

Theme: Faith in Exile

Title: The Judgment of False Teachers - II Peter 2:4-1a

Aim: Emphasize that God will judge false teachers in His time.

Intro: It's amazing that every thief, every liar, every criminal thinks he will get away w/the robbery, lie, crime. As a matter of fact, we all seem to think that way at times. Maybe it's wishful thinking, hoping others will not notice & even God will turn a blind eye. It's also true that false teachers/prophets, who have denied the truth (especially of Scripture) & are deluded by their own erroneous thinking & have espoused lies which better fit their false narrative, no matter the cost to others – such false teachers believe they will get away w/their false teaching & escape judgment, but such is not so. Theme: Faith in exile. We have submitted that who are Christians, followers of Christ, are exiles in this world that not our home. We have been given, in 1st & 2nd Peter, some guidelines for how to live as exiles in this world as we wait for our Lord's coming again & the completion of God's eternal plan. Last week Pastor Derek spoke from II Peter 2:1-3 on Peter's introduction of the problem of false teachers among the exiles who had been scattered by God for the purpose of spreading the gospel & advancing the kingdom of God. We have been scattered in the same way & placed by God where we are for the same purpose. And, as then, there are false teachers among us today, opposing God's work. These false teachers, then & now, espouse destructive heresies, deny Jesus as Savior/Lord (or our need of a Savior), cause others to go astray into sensuality, blaspheme the truth, & exploit others w/false words. At the end of vs3, Peter firmly announced the condemnation & destruction of false teachers. I think it interesting that Peter followed his warning against false teachers w/this declaration of judgment upon them. Then, he wrote of the madness & emptiness of false teaching. But it seemed that Peter thought it necessary to back up that declaration. II Peter 2:4-10a [READ]. Perhaps those false teachers doubted there would be any consequences to their wrongdoing. Perhaps they thought God did not hear/see or care. Many today think this way. In Psalm 94:7 we read of such evildoers, "*They say, 'The Lord does not*

see; the God of Jacob does not perceive.” Also, perhaps those exiles, seeing what was happening around them as a result of false teaching, wondered why God didn’t do something to stop it. Where was God? Why was He idle? Perhaps in today’s world you’re asking the same question. Peter wanted to assure those exiles, & God wants to assure us, that judgment was/is coming. False teachers/prophets will not go unpunished, but judgment will be in God’s timing. I) **God is Judge!** He’s done it before & He’ll do it again. A) He was/is the Judge of fallen angels – vs4. That word “hell” is the Greek “tartarus,” equivalent to the Hebrew “Gehenna.” It was considered, according to Strong’s, the “abode of the wicked dead.” Now, we know that Satan & his minions, these fallen angels, demons, if you will, are very active in taking captive much of the unbelieving world & harassing believers as allowed, stirring up temptation. Yet, they are very much bound by God, restricted to only that which He allows, until His purposes are complete & He says, “enough!” Simply put, tho the judgment & destruction of those fallen angels is set, it has not yet been fully carried out, awaiting the Day of Judgment which will take place when Jesus comes again. Jude 6 tells us that *“The angels who did not stay w/in their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, He (God) has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day...”* B) He was/is the Judge of “the ancient world” – vs5. We read in Genesis 6 how that God *“...saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, & that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”* (vs6); & in vs7-8, *“So the Lord said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land...But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.’*” God destroyed the world by the great flood. Peter spoke of it in the next chapter, which we’ll get to in a few weeks. You think God doesn’t see? You think He won’t judge? Many think that since God is love, He will not judge. But just look at the flood. And consider that those who were destroyed in the flood will one day be raised to face the final judgment when Jesus comes again! C) He was/is Judge of Sodom/Gomorrah – vs6. We read in Genesis 18:20 that the sin

