

LESSON 22 (Second Epistle of Peter - Lesson 6). – December 1, 1888.

2 PETER 2 :1-10

1. WHAT obstacles hindered the progress of truth "in old time"? 2 Peter 2 : 1, first clause.

2. What did Peter say there should still be among the people? Same verse.

3. What does he say of the character and work of these false teachers? Same verse.

4. Is it necessary that these false teachers who deny the Lord should be avowed disbelievers in him?
Titus 1 : 16.

5. What does Christ say will be the fate of such? Matt. 7 : 22, 23.

6. How much following will such ones have? 2 Peter 2 : 2.

7. What will be the result to the truth? Same verse.

8. What principle is it that leads these men to cover their licentiousness with the garb of religion? Verse 3.

9. When such ones flourish the most, what may we know concerning the time of retribution? Verses 1 and 3, last part of each.

10. What three great events of the past assure us that God will not allow them to go unpunished? Verses 4-7, 9.

11. When will there be a parallel to the wickedness of men in the days of Noah and Lot ? Luke 17 : 26-30.

12. In what did the great sin of the people in those times consist? Gen. 6 :2, 5, 12; Jude 7.

13. What does Peter say of these last-day false professors? 2 Peter 2 : 10, first part.

14. To what time are all the wicked reserved for punishment? Verses 4, 9, last part of each.

15. What was the character of those who escaped the judgments that have been brought upon the earth in the past? Verses 5, 7, 8.

16. What encouragement can the righteous find in the account of past judgments? Verse 9, first part.

NOTES.

IN 2 Peter 2: 4-9 three events of the past are brought to view as evidences that God will surely punish the wicked, and deliver the godly out of temptation. First, "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell;" second, he "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;" and third, he turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, "making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly," but delivered just Lot. Now, says Peter, if God did these three things, he knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. The fact that God has done these things in the past (and that he has, all the wicked may know if they will) is sure evidence that God will finally punish all the wicked, and will thereby deliver the godly out of temptation.

AND here it may be noticed that the punishment of the wicked is necessary to the complete redemption of the righteous. The loyal angels could not have been delivered from temptation if God had not cast out from among them the angels that kept not their first estate. Jude 6. Lot's righteous soul was vexed from day to day by the filthy acts of the Sodomites, and the same must have been the case with Noah, when every imagination of the thoughts of the hearts of men was only evil continually. God destroyed the wicked race, preserving Noah alive. So when wickedness abounds over the whole earth, and men totally reject God's Spirit the safety of God's loyal people, no less than outraged law, demands the destruction of the wicked.

Ellen White Notes Compiled:

#1 "There were false prophets also among the people," says the apostle Peter concerning the church anciently, "even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." {RP, October 30, 1913 par. 7}

#2 The faithful Peter speaks of the dangers to which the Christian church would be exposed in the last days, and more fully describes the heresies which would arise and the blaspheming seducers who would seek to draw away souls after them. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." {RH, April 15, 1875 par. 11}

#3 Modern spiritualism, resting upon the same foundation, is but a revival in a new form of the witchcraft and demon worship that God condemned and prohibited of old. It is foretold in the Scriptures, which declare that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, points to the special working of Satan in spiritualism as an event to take place immediately before the second advent of Christ. Speaking of Christ's second coming, he declares that it is "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." 2 Thessalonians 2:9. And Peter, describing the dangers to which the church was to be exposed in the last days, says that as there were false prophets who led Israel into sin, so there will be false teachers, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. . . . And many shall follow their pernicious ways." 2 Peter 2:1, 2. Here the apostle has pointed out one of the marked characteristics of spiritualist teachers. They refuse to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God. Concerning such teachers the beloved John declares: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." 1 John 2:22, 23. Spiritualism, by denying Christ, denies both the Father and the Son, and the Bible pronounces it the manifestation of antichrist. {PP 686.1}

#4 Those who profess to be the disciples of Christ, while in works they deny him, are serving the arch-enemy in disguise. They are robbing themselves in the garments of righteousness to conceal a worldly, selfish, unregenerate nature, and their profession presents a false light to the world. In the field, in the workshop, in the family circle, in the church, they reveal the sad fact that their religion consists in hollow formalism; and they are constantly exerting an influence contrary to true godliness. {ST, April 21, 1887 par. 6}

#5 The voice of God is speaking to us through his word, and there are many voices that we will hear; but Christ has said we should beware of them who will say, Here is Christ or there is Christ. Then how shall we know that they have not the truth, unless we bring everything to the Scriptures? Christ has warned us to beware of false prophets who will come to us in his name, saying that they are Christ. Now, if you should take the position that it is not important for you to understand the Scriptures for yourselves, you will be in danger of being led away with these doctrines. Christ has said that there will be a company who in the day of retributive judgment will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" But Christ will say, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." {RH, April 3, 1888 par. 7}

#6 (See quote for #3)

