

# Abounding Grace Christian Church

## A Study of the Second Epistle of Peter – Part 9

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

#### A. Verse 9 (continued) – “...then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,”

1. “...to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment” – The word “reserve” means; “keep on, continue in a state”<sup>1</sup> The “unjust” are the unrighteous or the unsaved. It literally means; “...one who violates or has violated justice...of one who breaks God’s laws, unrighteous, sinful”<sup>2</sup> Peter states that the unjust are “...under punishment...”. This is in the present tense. The word “punishment” means; “to punish, with the implication of resulting severe suffering”<sup>3</sup> The idea is that there is present punishment for the unjust now until the future “day of judgment” comes.

Douglas Moo writes:

“How is it that God stands silent as such false teachers twist his truth and lead his people astray? Peter’s answer is simple: God is not standing silent. Using the examples of the angels who sinned, the world of Noah’s day, and the cities of

Sodom and Gomorrah, Peter argues that God is both judging sinners now and will finally condemn them in the future...

The Bible everywhere teaches about a great day of judgment to come, when the righteous will receive their eternal reward and the unrighteous will suffer eternal condemnation. The idea of judgment in this life is not so common, but appears often enough. We think, for instance, of Romans 1:18–32. Here Paul three times claims that God ‘gave over’ sinful human beings to the consequences of the sin that they had chosen (vv. 24, 26, 28).”<sup>4</sup>

#### B. Verse 10 – “...and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,”

1. “...those who walk according to the flesh...” – In this context, the word “flesh” is defined as “mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God”<sup>5</sup> (cf. Romans 8:1-13; 13:14; Galatians 5:16-24; 6:8). The word “walk” means; “to pursue after, be devoted to”<sup>6</sup> So, Peter in the context, is saying that these false teachers are pursuing after and are devoted to the sinful, earthly nature.
2. “...in the lust of uncleanness...” – The word “lust” here means; “impure desire”<sup>7</sup> The meaning of the word “uncleanness” is; “a state of being tainted or stained by evil”<sup>8</sup>
3. “...and despise authority...” – The word “despise” means; “to feel contempt for someone or something because it is thought to be bad or without value—‘to despise, to scorn, to look down on’<sup>9</sup> So, these false teachers are said to have contempt for “authority”. Many scholars agree that this is referring to; “a supernatural ruling power”<sup>10</sup> Kenneth Gangel confirms this:

“But this was not just any authority; these reckless antinomians despise (d) (*kataphronountas*, ‘think down on’) ‘lordship.’ *Kyriotētos*, ‘authority,’ refers either to angelic powers (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16) or perhaps more likely, to the authority of the Lord (*kyrios*) Himself (cf. 2 Peter 2:1).”<sup>11</sup>

4. “...they are presumptuous...” – This word means; “one who is bold; in a bad sense, a presumptuous, audacious person”<sup>12</sup> The word can also be defined as; “overstepping due bounds (as of propriety or courtesy): taking liberties”<sup>13</sup>
5. “...self-willed...” – “...pertaining to being arrogant as the result of self-will and stubbornness...”<sup>14</sup> This implies that they are unteachable and not willing to receive correction from anyone. Arrogance is a form of pride which the Bible warns about often (cf. Proverbs 3:34; 16:18; 28:25; 29:23; I Peter 5:5).

<sup>1</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 12.

<sup>3</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 488.

<sup>4</sup> *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, Douglas J. Moo (Zondervan Publishers, Grand Rapids, 1996.)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 571.

<sup>6</sup> William D. Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 1251.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 1152.

<sup>8</sup> Louw and Nida, 769.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 762.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 477.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth O. Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 872.

<sup>12</sup> Mounce, 1293.

<sup>13</sup> Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

<sup>14</sup> Louw and Nida, 763.

