

Sunday January 2nd 2011
The Second of Peter
Part Six

1). 2Pe 2:9 *then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 ¶ and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, 11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.*

a). We had seen in our last session, through the examples of Noah and Lot, how God had delivered ‘the godly’ from the impending judgment that was to come upon ‘the unjust’ as a result of the ‘unjust’s’ defilement by their association with the fallen angels.

b). And these serve as examples for those today who would live ‘godly’ – those who will remain faithfully obedient, those who will not depart from the faith. And the promise is that in the present God will deliver the faithful ‘out of temptations’ after the fashion we see in - 1Pe 1:5 *who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 ¶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,*

c). In this then we will realize that being delivered ‘out of temptations’ is not a removal from those ‘temptations’ but God’s protection through them so as to guard the faithful ‘for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time’ – 1Co 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

d). On the other hand ‘the unjust’, those who are not faithfully obedient, those who depart from the faith, God will reserve ‘under punishment for the day of judgment’.

e). The certainty and severity of the judgment that ‘the unjust’ will experience is demonstrated through the destruction of the ancient world and the destruction of the cities of the plain and will be administered at the Judgment Seat of Christ – 2Pe 2:3b.....*for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.*

f). Mt 13:49 *"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

g). So to bring this thought to a conclusion we will recall that in our study of 1 Peter we read - 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,*

h). For the faithful then, for those who do not stand away from the faith, the inheritance which is 'incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away' is 'reserved' in heaven – and as we have just seen for the unfaithful judgment followed by punishment awaits them 'in heaven' which is described in Jude as follows - Jude 1:13 *raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever*[lit. 'with respect to the age'].

i). The word translated 'reserved' is the same Greek word in both Peter and Jude; and so then for the 'godly' an inheritance is reserved, and for the 'unjust', the 'blackness of darkness' for the age to come is reserved.

j). This is all so very clear for us to see.

2). V10 of our scripture from 2 Peter Chapter 2 gives extra detail concerning the 'unjust' saying - 10 ¶ *and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority.*

a). The companion scripture to v10 in Jude then gives us commentary on the same - Jude 1:8 ¶ *Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.*

b). Walking 'according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness' in Peter and defiling 'the flesh' in Jude would be one and the same thing and the word 'likewise' in Jude would therefore take us back to the inhabitants of the cities of the plain who defiled their flesh through their involvement with the fallen angels who had left their proper domain.

c). Uncleanness = Greek – 'miasmos', *mee-as-mos* = (morally) contamination

d). There is therefore a parallel drawn in the scriptures between the inhabitants of the cities of the plain and eternally redeemed Christians today with regards to their both 'walking according to the flesh', which causes them to 'defile the flesh'.

e). The old creation in Adam and the new creation in Christ were brought into existence for essentially the same purpose – man ultimately having a position of rulership over the earth within the 7th Day.

f). And we can see that lessons are drawn from the experience of the old creation in Adam to teach spiritual truth with regards to the new creation in Christ.

g). And these truths concern Christians who ‘defile the flesh’ today through standing away from their high calling, thereby departing from the reason for the new creation in Christ.

h). And this standing away from the faith, as we saw last time, comes through association with the work of fallen angels, which from God’s perspective would be a demonstration of spiritual immorality of the grossest nature equivalent to the inhabitants of the cities of the plain going after ‘strange flesh’ as they lusted for physical union with the fallen angels who had left their proper domain – 1Ti 4:1 ¶ *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,*

3). Then we see in Peter that the false teachers, ‘the unjust’, ‘despise authority’ and in Jude they ‘reject authority’ – now in order to get a proper perspective on this let’s look at the word ‘authority’

a). Authority = Greek – ‘kuriotes’, *koo-ree-ot'-ace* – from – ‘kurios’, *koo'-ree-os* = from kuros (supremacy); supreme in authority, i.e. (as noun) controller; by implication, Master (as a respectful title):-- God, Lord, master, Sir.

b). Authority then has to do with rulership, a position of authority that emanates from God and is held on behalf of God and the words ‘despise’ and ‘reject’ have to do with setting aside that God given authority.

c). In the first instance this would again take us back to the fallen angels in the days of Noah and Lot as examples of those who set aside the authority given them by God in order to follow a direction completely contrary to God’s purpose.

d). The spiritual truth imparted through this example once again is that Christians within this dispensation can also ‘set aside’ their God given position of authority/rulership, a position that awaits them at the Judgment Seat, in order to follow a direction contrary to God’s purpose, with the same disastrous results.

