

2 Peter 2:4-9

Hope in the fight

For If God Did Not Spare Angels...!



Peter has begun chapter 2 by addressing a pressing problem in the early church – false teachers and those that had turned aside to follow them. He is imploring people to stick to the apostles teachings. The apostles knew what they were talking about! They had learned what they knew directly from Jesus! AND, they had been given a special portion of the Holy Spirit after the living Jesus had departed by ascending into heaven! Point is – the apostles knew what they were talking about! Those that disagreed with them did not know what they were talking about when it came to Jesus and salvation, or just about anything else for that matter! Those people were actively leading others to their destruction and they were a hindrance to the purposes of God in and through the church! Peter was driving home the point that, in Christianity, it really matters what you believe! It is why we now have doctrinal statements that spell out very specifically, very precisely, what we believe are the essential/foundational tenants of the apostles teachings – the hills upon which we will die before conceding an inch of that ground to another belief system/the Evil One! By these doctrinal statements we identify ourselves as biblical, therefore apostolic, and therefore Christ-following Christians – or – **not**! They really are important! The problem with the early church was that, in the absence of an actual presence of an apostle, they had little way to combat these false teachers and prophets. They did not have the Bible yet! Not all the New Testament was even written at that time, and it certainly had not been compiled into one Book! So the apostle's teachings in permanent form – in written word – were not readily available yet. So, if you notice, Peter did not argue/debate the issues that the false teachers had brought into the church. He simply makes a bone-chilling statement about them personally, which, as I read it, basically says that God has reserved a special place in Hell for them, and they are almost there already, along with those that have chosen to follow them! Their time is short!



He begins this part of his treatise by asserting and giving examples that would prove that that God has exercised terrible judgment and wrath in the past and so knows what He is doing when it comes to judgment in the present!

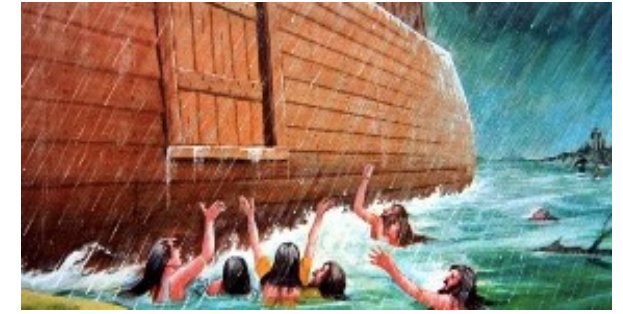
He begins with the judgment of the angels. The scriptures are pretty tight-lipped about this earliest occurrence that we know about in salvation but at least we have something, and Peter is also referring to it. Angels are “*ministering spirits*” (**Heb. 1:14**) – being sent out by God to accomplish the will and plan of God on earth and in heaven too. The realms of heaven, it seems – from their difficult-to-imagine descriptions in the Bible, are dimensionally quite different from our 3-dimensional world. Angels are also given the right to break through the stubborn barrier that separates the heavenly realms from our earthly realm. Normally, working from *behind* the barrier between the realms, unseen and usually unnoticed, but are evidently have the power to affect things as God directs them to be affected! Many believe in guardian angels who God sends to protect children and the saints (**Matt. 18:10; Ps. 34:7**)



The book of Revelations shows angels ferrying back and forth **between** the heavenly and earthly realms delivering messages of warning from God to the nations of the earth, and protecting/preserving in some cases, and conversely, also delivering the terrible wrath of God against a preposterously rebellious human race! They do this as God forces the destruction of the old order of things - narrowing human history into an explosive vortex that will bring the order of things as we know it to its well-deserved end! The bottom line is that these angel-messengers have been the companions of God for unknown eons before our own creation. In **[Ezekiel 28:11-19]** there seems to be a mixture of a prophecy against the arrogant and vain King of Tyre - with a description like that of an angel – a powerful angel! Isaiah 14 also seemingly contains a reference to the same powerful being. A rebellion is alluded to – one that preceded the creation of earth. A third of the angels rebelled and followed the rebellion of Satan, so they were judged by God and cast out of heaven – not out of the realms that heaven exists in, but out of heaven itself. They are relegated to earth where they are mostly unseen, but not unnoticed! We see their terrible influence all around the planet! But the Book of Revelations says that at the end of this old order of things, they will be sentenced/condemned with Satan and permanently cast into a terrible place, a prison of eternal torment! In the interests of time, I did not include proof texts for this information on angels but if you would like, let me know afterward and I can provide them for you. Some day, perhaps, I will preach on this topic and be far more detailed with scriptural evidences. But, like I said, the Bible is quite vague and mysterious about this topic. So I don't hold it hard, but hold it soft. In otherwards in this area it is easy to draw wrong conclusions, so it is not a hill I am willing to die on – not even close!



