

Wednesday, March 6, 2024
THE WRITINGS OF PETER
PART 10

We continue our study of the writings of Peter the apostle. We are in his second letter and our goal is to study chapter two.

2 Peter 2 (NKJV)

This chapter begins with the contrasting word – “but”. It tells us that what has been said in previous thought also has a contrast to it. Peter was speaking previously of the truth from God. Now, he says that what is false is also being spoken through false teachers. Peter gives us the impression that these false teachers started out in the truth but then strayed into what he calls destructive heresies:

- *Destructive: apóleia (from /apóllymi, "cut off") – destruction, causing someone (something) to be completely severed – cut off (entirely) from what could or should have been.*
- *Heresy: haíresis (a feminine noun derived from /hairéomai, "personally select, choose") – properly, a personal (decisive) choice.*

A choice to believe a lie that destroys God’s destiny for the one making the choice. In the instance of these false teachers – not only is the message wrong but so is the motive. One motive that leads them astray is greed:

pleoneksía (a feminine noun derived from /pleiōn, "numerically more" and /éxō, "have") – properly, the desire for more; points to a brand of covetousness, defined by the context.

As the gospel invaded the culture, many tried to integrate the philosophy of the times and the gospel.

Colossians 2:8-10 (NKJV)

If you seek to alter the gospel, you reject its Author. Peter gives 3 examples of what happens to those who reject the truth:

1. Angels who rebelled.

Peter refers to angels who sinned and were sent to hell to be held in gloomy dungeons for judgment.

Hell: *tartaróō* – properly, send to *Tartarus* ("Tartaros"). The NT uses (*tartaróō*) for the *netherworld* – the place of *punishment fit only for demons*. Later, *Tartaros* came to represent *eternal punishment for wicked people*. [In Greek mythology, Tartarus was a "place of punishment under the earth, to which, for example, the Titans were sent" (Souter).]

This is the only place this word is used in scripture. "Gloomy" or "dark" is translated from a word that means "darkness so dense and foreboding that it can be "felt".

2. The wicked before the flood.

The wicked were judged but Noah was spared.

3. Sodom and Gomorrah.

The wicked subjected to fire but righteous Lot spared. False teachers follow the desires of the flesh and despise authority. Their teachings are so dangerous that they will take you where angels fear to tread.

Jude 1:4-13 (NKJV)

Peter compares their madness to the dumbness of an ass. To experience the freedom of the Lord and then turn back to lies makes their state worse than ever:

Matthew 12:43-45 (NKJV)

The same darkness is reserved for them in which the rebellious angels are imprisoned. They choose heresy instead of truth just as a dog chooses to eat its vomit or a hog chooses to wallow in the mud. False teachers promise you something that they don't possess – depth in Christ and liberty.

Recognizing a false teacher:

- Sees themselves as a special messenger or carrying a special message.
- Sees themselves as being held to a different standard than scripture due to their special status.
- Exalts worldly goals to their listeners: wealth, status, power – and uses scripture to further these goals.
- Focuses on experience more than truth.

- Often sows division in the Body of Christ and seeks to keep their listeners isolated from spiritual input.
- Depends on manipulation and disguises it as the Spirit.

Today's Scriptures:

- 2 Peter 2 (NKJV)
- Colossians 2:8-10 (NKJV)
- Jude 1:4-13 (NKJV)
- Matthew 12:43-45 (NKJV)