e). And then this concept is further amplified in Jude and Peter as we are told that those who despise and reject authority also ‘speak evil of dignitaries’; and in this we can see in addition to standing away from their own proffered position a setting aside of God given authority in others in the present, which really must be seen as the same as setting aside God Himself - 2Pe 2:10 ¶ *and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,*

f). Presumptuous = Greek – ‘tolmetes’, *tol-may-tace'* = to act without fear

g). Self-willed = Greek – ‘authades’, *ow-thad'-ace* = self-pleasing, i.e. arrogant:

4). Now according to the scripture - Ro 13:1 ¶ *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.*

a). It seems somewhat redundant to comment on this scripture, but regardless please let's note – ‘For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God’.

b). This statement of itself becomes a matter of faith for us – do we believe it or not? Because our answer to this question will determine our attitude and conduct with respect to the appointed authority and in case we are having difficulty in making a decision v2 from Romans 13 should help us – providing of course that we actually believe what God has said - *Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.*

c). Now on a grand scale we can see ‘speaking evil of dignitaries’ in the false teaching that allows for the cursing, binding and casting out of Satan and the fallen angels that is so prevalent within Christendom today; rather than accepting that Satan and the fallen angels ‘are appointed by God’ and therefore any evil spoken against them is in effect spoken against the One who appointed them – the only One who has the right to rebuke them and the right to remove them.

d). In respect of this look what we find in - 2Pe 2:11 *whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.*

e). And also in - Jude 1:9 *Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"*

f). And we can also understand this with regards to Christians’ involvement with and criticism of national governments and political leaders instead of following the clear command of scripture - 1Pe 2:13 ¶ *Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—*

5). King David, as a type of Christ, provides the perfect picture for this –

1Sa 22:1 ¶ *David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. 2 And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.*

a). Those who were discontented and outcasts from the kingdom of Saul gathered themselves to David and waited. They did not involve themselves in the affairs of the kingdom under Saul, nor did they attempt to overthrow it – they just waited for God's timing.

b). And even though Saul had been rejected by God as king and even though David had been anointed as king in his place and Saul was intent on David's destruction, David recognized whose authority resided in Saul and conducted himself accordingly - 1Sa 24:5 *Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. 6 And he said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD." 7 So David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul. And Saul got up from the cave and went on his way.*

c). And even though God would work through the hand of a man to remove Saul, that man would still be cut off for daring to touch the Lord's anointed – 2Sa 1:14 *So David said to him, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" 15 Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go near, and execute him!" And he struck him so that he died. 16 So David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD'S anointed.'"*

d). To see this truth and adopt it as our practice does require a huge shift in our thinking and our attitude – but a shift we need to make nonetheless which will only come about through the renewing of our mind.

6). Then in addition to this let's go back and consider Israel at Kadesh Barnea again for a moment – Jude 1:5 *But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.*

What we will realize then as we look at this incident more closely is not only did they stand away from their calling as God's firstborn son but at the same time they also chose to set aside the authority that God had appointed over them, speaking evil of that authority - Nu 14:2 *And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 "Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children*

should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt." 5 ¶ Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

a). Moses and Aaron fell on their faces because they knew that the complaints of the people were not against them, but against God who had appointed them – as the people rejected Moses and Aaron so they rejected the Lord Nu 14:11 ¶ *Then the LORD said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?"*

b). And the result of this we will remember – during the next 38 1/2 years this entire generation except Caleb and Joshua perished in the wilderness without receiving their inheritance.

c). It is a serious thing to ‘despise’ God’s appointed authority – but we have lost the vision of this as the world would teach us that we have the right to have our way not only in the affairs of the world, but also in the ‘church’.

d). But with regards to the ‘church’ let’s remember - Eph 5:23 *For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

e). It is true that in that coming Day Christians will occupy a position as co-regent with Christ, but that Day is not now and all the while the effects of the fall are still present Christians are to occupy a position relative to Christ that is the same as Eve’s position relative to Adam following the fall – to be in subjection to Ge 3:16 ¶ *To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."*

