

Judgment & Deliverance

2 Peter 2:1-22

November 10th, 2024

I. Introduction

In our chapter, Peter addresses the reality of false teachers who have and will arise in our midst, who proclaim a different Jesus, a different ethic, and a different future. But, they shall not get far: v. 3, “for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.” Just as these false men are nothing new, so the judgment that shall overtake them is nothing new. Throughout the story God is telling, God’s judgment has frequently overtaken men like these; but also, in these moments of judgment, the Lord is ever mindful of His _____.

II. The Text: 2 Peter 2:1-22

... 4 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; 5 and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; 6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; 7 and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked 8 (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)— 9 then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment. ...

III. Judgment & Destruction

v. 4 - **First.** When cosmic, superhuman angels, or heavenly ministers, rebelled against the authority of God and broke rank, serving themselves rather than the Lord—He cast them down to hell. He delivered them into chains of darkness. The devil and his angels are on death row, awaiting the Great Judgment—the eternal fire ‘prepared for the devil and his angels’.

v. 5 - **Second.** Peter moves from the cosmic, superhuman powers to the ancient earthly realm. When the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thought of his heart was only evil continually, He determined He would blot out man from the face of the land, man and animal. God did not _____ the ancient world.

v. 6 - **Third.** Peter points us to the city or human society—the example of Sodom and Gomorrah. Cities do have a reputation for arrogance, for pride, and for godlessness. And God takes note of it. He destroys cities, for their wealth and fame and glory do not excuse their _____.

IV. Judgment As Warning

These examples of God’s severe judgment of the ungodly are first and foremost a warning—not just to false teachers, but to the many who would follow in their destructive ways. Solomon in Ecclesiastes made this observation: “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed _____, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecc. 8:11). Because sin isn’t punished right away, evil men feel confirmed in their way. And not only do they feel confirmed, but those who look at them think they, too, might be able to get away with it. But what if God is just testing us? What if God is just being patient? What if His delay is not His approval of sinful behavior, but His _____ toward them, desiring them to repent?

V. Judgment As Deliverance

These instances of God's judgment are also meant to be a _____ to all who desire to live a godly life in this present age. For these examples of judgment are also examples of God's _____. God's judgment upon the wicked is His rescue of those who walk faithfully with Him.

- God's judgment upon the angels was a deliverance for the holy angels who did not rebel against the Lord. In Revelation 12, for instance, after the Devil, that ancient dragon, was cast out of heaven, the Lord says to the holy angels who kept their position: "Rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them!" Rejoice!—why? Because the ungodly have been cast out. It was a kindness to the faithful, for they were delivered from the presence of the wicked.
- God's judgment upon the ancient world was His deliverance of Noah and his family. He was a preacher of righteousness who longed for righteousness and for a new world not filled to the brim with wickedness as it was. And the Lord rescued him—by destroying the corrupt world of ungodliness.
- God's judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah was also a merciful deliverance of Lot. Lot was oppressed by the filthy conduct of his neighbors: "For that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds" (v. 8). By simply living among these ungodly people, Lot was tormented, and so God rescued him—by bringing judgment upon that city, turning it to ashes.

Lot pleaded with his neighbors not to act so wickedly. Noah was a preacher of righteousness, who sought to bring that ancient world to their senses. In this, they represent the faithful Church in every age, ours included, where God's people, though sorely outnumbered, try as we can to persuade a generation bent on evil away from their ways. Like Lot, like Noah, we cannot by our own powers extricate or remove ourselves from the corrupting forces that seem to have taken over. But what does God do? He delivers His people. He rescues those who are grieved by the unrestrained sin that threatens to swallow up the world.

VI. The Thrilling Romance of Orthodoxy

Peter in his day, together with his readers, could have succumbed to discouragement. He wrote to remind them of what story they're in. God is writing this story. It is unfolding in real time. And whatever scene we find ourselves in we can rest assured that the Author is not going to be overwhelmed by the corrupt world we find ourselves in. On the Mount of Transfiguration, He has already told us how His story will end. We are to walk in this light, by faith trusting in the Lord.

False men and false teachers abound in every age. But God's Church prevails down through the ages—the heavenly chariot of _____ flies "thundering through the ages, the dull heresies sprawling and prostrate, the wild truth reeling but erect." This is how it goes. Why? Because God likes a good adventure, and He is writing the one we're in.

VII. And as we come to the Table . . .