

Abounding Grace Christian Church

A Study of the Second Epistle of Peter – Part 7

I. Exposition of Chapter Two – False Prophets and Teachers (Continued).

A. Verse 2 – “And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.”

1. The Greek word translated “**destructive**” here, is found four times in this context (cf. Verse 1 2 times; and verse 3). The meaning of this word is: “**consumption, destruction; waste, profusion, state of being destroyed; eternal ruin, perdition**”¹ In this context, Peter is saying that “**destructive heresies**” (verse 1) will lead to “**destructive ways**”, which in turn, leads to a destroyed life both in the present life, and potentially, in eternity. (cf. Galatians 6:7-8). It’s noteworthy to point out that in many translations, the word “**destructive**” here is translated “**sensuality**” or “**immorality**”, or something similar. This reflects accurately what the primary heresies were teaching.
2. The word “**blasphemed**” means; “**to speak against someone in such a way as to harm or injure his or her reputation**”² Because of these false teachers and their heretical teaching and lifestyles, the “**way of truth**” – the Gospel, and Jesus Christ Himself, was being evil spoken of and its reputation being hurt.

“Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered.” – II Peter 2:2 – New Living Translation

B. Verse 3 – “By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.”

1. “**By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words...**” – The word “**covetousness**” means; “**to take advantage of someone, usually as the result of a motivation of greed**”³ The word “**exploit**” means; “**to take advantage of someone by implying that what is offered is more valuable than it is—‘to exploit, to exploit by deception, to cheat**”⁴ There are many preachers out there who need to be very careful along this line. Even if a ministry is not heretical in terms of straying from the fundamental truths of Christianity, they need to be watchful that they don’t deceive in the area of money due to greed.
2. “**...for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.**” – Here, we have the promise that judgment is coming upon these heretics. The word “**judgment**” is defined as; “**to judge a person to be guilty and liable to punishment**”⁵. So, Peter is saying that they deserve punishment and it is coming. Joseph Thayer translates this verse as, “**whose punishment has long been impending and will shortly fall.**”⁶ Concerning the word “**slumber**”, Louw and Nida emphasize that it’s used figuratively here and state:

“In 2 Pe 2:3 ...occurs in a highly figurative context: literally ‘and their destruction is not drowsy,’ meaning either ‘their destruction is imminent’ or ‘their Destroyer has been wide awake’ (see Today’s English Version).”⁷

“In their greed these false teachers will make a profit out of telling you made-up stories. For a long time now their Judge has been ready, and their Destroyer has been wide awake!” – II Peter 2:3 – Today’s English Version (GNB).

C. Verses 4-5 – “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; 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;” – (NOTE: verses 4-8 gives three examples of God’s judgment.)

1. “**For if God did not spare the angels who sinned...**” – The first question we need to ask is, who are these angels who sinned? In the context, they are angels who sinned during the time of Noah (verse

¹ William D. Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 1095.

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 433.

³ Ibid., 757.

⁴ Ibid., 758.

⁵ Ibid., 555.

⁶ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 72.

⁷ Louw and Nida, 258.

5). Many scholars agree that this same event is mentioned in **I Peter 3:18-20** and **Jude 6-7**. These same scholars tend to agree that this is referencing the event recorded in **Genesis 6:1-4**.

2. The next question is, what sin(s) did these angelic beings commit? **Jude 7** states that these angels gave **“...themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh...”** This coincides with **Genesis 6:2 and 4** which reads: **“...that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose...There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.”** Bible Scholar Michael Heiser writes:

“Scholars agree that the passages are about the same subject matter. They describe an episode from the time of Noah and the flood where ‘angels’ sinned. That sin, which precipitated the flood, was sexual in nature; it is placed in the same category as the sin which prompted the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. The transgression was interpreted by Peter and Jude as evidence of despising authority and the boundaries of ‘proper dwelling’ for the parties concerned. All of those elements are transparent in Genesis 6:1–4. There is simply no other sin in the Old Testament that meets these specific details—and no other ‘angelic’ sin at all in the Old Testament that might be the referent.”⁸

3. **“...but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for Judgment...”**

- a. God **“cast them down to hell...”** – The word **“hell”** here is the Greek word **tartaroō** or **tartarus**. This is the only place this word is found in the New Testament. One definition of it is; **“the deepest abyss of Hades); to incarcerate in eternal torment”⁹** This seems to be a particular part of hell, or the place of the dead, reserved specifically for these fallen angels.
- b. **“...delivered them into chains of darkness...”** – This coincides with **Jude 6** which reads; **“And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;”** The word **“chains”** means; **“a pliable instrument of binding—‘chain’ (made of metal) or ‘rope’ (made of fiber)”¹⁰** The question arises, how do you chain spiritual beings? It’s possible that this is speaking more in a metaphorical way emphasizing they are being bound and cannot escape.
- c. **“...to be reserved for judgment.”** – There is coming a day of judgment for all the angels and people who rebelled against God – **Revelation 20:10-15**.

4. **“...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.”**

- a. We now come to the second example of God’s judgment on the ungodly. The flood of Noah’s day destroyed the entire human race with the exception of Noah and his immediate family. (cf. **Genesis 6:13 – 7:1-24**). **Jesus confirmed the existence of Noah and the flood (Matthew 24:37-38; Luke 17: 26-27)**. In **Genesis 8:4** the Bible states that the ark rested on **“...the mountains of Ararat.”** Bible teacher and author Rick Renner writes:

“The remains of Noah’s Ark are visible today and are located in the lower mountains of Ararat, on a slope of a mountain called Cudi (pronounced Judi). The name Cudi refers to the place of the landing. From the most ancient times, it has carried this name because the ancients knew it was the place where Noah’s Ark had landed. After years of research, on June 20, 1987, Turkish authorities officially dedicated the slope of Mount Cudi as the site of Noah’s Ark.”¹¹ (PLEASE NOTE: This is highly contested by many Biblical Archaeologists.)

- b. Noah is said to have been a **“...preacher of righteousness...”** – Most scholars agree that it took approximately 100 years to build the Ark. In **Genesis 5:32**, Noah is 500 years old. By the time Noah entered the ark and the flood began, Noah was 600 years old (**Genesis 7:6**). This means that he potentially preached to the people during all this time, but they wouldn’t believe. This demonstrates the compassion and longsuffering of God (**II Peter 3:9**).

⁸ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 97-98.

⁹ James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2009), 71.

¹⁰ Louw and Nida, 54.

¹¹ Rick Renner, *Fallen Angels, Giants, Monsters and the World Before the Flood*, (Shippensburg, PA: Harrison House, 2024), 21.