't righteous because of what he did. He was righteous because of who he trusted.

Lot's righteousness comes from the fact that he trusted in God, that he believed God, took him at his word, aligned his heart with God. What grieved God, grieved him, and he desired at least to live out God's righteous commands. Guys, this is the gospel. We've always been saved the same way. This is repent and believe from Matthew 4. This is, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom," from the thief on the cross. This is, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus' Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved," from Romans 10:9. And this is, "If you love me, you will obey my commandments," in John 14.

None of those state that we will live the Christian life in righteous perfection. They all state that Jesus did, and we trust in him for who he says he is and then we'll do our best to mirror him. The

gospel of salvation has always come through one means, salvation by grace through faith according to Hebrews 11. By the way, if you ever read that, Hebrews 11 is the hall of disaster, not the hall of heroes. It's the hall of faith. They weren't saved for their morality. They were saved for their trust in God, their faith. That is active belief in the person and work of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and believing that God is who he says he is.

Whether from Lot's position looking forward at God's promise of the redeemer or our position looking backward at the revealed Christ, all salvation has always been by grace through faith. And as best we can, we trust in God's provision for our lives based on his character and we live accordingly. But we are secure in what he has accomplished for us.

Now, what is the overarching marker of a false teacher that we talked about last time? They'll convince you of what? The exact opposite. They will remove your assurance of security. They will whisper the words of their father, the devil into your ears, did God really say? That's the original line from the devil, Genesis 3. It wasn't a lie. It was a question. Let's introduce doubt. Did God really say that? And then I can take your doubt and then twist the truth.

I believe he said this and this instead. Let's look at this and you can see I can twist the scriptures. You can have everything in here, but God doesn't really care about your personal holiness. He caresses that you are happy. He created you with a sexual identity that you should explore. We can't really trust this anyway because men have corrupted it and all those historical examples didn't really happen.

Look again at the last half of verse 9 and the first half of verse 10. "God knows how to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment". Just like those angels in gloomy darkness, which by the way, that will come back to us later, and especially those who indulge of the lust of defiling passion and who despise authority. Anyone who despises authority tries to trash the word of God and say that it's not what it says it is.

Peter here, by the way, brings everything full circle for us. He reminds us again that all these crazy examples from history are trustworthy events that actually happened. They will be denied by false teachers because they prove their very judgment that is coming.

These false teachers, by the way, will fall under the heavy hand of God's judgment because of these proofs and because of God's unchanging characters. These false teachers who according to verse 2, entice us into sensuality and sexual sin, who exploit you with their greed, who deny the master who bought them. Peter's not saying they're losing their salvation. He's saying you're claiming to follow Jesus and yet your very lives are denying his existence by your actions. What does verse 10a say? "Especially those."

Now, this is true of all rebellious sinners, but again, an argument from the lesser to the greater, the single to the large, right? All of these people who act like this, but especially those who live this way, who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and who despise authority. That's describing the false teachers from earlier in our statement.

By the way, this is all manner of sensuality, but in particular I want you to see this. It's a sexual revolution. I recently saw a post on social media from a pastor who said this, "Make no mistake. All apostasy happens because people want to gratify their sexual desires."

Think about that. We're willing to trade eternity, our eternal souls for a sexual identity that is a lie. But that's exactly what we see here. These people will do that. And not only that. They despise authority. These false teachers will use the name of Christ to gain your trust. They will abuse the name of Christ by promising you his benefits and the fulfillment of your flesh, and they will ultimately disregard the name of Christ, that authoritative name that in their hearts they actually truly despise as soon as they have accomplished their mission of dragging you into their rebellious destruction.

If God brought forth angelic, global, regional, and personal judgment, then for sure he will bring judgment on these individuals, these wicked and deceptive false teachers and all those who follow them in their deception. Well, I warned you at the beginning this was a weird passage, lots of strange things going on. It's also a little bit dark, right? We're still in the middle of the second act, the dark part of the saga. If this was Star Wars, we're on that funky swamp planet learning from Yoda, right? Peter is Yoda. We are young Luke in this analogy. We're trying to understand the light, the truth, and not give into the dark side.

Peter wants your safety in the safe refuge of God, in the refuge of his word, in the safety of his person and character. Take these examples as proof of who God is and who he says he is. Take God at his word, novel concept, and when scoffers come along and scoff at you for being a Christian, you'll be warned about that in chapter 3, that's going to happen.

Christian Bible. They're scoffing. They're dead in their sins. Remember this, wolves are going to wolf. That's what they do. Sinners are going to rebel. Wolves are going to stalk you. They're going to divide you away from the safety of the church, of the safety of biblical teaching. They're going to hunt you down and destroy you. And I don't know about you, but I would much rather take the testimony and word and the actionable proof of the God of the universe who created me to bless me over the seductive words of a false teacher who's promising me indulgence in the flesh, but actually hates and rejects the very God he is claiming to represent. I would take God's word every time.

But guys, it takes wisdom. It takes wisdom to know the difference. You must be in the word, knowing the authentic gospel and the true message of Jesus so that you can identify the fake messages out there. You must spend time in his word. You must spend time in prayer asking for that wisdom. James 1:5, "If any of you lacks wisdom, ask the Father and he'll give it to you freely and without reproach."

Guys, we have to know the battle that is raging on around us in order to see the true hope that we have in Christ. Reject these false teachers and fake Christian overtures. Warn your friends. Don't be content with the fact that, well, they go to church. They're in a false religion. Warn them, get them out. Give them the true biblical Jesus and the truth of his word. Trust in the God of the

Bible, trust in the revealed and written word that is Christ and his scriptures. And as we continue next time, we'll see the final unfolding of the portrait of a wolf and the final fate of wolves. We want to continue to equip you in the knowledge of God's word.

I have a quote for you I want to share with you just so you can understand my heart. John MacArthur says this, "A good shepherd is not known by how gently he pets the sheep. A good shepherd is known by how well he defends them and feeds them."

That's our goal. We want to establish you in the truth just like Peter. It's the whole purpose of this book, 2 Peter 1:16. We want to establish you in the truth that you already know. That might be 1:13. I forget. That's the key passage. We want to establish you in the truth of God's word so that you can understand and know God's will for your life, that you can dedicate your personal life to his glory, and that we as a church body, as Redeemer Bible Church can live out our purpose of bringing glory to the name of Christ, to the world around us. Amen. Let's pray.

Father, we are blessed to sit under the teaching and preaching of your word. I'm blessed every time I hear one of our pastors preaching. I'm blessed every time I get to study and sit under your instruction. Father, we're grateful that we can go to any text of the Bible and find your revealed truth in how we can live righteously, how we can know you, how we can repent of our sin and trust in Christ, how we can find salvation and live out a life that points other people to do the same.

I thank you for everyone in this room who knows Jesus. And Father, for those who do not, I pray they would know the truth of Romans 10:17, that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God, that they would look to your word for truth. Jesus, you prayed. Sanctify them in your truth for your word is truth. May everyone who does not yet know Jesus, encounter Jesus, repent of their sins and trust him as their Lord and Savior, and may we all leave this place reconciled to God through Christ. Thank you for this truth, for the warning against those who would lie to us and for the assurance that we can trust your perfect word. Pray in Jesus' name. Amen.