7). Then this same truth concerning setting aside God’s appointed authority, which is to be seen as apostasy, is reiterated in the account of the rebellion of Korah – Nu 16:1 ¶ *Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men; 2 and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown. 3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?" 4 So when Moses heard it, he fell on his face;*

a). Korah was the cousin of Moses and Aaron and with Dathan, Abiram and On he rose up against the authority of Moses as leader of the people and Aaron as

high priest – their argument simply was that ‘all the congregation is holy’, and ‘the Lord is among them’ therefore anyone, but most particularly Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On, had just as much right to lead the people physically and spiritually as Moses and Aaron - Moses and Aaron had taken ‘too much’ upon themselves.

b). Now whereas it is true that ‘all the congregation is holy’ and ‘the Lord is among them’ it was Moses and Aaron alone that God appointed to the task of leading the people and God’s decision in this choice did not need to be second guessed, but received by faith.

c). And again in our scripture we see that Moses ‘fell on his face’, because again he recognized whose authority was being challenged.

d). This rebellion against God’s authority led to unacceptable incense being offered upon the altar at the door of the tabernacle by 250 men of renown, leaders of the congregation, who sided with Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On against Moses and Aaron.

e). This in turn led to the only possible conclusion, God’s judgment upon the entire group – Nu 16:31 *Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods.33 So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly..... 35 ¶ And a fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.*

f). This without doubt would serve as a serious a warning as the destruction of the ancient world and the cities of the plain with regards to those who would want to set aside God’s appointed authority – whether in the world or within the church.

8). But now look at Israel’s reaction to this event - Nu 16:41 ¶ *On the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD." 42 Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.*

a). It is incredible to think that just the day after witnessing the ground swallowing Korah and the households of all the men that were with him and fire consuming the 250 men who were offering unacceptable incense because of their setting aside of God’s appointed authority we find *all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD.*

b). And again, the murmuring was not against Moses and Aaron but against the Lord, and it was the Lord alone who had executed judgment the previous day in response to the rebellion against His authority.

c). And judgment is the only thing that could be expected in response to the action of ‘all the congregation of the children of Israel’ - Nu 16:44 *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 45 "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces. 46 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun." 47 Then Aaron took it as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48 And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped. 49 Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident.*

d). To say it once again, it is a very serious thing to set aside and murmur against God’s appointed authority. He did not tolerate it in the old creation in Adam and He will not tolerate it in the new creation in Christ.

e). The lie of course is that things are different today and God does not view things in the same way – but the only question to be asked in respect of this is , ‘What does the scripture say?’ - Tit 3:1 ¶ *Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one [rulers and authorities], to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*

f). What else do we need to know?

9). There is of course nothing else that we do need to know, however, our knowing needs to move into the realm of faith as we choose to trust God in the midst of our own circumstances.

a). Now we may not struggle with keeping ourselves away from setting aside God’s authority with regards to fallen angels in the heavens or political leaders on the earth, but what about the authorities that God has set in place that are much closer to home?

b). Ac 20:28 *"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

c). The ‘Church’ is subject to Christ and Christ has appointed ‘overseers’/Elders within His Church to shepherd the church of God. To set aside that authority by murmuring against it is to set aside the Lord Himself. This would be no different to the incident with Korah.

d). And the issue at hand here is not who God has appointed as Elders, but do we believe and therefore trust God?

10). And what about husbands? - 1Co 11:3 *But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.*

a). Christ is the head of every husband and every husband is subject to Christ. For any husband to reject the commands given to him, even through passivity, is to set aside the authority of God.

b). Then from the wife's perspective - Eph 5:23 *For the husband is head of the wife,*

c). God's authority resides in the husband and presents a picture of Christ and His church. For a wife not to be submitted to her husband in everything or to murmur against him is to set aside God's authority, thereby setting aside God Himself.

d). Again for both the husband and the wife it is not a case of, 'You don't know my wife/husband', but do we believe God and therefore trust Him irrespective of our circumstances?

e). And of course the same would be true for the parent/child and master/servant relationship - Eph 6:1 ¶ *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. 5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,*

f). Now all of these may be uncomfortable examples of God's appointed authority, but our discomfort doesn't make them any the less real. Setting aside God's authority in others by refusing to accept it or 'speaking evil'/murmuring against it is to come against God Himself; and as we have seen most poignantly today, this is something God will not tolerate, that will result in the most serious judgment. This is why we find this description in Jude – Jude 1:15 ¶ *"to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." 16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts;*

g). To reject God's appointed authority, to speak against God's appointed authority is scripturally to be seen as apostasy and those who do so will find reserved for them 'the blackness of darkness' for the age to come.

h). Ho 8:7 *"They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up.*

i). Heb 12:25 *See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.*