

2Pet. 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Just as there were false prophets in days of old and in Peter's day, there will be false teachers that will show up among the believers today. These leaders will come on the scene stealthily, without proper authority, and will introduce teachings and choices that, if followed, will result in spiritual death. Some will even deny that Jesus is Lord; they will deny the truth of His redemption of mankind. This will result in their own spiritual death—eternity in hell.

So often we think of prophets as only *foretelling* the future, but they are also responsible for *forthtelling* of God's truth—that which we most associate with teachers.

Note from listening to McGee: I hadn't noticed, but he pointed out that the reference to prophets is past tense while the reference to teachers is future indicating that the prophetic ministry as to foretelling ended with the apostles.

"even denying the Lord that bought them" – This is a statement regarding the truth that Jesus' redemption was meant for all—even the false prophets. His atonement was not limited; it is available to ALL.

Guzik: "Even a person who has what appears to be a godly walk and relationship with Jesus Christ can still bring in destructive heresies. Often times good men who teach lies do the worst damage. Their lies are accepted far more easily because of the good character of these men."

2Pet. 2:2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

"Follow" = obey, yield to, imitate

"Pernicious ways" = ruin or loss (physical, spiritual or eternal):—damnable(-nation), destruction, die, perdition, x perish

The sad fact is that MANY will believe and follow these false teachers, and the result will be their damnation. Because they claim to be followers of the truth, the truth will be mocked and rejected. That's really sad. I believe this happens because believers/churches are unwilling to be "politically incorrect" or are afraid of hurting someone's feelings or..... So, these false teachers, who are oh so clever, are allowed to continue in fellowship with the body until the body becomes poisoned. The word tells us that by

their fruits we shall be able to identify these people. When they are identified, they should not be allowed to continue in fellowship with the body of Christ with the opportunity to lead others away from the truth.

Matthew 7:15-16 "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Jon Courson had a great quote that applies here: You can tell a wolf by what he eats. If he eats sheep, he is a wolf.

2Pet. 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

What motivates these false teachers/prophets? Covetousness, greed. They will invent their own versions of truth and give life to it. (A good example of someone with this ability is Arafat, who has created his own truths concerning Jerusalem; and people accept it, even though the facts of history tell a different story.) What do they do with this "so called" truth? They try to make money by appealing to the sensibilities and/or natural desires of man. I think one of the prime examples of this is the popularity of prosperity gospel preachers who appeal to man's desire for wealth.

Their judgment is sure, certain. They may think they are getting away with their scam, but judgment will come quickly and surely (from God's perspective).

Note from McGee: The Greek for the word *feigned* means molded (from which we get our word for plastic) and is applied to those who mold their words to what the people wanted to hear.

2Pet. 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

Peter starts to make a comparison between these false prophets and other beings of God's creation. He's basically going to make the case that if God judged all these others, why would He spare these false prophets.

First, we are told of angels that sinned and were cast down to hell and put into chains of darkness to await their judgment. I personally think these are the same angels referred to in Jude.

Jude 1:6 "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

In reading through this verse again, I think the meaning could be that the angels are being reserved for the day of judgment—not just awaiting their own day of judgment. Maybe they make up the demon horde that is released from the bottomless pit with the 5th trumpet judgment that is described in Revelation 9.

My speculation is that these are the angels that procreated with the women of earth and polluted the families of man to the point that the line of Messiah would have been destroyed if God hadn't sent the flood.

Genesis 6:4 "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

Which leads right into the next verse.

2Pet. 2:5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

God didn't hesitate to destroy all but eight people on earth when those on earth became so ungodly that mankind needed a fresh start if he were to ever have the hope of salvation. The phrase "old world" carries with it the idea of the original creation. Noah was delivered out of all the inhabitants of earth at that time. Why? Because he was one who proclaimed divine truth, righteousness, and holiness. Peter is clear to explain that God caused the flood to destroy the ungodly (those who were irreverent and wicked).

Genesis 6:5–6 & 8 "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

Genesis 6:11–13 "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

2Pet. 2:6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Next Peter reminds his readers of the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha. They were turned to ashes in an act of judgment and condemnation by a God-initiated catastrophic event. Why did God destroy them? To make them examples to all the other ungodly people in the world at that time.

Ezekiel identifies the sins of Sodom that brought about her destruction.

Ezekiel 16:49–50 “Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.”

This should give the people of America great pause. The only area in which we seem to still exhibit a redeeming quality in comparison to Sodom is in the area of helping the poor and needy.

2Pet. 2:7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:
2Pet. 2:8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;)

Just as God delivered Noah, the preacher of righteousness, He delivered “just” Lot when He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

Just = equitable (in character or act); by implication, innocent, holy (absolutely or relatively):—just, meet, right(-eous). Webster: **equitable** = marked by a due consideration for what is fair, unbiased, or impartial

I have never really thought about Lot much other than as a selfish young man. I never considered the fact that Lot was a righteous man and was vexed (tortured, tormented, in pain) by all that was happening around him. I always thought he should have “gotten out of Dodge.” Pastor Bob planted a new thought in my mind recently when teaching about the letter to the church at Pergamos in Revelation 2. God was commending them for “holding fast my name” in the place that was recognized as “Satan’s seat.” Maybe Lot had been motivated by selfishness when he chose the land he wanted at Abraham’s bidding, but he obviously held on to his faith and the truth that

he had received about God from Abraham. It was an evil place in which he lived, but he lived as a light in the darkness.

