

Title: Terrorists in the Church: Description, Danger & Doom of False Teachers (Part6)

Passage: 2 Peter 2:7-9

Theme: The deadly danger of false teachers in the church

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**{ {Read Passage} }** 3b-9

I of t/things I've mentioned B4 as it relates to this chapt. is that there's an underlying sub-theme: God's faithfulness.

It's a chapt. on t/dangers of false teaching & even w/i that category we see t/perils of apostasy (there are those who will appear to be genuine xns who will depart from t/truth).

It's a chapter on heretical teaching, counterfeit Xns, false teachers.....

But it's also a chapter on God's faithfulness.

Like what Paul says in 2 Tim 2 (vv. 10-19) (Paul's last letter; his final instructions before he is put to death by Rome for his faith in JC).

10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

11 It is a trustworthy statement:

For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him;

12 If we endure, we shall also reign with Him;

If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.

God is faithful to those whom He has chosen (v. 10) – to His elect bride.

To you, to me.

So Paul says to Timothy ==>

14 Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless, and leads to the ruin of the hearers. 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. 16 But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, 17a and their talk will spread like gangrene.

Names 2 offenders ==>

17b Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and thus they upset the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless,

Yes, t/CH has its hypocrites & apostates, & those who profess to be followers of JC, but they really aren't.

Yes, false teachers have not only gone astray from t/truth (as bad as that is), but even worse they have brot upset to t/faith of God's own.

These are t/Bart Ehrman's and Francis Beckwith's of the world.

Verse 19 ==>

Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," . . .

God knows. He's lovingly sovereign. Your salvation was ultimately & finally His choice, not yours. There will be those, like Judas, who fall away, but God is faithful. He knows who really belong to Him & He will be faithful to them, even during those times when they their own faithfulness falters.

Contrast to our passage in 2 Peter.

TAP names 2 phoney followers of X: Hymenaeus and Philetus. 2 names, forever inscribed in t/eternal Word of t/Living God as examples of what it means to forsake t/way of truth.

He also talks about t/fact that God . . . . knows . . . .

Peter, in this 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter also talks about 2 men.

These are 2 men who are t/flip side of those that Paul names. They are examples of those who lived in a time of darkness.

They were far from perfect, yet, God counted them as righteous before Him – His possession.

Noah and Lot.

Peter also reminds us that God knows. He knows how to rescue t/godly from trial and temptation. We'll see that in v. 9.

God is faithful.

We're finishing up a section that runs from t/middle of v. 3 to t/end of v. 9. Those vv encompass our 2<sup>nd</sup> main pt as we work our way thru this ch.

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

We've been looking at a description of that condemnation.

More accurately ==>

### **B. Their Judgment Described (4-9)**

#### **1. Described in Terms of the Past**

T/Condemnation of these 1<sup>st</sup> c. doctrinal degenerates is framed by way of 3 examples of God's judgment taken from t/annals of history.

Angels who sinned (fallen angels of Genesis chapter 6)

World that sinned (entire race of men wiped out in t/flood).

Cities that sinned (namely Sodom and Gomorrah).

{read vv. 4-6}

In t/middle of all this judgment and condemnation that saturates this chapter we find ==>

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

Noah (v. 5); Lot (v. 7-8)

#### **(1) What do we know about Noah?**

##### **(a) He built an ark!**

More than a children's story, it's an attested fact recorded in t/OT Scriptures.

From t/biblical descriptions we figure that t/Ark, or ship that Noah built would have rivaled modern day oceanliners in size & gross tonnage. 450' long x 75' wide x 45' tall – w/a cargo cap. roughly = 522 box cars.

Since it had 3 decks, t/total area was nearly 96,000 square feet, w/a total vol. of about 1.3 million cubic feet.

I've read that naval engineers have confirmed that t/dimensions made for a most stable ship design. Stability was key.

##### **(b) What else?**

i. We learn a lot about Noah from a single v. in Gen. 6 (v. 9) ==>

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked w/God.

Look at them in reverse order ==>

(i) He walked with God

Same phrase is used of Enoch in Gen. 5. Describes intimacy. Perhaps a NT counterpart would be our walking by t/Spirit (Gal. 5) or our walking in X (Col. 2).

(ii) He was blameless in his time

Much like TAP, his contemporaries could find no fault w/him. He was a beacon of light that shined in t/darkness.

(iii) He was a righteous man

What does that mean? He was religious? He believed in God? He prayed, did religious things? His good deeds outweighed his bad?

That's not t/pic. Sure he believed in God (not just any 'god' or a deity of his choosing, but YHWH). No doubt he prayed & tried to honor God w/his life.

