

Title: Terrorists in the Church: Description, Danger & Doom of False Teachers (Part5)

Passage: 2 Peter 2:5-6

Theme: The deadly danger of false teachers in the church

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{{Read Passage}}

1 thing you learn as a parent is t/principle of precedence. You try to be consistent in raising your children & consistent w/discipline. If they learn that you mean business at a young age & if you're consistent, you have set a precedent for "future violations." Conversely, if you are slack & all bark w/no bite, when your kids get older & out of control you will have proven to them that you are not willing or able to get their attention.

Think about Paul's words in 1 Cor. 10.

There that he reminds his readers of instances where Israel provoked God's judgment. Precedent.

In drawing from accounts recorded in t/OT he writes in v. 11 ==>

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction . . .

He's saying that we had better take notice. God has demonstrated in some powerful ways that He is not to be trifled with. Don't be guilty of idolatry as they were // immorality as they were // grumbling/complaining as they were. God's judgment fell upon them.

Therefore he says in v. 12

. . . let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

God's precedent in demonstrating his power in the past is a tremendous reminder of how he can/will demonstrate it in the future.

As we continue to look at ==>

II. The Condemnation of False Teachers (3b-9)

Much like TAP, Peter draws upon t/OT as a precedent.

We see ==>

B. Their Judgment Described (4-9)

in vv. 4-9 in terms of 3 vivid historic accounts—all from Genesis—of God's certain judgment of t/wicked.

These 3 examples are to serve as a wake-up call to those false teachers who not only deny X & t/Gospel – but who deny that a loving God could also be a judging/condemning God.

We noted last time that this passage is framed by way of an extended "if" / "then" form of argument — "if this is true, then this is true" or "if this is true then this will happen."

If you were here & paying attent. you also learned that t/term for this is "protasis" and "apodosis"

The protasis is the "if" & the apodosis is the "then".

"IF (protasis) you eat your vegetables THEN (apodosis) you can have desert."

That's t/sort of thing we have here. Gen. these "if/then" clauses aren't long. Usu. found in a single statement. Here we have an extended example that goes all t/way from v. 4 to v. 9.

To put it another way ==> v. 4 intro. a protasis that doesn't have an apodosis until v. 9.

If God judged the angels (v. 4)

and if he judged the flood generation (v. 5) while at the same time sparing Noah (v. 5)

and if he judged Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 6), while at the same time preserving Lot (vv.7-8)

Then it follows that the Lord will preserve His true children who live in an ungodly culture (examples: Noah and Lot)

And it also follows that the Lord will punish false teachers, along w/all unrighteousness on t/day of judgment (examples: Angels, Flood, Sodom & Gomorrah).

Again we're brought back to ==>

a. Three Examples of God's Certain Judgment of the Unrighteous:

- 1) The fallen angels of Genesis 6
- 2) The Flood of Genesis 7 (typo from last time where I had 11)
- 3) The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19

(1) All given by Peter as evidence that t/false teachers cannot escape that which they deny: Judgment

George Santayana "those who refuse to learn from history are destined to repeat it."

Which reminds me once again of H.C. Saturday night the FR website still had a page up ==>

THE END OF THE WORLD IS ALMOST HERE! HOLY GOD WILL BRING JUDGMENT DAY ON MAY 21, 2011

This is precedent in reverse. God will bring judgment, t/day of which no man knows or will know. Too bad neither Mr. Camping or his followers bothered to learn from history. Many over t/past 2k years have claimed to know when God will consummate the age. Many (100s / 1000s) have made predictions. Not one of them has been right.

What God has promised is that he will bring all things to an ordained end. All will face a final judgment. Those who clothed w/the right. of X will be spared; those who die in their sin will perish.

(2) The 3 examples that Peter gives here serve as an historic foreshadowing of what will one day come on a much larger scale

(a) Last time we took a look at the 1st example ==>

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into Tartarus and delivered them to chains of darkness, reserved for judgment;

That's is drawn from Genesis 6: Namely t/wicked angels who either took on human form or entered into wicked human rulers in order to pollute t/race of men & perhaps even thwart t/coming of t/Messiah. Tho they were once heavenly angels, they were not spared a hellish judgment.

That brings us to v. 5 & t/2nd example ==>

(2) The Great Flood of Genesis 7

and [if He] did not spare the ancient world but protected Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought a flood upon the ungodly world; [8th person = lit. transl.]

(a) Peter brings us back in time (again) to the "ancient world" – Another way of referring to t/antediluvian (pre-flood generation) of men.

