

3b their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

4For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; 5and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; 7and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men 8(for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), 9then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.

In his opening words on this section of scripture, circa 1990, John MacArthur says; *"As I have been reading this section over, time and time again in the last month or so, I find the fury of it almost breathtaking. Peter, speaking for God, pledges devastation and fiery judgment on the false teachers who misrepresent His truth."*

That so well stated my thoughts that I knew I couldn't say it any better. The fury of God will be unleashed on people who, in the name of their false invention of God, lead other witless people astray into perdition.

2 other places of this level of fury come to mind for me immediately that are similar, but it's Jesus speaking directly.

Matt. 18:4 *"Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; 6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 "Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through*

whom the stumbling block comes!

When Jesus, who spoke the worlds into existence with the breath of His mouth, when that Jesus says; **Woe** about a group of people, the weight of all the universes is in that warning. You do not want to be that group, or that person.

Jesus is furious with persons who cause His little ones to stumble. To stop believing. He says it is inevitable.

Another quote; This time by Arturo Azurdia. He says, *"At all times and in all places there is a frightening conspiracy to undermine the primary mission of the church of Jesus Christ."* *"At all times and in all places there is a frightening conspiracy to undermine the primary mission of the church of Jesus Christ."*

There was a news item last week. In Canada, preschool is now mandatory for all babies starting at 3 years, and the state is using it as a social experiment. They're actively discouraging little boys from being boisterous and loud, playing with trucks and tractors, and likewise they're teaching the little girls that that's what they should be doing.

It's state sponsored gender disforia beginning at 3 years old. I think about what Jesus said and that makes my skin crawl.

And in a way, we're all little ones. The same truth is just as dangerous for adults as it is for children. Listen to just a small portion of Matthew 23, just a couple of verses; OK, 6

23:13*"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. 15"**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.*

29*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30and say, 'If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have*

been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ 31 “So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 “Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers. 33 “You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

The fury of God is unleashed on people who cause other people to stumble and ultimately go into perdition. Nothing makes God more angry than that sin. And that's what Peter is going to unpack for his hearers in these verses this morning. So fasten your seat belts.

What we have in these verses this morning is one long conditional statement about God's judgement. A conditional statement is simple logic. If, then. If this, and this, and this, then this. Because of this, the logical conclusion is this.

But we need to unpack all of the elements in Peter's argument because there is some fascinating truths within all that he says.

It's actually a double argument. God knows how to judge the wicked enemies of the truth. And God knows how to preserve those who belong to Him. Dual truths. And it's fascinating how Peter gets that done.

What Peter does here is re-visit two of the most spectacular sins in the old testament, and he shows us both God's immediate judgement and also how God preserved His righteous ones within that judgement.

And within those spectacular sins and spectacular judgements is a message to our current culture. God does not change. He may be withholding judgement in these final moments, but judgement for the equally spectacular sins that have overcome our generation is waiting patiently while God finishes calling out of this evil generation a people for His name. And then, like the flood we'll look at quickly, it will come in like a tidal wave. Take that to the bank. That's Peter's whole point.

I began our section with the final sentence in vs. 3 that we looked at 2

weeks ago. He's speaking about false teachers who will sneak in among the people to not only exploit them out of their money, they will cause them to engage in sexual sins and ultimately to go into perdition. All neatly packaged in the name of religion. Peter says;

3b their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Last week I said the church exists in a strange tension. Jesus is resurrected from the dead. All things belong to Him. Every atom and molecule is under His ultimate control. But evil is still rampant in this world.

Peter will remind us more than once that this phenomenon is normative. Christ is at the right hand of God. He owns everything. He has power over everything. But evil is not only here, but within my lifetime, evil has been ramped up exponentially.

I can say that within my years, the evil around me was rather old school. In the 1950's when I was a little guy, evil wasn't much different than it had been for 500 years. But there has been a sea change in my lifetime, and not only that, but to me at least, it seems like the ramp upwards has been exponential. The curve was gentle to begin with and is now steep.

Where is God? Where is the judgement? Peter assures us, God isn't asleep. Swift judgement will come, but all within a God ordained timeline. Meanwhile we look around and the heat keeps rising. The astonishing sins Peter will describe aren't looking so astonishing these days.

Peter will also tell us that these spectacular sins and sinners are being held in punishment for a final judgement. They are waiting in torment for their final destination. Fearful truths.

