

2 Peter

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2 Peter 2:4-11

Vs. 4: Doomed angels – Peter’s anger toward the false prophets shows through with 3 examples of God’s past judgement and wrath towards similar offenses, beginning with rebellious angels.

- Peter says that God threw the rebellious angels into the lowest depths of Hell. The Greek word **Tartarus** is one his readers would know well, for in Greek mythology this is where Zeus had thrown the Titans. Peter describes this as **seiroi**, the very pits of darkness. The story of the judgement of the rebellious angels begins in Genesis 6:1-5 where they were the sons of God who took human women as wives, which added to the wickedness of humanity. In Job 1:6 the sons of God, along with Satan, come to present themselves to God and then a second time in 2:1. They are referenced again in Job 38:7 and Ps. 89:6. Paul says in 1 Cor. 11:5-10 that it is good for a woman to have long hair (to differentiate a Christian woman from the prostitute women of the pagan temple who shaved their heads) but that Christian women should cover their heads “because of the angels”, for the belief was it was the hair of human women that made them so attractive to the sons of God in the Genesis account.
- But it is in the Apocryphal Book of Enoch where the story is all brought together. Enoch and the story of the judgement of the angels would have been very familiar to Peter and his readers. In Enoch, the offspring of the angels and human women became giants who proved to be completely evil, so humans cried out to God. God sent out His archangels who captured the rebellious angels and slew all the giants. The rebel angels were confined to the abys of darkness and eternal fire. Peter’s point then is that this is what God does to those who practice rebellion and sin and if God will do

this to angels, He will not hesitate to render such a judgement against people.

Vs. 5: Doomed ancients –

- As the rebellious angels and their offspring led the world of men deeper and deeper into sin, they too were judged and dealt with. Peter goes back to Genesis 6 – 7 to show that God’s judgement is thorough but just. Noah, who preached righteousness to men, was spared along with his family. Noah remained faithful and did not conform to the world (Romans 12:2), but was transformed, proving what the will of God is. The message? God is just. The wicked will be destroyed. The righteous will be saved.

Vss. 6-8: Doomed cities and the saved – Peter then points to Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of Genesis 18 - 19, whose men were grossly immoral and inhospitable to Lot and his angelic guests. Lot lived in Sodom and like Noah lived in the midst of every kind of immorality, yet he too would not conform to the “normal” life around him. Abraham had tried to negotiate for the cities to be saved, but God’s angels did not find any other righteous people in the city, so they arranged for Lot and his family to be saved. The wicked are destroyed. The righteous are saved.

Vss. 9-11: Good vs. evil where God is THE judge – Peter now turns back to his enemies, the false prophets. He sees them as an extension of the rebellion and sin of the past, no different than the rebellious angels, the men of Noah’s time, or the men of Sodom and Gomorrah.

- They are men driven by desire: They are dominated by their animalistic lusts and are entirely selfish. They have no care for the lives they destroy and cannot ever fill their appetite.
- They are rudely audacious: they despise authority, God’s authority and the authority of His church. They are daring in the worst sense, in the way that we would say Lady Godiva was daring by riding nude through the streets of Coventry. This kind of daring disregards decency and moral rightness.

- They are self-willed: The Greek word is ***authades*** meaning “self-pleasing” and carries with it a sense of obstinacy. Such a person is supremely determined to have their own way, holding their own opinion to the death, and are arrogantly and brutally happy to stomp on the opinions and rights of others.
- They even dare to speak evil of angelic majesties: Not even God’s triumphant angels spoke ill of their angel captives. In Enoch’s story, the victors simply took their captives before God for judgement. In Jude 9 Paul tells the story of the archangel Michael arguing with Satan over the possession of the body of Moses. Michael would not even speak ill of Satan, only saying “The Lord rebuke you!”
- So it seems that the false prophets were suggesting that if the angels themselves took whatever women they wished then it must be permissible for God’s men to do the same, using the actions of angels as justification for their own immoral teachings. Peter here appears to be suggesting that the audacity of these false prophets is so great that they will even slander angels, something not even other angels will do.
- In the contrast between those who are good and those who are evil, the good always keeps their eyes fixed on heaven, whereas the evil thinks nothing of the reward of heaven or the terrors of Hell. Everything the evil one knows is here on earth, every pleasure is a physical/material pleasure ...and its always just beyond his fingertips.