

September 24, 2017

## Practicing Our Readiness Drills for Christ's Return - Seeking God's Guidance from 1st and 2nd Peter

Sermon Topic: God's Definition of Justice and How to Escape it

2 Peter 2:4-10

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, (ESV)

- Theme of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter: Defend yourselves with biblical knowledge and spiritual maturity against the deceptions of false teachers.

Introduction: Mt St. Helen's eruption in 1980 covered the Northwest with ash for weeks. It was a daily reminder of the power of God to unleash the forces of nature at will when he wants to for His greater purposes. Was it for punishment sake? Only he knows. Was it just to release pressure building up under the earth's crust? Only he knows. Was it a combination? Since nations do not exist into eternity, there is no eternal punishment for nations, therefore if God wants to get a nation's attention he will do it through natural disasters or other means. Deep in their hearts humanity knows that God uses these forces of his nature to bring punishment or repentance but, scoffers continue to claim that there is no God, that nature is a force unto itself, that there is no need to fear God because God does not exist. We are just a collection of random molecules in a random universe that is spinning out of control with no eternal purpose. These same scoffers were preaching their heresy in Peter's day as much as they are today and if you listen to them you will follow them into perdition.

Critical Point #7 – Be warned: following false teachers is a matter of eternal damnation and torment. Choose instead to be rescued by God's grace.

1. God has and will punish those who choose Satan's evil over God's righteousness, whether these are rebellious human beings or rebellious angels.
  - Examples:
    - The imprisonment of exceptionally rebellious (now demonic) angels. **For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell (Tartarus) and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;**

When did this happen? Genesis 6:1-4 When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." The Nephilim were on

the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God (line of Seth) came in to the daughters of man (line of Cain) and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. (ESV) What was the purpose of this? To build a super race of giants who would control the population of earth under demon influence. (my opinion only here).

Where is Tartarus? It is a place lower than Hades (see Luke 16) God used for the imprisonment of these vile creatures. If the Rich Man is in torment in Hades, imagine the pain and suffering that is being experienced by these most wicked of demons. . . These demons have now been in this prison for over 5,000 years and that's only the smallest fraction of their sentence. Hell is forever. One of the worst punishments we inflict on inmates is solitary confinement and lack of light. These demons are in an environment where they are separated from one another, where there is no light, where there is gloom or fear. Do you not think they wish they could cease to exist? God will not allow that to happen. There is no suicide in Tartarus and there will be none in hell.

When is their final judgment? Matthew 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (ESV) And Revelation 20:11-15

- The destruction of all human and animal flesh in the worldwide flood of Noah's day. **if he did not spare the ancient world,**

Some might say this was unjust. Why did all those innocent people have to perish and drown? The answer is twofold. 1) they were not innocent, 2) they could have gotten on the boat but refused. I call this act of God "A Total Cleansing". The patient had to die in order to live, like taking some stem cells from a dying patient and starting over from scratch. The human race was about to self-destruct anyway so God acted mercifully to give us more time by rescuing Noah and family.

- The destruction of two vile cities in Abraham's day, Sodom and Gomorrah. **if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;**

Again people would say this is cruel. How could a loving God do this to these people? Answer: If he didn't, he would be like a doctor who said you have treatable cancer but I know you don't like knives so I won't cut it out. Same for all the wicked Canaanite nations God targeted for destruction. By doing this he saved the patient, i.e. the human race. I call this "Precision surgery".

2. God has and will rescue those who choose God's righteous path over Satan's evil.  
Examples:

- Noah and his 7 family members. **but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly**

People say this is a myth. There is no way one ship built by one man and his sons could contain a pair of all the animals on earth. Oh yeah? Visit the ark and see for yourself. It is inspiring to see how God saved Noah. Expound.

- Lot and his daughters. **and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);**
- But, no salvation for the angels who rebelled. Why?

### Application

1. It's all about the gospel. We are not righteous nor are we godly apart from what God has done for us at the cross. **then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials,**
2. Teach our children to be pure of heart and submissive to authority. **and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, (ESV)**