*4For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;
5and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the*

world of the ungodly;

This whole portion is about a specific occurrence of a spectacular evil. These are a specific group of angels that are associated with what we call the antediluvian era. From Adam to Noah.

Peter isn't talking about fallen angels in general. He's talking about a particular group who have been locked up in pits of darkness. These aren't the ones harassing us. These are a select group.

Peter seems to have a special fascination about this period. He mentions this two times. Jude also mentions this spectacular sin.

We'll start with Jude, because it is Jude that describes what this group and the next group, Sodom and Gomorrah have in common.

Jude 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

5 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, 7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

So Jude is saying the identical thing as Peter. The parallel is very close. Maybe Peter copied Jude's sermon, or Jude copied Peter's, but they're obviously very very similar.

Jude says they crept in. They sneak in with stealth. Jude adds that these people are foreordained to this judgement. Long beforehand marked out for condemnation. Jude, like Peter defines their common licentiousness.

Sexual sin. And Jude likewise says they deny Jesus.

But Jude begins by reminding these new Christians that when the Jews were a new people, God likewise, after delivering them from Egypt, destroyed some that did not believe. True for the children of Israel, and by association, true for God's church. A warning.

And then Jude says; *And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode,*

What is that? What did these angels do? What does it mean to abandon their proper abode. Listen to the King James version; *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.*

They left their first estate. What is that. Well if you understood Hebrew, and we can read about words and understand, what happened here is that these angels abandoned the boundaries that God created for them to live in.

Hold that thought. They left their first estate. They crossed over God ordained God designed boundaries for them to live within. That's important.

When we combine all of the passages from Peter and Jude and even Enoch who lived within that time period, with the story about Noah in Genesis 6, here's what we get. Let's revisit the event in Genesis;

Gen. 6:1 *Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.*

5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

The sons of God, the angels, fallen wicked angels, and the daughters of men. Angels cohabitating with women. OK, put on your thinking caps. Fallen angels have no possibility for redemption. So what happens to the human race which does have that possibility if, over a short period, every single human family is tainted with unredeemable seed.

No Messiah, that's what. A human race that is un-redeemable, just like the angels. God's plan of a Messiah who brings redemption is destroyed.

This plan of Satan was directly aimed at Jesus and redemption. And it was caused by angels who left their first estate. Moved outside the God ordained and created boundaries. Angels having a sexual relationship with women.

And God brought swift judgement. He eliminated that entire generation. All but 8 people, who were unstained by that plot of Satan. And God locked those angels up in a place called Tartarus. And they are waiting there for the final judgement, the lake of fire.

You'll recall that the demons who were dwelling in the wild man at Geresá spoke to Jesus and begged Him not to send them to that place. The demons are aware. All this stuff is known to them. It may seem a little far fetched and fantastic to you, but to them it's ordinary.

Luke 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before Him, shouting in a loud voice, "What do You want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You not to torture me!" 29 For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was bound with chains and shackles, he

had broken the chains and been driven by the demon into solitary places.

30 "What is your name?" Jesus asked.

"Legion," he answered, because many demons had gone into him. 31 And the demons kept begging Jesus not to order them to go into the abyss.

The demons don't want to be locked in the abyss. Matthew says they asked, *did you come to torture us before the appointed time?* They know what happened to those demons who left their first estate, and they beg to avoid the pit of darkness.

In 1 Peter 3, you'll recall that Peter speaks of this timeframe and this spectacular sin;

He was put to death in the body, but made alive in the spirit, 19in which He also went and preached to the spirits in prison 20who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built. In the ark a few people, only eight souls, were saved through water....

Angels who left their God ordained boundaries, their God designed habitation and engaged in sexual sin with creatures that God did not design them to have relations with. Those angels are in prison. Jesus went there, after He was made alive from the dead, and proclaimed to them the very victory that Satan had used them to try to thwart.

Now stick with me, because there's a parallel with that spectacular sin and the next one Peter will recall. Jude says;

*6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, 7 **just as** Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they **in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh**, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.*

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is like the sin of the angels who

disrespected God ordained boundaries and left their first estate.

Peter says; 6 and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter;

Now I get in trouble around here, and people say I harp on this particular kind of sin disproportionately from other sin, but I think I'm in good company.

