



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Second Catholic Epistle of St. Peter

Chapter 2

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Introduction

- “Beware of false teachers”, is the focus of the second chapter
- Denying the Lord who bought them, they will secretly introduce destructive heresies (1-3)
- God knows how to reserve the wicked for the day of punishment, and He also knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations (4-9)
- In arrogance they revile against authority, motivated by the wages of unrighteousness



Introduction

- They are like wells without water, clouds tossed by a tempest (10-17)
- In both their methods and promises they seek to deceive those who had once escaped the pollutions of the world
- But the false teachers are once again enslaved by such pollutions and their last end is worse than the beginning (18-22)



Destructive Doctrines (2:1-3)

- The true prophets are referred to in 2 Pet 1:19
- The term false prophet occurs several times in the Old Testament Jer 5:31; 6:13; 8:10, also Christ foretells the rise of false prophets (Mt 24:24)
- Among the people. Israel is meant
- Teachers of false doctrines. St. Paul often warns against such teachers. See Acts 20:30
- Party divisions caused by false teaching



Destructive Doctrines (2:1-3)

- A heresy is a schism, or that which tends to produce schism
- Denying the divinity of Christ and His atonement is the culmination of false teaching
- Swift destruction: Sudden destruction
- There shall not only be heresies, but also many followers of them
- The way of truth will be evil spoken of - By those who blend all false and true Christians together



Destructive Doctrines (2:1-3)

- They only use you to gain by you, as merchants do their wares
- Covetousness for the most part is a companion of heresy, and makes trade in souls
- Deceit is the tool they are using to exploit you
- Whose judgment was long ago determined, and will be executed speedily
- All sinners are adjudged to destruction; and God's punishing some proves He will punish the rest

Doom of False Teachers (2:4-11)



- In order to show that judgments on these wicked teachers are sure, St. Peter cites examples
- The sinning angels were cast out of heaven
- The word “hell” is not Gehenna, but Tartarus, a term used for the place of future punishment
- They became angels of darkness bounded with chains and excluded from the light of heaven
- These chains do not hinder their often walking up and down seeking whom they may devour

Doom of False Teachers (2:4-11)



- The case of the ancient world is the second example of God's swift justice
- God did not then forget the righteous, (Noah and his family, eight persons)
- A preacher of righteousness: by example as well as by word (Gen 7:1; 1 Pet 3:20)
- Turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes is the third example of judgment on sin (Gen 19:29)

Doom of False Teachers (2:4-11)



- The saving of the righteous is as marked as the punishment of the wicked. See Gen 19:1,7
- The wicked: who set at defiance the laws of nature, as well as man and God
- He had a troubled soul, and being vehemently grieved, lived a painful life
- These examples show that the Lord knows how to deliver the righteous from trials, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished

Doom of False Teachers (2:4-11)



- Those next named will receive the greater punishment, those who live carnally and impure
- Those who refuse to submit to authority
- A characteristic of this class is their arrogance and stubborn
- They are not afraid to speak evil of persons in authority, though they are so insignificant in might
- The angels, superior in might and power, do not show such disrespect to any superior power

Depravity of False Teachers (2:12-17)



- But they are utterly irrational as the brute beasts were destined to the slaughter for man's uses
- So do these men willingly cast themselves into Satan's snares
- They do not understand: either of angels, of whose nature, office, and dignity, they are ignorant
- Their own wicked conduct shall bring them to destruction and eternal punishment is the wage of their unrighteousness

Depravity of False Teachers (2:12-17)



- Like dumb brutes forgetful of coming destruction, they take pleasure in carousal for a day, regardless of the morrow
- They are disfiguring the beauty of the church
- They take great pleasure in their sins and lusts, by which they deceive themselves and others
- They look around with a lustful appetite
- Unstable: not firmly established in faith and piety

Depravity of False Teachers (2:12-17)



- Heart-not only the eyes, which are the channel, but the heart, the fountain head of lust
- Cursing and covetousness, as in Balaam's case, often go together
- Balaam sold himself out to an evil cause for the sake of gain (Num 31:16)
- He was rebuked by the voice of the donkey he rode (Num 22:28-30)

Depravity of False Teachers (2:12-17)



- These are wells without water. They promise much but disappoint
- Clouds that are carried with a tempest. These mists promise rain, but it fails to descend
- For these apostates the blackness of darkness is reserved (an eternal separation from the presence of God, and the glory of his power)
- False and corrupt teachers will be sent into the lowest hell

Deceptions of False Teachers (2:18-22)



- This shows how they promise great things and disappoint
- They entice those who are about to be delivered from the company of them who live in error using the lust and profanity
- Liberty from all restraint, complete freedom to serve their own wills against God's law
- Those who offer liberty are themselves slaves, serving their own passions and lusts

Deceptions of False Teachers (2:18-22)



- If one who has been converted is enticed back again into his sins, his state is worse than before
- The apostasy is more inexcusable, and causing a greater damnation
- They add the sin of rejecting the way of righteousness after its knowledge to the other sins
- Their relapse is described in the Proverbs 26:11
- Such a repulsive course can be compared with the most disgusting habits of unclean animals

Conclusion



- What is meant by false prophets?
- What impact can their teaching have on their followers?
- What are the two main sins of heretics? (v.10)
- In verses 15 -16 it talks about Balaam. Who is he and what was his main problem?
- In the last paragraph it talks about the false meaning of liberty. Please explain.