V. 5 says that t/ancient world was also an ungodly world. Therefore, God judged it by way of a universal flood that destroyed all of humanity w/exception of Noah & 7 others.

Think about it: All of humanity obliterated.

Luther called this "a fearful example" ==>

". . . the most horrible one in the Scriptures. One might almost despair in view of it, even if he were strong in faith. For when such language and judgment of God go to man's heart, and he thinks of it, that he too shall die. He must tremble and fear if he is not well armed, since among so many in the whole world no one but these eight only were saved." [261]

(b) You can read about the great flood in Genesis chapter 7

Not really w/i my purpose this morning to go there give a detailed exposition of that chapter.

(c) You might note that Peter in his 2 letters refers to Noah and the Flood 3 times

i. Turn to 1 Peter 3 (vv. 18-20)

This comes in t/middle of a passage on suffering

Interesting parallel to 2 Peter.

Noah. Flood. Also the "imprisoned spirits" who were disobedient. Those are t/same "spirits" or angels that we saw as our first example in 2 Peter: **For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into Tartarus and delivered them to chains of darkness, reserved for judgment;**

ii. Then in chapter 3 of 2 Peter (v. 6) - context of vv. 3-5

The flood is symbolic or a type of God's future final judgment. Seeing the flood that way was common among t/Jews.

(d) Here in chapter 2 we see Peter reminding them of the flood

This was a powerful message to Peter's readers and to the false teachers that Peter is addressing.

The flood was sudden.

The flood was a holistic judgment (no one escaped).

The righteous were few. ("8")

Those who were savingly related to God were mocked by those who were not.

The wicked rejected the preaching of the righteous. They mocked t/idea of judgment. True as it related to Peter & his audience. Was true of Noah. True for us today.

i. Note that Noah is called "a preacher of righteousness" in v. 5

(i) Word is κήρυξ - same word used by Paul in 1 Tim. 2:7

For this I was appointed a preacher

It's here in 2 Peter that we are told that Noah preached. He was 120 years not only building, but preaching.

120 years. This was a demonstration of God's patience and grace.

12 decades of a living object lesson as men watched this man and his family build a ship on dry land.

12 decades of building punctuated by preaching t/righteousness of God, his grace and mercy along w/impending judgment.

"But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and, being displeased at their conduct, urged them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better." [Josephus, *Antiquities*]

(e) While he proclaimed repentance for 120 years, no one save his family listened and so no one but his family was saved

i. Lesson on results

Modern day pundits would say, "Noah, you need to change your methodology. You're not getting any seekers."

Like someone who says that evangelism isn't happening unless there are results. Listen, t/fact that God's Word is proclaimed & that He is glorified in t/message ought to be "results" enough for us!

2 Corinthians 2:15–17 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? 17 For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

Truth must not be compromised; repackaged; (folded, spindled or mutilated!)

Had Noah preached a different message, one more "relevant" or "encouraging" he may have had earthly "results" but not eternal ones.

God cannot be glorified when His word isn't honored.

[God] did not spare the ancient world but protected Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought a flood upon the ungodly world;

In his earthly ministry Jesus drew from the same example ==>

MAT 24:37-39 37 "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38 "For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

LUK 17:26-27 26 "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

HEB 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned {by God} about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

(3) The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19

and if by reducing the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes He condemned them to ruin, making them an example of what will happen to the ungodly; Here's another "if" (cf. v. 4,5).

(a) Here we are introduced to our 3rd example, also from the book of Genesis: the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

For this we go back to somewhere around t/middle of the 21st c. BC. Roughly 4,000 yrs. ago.

i. Stage is set in Genesis 18 (turn there)

T/OT Patriarch Abraham is visited by 3 Men. Not 3 men at all but God and 2 holy angels. They announce that Sodom and Gomorrah are to be destroyed for their wickedness.

Abraham then asks t/question:

What if t/entire city isn't wicked? What if there are even 10 there who are righteous. Would God not spare the city if 10 were there who worshiped t/Lord?

God assured Abraham that if 10 righteous men could be found, he would spare the city.

We know that t/# had to be less than that since t/cities were destroyed.

ii. And we see that in t/next chapter

Here again we are introduced to Lot, Abraham's nephew.

(i) We saw him in Gen. 12

Abraham took him along when t/Lord called him to leave his native land and travel to Canaan where God would make him into a great nation.