But it wasn't a matter of religiosity or weighing one's good works against t/bad ones.

Hebrews 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.**

Do you see t/connection?

He was warned by God about things not seen. That is, God told Him to do something that at t/time didn't make a whole lot of sense.

Build a boat on dry land. Not just any boat. This wasn't a row boat. It was a ship. And it's going to cost you a big part of your life to do this.

What things is God calling you to do, or to endure, that don't make a whole lot of sense. Need to be obedient, even when that's difficult. We may be called to sacrifice a portion of our lives to a time that seems to us to be unfruitful, but is essential to God's purpose for us. Not just for us, but others. Noah's obedience directly impacted his family & t/entire human race.

Noah was faithful. That's what God is asking of us: Be faithful.

120 years Noah worked to prepare an ark for the salvation of his household. Their physical salvation was illustrative of their spiritual salv.

In that sense t/Ark was a type of X. All who enter in do so by faith. All who enter in are spared from t/wrath that those outside will receive.

Ark was covered w/pitch. Heb word for pitch has same root as t/word used for atonement (kap, pe, resh). Words sound similar: "pitch" = *kopher*; "atonement" = *kaphar*).

T/pitch kept t/waters of judgment from entering t/ark just as X's atoning blood keeps judgment from t/believing sinner.

... in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world . . .

How did he condemn the world? No doubt partly thru his preaching.  
Rem. we saw that Peter refers to him as "a preacher of righteousness."

He preached repentance while t/world around him mocked him & rejected that message.

Ark was a barometer of God's coming judgment. It was like a clock: as it got bigger & bigger God's judgment came nearer & nearer.

Moses preaching probl. increased in intensity until t/moment that t/ark was finished & God closed t/door behind them leaving t/rest of t/world w/o hope.

The last thing ==>

. . . and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

It wasn't about religiosity or trying to appease God through works.

It was about faith.

His faith, his unswerving trust in God was demonstrated w/the fruit of his unhesitating obed. over t/course of 120 yrs in doing something that, from a human perspective, looked totally absurd & absolutely impossible

No coincidence that Hebrews next turns to Abraham, who is t/father of all who are justified by faith.

Remember how TAP frames that in Romans 4:

"Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."

That's t/great doctrine of imputation, a doctrine that's at t/heart of t/Gospel.

MacArthur writes:

"All who believe in God are righteous, not always in practice but always in position. Christ's righteousness is imputed to us by faith (Rom. 3:22). The Father sees us as He sees the Son, holy and righteous, because by faith we are in the Son. If we put on colored glasses, everything we look at will appear that color. God looks at believers through the lens of His Son, and He sees us as He sees the Son. Thousands of years before Jesus became incarnate, God looked at Noah and saw the Son, because Noah believed." [MacArthur, J. (1996). Hebrews (324). Chicago: Moody Press]

**(c) Noah was one example of God's gracious preservation of the righteous in the midst of the wicked**

Noah's day isn't so much unlike our own. People mocked God's Word. So today. World was filled w/all manner of wickedness, immorality, violence, lewdness, vulgarity, lying, killing, blasphemy. So today.

In t/midst of that a believing remnant found grace. So today.

**(2) Lot (7-8)**

**. . . and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of lawless men;**

**(a) Here we have Lot mentioned by name for t/first time**

Altho we did spend some time last week talking about him in connection with v. 6. Can't separate t/story of S&G from t/person of Lot anymore than you can sep. Noah from t/flood.

**(b) Lot was Abraham's nephew who accompanied Abraham when he moved to t/land of Canaan**

They settled around Bethel (not far from Jerusalem) and separated because t/land wasn't plentiful enough to support them both.

Abraham gave Lot t/choice of direction. Lot looked toward t/Jordan Valley. Saw that it was fertile & rich, an ideal place to raise crops & livestock - so he chose to move in that direction, S.E. toward t/Dead Sea (also where Sodom / Gomorrah were located)

S&G - cities known for their wickedness // incinerated by God, reduced to ashes as an example of His holy hatred of sin.

Of all t/inhabitants of t/5 cities on t/plain, only Lot & his 2 daughters were spared.

**(c) "Righteous Lot" (v. 5)?**

This guy wasn't as pure as wind-driven snow. He had a bit of a rap sheet.

He was selfish: His choice to live in Jordan Valley was largely driven by greed & personal ambition.

He was foolish: He offered his 2 virgin daughters to t/mob of mad perverts who were pounding at his door demanding to have sexual relations w/his 2 angelic house guests.

He was shameful: Who can forget t/reprehensible act of his 2 daughters who got him drunk in order to be impregnated by him out of fear that they would die childless?

