

# God's Undeserved Mercy and Well-Deserved Punishment

*2 Peter 2:5, 7-10a*

**Thought for the Day:** Like Noah, God can deliver us from the temptations of this sinful, fallen world, if we will walk in close fellowship with Him; and, like Lot, even though we are spiritually weak and compromised, God will mercifully deliver us from ultimate judgment, if we sincerely put our faith in Jesus Christ for the salvation of our soul.

**Three, Two, One!** In 2 Peter 2:1-3, the Apostle Peter gives an **Introduction and Summary** of chapter two to warn of the very real danger of false prophets and teachers within the Church. God does not take their presence lightly, and in verses 4-6, Peter gives **Three** Examples of God's Inescapable Judgment to warn that God will deal severely with false teachers. At the same time, in verses 5, 7-8, Peter gives **Two** Examples of God's Merciful Deliverance of the godly. This leads to **One** Logical Conclusion in verses 9-10: God extends Undeserved Mercy to the godly but Well-Deserved Judgment to the unrighteous.

## **Three Examples of God's Inescapable Judgment (2:4-6)**

- I. The Angels Who Sinned (2:4)
- II. The Ancient World of Noah's Day (2:5)
- III. The Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (2:6)

## **Two Examples of God's Merciful Deliverance:**

### **IV. The Preservation of Righteous Noah (2:5)**

**5 if (since) [God] 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...**

Why did God preserve Noah and his family? (Genesis 6:5-9)

- Noah found favor in God's eyes; he was a righteous man, a blameless man; Noah walked with God.
- Noah is an important example for us today!
  - "The culture in which we live is best described not as neo-pagan but as neo-barbarian. Our culture is addicted to evil and to the free expression of licentious passions, and that is the way it was in the days of Noah. The people presumed upon the infinite grace of God, and that was fatal, because God destroyed every human being on the face of the earth, except for Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives." (R.C. Sproul, *1-2 Peter*, p. 225)
  - Noah's world was wicked beyond belief—much like our own—yet, Noah maintained his purity in the midst of a totally depraved world and he shows us how to do it—we, too, must learn to walk with God! This is why the first priority of a follower of Jesus Christ is to know and love the Lord by pursuing intimate fellowship with Him.
- Enoch walked with God; he pleased God (Genesis 5:22-24; Hebrews 11:5).
- Abraham walked before God (Genesis 17:1).
- Walking with God speaks of intimate fellowship, determined obedience, and intentionally living so as to please Him.

- Walking with God is "Cultivating the consciousness of the Divine presence." (*Dean Goulburn, Bible Illustrator OT*)
  - Walking with God is "Practicing the presence of God," consciously living in the presence of the Lord, mindful that every thought, word and deed is being examined by Him. (*Brother Lawrence*)
- As God preserved Noah and his family through the Flood, so He preserves those who walk before Him.

## **V. The Rescue of Righteous Lot (2:7-8)**

**7 and if (since) he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked 8 (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)...**

- You will find precious little in the story of Lot (Genesis 11-14, 19) that indicates he had any kind of personal, saving relationship with the Lord!
- Lot offered his two virgin daughters to satisfy the lusts of those who came to his home, and later, in a drunken stupor, he was involved in incest with his daughters.
  - Lot was selfish, opportunistic, materialistic, and worldly (carnal); he was a compromiser; and he had absolutely no positive spiritual impact on any member of his family or his community.
  - Even when God's judgment was about to fall, "he lingered..." (Genesis 19:16)
    - Lot's heart was set on Sodom! Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)
    - "Lot had entered Sodom, and then Sodom had entered Lot, and he found it difficult to leave." (*Wiersbe, Be Alert, p. 59*)
- It is frankly startling that Peter would describe Lot as "righteous"!
- At some point in his life, Lot sincerely put his faith in God for the salvation of his soul, and God imputed His righteousness to Lot because of his faith. (Romans 4:1-5)
  - Because of his faith in God, and especially because of Abraham's intercession on behalf of the city (Genesis 18:22-33), God in His mercy rescued Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

## **One Logical Conclusion—God's Undeserved Mercy and Well-Deserved Judgment:**

### **VI. The Rescue of the Godly and Punishment of the Unrighteous (2:9-10)**

**9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.**

- In each of the Examples of God's Inescapable Judgment, all those who deserved God's judgment "indulged in the lust of defiling passion and despised authority."
- None of us deserve God's mercy; all of us deserve God's judgment!
- Jesus Christ experienced God's judgment on the cross to save us from the penalty of our sins. He intercedes on our behalf that we might experience God's undeserved mercy rather than His righteous, well-deserved wrath.
- "One day soon, the fire will fall! Are you ready?" (*Wiersbe, Be Alert, p. 60*)