We should all be “Lots” in America today. It seems that we, as a nation, are getting closer and closer to the days of Noah...

Genesis 6:5 “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

...and the status of Sodom and Gomorrah as we flagrantly choose to ignore God and/or refuse to recognize there is a God. We are approving things that are obviously evil in God’s eyes according to His word. How many of us experience torture and pain in our souls because of the evil around us? Are we truly living as lights in the darkness?

2Pet. 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

2Pet. 2:10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

After looking at Strong’s, I think the proper definition of the word *temptations* in verse 9 is evil experience, adversity. The word *how* is not in the Greek. My paraphrase—The Lord knows to deliver the godly from evil situations (and will). He knows to bring the unjust to punishment and damnation (and will). It would seem that the worst offenders are those that follow the dictates of their own carnal nature and lack of morals and despise being subject to any authority. They are bold, daring, self-willed (arrogant), and speak evil of the powers that deserve respect for the position they hold in God’s ordained order.

Boy, does that speak to America today (as well as many other parts of the world). “If it feels good, do it,” is a mantra I have heard expressed many times. We are becoming a society without morals. No one wants to submit to anyone or anything. We are bold in our speech and actions and dare anyone to say, “You can’t say/do that.” We are arrogant and selfish. Speaking evil of the things of the Lord or the authorities He has authorized on our behalf is a common thing.

I love this section of scripture. It is one of the great proofs to me that God will deliver “His church” before He ushers in the time of His wrath lurking somewhere in our future (very near future I believe).

2Pet. 2:11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

First, Peter makes a statement of fact. The angels are greater in power and might (includes miraculous power) than man. That is according to God's plan. Although I know they would probably like to speak their mind regarding these false teachers/ prophets (righteous indignation), they don't complain to the Lord about having to watch them in their wicked ways. That would be stooping to the level of those wicked men. "Railing accusation" indicates the use of abusive, insulting, foul mouthed, slanderous words regarding the wicked acts and words of these false prophets---Which are exactly the kinds of words that these men are using about the truth of God. These angels know God's truth.

Romans 12:19 "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

Mark Hitchcock made the reference back to the "dignities," which he identified as fallen angels. Even fallen angels still occupy a higher position in the creative order than man, as I referenced in the previous verse. He pointed out how so much of false teaching today is directed toward assuming authority over spiritual powers that only God possesses. Paul understood this truth as recorded in his letter to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9 "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

He knew that he had no authority over this emissary of Satan and that it was to God's authority that he must appeal for release—and eventually yield for strength to endure.

2Pet. 2:12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

"these" = the false prophets/ teachers

Peter is comparing them to natural (instinctive nature) brute (irrational, unreasonable) beasts (animals, living things) that were born in the same state in which they were expected to perish—in other words, dumb animals.

They speak evil things about things/truth they really don't understand; they are ignorant. Because they refuse to hear and understand God's truth, they will be destroyed in their own depravity.

2Pet. 2:13 **And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;**

These false teachers will get the wages they earned through their immorality and wrongdoing—destruction. They'll get their just reward (which is a result of their warped thinking). They please their senses by indulging in their desires in the day time, using the money they've fleeced from the flock. They are bold and unashamed; they don't even try to hide their misuse of this money.

John 3:19b "...and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

They are stains and blemishes in the fellowship of believers, disgraceful people. They are indulging in their luxuries and desires, believing their own delusions, and yet claiming fellowship with the believers.

2Pet. 2:14 **Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:**

These evil men have eyes full of adultery; they claim allegiance to God's truth but can't refrain from their sin—like a man who pledges faithfulness to one woman (or vice versa) and continues to seek relationships with other women. In the process they entrap/delude/entice others to follow them in their wickedness. In their heart/thoughts they have "exercised" fraudulence, extortion and greed. I thought the word for *exercised* was very interesting; it includes the idea of "practice naked." It gives me the impression that their motivations are "out there" for everyone to see. Their actions become dominated by motivations of hate and greed.

"cursed children" – The practices of these false teachers are those that place them in the category of the eternally cursed.

Jeremiah 48:10 "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully...."

Revelation 22:14-15 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

2Pet. 2:15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2Pet. 2:16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

These men have been taught the truth, but have chosen not to follow it. They probably didn't intend to stray so far off the path; but when you reject God's truth, you have no chance of developing strength and understanding in spiritual things. They have chosen instead to follow the way of Balaam (see Numbers 22).

