

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

I. General Considerations

a. We have been saying that God knows proper judgment.

i. What goes into that?

ii. Our Lord has all knowledge.

1. Because of that, he knows the ways of all people.

2. He knows the motives of people's hearts.

3. He knows how decisions were arrived at and what would have to be different for other decisions to be made.

4. There is nothing that can escape his knowledge and gaze.

5. There is no pulling the proverbial wool over his eyes.

6. He knows all things.

b. So when we ask the question, does God know how to deal with the unrighteous?

i. We answer in complete confidence: yes he does!

- ii. He demonstrates this in redemptive history in terms of angels and in terms of ‘the ancient world’ and in terms of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - iii. He is able to do all his holy will. He is able to hold the unrighteous accountable.
- c. Now we have asked another question.
- i. We asked, ‘does God know how to protect his people?’
 - 1. We have admitted that sometimes this looks disjointed and arbitrary.
 - 2. And sometimes it looks like God doesn’t protect his people.
 - 3. Sometimes it looks like the unrighteous are having their way.
 - ii. However, with the introduction of Noah, we find that this is not the case.
 - 1. God is able to hold the unrighteous accountable while preserving his people.
 - iii. So we ask the question again...

II. Does God Know How to Protect His People? (Continued)

a. The case of Lot

- i. Now with Lot we have a little bit of a different account, for Noah was involved in a worldwide event and Lot was involved in a localized event.
 - 1. With Noah God was concerned about worldwide wickedness and with lot God was concerned about localized wickedness.
 - 2. However, it is still wickedness and how to hold one to judgment and the other in salvation.
 - 3. So let's pick it up in the Scriptures to see what Peter says concerning Lot.
 - 4. **2 Peter 2:7-8** 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),
- ii. Peter does not mention how it is that lot ended up in Sodom itself.
 - 1. If you remember the account from Genesis chapter 13:7, "...there was strife between the herdsmen of

Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock."

2. At that time, Abram took it upon himself to allow Lot to choose which part of the land he would claim as his share for his flocks and for his own servants.
- iii. You may be aware of the rest of the story that Lot, it is said, looked around and found the choicest part of the land, which was found in the Jordan Valley.
1. He moved himself and his flocks and his servants to that area, which is described as "the garden of the Lord."
 2. Lot eventually settles near Sodom and apparently later moves into Sodom itself.
 3. Later he actually becomes a prominent member of the community as a leader.
- iv. When you read this story of Lot in isolation from the rest of redemptive history it is easy to understand how you may reach a different conclusion than Peter did when he called Lot righteous.
1. Nevertheless, Peter calls Lot righteous.

2. He was “oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men and at the same time his “soul was tormented day after day by their lawless deeds.”
- v. From this, we understand that Lot had chosen to live a righteous life while living in the middle of an unrighteous community.
1. He is among the righteous of whom Abram interceded before the Lord.
 2. Abraham interceded so that the Lord would stay his hand of judgment if he found, at minimum, 10 righteous persons living there.
 3. So although we might question the motive of Lot in choosing this particular land and maybe even call into question his loyalty to God in doing so.
 4. In terms of the Scriptures he is to be numbered among the righteous.
- vi. And the point of the matter for Peter is that the Lord rescued righteous Lot.

1. As the Lord had done previously concerning Noah and preserving him and his family so the Lord turned his attention to Sodom and Gomorrah in judgment all the while knowing how to rescue the righteous.
2. The Lord heard Abram and brought Lot, his wife, and his two daughters safely out of Sodom.
3. Unfortunately, Lot's wife failed to heed the warning given to her and looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt.

b. [Note: it is important to understand God's name as it is involved in the rescue of Lot.

- i. We read back in Genesis 19:16, "But he hesitated. So the man seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the Lord was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city."
- ii. Here we see the name of God as it is applied to Lot and his rescue.

- iii. For compassion is God's name as much as any other aspect of his name and it is according to his name that God acts on behalf of his people].

III. **Does God Know What To Do Today?**

- a. Now, that's all fine and good for back then and for those people back then.
 - i. The question arises, "does God know what to do today?"
 - ii. You see, does God still know how to deal with the unrighteous and to protect the righteous today?
 - iii. It's a question that sometimes weighs heavily upon our hearts.
 - iv. You see we observe so-called "acts of God" through natural disasters in which death comes upon all kinds of people whether Christian or non-Christian indiscriminately.
 - v. So we know that whatever Peter is saying, he's not saying that believers don't fall under the same acts of judgment in this world today as unbelievers.

- vi. The key for us is whether or not God knows how to hold the unrighteous under judgment and preserve the righteous through judgment.
- b. So it would do well for us to get the text in front of us again to see what Peter says.
 - i. We find at the very beginning of our text for today “for if God did not spare” and then in verse five, “and did not spare the ancient world” and then again in verse six, “and if he condemned.”
 - ii. These kinds of statements are contrasted within the text with two key phrases, “but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness” and then down in verse seven he says, “and if he rescued righteous Lot.”
- c. You can see from these statements that Peter is doing an “if this, then this,” type of argument in which he is bringing us to a proper conclusion in the matter before us.
 - i. It is important for us that we remember the context of the church in which Peter writes his letter.
 - ii. The church is under persecution and suffering trouble and it is of such a nature where it seems like the church has

been forgotten by God and the unrighteous seem to prosper.

iii. What are we to hold fast to in a situation in which it seems the unrighteous are not dealt with and the righteous are not being preserved?

iv. Let's look at Peter's conclusion.

v. **2 Peter 2:9-10** *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.

d. These words from the hand of the apostle Peter should be very encouraging to us.

i. Although it is true God does not send worldwide floods today to judge the unrighteous while preserving the righteous in an ark,

ii. And although it is true God does not send fire and brimstone down upon the cities of the plain while rescuing the righteous out of them,

- iii. It is true that these very acts of God in history establish a paradigm for us to rely upon as to how God will act and does act even now.

IV. **Final Considerations**

- a. Does God know how to protect his people?
 - i. We have seen that he does know how to protect his people through the events of the flood and the preservation of Noah.
 - ii. We have seen that he does through the judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah and the preservation of Lot and his daughters.
- b. Some may say ‘that’s all fine and good for then but what about now?’
 - i. And that question spurred us on to ask the next question.
 - ii. Does God know what to do today?
 - iii. At first glance it doesn’t appear that believers are being delivered from their own “floods” or “Sodom’s and Gomorrah’s” but are rather carried off with the unrighteous.
- c. However, we have begun to see that that misses the point.

- i. There isn't going to be another world-wide flood and there isn't going to be another Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - ii. But there will always be times of temptation and testing.
 - iii. And, of course, there will be death and ultimately there will be a final judgment at the end of days.
- d. The church in Peter's day was suffering persecution.
 - i. They needed to know that God had them in their hands.
 - ii. They needed to know that the unrighteous did not have the upper hand no matter what their circumstances seemed to dictate.
 - iii. Thus, God knows what to do today.
 - iv. We conclude next time we are together, Lord willing.