#7 "And for this cause [not receiving the love of the truth] God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This man and those deceived by him love not the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness. And what stronger delusion could come upon them than that there is nothing displeasing to God in licentiousness and adultery? The Bible contains many warnings against these sins. Paul writes to Titus of those who "profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [not openly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." The ones here referred to are not those who openly claim to have no faith in Christ, but those who profess to believe the truth and by their vileness of character bring a reproach upon it, causing it to be evil spoken of. {5T 144.3}

#8 Peter also outlines two classes, one approved of God, because obedient to all his commandments; the other disloyal to him, sinning against him because transgressing his law; for "sin is the transgression of the law." "There were false prophets also among the people," he writes, "even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." But he says, "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. {ST, February 11, 1897 par. 11}

#9 "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." {5T 145.1}

#10 "There were false prophets also among the people," says the apostle Peter concerning the church anciently, "even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them ensamples unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds):

the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to remove the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." {KC 6.2}

The Lord is guarding His people against a repetition of the errors and mistakes of the past. There have always abounded false teachers, who, advocating erroneous doctrines and unholy practices, and working upon false principles in a most specious, covert, deceptive manner, having endeavored to deceive, if possible, the very elect. They bind themselves up in their own fallacies. If they do not succeed, because their way becomes hedged by warnings from God, they will change somewhat the features of their work, and the representations they have made, and bring out their plans again under a false showing. They refuse to confess, repent, and believe. Confession may be made, but no real reformation takes place, and erroneous theories bring ruin upon unsuspecting souls, because these souls believe and rely upon the men advocating these theories. {KC 6.3}

#11 Through indulgence in sin, the world is becoming as corrupt as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, and as it was in the days that were before the flood. Jesus said that this condition of society would be a sign of his coming. He said: "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." The very sins that brought upon Sodom the fire of destruction are practiced today, and are fast ripening the world for the day of final doom. Indulgence in intoxicating liquor and in licentious practices, is common in all our cities and villages, and the last great day is hastening upon the world. {RH, May 1, 1894 par. 3}

#12 This is the principle that needs to be cultivated. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" [John 15:13, 14]. In submission to the principles of the law of God is our only safety. The world is in great need of salt, which Christian precept and practice can introduce into it. The world is following in the steps of the inhabitants of the Noachian world and of the Sodomites. Of the days of Noah it is written. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" [Genesis 6:5]. And Jude says, "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" [Jude 7]. {19MR 105.1}

The message we bear must be as direct as was the message of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. He rebuked the adultery of Herod. Notwithstanding his life was in peril, the truth did not languish upon his lips. And our work in this age must be as faithfully done. The inhabitants of the world at this time are represented by the dwellers upon the earth at the time of the Flood. The wickedness of the inhabitants of the old world is plainly stated: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). God became weary of these people whose only thoughts were of pleasure and indulgence. They sought not the counsel of the God who had created them, nor cared to do His will. The rebuke of God was upon them because they followed the imagination of their own hearts continually; and there was violence in the land. "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:6, 12, 13). . . . {2SM 151.1}

#13 The apostle Peter distinctly points out the class which will be manifested in these last days. {ST, April 12, 1883 par. 11}

2 Peter 2:10-14: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas, angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children." {ST, April 12, 1883 par. 12}

#14 Satan was once an angel of light, but he was cast out of heaven when he became rebellious against God. Sin separates both men and angels from God. And "if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." The history of the past furnishes examples of the fate of those who persist in indifference to the provisions of salvation. God revealed his character to Moses, declaring how he would deal with the obedient and the disobedient. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." {ST, January 5, 1891 par. 2}

Peter also outlines two classes, one approved of God, because obedient to all his commandments; the other disloyal to him, sinning against him because transgressing his law; for "sin is the transgression of the law." "There were false prophets also among the people," he writes, "even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." But he says, "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. {ST, February 11, 1897 par. 11}

#15 In Noah's day, the inhabitants of the old world laughed to scorn what they termed the superstitious fears and forebodings of the preacher of righteousness. He was denounced as a visionary character, a fanatic, an alarmist. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." Men will reject the solemn message of warning in our day as they did in Noah's time. They will refer to those false teachers who have predicted the event and set the definite time, and will say that they have no more faith in our warning than in theirs. This is the attitude of the world today. Unbelief is wide spread, and the preaching of Christ's coming is mocked at and derided. This makes it all the more essential that those who believe present truth should show their faith by their works. They should be sanctified through the truth which they profess to believe; for they are saviors of life unto life, or of death unto death. {ST, October 8, 1902 par. 4}

#16 Will this tempted brother fail with all the encouragements of the Word of God to sustain him in heroic endurance? "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Every trial is weighed and measured by the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is not beyond man's ability to endure through the grace given unto him. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (Ibid.). Will this dear brother, who is so young in the faith, lay hold upon the promise? "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations" (2 Peter 2:9). This means that, while everything may appear overwhelmingly dark, the Lord will bring forth the tried one with firmer faith and a richer experience. {12MR 81.1}