

## The Danger – and Doom – of False Teachers

2 Peter 2.1-9

Second Peter, chapter one, is all optimistic: *Precious faith, precious promises, abundant entrance into Christ's coming kingdom, prophecy that is like a lamp shining in a dark place.* But false teachers – both then and now – are ready to undermine God's truth. Let's meet these deceivers who undermine our hope.

Context: Peter's message in Chapter 1

*The promises and provisions of our faith are magnificent, and growing in faith leads to reward in Christ's coming kingdom, which we know is coming because of Jesus' Transfiguration, which confirmed Spirit-led Old Testament prophecies.*

**But...there will be false teachers:** Who are these guys? (1-3)

- They surreptitiously introduce teachings that ruin people's lives
- They reject Christ as Lord and malign His name by their actions
- They lure with smooth speech and promise what people desire

**God knows how to rescue...and to judge:** Doom and deliverance (4-9)

- God knows how to keep the unrighteous under punishment...
  - Exhibit A: The angels who sinned (Genesis 6.1-4)*
  - Exhibit B: The world of Noah's day (Genesis 6.5)*
  - Exhibit C: Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19)*
- God knows how to rescue the godly from temptation



# Beware False Teachers

**Digging Deeper**

1. 2 Peter 2.1 picks up Peter's reference to Old Testament prophets in 1.21; those prophets spoke as they were *moved by the Holy Spirit*, but there were also *false prophets*. Can you name some of them? What did they say? How did God respond to Israel and her false prophets (see Ezek. 22.23-31)?
2. Just as there were false *prophets* who led Israel astray, so too there will be false *teachers*, Peter says, who will lead Christians astray. Peter warns that these false teachers will "secretly introduce" their wrong instruction. Jesus warned of this (Matt. 7.15); Paul warned of this (Acts 20.29-30). Are Christians today susceptible to false teachings? How do false teachers deceive Christians into accepting their unbiblical instruction?
3. Peter adds that the instruction of false teachers is *destructive* (that is, it *destroys people's lives*), and that it often involves *sensuality* and *greed*. There are many examples of this today. But instead of pointing at *others*, let's check *ourselves*! How are we susceptible to the lure of sexual or material temptation? How can these things damage our faith and hinder our relationship with God?
4. In verse 3, Peter states that the false teachers' *judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep*. In other words, like false prophets of old, God's judgment of false teachers is sure. It is active – and it is constant. To prove his point, Peter highlights three cases from the Old Testament (verses 4-6). On *angels that sinned*, see Jude 6 and Gen.6.1-4. On the sinfulness of the world in Noah's day, read Gen. 6.5. On the sin and judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, see Gen. 19. What is Peter's point?
5. Woven into the announcement of judgment on false teachers is a hopeful reminder that God *rescues* us from falling. Can you relate to the situation of Lot described in verses 7-8? How did God save him from the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah? Has God rescued you from temptation? Read 1 Corinthians 10.13. When you sense the lure of lust or greed creeping into your life, what should you do?