

God Knows Proper Judgment (iii) – 2 Peter 2:4-10

I. General Considerations

a. We live in God's world.

- i. Because we live in God's world, we may be assured of faithfulness.
- ii. God makes himself known generally to all people.
- iii. He makes himself known specially in an inscripturated writing authored by him and given to his people through chosen vessels.
- iv. Because of God's faithfulness, we may be confident in the regularity of life.
- v. At bottom, what is at stake is God's faithfulness.

b. But there is wickedness and evil in the world.

- i. Does this counteract God's faithfulness?
- ii. Does the mere existence of evil or wickedness nullify God's faithfulness?
- iii. Because of its existence, are others justified in saying that God either doesn't exist or is impotent to do anything?
- iv. Yet, all the while we live in God's world and count on his faithfulness in regularity

- v. and in the production of the earth to bear fruit that we might eat and drink and might enjoy our time here on earth.
- c. Although we live in God's world, we live in a fallen world.
- i. We live in a world in which God's faithfulness is being challenged.
 - ii. The truth has become less than what we used to think in terms of truth.
 - iii. Now everyone has his or her own truth that we are all supposed to accept no matter what.
 - iv. It is no longer someone's perspective but truth.
 - v. We have rejected the image bearing role that we have.
 - vi. We instead replace that with a corruptible image that is rooted in the lie.
- d. God is truth.
- i. It stands to reason that we seek out what God says so that we may live.
 - ii. But it also stands to reason that living in a fallen world means that the truth will be opposed.

- iii. When the truth is opposed, falsehood will seek to replace it.
- iv. False teachers come into the church seeking to corrupt the truth handed to it.
- v. And now the question arises, will it succeed?
- vi. Does our God know how to deal with such things?
- vii. So far we have seen that he has been faithful to do so in terms of angels and the ancient world.
- viii. Let us continue following what Peter says here regarding this question and anticipate the next question, does God know how to protect his people?

II. Does God Know How to Deal With the Unrighteous? (Continued)

a. Sodom and Gomorrah

- i. As we traverse redemptive history, we now come to a third group, which demonstrates an answer to the question does God know how to deal with the unrighteous.

1. For that answer we turn to Sodom and Gomorrah.

Let's pick it up in the text at verse six.

2. **2 Peter 2:6** 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.
- ii. Now if you remember the account of Sodom and Gomorrah back in the book of Genesis it said there that God would go down to the cities to see if it's cry matched its behavior.
 1. Listen to what the Lord says in...
 2. **Genesis 18:20-21** And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. ²¹ "I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know."
- iii. Here we have a portrayal of the Lord going down and putting himself in a position to accurately evaluate the given situation of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 1. Now before you get too excited about this....,

2. we understand that God does not have to come down and examine Sodom and Gomorrah to find out what's going on there in terms of the cities' cry and its actual behavior.
 3. God already knows this.
 4. But I believe he does so for the sake of Abraham to whom God has revealed much and promised much...
 5. He allows Abraham the opportunity to intercede on behalf of the cities in which his nephew Lot resides.
- iv. In the course of time, God judged Sodom and Gomorrah in their wickedness and set forth to bring about a proper judgment in redemptive history.
1. He does so, once again, to demonstrate his righteousness and his thoroughgoing examination of all things.
 2. The knower of all hearts knew the cities and their wickedness.

3. God had already demonstrated compassion and long-suffering and mercy and grace by withholding proper judgment for a period of time.
4. And now in the course of time God carries out the proper judgment, thus demonstrating once again how God is able to deal with the unrighteous.

b. What do we find here?

- i. What do we find here concerning these judgments?
 1. We find that God is able to judge and hold under judgment a class of angels who had sinned.
 - a. This is the case whether it was when Satan had sinned against the Lord or it took place in the first part of Genesis chapter 6.
 2. God is able to carry out his proper judgments and hold them under judgment for the last day.
 3. This is also true concerning a class of human beings who lived in ancient times before the great flood in Noah's day.

4. And then he demonstrates that this is possible after the time of Noah when he judged Sodom and Gomorrah righteously.

III. Does God Know How To Protect His People?

- a. There is a counterpart to this that is of concern to us at this time.
 - i. So we are convinced by the three examples that Peter sets before us that God is indeed able to deal with the unrighteous and hold them under judgment for the end of days.
 - ii. Now, our attention turns to whether or not God is able to protect his people and what that looks like and what we are to take from this.
- b. From our perspective, things can seem disjointed, arbitrary and indiscriminate.
 - i. And from the standpoint of how we would view things, it would seem confusing at best and it is very hard to sort things out at times.
 - ii. But we must remember, beloved, that nothing is too difficult for the Lord.

- iii. The Lord knows how to discern and he knows how to discriminate and he is never arbitrary or inconsistent but he acts fully in concert with his name.
- iv. So to demonstrate to us that he knows how to protect his people, Peter turns to Noah and Lot as examples.

c. The case of Noah

- i. Peter does not address the issue of angels who did not sin perhaps because they remain in the state in which they were created.
 - 1. And so the focus upon the angels who sinned was to demonstrate to us that God indeed holds the unrighteous under judgment and reserved for judgment until the end of days.
 - 2. So Peter moves forward to Noah and we want to pick it up in the text at this point.
 - 3. **2 Peter 2:5** and 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;

- ii. Though it appears that human beings can do something that we call “multitasking,” it is only God who truly can.
 - 1. He is able to bring judgment and at the same time preserve the righteous.
 - 2. To put it in other terms he is able to hold the unrighteous under judgment for the last day...
 - 3. While doing that he is able to preserve the righteous for the last day,
 - 4. And he does so even though all manner of things may go on in our lives and in this world.
- iii. The Greek word for “preserve” (phulasso), means ‘to protect by taking careful measures.’
 - 1. So God is able to bring judgment during the ancient world days by bringing a worldwide flood...
 - 2. While doing that, at the same time he is able to protect Noah and his family by taking careful measures and so preserve them (and so the human race).
 - 3. So if we picture the time before the flood where wickedness prevailed...,

4. God calls upon Noah and his family to build an ark to preserve life because he had “found favor” with the Lord.
 5. So Noah is described here as a preacher of righteousness.
- iv. You can begin to see the picture more clearly in terms of the last day judgment that is yet to come can't you.
1. You can see how God discerns and discriminates between the righteous and the unrighteous.
 2. You can see how he is able to hold the unrighteous under judgment while taking great care to protect the righteous by taking careful measures.
 3. And all of this, beloved, points us to the cross, to Jesus Christ who preserves us, the righteous through judgment.

IV. Final Considerations

- a. Beloved, in order to understand these kinds of questions, we need to understand who our God really is.
 - i. We understand his character in that he is compassionate and merciful and gracious, etc.

- ii. However, we also understand his other attributes in terms of his knowledge and power.
 - iii. If God knows all things and can do all his holy will, then we may rest assured in his faithfulness that he will accomplish all his purposes.
- b. He doesn't just know the unrighteous;
- i. He knows their ways.
 - ii. He knows how they operate.
 - iii. He knows what will prevent their success.
 - iv. And he knows how to discern them and keep them under judgment for the end of days.
 - v. While doing so, we understand that our God is able to preserve the righteous.