

# The Fate of False Prophets and Teachers

## 2 Peter 2:4-10a

**Thought for the Day:** False prophets and teachers, along with all the ungodly, are presently under the punishment of God (cp. John 3:36; Romans 1:18) and will not escape His wrath in the final day of judgment (i.e., the Great White Throne judgment which will result in condemnation and destruction: being cast into the Lake of Fire).

2 Peter chapter two is a very dark and sobering chapter in the Bible. It deals with the theme of false prophets and false teachers in the Church. It teaches us that we need to know our Bibles so well that we can identify and reject false teachers who may attempt to infiltrate the church with their false teachings today. We need to be able to spot the *Wolves in Sheep's Clothing* in our midst. We need to learn to use the Word of God to filter and evaluate every person who claims to be a spokesperson for God and every teaching that purports to be a message from the Lord (Acts 17:11; Psalm 1:2).

Verses 1-3 are an Introduction and Summary of the entire chapter:

1. The Reality of False Prophets: 1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you...
2. The Teachings of False Prophets: 1c...who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them...
3. The Fate of False Prophets: 1d ...bringing upon themselves swift destruction . . . 3b Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.
4. The Danger of False Prophets: 2 And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3a And in their greed they will exploit you [take advantage of you] with false words...

### **Overview:**

Vss. 4-6 – Three Examples of God's Inescapable Judgment

Vss. 7-8 – One Example of God's Merciful Deliverance

Vss. 9-10 – The Logical Conclusion: God's Undeserved Mercy & Well-Deserved Judgment

### **Three Examples of God's Inescapable Judgment:**

#### **I. The Angels Who Sinned (2:4)**

##### **4 For if (since) God did not spare angels when they sinned...**

- Some Bible scholars believe this refers to the original fall of Satan when a third of the angels joined him in rebellion against God.
  - However, there is no indication that God judged those angels at their original fall as Peter describes here.
  - Rather, we understand that those angels became the demons spoken of frequently in the Gospels, the "spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places," spoken of in Eph. 6:12.
- Peter is referring to the events recorded in Genesis 6:1-4.
  - Some of the fallen angels, who joined Satan in rebellion against God, took the additional step of having sexual relationships with human women, producing an evil hybrid called the Nephilim.

- The angels of 2 Peter 2:4 are the “sons of God” in Genesis 6, demons, who are being punished by God because of the terrible sin they committed.

**... but cast them into hell (Greek *Tartarus*) and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment...**

- This is the only place in the Bible where the word *Tartarus* occurs; it is unfortunately translated by the word “hell.”
  - It is better to reserve the word “hell” for the final destination of all those, both humans and demons, who refuse to submit to God—the Lake of Fire from which there will be no escape—it is eternal. (Revelation 19 & 20)
  - *Tartarus*, on the other hand, as we see here in verse 4 and in Jude 6, is temporary.
  - Elsewhere in Scripture (6 times in Revelation), *Tartarus* is referred to as the Abyss (*NIV*) or the Bottomless Pit (*ESV*).
    - From this place will come demonic creatures that will torment people during the Tribulation period for five months (Revelation 9).
    - Revelation 9:11 – “They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.”
    - This is where Satan will be bound for the 1,000 year Millennium. (Rev. 20:2)
- Whether you agree with this interpretation or not as to the identity of these angels, the point Peter is making is this: God did not spare them; He did not show them any mercy!
  - He judged and condemned them to a place of terrible torment until their final judgment and eternal destruction in the Lake of Fire.
  - In exactly the same manner, God will deal with the false prophets and teachers. (2 Peter 2:1, 3, 9-10)

## **II. The Ancient World of Noah’s Day (2:5)**

**5 if (since) 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...**

- Cp. Genesis 6:5-8, 11-13.
- If God did not spare the entire world, He will not spare false prophets and teachers; in like manner, they will all be condemned and destroyed.

## **III. The Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (2:6)**

**6 if (since) 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...**

- Cp. Genesis 18-19.
- This is an example of what is going to happen to false prophets and teachers and to ALL the ungodly—those who reject God and despise His Word.
- When God’s will is of no concern to you, you are ungodly and you will suffer the consequences!
- Repent, turn to God, confess your sins, ask Jesus to be your Savior and to forgive you of your sins!