6. **“...not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries”** – The word **“dignitaries”** isn’t a very good translation. The English Standard Version (ESV) more accurately translates this word as **“glorious ones”**. Louw and Nida’s Lexicon states: **“a benevolent supernatural power deserving respect and honor—‘glorious power, wonderful being.’ αὐθάδεις, δόξας οὐ τρέμουσιν ‘arrogant people showing no respect for the glorious powers above’ 2 Pe 2:10.”**<sup>15</sup> Many scholars believe that the **“glorious ones”** mentioned here, who were spoken evil of, were fallen angels. They cite the next verse which refers to angels as the reason for that conclusion. As to why the false teachers would slander the fallen angels, we can only speculate. (cf. **Jude 8-9 which is considered to be parallel verses**). Douglas Moo writes:

**“More likely, as the NIV suggests and most contemporary commentators agree, Peter is referring to angels. Furthermore, most also agree that evil angels are meant, since Peter seems to contrast these ‘glorious ones’ reviled by the false teachers with the ‘angels’ in verse 11 (which, since Peter commends their activity, must be good angels). Why is it wrong for the false teachers to slander these evil angels? Presumably because, though fallen, they still bear the impress of their ‘glorious’ origin.”**<sup>16</sup>

- C. **Verse 11 – “...whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.”** As stated above, the **“angels”** mentioned here are thought to be unfallen angels of God. The question is, are they **“...greater in power and might...”** than the fallen angels or the false teachers? Scholars disagree as to which group is being referred to but, in my view, it doesn’t matter. God’s angels are more powerful and mighty than both groups!!

- D. **Verse 12 – “But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,”**

1. **“...these, like natural brute beasts...”** – The word **“natural”** means; **“governed by (the instincts of) nature”**.<sup>17</sup> For the word **“brute”**, Louw and Nida state the meaning as: **“pertaining to a lack of capacity to reason or think properly—‘without reason, not able to reason.’...In rendering 2 Pe 2:12 one may translate ‘creatures unable to reason’ as ‘wild animals’”**<sup>18</sup> The word **“beasts”** simply means; **“a living creature, animal”**<sup>19</sup> So, Peter is calling these false teachers irrational animals governed by their natural instincts.

2. **“...made to be caught and destroyed...and will utterly perish in their own corruption.”** – The idea here is, just as wild animals are caught and killed, these false teachers will **“...utterly perish...”**. This is one word in the Greek and means; **“to cause someone to become perverse or depraved, as a type of moral destruction,... to cause the moral ruin of”**<sup>20</sup> They will be **“morally ruined”** in their **“...own corruption.”** The word **“corruption”** here means; **“a state of ruin or destruction, with the implication of disintegration”**<sup>21</sup> The Kenneth Wuest translation reads:

**“But these, as irrational creatures, having been born as creatures of instinct, [destined] for capture and destruction, uttering blasphemies in the sphere of those things concerning which they are ignorant, shall in their [acts of] destroying surely be destroyed,”**<sup>22</sup>

- E. **Verse 13 – “...and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,”**

1. **“...will receive the wages of unrighteousness...”** – The word **“wages”** means; **“dues paid for work; wages, hire”**<sup>23</sup> (cf. **Romans 6:23**).
2. **“...those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime...”** – The word **“carouse”** means; **“indulgent living, luxury”**<sup>24</sup>
3. **“They are spots and blemishes...”** – The word **“spots”** means; **“a spot, stain, blot; a moral blemish”**<sup>25</sup>  
The word **“blemishes”** means; **blame, ridicule; a disgrace to society, a stain**<sup>26</sup>

**“Their destruction is their reward for the harm they have done. They love to indulge in evil pleasures in broad daylight. They are a disgrace and a stain among you. They delight in deception even as they eat with you in your fellowship meals.”**

**– II Peter 2:13 – New Living Translation**

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>16</sup> *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, Douglas J. Moo (Zondervan Publishers, Grand Rapids, 1996.)

<sup>17</sup> Thayer, 660.

<sup>18</sup> Louw and Nida, 350.

<sup>19</sup> Mounce, 1165.

<sup>20</sup> Louw and Nida, 769.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 232.

<sup>22</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1961), 2 Pe 2:10–16.

<sup>23</sup> Thayer, 415.

<sup>24</sup> Mounce, 1295.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 1273.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 1215.