

April 26: You Can Trust God to Stay Unshaken (2 Peter 2:4-10a)

- God is such an amazing and unique God:
 - He is unequalled in everything because He is the only true and living God.
 - He is unconventional as His ways are not our ways.
 - He is unavoidable. Believers can't avoid His perfect provision and protection in the lie-infested world of religion AND unbelievers can't avoid their accountability with God ("*Be sure your sin will find you out*").

- Peter wants the church to be hopeful, strong and unshaken, so he reminds us we can stand uninfluenced while false teachers will face severe consequences for their destructive ministry. Peter communicates two truths:
 - Ungodly deceivers will be judged.
 - Godly believers will be rescued.

- Peter uses a long "*if-then*" sentence (v. 4-8) to demonstrate the certainty of punishment and retribution for the godless deceivers and preservation and rescue for the godly followers. His conclusion is stated in v. 9. He proves his declarations with five historical examples.
 - Three historical examples warn about not following false teachers who will be judged
 - Two historical examples encourage us to stay strong and experience God's faithful rescue.

- These two truths provide great motivation to stay faithfully unshaken.

1. **God will assuredly judge and punish the ungodly** (2:4-5a, 6, 9b-10a)

- a. God is a God of accountability and no rank, strength or numbers can shield rebellious evil from God's vengeance.
 - God judged and punished sinning "angels" (v. 4). Even high-ranking angels are not spared from God's wrath and neither will prominent false teachers. Which "*angels*" is Peter referring to?
 - Some say these angels are pre-Adamic angels who sinned sometime between Genesis 1 and the fall in Genesis 3 (which

Satan led and 1/3rd fell with him-Rev. 12:4, 9). This doesn't seem likely because Satan and his demons are not incarcerated but still free to roam the earth and harass the world.

- Some say these angels are a special group of particularly evil angels described in Gen 6:1-4: "*sons of God*" (demons) took wives among "*the daughters of men*" and attempted to create some kind of corrupted humanity. They were punished by God and put in prison (1 Peter 3:19-20; Jude 6-7) or "cast into hell" (called tartaros, a subterranean place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out and where these angels were consigned to "pits" or "chains of darkness" until the final "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:10)

b. God judged and punished the pre-flood "*ancient world*" (v. 5a).

- God drowned all living beings and things (humans, animals, vegetation) because sin was "*great*" and God was "*sorry that He had made man*" (Gen. 6:5-7).
- God's next judgment on the world will be worse as it is final and will be by fire (2 Pet 3:7)

c. God judged and punished "*the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah*" (v. 6)

- God turned a fertile plain "*like the garden of God*" (Gen. 13:10) into "ashes" when He rained fire and brimstone on five cities of the plains (Gen. 19:23-24; Deut 29:23; Gen. 14:8)
- God said their sin was "*exceedingly grave*" (Gen. 18:20; 19:13; Ezek 16:49-50 – homosexuality; arrogance, neglected poor and needy; committed abominations)
- God used them as "*an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter*" (2 Pet 3:6)

2. **God will assuredly justify and preserve the godly** (2:5b, 7-8, 9a)

- Peter shares two examples of God's preservation in the midst of God's judgment (Noah and Lot).
 - Noah and Lot weren't protected because they were good men and merited God's protection.
 - Salvation is always by grace through faith in Christ (promised Messiah & King in the Old Testament) apart from any good works.

- a. God spared Noah and his family through the flood (v. 5b). God “*preserved*” Noah and his family as an act of His grace (Gen. 6:8). Noah was “*a preacher of righteousness*” (Gen. 6:9) and spent over 100 years warning of God’s coming judgment (an act of mercy for 100+ years)

- b. God spared Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7-8).
 - How can Peter call Lot “*righteous*” three times and contrast him with the “*sensual conduct of unprincipled men*” (v. 7) and “*their lawless deeds*” (v. 8)?
 - The recorded life of Lot is anything but “*righteous*” (he offered his virgin daughters to Sodomites; had to be grabbed by angels to leave Sodom; allowed his daughters to get him drunk and commit incest in order to become pregnant)
 - We know true believers still sin and even commit heinous sins, yet Lot showed some signs of godliness (he didn’t look back as God instructed when he left Sodom unlike his wife; Abraham’s request for God to spare Sodom and Gomorrah if there were only ten probably had Lot in mind; Sodom’s sin “*oppressed*” him [v. 7] and he “*felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds*” as an believer would feel; perhaps Peter also refers to other things the Old Testament story didn’t record about Lot, but God revealed to him)

- v. 9-10 pulls Peter’s examples into a conclusion:
 - The godly will experience temptations and tests in a godless culture, but God is faithful to rescue
 - The godless will be “*under punishment for the day of judgment and especially those who indulge the flesh in it corrupt desires and despise authority*” (v. 9b-10)
 - Peter’s two-outcomes remind us of Jesus’ two ways and two outcomes in Matthew 7:13-14.