(ii) Chapter 13 tells us they settled around Bethel

But t/land wasn't sufficient to support all of their livestock so Abraham says to Lot: *"Let's not be at odds w/one another over this. We need to*

separate and you get to choose. If you head west I'll go east, if you go east I'll go west."

We see God's providence in this. God is sovereign over t/free acts of men.

Lot looked toward the Jordan Valley. Saw that it was fertile and rich, an ideal place to raise crops and livestock & chose to move in that direction, to t/S.E. of the Dead Sea.

Abraham settled in t/land of Canaan just as God designed.

Here in chapter 13 that we are introduced to t/wickedness of Sodom:
v. 13 **Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD.**

Sets us up for t/destruction of the cities several years later.

iii. Chapter 19 - The 2 men who appeared to Abraham in chapter 18 (angels) visit Sodom

Partly they're there to serve as witnesses: "By t/testimony of 2 or 3 witnesses let every act be confirmed."

They come to t/city gate and Lot is there. That's where t/politicians hung out so he may have had some official role (elder) in t/city.

Knowing that it's late & knowing t/wickedness of t/city, Lot invites them to lodge at his home. They initially decline t/invite saying that they will stay in t/city square, but Lot, knowing that this would be disastrous, convinces them to stay w/him.

They enter his house, Lot prepares a fine dinner, they eat and then intend to retire for t/eve.

(i) We pick up the story in verse 4

4 Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter;

Shows how extensive t/wickedness of the city was.

5 and they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them.”

Lit. "that we may know them." Heb. yada.

We have a mob. This isn't the welcome wagon. It's a mob of sexually charged perverts. They see some newcomers and want to formally introduce themselves.

6 But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, 7 and said, “Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. 8 “Now behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof.”

What's that all about? That seems to us to be a heartless, godless, and foolish thing to do.

A few thoughts

First - These were men who lived in a time of darkness and whose understanding of YHWH was limited. They didn't have the Law and the Prophets. Not only that, they didn't have the fulness of the Holy Spirit. They were part of the Pre-Mosaic O.T. dispensation, not under the New Covenant. The law had not been written on their hearts.

Second - Near Eastern culture was fanatical when it came to hospitality. That seems strange to us, but you were almost compelled to treat strangers w/more consideration and sacrifice than members of your own family.

Third - Women were not highly esteemed at this time. They were expendable. That was cultural, not biblical. (Contrary to pop. belief, Xnty elevated women to t/special place of honor that they deserve).

Fourth - Could it be that Lot felt that, in offering his daughters, he was throwing fruit to hungry dogs rather than meat? Perhaps he thought that they wouldn't be interested and he was trying to buy time? We don't know if he actually would have sent his daughters out (he never got the chance), we can only presume that he would have.

9 But they said, “Stand aside.” Furthermore, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.” So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door. 10 But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 11 And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.

The angels have witnessed enough. The city and its inhab. are to be destroyed.

15 And when morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters, who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city.” 16 But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city.

24 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, 25 and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

26 But his wife, from behind him, looked back; and she became a pillar of salt.

Back to 2nd Peter

There is a ghost town in our neighboring state of PA.

Ghost towns are nothing new to me from my years of living in AZ – a state that has it's share of 19th c. mining towns that lived and died w/the mines. Empty reminders of what once was – sort of like the east side of Bfflo.

But this borough in central PA is unique. It lies beyond a detour where Rt. 61 has been rerouted to avoid this once active town that now lies in ruins.

I'm told (I would love to see this for myself one day) that if you avoid the detour to venture along the original route 61 you will come to a place where the road is closed. Closed w/o explanation.

Beyond that closure lies what once was Centralia, a coal mining town that once was home to nearly 3k people.

Today t/cemeteries are more populated than t/town.

Back in 1962, workers set fire to t/landfill. Burning garbage was a common practice and not dangerous in itself. However, this landfill was located over an abandoned mine. Within t/mine was an exposed vein of anthracite coal which was set ablaze by t/burning trash.

The fire was extinguished. At least that's what t/workers thought. What they couldn't see was t/fire that cont. to burn underground. A coal fire that metastasized to the cells of t/coal mines that lay underneath t/town.

The PA Dept of Environmental Resources began monitoring the fire by drilling holes to determine the extent and temperature of the fire. However, by doing so they were adding fuel (air) to the fire only making things worse.

Residents complained of symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

All efforts over the next 2 decades to still t/fire failed.

Roads cracked under the heat and steam drifted out of the fissures.

In 1981 t/ground caved in under t/feet of a 12 year old boy resulting in a sinkhole 150' deep. Fort. t/boy's cousin was able to pull him to safety.

