

PETER'S EPISTLES

2 Peter: Spiritually Maturing Opposite Apostasy **III. God's Hope Of Deliverance From False Teachers** **(2 Peter 2:1-10)**

I. Introduction

- A. In A. D. 66, the year before his martyrdom, Peter was concerned that fellow believers might mature in the Christian faith in order to combat the rising opposition of heresies that the Church already faced. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Introduction to the Second Letter of Peter," p. 1765; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 862)
- B. Peter thus wrote this epistle to call believers to spiritual growth in preparation for apostasy, and 2 Peter 2:1-10 gave God's hope of deliverance of believers from false teachers after Peter's death. We view it for our insight:

II. God's Hope Of Deliverance From False Teachers, 2 Peter 2:1-10.

- A. Having written of the Biblical prophets of old in 2 Peter 1:19-21, Peter noted that there were nevertheless false prophets among Israel's people just as there would be false teachers among them, 2 Peter 2:1a.
- B. Peter then briefly described their harmful conduct to believers in the Church, 2 Peter 2:1b-3a:
 - 1. They would secretly bring in destructive "heresies" (*haireseis*), what in the New Testament referred to "religious parties or sects . . . factions probably based on false doctrines," 2 Peter 2:1b; *Ibid.*, p. 869-870.
 - 2. These heresies would deny the Lord Who bought them, meaning that they would deny Christ Who had already redeemed them along with the rest of the world though they were never saved, 2 Peter 2:1c; *Ibid.*, p. 870. Though Christ's unlimited atonement paid for their sins, they would deny Christ, remaining in unbelief, thus bringing upon themselves swift destruction in divine judgment, 2 Peter 2:1d.; *Ibid.*
 - 3. Many in Christendom would follow their sensuality, what would cause the Christian faith itself to be slandered (2 Peter 2:2), and in their greed for money, the false teachers would exploit Christians of their finances by means of false words, 2 Peter 2:3a.
- C. However, the false teachers' condemnation was stated long ago, and their destruction would occur (2 Peter 2:3b), for God was willing and able to punish them and to deliver His people from them, 2 Peter 2:4-10:
 - 1. 2 Peter 2:4-9 is a single sentence, one of the longest sentences in the New Testament, a conditional sentence where the protasis or "if" clause runs in verses 4-8 and the apodosis or "then" clause is at verse 9.
 - 2. In 2 Peter 2:4-8, Peter gave three examples of God's past deliverances of the righteous from the wicked as encouragements that He is both willing and able to deliver Christians from false teachers:
 - a. First, God did not spare the angels that sinned in their rebellion with Satan (Ezekiel 28:15), but He cast them into "Tartarus" (*tartaroo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1968, p. 813), holding them captive there in divine punishment in Hades until the final judgment (2 Peter 2:4; Rev. 20:14). [This punishment graciously delivers us in today's world from much worse battles in the angelic conflict!]
 - b. Second, God did not spare the antediluvian world, but He preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness with seven others when He brought the Genesis Flood on the ungodly world, 2 Peter 2:5 ESV.
 - c. Third, God turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, making them an example of what would happen to the ungodly (2 Peter 2:6 ESV), but He rescued Lot who was greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked, 2 Peter 2:7-8 ESV.
 - 3. Having alluded to these three examples, Peter concluded that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment, 2 Peter 2:9.
 - 4. This punishment especially applied to the false teachers who indulged in the lust of defiling passion and who despised authority, those who Christians would face after Peter's martyrdom, 2 Peter 2:10, 2-3.

Lesson: *After the martyrdom of the Apostle Peter, the Church would face false teachers who would introduce destructive beliefs that denied Christ, doing so with sensuality that gave the Church a bad reputation while also financially exploiting believers with false words. Nevertheless, God was both willing and able to deliver righteous believers from such teachers as seen in His past record of confining wicked fallen angels to punishment in Hades to the relief of the world today, as also seen in God's punishment of the wicked antediluvian world while rescuing Noah and his family and as also seen in God's devastation of Sodom and Gomorrah while delivering Lot who had been so oppressed by the sensually wicked men of those cities.*

Application: *(1) May we be assured that God is both willing and able to deliver us from false teachers like He delivered believers of past ages. (2) May we avoid the lusts of the world that false teachers use to ensnare people.*