The sin of homosexuality and the sin of transgenderism is the sin of leaving your God ordained first estate that He designed, just like those angels did in Noah's time.

It's no accident that in our time, this kind of sin that brings the ultimate judgement, swift, all encompassing, world wide judgement is exploding in the world. I believe we are right at the very end of human history. I believe that this sin of going outside God's created and ordained boundaries in direct defiance of God Himself is a pre-lude to world wide judgement.

God drowned the whole world because angels left their first estate. God obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah off the face of the earth. Every man, woman, and child in that region somewhere over by the Dead Sea, obliterated.

We laugh at that map that has an ocean where all the arab countries used to be. Ground zero ocean. Problem solved. But we may find out later that the real estate below sea level at the Dead Sea may have been part of the valley floor that Abraham and Lot looked at from the mountains. Lush river bottom land that became Sodom and Gomorrah.

Godly Abraham gave his nephew first choice. Lot chose to take his flocks to the lush green valley of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Let's review the sin that brought the fury of God to such an extent that no trace of these ancient cities has ever been located. It's in Genesis 19

1Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. 2And he said, "Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." They said however, "No, but we shall spend the night in the square." 3Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. 4Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; 5and they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them." 6But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, 7and said, "Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. 8"Now behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof." 9But they said, "Stand aside." Furthermore, they said, "**This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge**; now we will treat you worse than them." So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door. 10But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 11They struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.

12Then the two men said to Lot, "Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring them out of the place; 13for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it." 14Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, "Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city." But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting. Skip down to vs. 23

23The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar. 24Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, 25and He overthrew those cities, and all the

valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26But his wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

27Now Abraham arose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD; 28and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace.

The men of Sodom said, How dare you judge us. Sound familiar? How dare you say what we are doing is somehow wrong. Evil? We'll do worse things to you than we do to the angels.

Lot would have been a dead man if the angels hadn't pulled him inside the house. And the doors would have been battered down if the angels hadn't struck the men blind. And even then, no repentance. They wearied themselves trying to find the door. Really? You go blind and your passion is so out of control that you keep looking for the door.

A famous coroner in San Francisco several years ago said he could tell you in less than 10 seconds which corpses were murdered by homosexuals. He said the mutilation is beyond, far beyond anything that normal people are capable of. Such is the madness of this sin that goes beyond God ordained boundaries.

Vs.7 and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men 8 (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds),

This is the final **if** in the conditional statement. If God judged the entire Pre-Noahic world with water, but He saved Noah and seven others, and if God judged the entire valley floor where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah dwelt, but He saved Lot and his 2 daughters, then . . .

Notice the reactions of the men of Gomorrah and Sodom to Lot. It sounds like the headlines on our current newspapers; How dare you

judge us. We'll punish you for saying we're evil.

And to the 2 guys who were betrothed to be married to Lot's daughter's. He seemed as if he jested. What an idiot Lot is. Always running around saying the sky is falling. His message to them seemed as if he was a mad man. Lot, the idiot.

How are we received if we speak to this world we live in and say, You are dwelling in the city of destruction and you need to flee for your very life. Flee to safety in Jesus, because judgement on this world is imminent.

Jim has lost his mind. Running around here telling us that we need to get out of this city where the sky is going to soon fall. Very soon. And telling us the only safe place to be is with Jesus. What a nut ball.

14Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, "Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city." But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

Two reactions. How dare you say I'm doing something evil. And you must be a nut case. Who was it that said it will be just like the days of Noah?

Mt. 24:...37 As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark. 39 And they were oblivious, until the flood came and swept them all away. So will be the coming of the Son of Man....Oh yeah, it was Jesus.

Those are all the conditions in Peter's if . . then statement. If God knows how to rain down spectacular judgements on spectacular sins, and if He knows how to save His own people out of that judgement,

9then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

Peter says I want you to see 2 important truths in my conditional statement of previous judgements. First, God knows how to rescue His own out of the judgement.

In the letters to the churches in Revelation 3 Jesus says something to the church at Philadelphia that is always true in every age in every church that holds God's word up in high esteem;

10 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

God delivered Noah and 7 others. He put them inside an ark and they floated on top of the water that drowned the entire world. God delivered Lot and his 2 daughters.