If those 3 dark spots on his record were all we had to go by we'd say he was anything but righteous.

**i. But remember what I said last time:**

He lived in a time of great darkness. The knowledge of YHWH was very much limited. They had no Bible, no Mosaic Law, no community of Israel, no CH, no fulness of t/Holy Spirit.

In the midst of all that darkness they had 2 things: Faith & a Gracious God who mercifully pardons those who trust Him.

**(i) Yes, Lot lived in a time of darkness**

While we can't excuse his sin, we can appreciate t/fact that he was a far cry from t/doctrinally enlightened Xn.

That's why we see a principle in t/Bible that God will hold men accountable to what they did with t/light they had.

Jesus in Matthew 11:20–24 ==>

20 Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 “Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. 23 “And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. 24 “Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.”

That he was spared at all speaks to t/fact that God thot him righteous. Rem. Abraham prayed to God asking that He spare t/city if at least 10 righteous could be found there. There weren't 10 so God destroyed t/city. But he did deliver Lot.

Jewish tradition was quite divided on the matter. Some saw Abraham's prayer on behalf of the righteous in Sodom to refer to Lot. Yet there were rabbis who viewed Lot with contempt.

But I don't know that they were in the majority.

Compare, however, the statements recorded in t/extra-biblical Jewish text, Wisdom of Solomon or "Wisdom" (probl. not written by Solomon but by an unnamed author around t/2d c. BC). ==>

6 When the ungodly were about to be wiped out, **Wisdom** [i.e. God] *saved a man who did what was right*. He was able to flee from the fire that descended on the five cities. 7 A smoking wasteland is all that remains, witnessing to their wickedness. Plants there never produce fully formed fruit. **A pillar of salt** still stands there as a reminder **of a faithless being**. 8 By trying to get along **without Wisdom**, they didn't recognize what was good. In doing so, they left a lasting memorial of their foolishness for everyone to see. They were unable to hide the things that led to their downfall. 9 *But Wisdom rescues her servants from their trials*. [10:6-9]

Did you catch that last statement? [^] Cf. v. 7a, v. 9a.

... **He rescued righteous Lot** ...

... **the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation** ...

ii. Lot may not have had t/Law, but he was far from lawless

He was ==>

... **oppressed by the sensual conduct of lawless men**

Verse 8 (parenthetical) ==>

**(for by what that righteous man saw and heard while living among, his righteous soul was tormented day after day with their lawless deeds)**

**(i) Word "tormented" (ΚΑΤΑΠΟΙΝΕΩ) = oppressed – even worn out from exhaustion**

Day after day living among men and women that hated God and all that is good and pleasing to Him. Sound like today?

Someone once said, "If God doesn't judge America He'll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

I've never really liked that. God apologizes to no one. Least of all for His mercy and patience. But it does make a point about where we are.

God will judge America. In fact, He already is.

You might be critical of Lot. He's a figure that's not immune.

But let me ask you this: *"Are you tortured by t/sin around you?"*

Are you grieved by t/utter depravity of our Christless culture?

Think about t/things you watch on TV. For t/first time in my life I can see myself doing away w/television. I'm tired of constant barrage of lies.

*Are you tortured by sin or titillated by it?*

**PRO 25:26 {Like} a trampled spring and a polluted well Is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.**

Criticize Lot all you want, but don't forget you live in t/bright fulness of God's revelation. You have t/Bible; you know t/truth.

Luke 12:48 **Everyone who is given much, shall much will be required.**

**iii. Lot and Noah have much in common**

Both lived in times of great wickedness.

Both were troubled by what they saw around them.

Both were far outnumbered when it came to their trust in God.

Both are examples of justification by faith.

\* Noah believed God and built an Ark.

\* Lot believed God and left a city, refusing to look back.

Both warned those around them about God's impending judgment.

\* Noah preached to all who would listen;

\* Lot warned his 2 son in laws that judgment was coming, leave t/city.

Both Noah and Lot were ignored.

Both were rescued by our merciful God.

**c. The Elect in Christ will be Protected (9a)**

**(1) Verse 9: Two peoples - two destinies**

Those who are righteous (who are clothed in t/righteousness of X)

Those who are wicked (those who are naked in their sin).

**(2) Here we finally get to the apodosis – the "then" that logically follows from the "ifs" of verses 4-7**

4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned . . .

5 and [if He] did not spare the ancient world but protected Noah...

6 and if by reducing the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes He condemned them to ruin, making them an example . . .

7 and if He rescued righteous Lot . . .

**THEN the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation...**

(3) That's become evident by now hasn't it? Peter's point

i. God knows how!