of Sodom & Gomorrah (located in the plain of Jordan adjacent the Dead Sea) was “very grave.” Deep idolatry was accompanied by the sin of sodomy – the men of the city of Sodom even wanted to violate the angels of God sent to rescue Abraham’s nephew Lot & his family before the judgment of God was carried out. God destroyed those cities by raining down sulfur & fire. Genesis 19:25 – “***And [God] overthrew those cities, & all the valley, & all the inhabitants of the cities, & what grew on the ground.***” Even Lot’s wife looking back w/longing upon her home, was turned into a pillar of salt. This is not just a story, mind you, but an actual event, God intending to make Sodom & Gomorrah “an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly...” God is Judge. Peter’s argument was, “If God didn’t spare the fallen angels; if He didn’t spare the ancient world; if He destroyed Sodom & Gomorrah, then He will judge the false teachers among them – in His time, way. God doesn’t take sin lightly, especially sin which leads others astray. If He did, He wouldn’t be just & He wouldn’t be love. But God is also II) **Rescuer**. A) He rescued Noah & his family – vs5 – “***He preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, w/7 others.***” We know of course that God instructed Noah to build an ark to secure his family & preserve animals thru the world-wide flood, & Noah obeyed, taking months or even years to do so. All this time his actions was a testimony & warning to all around of his faith in God & the judgment coming. His very life called for repentance & faith from others who were looking on. God preserved for Himself a remnant, thru whom He would continue to carry out His eternal plan. B) He rescued Lot & his daughters – vs7-8. Again, when God destroyed Sodom & Gomorrah, the angels He sent to rescue Lot literally pulled them out of the city & urged them to flee from the coming judgment. Peter reminds us that Lot was a righteous man, tho he chose that place to live, & he was “greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked...” & tormented “over their lawless deeds that he saw & heard.” Does that describe you as you see & hear what’s going on around you in this world? We ought to be tormented in our inner being. We ought to lament what the world’s come to. Of course, both Noah &

the ark & Lot's rescue point us to Christ & His work of atonement. They were delivered from the midst of a sinful world & Christ's life, death & resurrection delivers us who believe from a life of slavery to sin & the judgment that awaits. Again, Peter's point is that if God rescued Noah & his family & Lot & his daughters, then He is able to rescue those exiles & us exiles! III) **God knows how** – vs9-10a. A) God knows how to rescue the godly from trials – vs9. False teachers made it difficult for those exiles to live as Christians in a world where the gospel was being challenged & their desire to be righteous & godly was ridiculed as “holier than thou.” Isn't it the same for us, at least at times, today? They were also persecuted because they followed Christ. Peter assured those exiles that God is able to rescue from trials. That word trial can also be temptation. Those exiles were surely tempted to take the easy way out & follow the false teachings which were popular, as false teachings are today. We are tempted to give in to the world's ways of thinking & accept what is pure madness. Stay close to God. Stay true to His word. Lovingly but firmly stand for the truth & don't believe the lies espoused. God will help you & rescue you, now & in eternity. Hold fast to Him. David Gudzik wrote, “We can trust in God's deliverance of the godly because it is just as certain as His judgment of the ungodly.” And, B) God knows how to “*keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion & despise authority.*” Doesn't that describe many in our world today (defiling passions, despising authority), even w/in the church (false church w/false teaching)? Again, Gudzik” “The unjust have [a] reservation made for them: they are reserved for the day of judgment.” This is, or should be, an encouragement for us. The good news is, though we all deserve God's eternal judgment, for those who are in Christ, He has taken the judgment of God/punishment for us. The wrath of God was poured out on His Son, our Savior, so that we might be rescued. He is w/us now, even living in us now by the person of the Holy Spirit, to deliver us day by day & enable us to live as exiles in this world. We who are in Christ are children of God, loved by Him & kept

by Him until Christ comes again. And, as Mark Braskie pointed out in our Bible study Tuesday night, the promise of judgment is hope for those who believe. God is not blind or deaf to the false teaching, false narrative around us. He is not uncaring. He is Judge & He will judge. In a great sense, those who disbelieve & espouse lies are judge/condemned already, because they reject Christ as Savior/Lord – tho we must pray for them & present Christ to them, that some may be turned to Christ. We're here to represent Christ in this world. Let us know the truth of God's word that we might not be taken captive by false teaching. It will certainly take faith – faith in exile.