Balaam's error was greed. The "way of Balaam" is a reference to the means he used to satisfy that greed. He practiced the art of divination, being able to reveal secrets and tell the future, and used his powers to make a profit. The King of Moab tried to get him to curse Israel, but God told him he couldn't—so he didn't. But it didn't keep him from looking for other ways to get the reward. His nature was unchanged toward the truth, even though he recognized God as God. It's a hard thing to understand. You can have head knowledge without heart knowledge.

James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."

2Pet. 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

These men are:

- "wells without water" – Individuals who are not functioning as they were intended.
- "clouds that are carried with a tempest" – They have no clear-cut direction; they follow whatever wind of doctrine suits their fancy.

They are doomed to live in the shadows, in the darkness forever. With what is darkness equated? Evil. It's eternity without the Savior, the light of the world.

There are so many comparisons with this chapter and the book of Jude!!!

2Pet. 2:18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much wantonness*, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

“great swelling” = bulging over, i.e. (figuratively) insolent:—great swelling.

“insolent” = Haughty and contemptuous or brutal in behavior or language; overbearing; domineering; grossly rude or disrespectful.

“wantonness” = without restraint, recklessness, abusive freedom

These false teachers speak haughtily and contemptuously with a domineering attitude. Their words are empty of truth. They try to entice and delude people to follow them by appealing to the desires of their senses. Their actions are without restraint and reckless. They exercise their freedom abusively. These men are persistent. It doesn't matter to them that a person has made a decision to follow God's truth. They keep up the pressure, blatantly appealing to the sinful nature with which we are born to lure believers away from the truth.

Again, I can't help but make comparisons to America today. We have been known as a Christian nation. My perspective is that men more often than not started out in the ministry through God's calling. As time has progressed and we have learned to make profit through the ministry, I am afraid that more and more people are choosing the ministry as a means to an end—wealth and fame; and fewer and fewer are choosing the ministry as *those called by God*. There are probably many who started out with a call from God, yet have had their ministry corrupted because of the lure and traps of the enemy. I know we are in a battle with our own sin nature, as Paul so eloquently expressed in Romans 7; but I also believe Satan and his army are actively at work as well. What better victory for him than to “take down” one of God's own.

Romans 7:14-20 “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul clearly defined the struggle of the believer as a spiritual one.

Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

2Pet. 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

"they" = the false teachers

"them" = audience of the false teachers

"liberty" = moral freedom

These false teachers are teaching a life of freedom from the guidelines set down in scripture by perverting the truth of scripture. While living a life that has bound them to sure destruction—their lives are decaying. Each step one takes away from the truth of God's word makes it easier to take another step and then another and so on.

The Greek for the word *overcome* states "to make worse, vanquish, rate lower, be inferior." Basically, when one falls under the spell of the false teacher, he is accepting his position as inferior to that teacher. He becomes a servant to that teacher in that he is dependent on the teacher to tell him what is acceptable and what is not.

In Christ, we are all on equal footing. We are subject only to God, and His will for us as stated in His holy Word.

1John 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

2Pet. 2:20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

My paraphrase--Once a person has been presented with the truth, the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and acknowledges that truth to the point that they begin to separate themselves from the pollutions (moral foulness) of the world, if they then allow themselves to reject God's truth, their end is worse than their beginning.

This verse makes me think of the parable of the sower in Matthew 13. These people are pictured by the seed that was sown on stony ground

Matthew 13:20-21 "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

What was their beginning? Lack of knowledge and understanding of the truth of God. What is their ending? Choosing to reject the truth of God, His word, and living life accordingly. Either way, the person is lost. How is one way of being lost worse than another? Maybe the answer is in connection to the day of judgment as alluded to in Matthew.

*Matthew 10:14–15 "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, **It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.**"*

2Pet. 2:21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

Peter tells us that the difference is in the "knowing." That's the point of reference. If we have no knowledge of truth on which to base our actions, then we suffer no mental anguish over the choices we make; we just suffer the consequences. When we deliberately choose to go against what we know is true and right, then we understand, whether we admit it or not, the resulting consequences of those actions and *know* that things could have been different.

Notice that the truth is *delivered* unto them. There has to be an instrument of teaching or instruction.

Hebrews 6 is directly connected to this passage.

Hebrews 6:4-6 "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

This is a clear reference to people who have made changes in their lives based upon their knowledge of Jesus as Savior and Lord, yet are still not saved. The wording "it had been better for them not to have known" ties directly to the wording in this section

“impossible for those who were once enlightened... If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance...” I think this is a direct reference to the hardening of the heart that happens in the process, and the next verse in 2Peter seems to affirm this thought process.

Until we are born again and become a new creature in Christ, we are going to continue to be subject to the sin nature that we inherited from our fathers (all the way back to Adam).

2Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

2Pet. 2:22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The first half of this verse is a quote from Proverbs.

Proverbs 26:11 “As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.”

The second half of the verse emphasizes the first.

The whole verse emphasizes the truth of being born again and becoming a new creation. You can train a dog and clean a dog up and feed it the best of foods, but you can't change its nature. A dog is a dog; it's going to do the disgusting things that dogs do. You can take a pig and clean it up; but as soon as you turn the pig loose, it's going to search for the mud. A pig likes mud.

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