They fled to the town of Zoar, which was beyond the zone that God would utterly destroy. God said, I won't rain down the judgement until I hear that you've made it safely to Zoar. They did, and destruction of fire and brimstone destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

God brings His own to safety. Even during the tribulation period where the believers will be martyred all day long like sheep being slaughtered, Jesus says, not a hair of your head will perish. Satan can't touch God's elect until God allows it.

This doctrine of God bringing His elect safely through the disaster is why we believe that the church will be removed prior to the 7 year tribulation period.

*9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, **and to** keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.*

A couple of final thoughts. Notice that God keeps the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgement.

God is keeping the wicked in a place of torment, but there's yet a day of judgement that is permanent. The spirits now in prison are in Tartarus, a holding place of black torment waiting for final judgement which is the great white throne judgement where they will be cast into the lake of fire.

And then in vs. 10 a reminder. *10and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.*

Sexual sin and a rejection of God's designed boundaries. Peter's words should make our generations hair on their necks stand up. God is particularly furious with people who reject God's designed boundaries.

I said it before and I'll say it again. I believe it is no accident that our generation is pushing the boundaries of the spectacular sins of angels who left their boundaries to have sex with human women, and the men of Sodom who left their first estate of normal relations with women to have sex, men with men, and unsaid, but I'm sure also because of what Paul affirms in Romans one, women with women.

In Revelation 11, just before Jesus comes in judgement on this world, God, speaking of Jerusalem calls it Sodom and Egypt.

In 1918, the people who read that must have thought, what a queer name. Why does God call Jerusalem; Sodom and Egypt. In 2018 it's becoming more apparent by the day. Sodom is the model of sexual sin and Egypt is the model of slavery.

What does all of this have to do with false teachers? False teachers are in the same category as angels who left their first estate to sin with women; and men who left their first estate to have sex with men. Men who claim to be women and women who claim to be men. And false teachers, all lumped together.

It's interesting to me that the church is desperate to find teachers who claim to be orthodox, but who can find ways to say the Bible doesn't mean what it seems to say about homosexuality. False teachers who

will come up with all kinds of ways to make that OK in spite of what the writings which are crystal clear about it say.

Teachers who began as orthodox, but who have like the angels and the men of Sodom, left that first estate. Left orthodoxy behind in order to allow homosexuality and transgenderism and anything else someone can figure out to do.

The Pope is giving the wink wink, look the other way. And main line protestantism is all moved over to that camp. And multi-billion dollar evangelicalism is scrambling to figure out how to keep the payroll money coming in and make it's doctrine and requirements so shallow, nobody is left out. And the government is happy with them.

One final word and I'll quit.

We're frogs in a frying pan. Little by little the heat gets turned up and we keep adapting. TV has been throwing this lifestyle in our face for 50 years now. Ever since Flip Wilson showed up in drag in 1968 as Geraldine, and Three's company began to chip away at the maybe it isn't so bad to be gay afterall lifestyle.

Until these days where if you even think a judgemental thought about a transgender role, you somehow are the evil person.

I hear you loud and clear. This is your hobby horse Jim. You visit this too often. But I want you to think about the only two sins that Peter considered specatacular enough to be in the same category as false teachers.

God's fury is waiting for false teachers, and people who leave their created and ordained first estate, and angels who also did that.

10and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.

The over-arching characteristic of these sins is that the persons who are doing them, despise God's authority.

How dare you make me a man, God! I'll show you. I can be a woman if I decide to. Or how dare you say I can only have sex with a person of the complimentary opposite by design gender who I have to stay married to for life. How dare you make such rules, and say people who reject that are evil. How dare you God. I'll have sex with anyone and any gender I want. And I'll decide what gender I am.

Our world hates God and they despise His authority.

Never-the-less, we are to love those folks. If perchance, God should be gracious to some little lamb who has been led astray. If God in his unfathomable grace should grant repentance to such as these.

We must never forget Pauls words to the Corinthians. He says, *such were some of you*. We hate the sin, we love the sinners.

There's no hope for angels who left their first estate. Likewise we could argue that there's no hope for apostates. People who understand orthodox doctrine and leave that estate behind to embrace and teach false doctrine.

But there is hope for confused people who have wandered into all kinds of the worlds sensuality. God can grant repentance to some of those. We don't back down from what this book says. But we welcome those folks to come and spend some time and listen to the book, and perhaps, if God allows, to repent and join with us.