Then there is the antediluvian world/ that piece of history between creation and the flood – a very mysterious time in human history. People lived 800 to close to a 1000 years and they used those years not to get better but to get progressively worse. The world became a zoo without cages! Can you imagine a world where people had 900 years to perfect the evil within themselves?! But the man Noah was the only one on the face of the earth that went against the grain of human civilization – one man! And God was very aware of him! And while God decided to destroy humanity as an incorrigible, hopelessly lost creation, he saved Noah and his family. It took Noah and his sons well over a century to build that big ol’ ark, but then God shut the door of the ark sealing the people outside, outside, and sealing the people inside, inside! Then the clouds above burst and the water table below exploded with great torrents of water pressure-driven to the surface. But Noah and his family and all the pairs of animals they had taken into the ark were saved from the floodwaters. Peter is saying that God is just and He differentiates between the righteous and the unrighteous, the true and the false - especially the true Christ-followers and the false ones, and He will judge everyone justly. He knows all things and He will judge accordingly. Then Peter uses a similar story of God’s judgment and wrath in the Old Testament, where God brought his condemnation and judgment down on the two vicious, perverted, and corrupt cities, Sodom and Gomorrah! This time it was molten fire that rained down from the atmosphere, maybe a meteor shower that reached the earth’s surface! It decimated the two cities and the entire region they had corrupted. But God saved one man, the man Lot and his daughters. Lot had lived there but ***hated*** all the terrible things he saw going on around him. So when God told him to get out and literally not look back, He didn’t have to tell him twice! Lot’s wife was NOT as ready as her husband, so she looked back - ***and died badly!*** This is proof, says Peter, that the justice of God is alive and well - and since God does not change, it was still going on in his day and in ours!



Vs. 9,10 – So, Peter says that God has a terrible wrath planned for those who rebel against His authority and rightful claims of His ownership as Creator! There is no question that His judgment and wrath are terrifying things! There is nothing as bad as being marked for God’s wrath, because it is dreadful beyond imagination! Hell is the epidemic of this judgment. and Hell is unimaginable! Since this section is directed at the church, this is an admission by Peter that there are some within the church that are so proud and willful that they will not listen to authoritative apostolic teaching! But who else could possibly know what Jesus taught? The people who were **not** taught by Jesus Himself were simply making things up! These same people tended to also gravitate toward disobedience to God by following their own base desires – greed and gluttony, envy and toxic competitiveness, lust for sex outside of God’s boundaries of marriage, and lust for power, maliciousness, pridefulness, deceit,.. He points out that these people don’t like rules and boundaries! They don’t want anyone telling them what they can and cannot do – especially God! The apostles repeatedly came up against these types in the churches they ministered to, people who resented the authority of the apostles and resisted their teachings, and ended up making up their own teachings to **counter** that of the apostles! Then these people would convince **others** that their way was the right way, and the apostles didn’t know what they were talking about! They couldn’t sway solid Christ-followers who knew their stuff, but these types had some success with weak ones who didn’t know the apostle’s teaching very well and who could be sucked into error by clever words and manipulation! These people were being set up to be used and abused! It was all VERY sad and discouraging to Peter, and he rails against these false Christians and false teachers in this chapter! This whole section of scripture is **an indictment of them that reads rather like a curse!** An angry Peter finds a grim satisfaction in the fact that these people will pay dearly, especially for the souls they divert from the path of God! Sometimes one’s sense of justice takes over and it feels good to imagine that smug look wiped off the faces of the enemies of God! But it wasn’t just the leaders - because the people that they divert from the Kingdom of God are also **responsible for their own path** and sadly they will pay just as heavily as the ones who led them astray!



The bottom line is to know the apostle’s teaching! Read about it, study it, and know God’s will for your life! But more than that, it is not enough to just know it. We must **surrender to it!** Mistrust yourself, let go of your own agenda, and trust Him! You will never regret it! There is nothing more satisfying than living in the love of God through complete and total faith in Christ and in glad surrender to His complete authority in one’s life! On the other hand, there is a swift and terrible judgment awaiting those who push aside the love of God, ignore His authority and divine right, and who continue on in rebellion – in deception and sin! I saw that truth when I was only four or five. It is not hard to figure out! You can smirk now at the threat of Hell, and the wrath of God,.. but hear me when I say that God will wipe the smirk off the face of every mocker! So says the apostle!