



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N33 August 18, 2024

PEOPLE GET READY

“The Judgment of False Teachers”

2 Peter 2:4-10a

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Eternity

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. 2 My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going.”

John 14:1-4



Will the
unrighteous
ever be
punished?

“Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth,” according to the creed of the Core Competency Eternity. In the same way that Jesus has been given the authority to forgive sins (Mk 2:1-12, esp. vv. 5, 7, 10), he has been given authority to judge humanity also (Jn 5:19-30, esp. 22, 27, 29, 30).

There are three different judgments in the future. There is a judgment in connection with Jesus’ *coming to rescue* (1Th 4:13-18). Writing to believers, Paul declares, “We will *all* stand before God’s judgment seat” (Ro 14:10), and “For we must *all* appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad” (2Co 5:10). This is a judgment of believers’ *works*, sometimes called the *bēma* after the Greek word translated “judgment seat” in which Christians will receive degrees of reward. On it one theologian writes: “The nature of the believer’s works will be examined in this judgment to distinguish worthy works from worthless ones. These works are the deeds done by the believer during his Christian life. All will be reviewed and examined. Some will pass the test because they were good; others will fail because they were worthless. Both good and bad motives will be exposed; then every believer will receive praise from God (1 Cor. 4:5)” (Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 597-98).

There is also a judgment in connection with Jesus’ *coming to reign* (Mt 24:30-31; cf. Zec 14:1-11; Rev 19:11-16). Before the inauguration of Jesus’ thousand-year reign on the earth, called “the millennium” (Rev 20:4), those who are alive when he returns must be judged in order to determine who will enter his kingdom. The judgment on *living Jews* is described in two parables recorded in Matthew 25:1-30, the parable of the ten virgins (vv. 1-13) and the parable of the bags of gold (vv. 14-30). These two parables must be interpreted in their context, namely, the Olivet Discourse (Mt 24-25), in which Jesus teaches his describes about the coming of the Son of Man and judgments to occur at that time. According to the first, five foolish

virgins who are unprepared for the bridegroom to appear are shut out from the wedding banquet (vv. 10-12). In the second, the worthless servant who was unfaithful to his master is thrown “outside” his master’s house “into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The two parables indicate that the unprepared and the unfaithful are excluded from the kingdom. In the parables, being *prepared* and being *faithful* are understood to be *evidence* of faith, resulting in righteousness that makes them fit to enter the kingdom.

The judgment on *living Gentiles* is described in a third parable recorded in Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the sheep and the goats. Jesus opens the parable with these words: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left” (vv. 31-33). The *righteous* sheep are destined for the kingdom and eternal life (vv. 34, 46), while the *unrighteous* goats are destined for fire and eternal punishment (vv. 41, 46). The two groups are judged on the basis of their treatment of the least of the king’s brothers and sisters. Compassionate treatment of righteous Jews, whom the king calls “brothers and sisters of mine,” is evidence of faith, resulting in righteousness that makes them fit to enter the kingdom. The sheep are righteous; the goats are unrighteous.

There is a third judgment following Jesus’ thousand-year reign on the earth prior to the eternal state. It’s a two-fold judgment on Satan (Rev 20:10) and the unsaved dead (vv. 11-15). This judgment will not be determine who is saved and who is unsaved, for all who appear before the great white throne because “the rest of the dead” (v. 5) are participants in the second resurrection, a resurrection of the unrighteous (v. 6). The books that are opened will confirm their guilt and be used to determine the degree of their lake-of-fire punishment throughout eternity.

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read 2 Peter 2:4-10a

4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) – 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. 10 This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority.

Read in another translation

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into hell and locked them up in chains in utter darkness, to be kept until the judgment, 5 and if he did not spare the ancient world, but did protect Noah, a herald of righteousness, along with seven others, when God brought a flood on an ungodly world, 6 and if he turned to ashes the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when he condemned them to destruction, having appointed them to serve as an example to future generations of the ungodly, 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man in anguish over the debauched lifestyle of lawless men, 8 (for while he lived among them day after day, that righteous man was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) 9 – if so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from their trials, and to reserve the unrighteous for punishment at the day of judgment, 10 especially those who indulge their fleshly desires and who despise authority. (NET)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Box “if” indicating a *condition* in vv. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9.
- Bracket “angels when they sinned” in v. 4.
- Box “but” indicating *contrast* in vv. 4-5.
- Circle “hell” in v. 4.
- Circle “ungodly” in vv. 5, 6.
- Circle “righteous man” in v. 7.
- Circle “depraved conduct” in v. 7.
- Circle “lawless” in vv. 7, 8.
- Circle “tormented” in v. 8.
- Double underline “then” in v. 9.
- Circle “trials” in v. 9.
- Highlight “day of judgment” in v. 9.
- Circle “authority” in v. 10.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, “This text is about _____.”