Engineers determined that their only option left was a massive trenching operation w/an estimated cost of \$660 million dollars.

The state chose to condemn the town and relocated its residents.

Fire that was started in 1962 still burns today, almost 50 yrs. later. And it's still growing. There is enough coal in the eight-mile vein to feed the fire for 250 more years.

A dozen or so residents remain, living among empty buildings, overgrown, weed-infested roadways; smoke and steam still ascending from breaks in t/earth.

An illustration in miniature of t/smouldering remains that once were the 5 cities on the plain.

(b) In verse 6 we see how Peter describes the scene:

... the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah [were reduced] to ashes ... condemned ... to ruin ...

The Jewish historian Philo describes it in a similar fashion:

"Such . . . were burnt to ashes, when God passed well-deserved sentence on the impious, and the heavens rained instead of water the unquenchable flames of the thunderbolt" (Drunkenness 53 §223).

In his day Josephus:

"In fact, vestiges of the divine fire and faint traces of five cities are still visible. Still, too, may one see ashes, reproduced in the fruits, which from their outward appearance would be thought edible, but on being plucked with the hand dissolve into smoke and ashes." [J.W. 4.484-85]

Jewish apocryphal Book of Wisdom ==>

"Evidences of their wickedness still remains: a continually smoking wasteland, plants bearing fruit that does not ripen." [Wisdom, 10:7]

i. The word Peter uses - τεφρωω = to reduce to ashes, to cover with ashes - is only found here in the NT

Same word used by Dio Cassius (lxxvi) in his account of the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 when t/city of Pompeii was buried in lava.

(c) What's the point?

II. *The Condemnation of False Teachers (3b-9)*

A. *Their Judgment Declared (3b)*

1. *Described in Terms of the Past*

a. *Three Examples of God's Certain Judgment of the Unrighteous:*

(1) *The Fallen Angels of Genesis 6*

(2) *The Great Flood of Genesis 7*

(3) *The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19*

... making them an example of what will happen to the ungodly;

Each of these comes as an example.

The example sort of culminates with S&G's dest.

Noteworthy that more than 20x in Scripture S&G are used an example of God's sure judgment on sinful men who violate his law.

Jewish apocryphal book of 3 Maccabees 2:5-7 5 The people of Sodom acted arrogantly and were notorious for their wicked deeds. You destroyed them with fire and sulfur, making them an example to others for all time.

Deut. 29:23 where God warns Israel that if they forsake His ways they would be like S&G.

ISA 13:19 And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Likewise, JER 50:40 "As when God overthrew Sodom And Gomorrah with its neighbors," declares the \Lord\, "No man will live there, Nor will {any} son of man reside in it.

AMO 4:11 "I overthrew you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, And you were like a firebrand snatched from a blaze; Yet you have not returned to Me," declares the \Lord\.

JUD 1:7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

... an example of what will happen to the ungodly;

i. Who are the ungodly?

Peter had in his sites t/false teachers.

By extension it includes everyone whose isn't united with JC in his deth burial and resurr.

I like the way John MacArthur describes them. Ungodly are characterized by lives that are:

"...inevitably empty, vain, and void of substance. The life of an unbeliever is bound up in thinking and acting in an arena of ultimate trivia. He consumes himself in the pursuit of goals that are purely selfish, in the accumulation of that which is temporary, and in looking for satisfaction in that which is intrinsically deceptive and disappointing. The unregenerate person plans and resolves everything on the basis of his

own thinking. He becomes his own ultimate authority and he follows his own thinking to its ultimate outcome of futility, aimlessness, and meaninglessness—to the self-centered emptiness that characterizes our age... Their thinking not only is futile but spiritually uninformed... Fallen mankind has a built-in inability to know and comprehend the things of God—the only things that ultimately are worth knowing...the ungodly are unresponsive to truth. . . Just as a corpse cannot hear a conversation in the mortuary, the person who is spiritually “dead in [his] trespasses and sins?” ... cannot hear or understand the things of God, no matter how loudly or clearly they may be declared or evidenced in his presence..." (MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press or Logos)

Example.

Example for all the world of ungodly men (even if they reject it) , for we who believe (God will be vindicated), angels of heaven and the demons of hell (all will be judged).

Something else we need to catch here.

In contrast to the ==>

a. Three Examples of God's Certain Judgment of the Unrighteous:

Are ==>

b. Two Examples of God's Gracious Preservation of the Righteous

Two men: Noah and Lot.

We'll get to them next time.