How to what? How to rescue (same word used of Lot in v. 7).

God knows how to rescue . . . . That's an incomplete thought.

(i) Rescue "who" from "what" ???

. . . rescue the godly . . .

Parallel is to the "unrighteous" in the second part of the v.

To be godly is to be t/opposite of unrighteous, it's to be righteous.

Who are t/righteous? Those clothed with Christ.

Who are the unrighteous? Those who aren't.

. . . from temptation . . .

(ii) Or "trials" - same word (πειρασμος) can be transl. either way

I think t/best way to understand it here is "trials that may cause us to fall into sin"

Matt. 6:13 **And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

## \* The tale of 2 little Greek prepositions

God delivers *out of* (ἐκ) not *away from* (ἀπὸ) trials.

Revelation 3:10 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from (ἐκ) the hour of testing (πειρασμός), that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth.

That's being delivered out of t/midst of trials and suffering, not being rescued away from trials and suffering.

We are not exempt from trials, but God can deliver us while in their midst. (Daniel 3 - Shadrach, Meshach, Abidnego).

This may be afflictions suffered in one's own family/household; on a job; in a CH (Peter's context). God is able to keep you and keep you He will.

God will preserve you, if you are His elect child. He will preserve you even if he doesn't immediately remove you.

Noah time of testing took 12 decades.

Lot spent years in Sodom.

Jesus' entire life was characterized by trials, Luke 22:28.

Deliverance defined by Paul in 2 Tim. 4:18

The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

All challenges, temptations, difficulties, tests, trials that we experience testify to t/steadfastness of our faith in Christ.

These 'prove' the reality of our salvation. Cf. 1 Peter 1:5-7.

"But the final and supreme promise is this: God knows how to save us from the ultimate judgment and destruction which is going to fall upon sin and evil and everything that is unjust and unrighteous. That is the great message of this chapter. The Flood, and the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, are but a preliminary indication of the final judgment, and in the judgment, finally, everything and everyone who is opposed to God shall be committed to everlasting and eternal destruction. Now the promise that is given here is that God will save the godly out of all that. We shall not be enveloped and overwhelmed in that ultimate last destruction. He knows how to deliver us out of it." [Lloyd-Jones, 164]

## ***B. Their Judgment Described (4-9)***

### ***1. Described in Terms of the Past***

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

### ***2. Described in Terms of the Future (9b)***

#### ***a. The False Teachers will be Condemned***

**... and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.** (translation debate on the ptcp.)

So we're brought back to judgment (cf. 3b).

And we'll continue on that theme next time ==>

## ***III. The Character of False Teachers (10-22)***

I'll finish w/this story about Ernest Hemingway, which I've adapted from a 1997 article in Moody Monthly.

Ernest Hemingway, the literary genius, said of his life: *"I live in a vacuum that is as lonely as a radio tube when the batteries are dead, and there is no current to plug into."*

A startling statement; Hemingway's life was t/ envy of many. He was known for his tough-guy image and globe-trotting pilgrimages to exotic places. He was a big-game hunter, a bullfighter, a man who could drink the best of them under the table. He was married four times and lived his life seemingly without moral restraint or conscience.

But on a sunny Sunday morning in Idaho, he pulverized his head with a shotgun blast.

There was another side to Hemingway's life, one that few people know about. He grew up in an evangelical Christian home. His grandparents were missionaries, and his father was a devoted churchman and friend of evangelist D. L. Moody. Hemingway's family conformed to the strictest codes of Christianity, and as a boy and young man he was active in his church.

Then came Word War I. As a war correspondent, Hemingway saw death and despair firsthand. His youthful enthusiasm for Christianity soured, and Hemingway eventually rejected the faith.

While we don't know all that transpired in Hemingway's heart, but we do know that Genuine Christianity means more than living in a Christian environment, going through catechism, conforming to the codes, and affirming the truths of Scripture. True Christians are non-negotiated followers of Christ, those who are progressively moving toward Him and who understand all of life in the context of His teaching.

The point is not Hemingway's life. It's my life and your life. If we aren't cultivating a living, vital relationship with Jesus Christ, then we, too, may respond as Hemingway did when life's questions are agonizingly unanswerable or when our inner impulses are too seductive for us to resist. An allegiance based on systems, rituals, and rules is never enough to keep us loyal. ["Moody," January/February 1997, pp. 23-24.]

The book of Job answers the question, "*Why does a true believer serve God?*"

*Curse God and Die?*

*Tho he slay me yet will I praise Him!*

. . . . . He who began a good work in you will perfect it.

He asks that you remain faithful.