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. According to 2:3, Peter's readers should know that the condemnation of false prophets is inevitable. Why so according to verse 4? (Note: "For" indicates *reason*.)
 2. Explain the *contrast* and the point Peter is making in verse 5.
 3. What do the "ungodly" in the days of Noah (v. 5) and the "ungodly" in Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 6) have in common? (See note.)
 4. The burning of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes is an example of *what* to *whom*?
 5. Peter calls Lot "a righteous man." How can that be?
 6. What does Peter say about Lot that might suggest that he was righteous?
 7. Peter says Lot "was tormented (*passive* voice) in his righteous soul." But the text literally says Lot "was tormenting (*active* voice) his righteous soul." In what sense, if any, was he tormenting his own soul? (See note.)
 8. Identify the two "then" *consequences* of Peter's four "if" *conditions*.
 9. What do you *infer* about Peter's false teachers from verse 10?
 10. **Discussion:** Talk about the *comparison* between Peter's day and today as you see it.
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Commentary On The Text

2 Peter 2:4-10a provides the reasons behind the writer's statement in verse 3, which has been translated in a variety of ways. The following two examples make Peter's point clear. Regarding God's judgment of false teachers, the apostle writes: "Their condemnation pronounced long ago is not sitting idly by; their destruction is not asleep" (NET), or the slightly more paraphrastic, "And God condemned them long ago and their destruction will not be delayed" (NLT). In other words, while God's judgment of false teachers may not be immediate, it is inevitable. Verses 4-10a provide reasons to believe that this is so followed by consequences of those reasons. Consider the following structural analysis of the passage: "Peter writes one long conditional sentence. The protasis (the 'if' part of the sentence) is long, extending from verses 4 through 8. The NIV helps the reader of the English text to make sense of it by breaking it up into four parts and repeating the word 'if' (the Greek word for 'if' appears only in v. 4)" (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, 100). The apodosis (the "then" part of the sentence) follows in verses 9-10. The NIV begins a new sentence in verse 10, while the ESV translates verses 9 and 10 more literally: "if this is so, *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority." In a nutshell, Peter argues from history that "the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment" (v. 9).

Verses 4-6 support the fact that "the Lord knows how . . . to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment" (v. 9b). He gives three *negative* examples of how God has done this in the past: first, regarding the angels who sinned (v. 4), then, the antediluvian ungodly (v. 5a), and finally, the ungodly in Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 6).

Verses 5b, 7-8 support the fact that "the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials" (v. 9a). He gives two *positive* examples of how God has done this in the past: first, regarding Noah and seven others (v. 5b), then righteous Lot (vv. 7-8). In each of the above examples where "if" is used, the word "since" would also be appropriate. One commentator writes: "We could translate the 'ifs' in verses 4, 6, and 7 as 'sinces.' Each one is a first class condition in Greek. A first class condition assumes for the sake of the argu-

ment that what the writer wrote is true. In this case each statement describes a situation that is indeed true to reality" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 2 Peter, 2024 ed. 46, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf). The five examples Peter cites raise questions that are addressed in the notes.

Verse 10a comments on the character of the false teachers in that day — about whom Peter will have more unflattering things to say in verses 10b-22. According to verse 10a, they "follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority." How other translations render the verse may help clarify the meaning: "those who indulge their fleshly desires and who despise authority" (NET) and "those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority." One commentator attempts to get at the sense of Peter's words: "Peter's charge of sexual malpractice is frequently alluded to in this letter, and in 2:19 he will point out the fact that these false teachers are assuming that Christian liberty exempts them from the ordinary rules of morality applying to less enlightened people . . . they are independent free-thinkers, bowing to nobody's authority — certainly it may imply, not to that of church leaders. As in 2:1, what the indictment refers to specifically is not clear to us today. But apparently these men were deprecating the divine authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in some way" (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 192).

Of course, false so-called "Christian" teachers are present today. One commentator observes: "In 2:1 Peter reminded us that 'there will be false teachers among you.' And his prediction is certainly applicable to the late twentieth century. Everywhere we look, we find people advocating ideas that the Bible clearly condemns, yet claiming that they are the true way to find God, or 'meaning in life,' or spiritual fulfillment. And these religious teachers are often successful, attracting large followings, making a good living for themselves, and garnering lots of publicity" (Moo, 113). And it appears that they are getting away with it. But Peter says "No" in 2 Peter 4-10a. Judgment day is coming for them.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 4 *angels when they sinned* “Some believe this sin was the one referred to in Ge 6:2, where the sons of God are said to have intermarried with human daughters, meaning (according to this view) that the angels married human women. The offspring of those marriages are said to have been the Nephilim (Ge 6:4; see notes on Ge 6:2-4). But since it appears impossible for angels, who are spirits, to have sexual relations with women, the sin referred to in this verse probably occurred before the fall of Adam and Eve. The angels who fell became the devil and the evil angels (probably the demons and evil spirits referred to in the NT)” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on 2Pe 2:4).

v. 4 *chains of darkness* Cf. “gloomy dungeons” (NIV©1984). The two translations reflect the different meanings of two Greek terms: *seirois* (or *sirois*), meaning “underground pits,” and a rare word *seirais*, meaning “chains.” In this case, the translations differ because they are translating different texts. The NIV©2011 translates *seirais* while the NIV1984 translates *seirois* or *sirois* (cf. NASB, RSV, NLT); the NIV©2011 translates *seirais* (cf. ESV, NET, NKJV). “‘Chains’ (Gr. *seirais*) has slightly better textual support than ‘pits’ (Gr. *seirois*; cf. Jude 6)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 2 Peter,” 2024 ed., 47, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf; contra. Moo, 102; see *The NET Bible*, 18tc on 2Pe 2:4). Perhaps their confinement is *metaphorical*, referring to the restricted scope of evil angels activity as a result of their sin (Moo, 102-103).

v. 4 *hell* Gk. *tartarus* not *hades*. “Tartarus, in Greek mythology, was the place of punishment for the departed spirits of the very wicked, particularly rebellious gods like Tantalus. Just as Paul could quote an apt verse of the pagan poet Aratus (Acts 17:28), so could Peter make use of this Homeric imagery. Josephus does the same, and talks of heathen gods chined in Tartarus” (Michael Green, *The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude*, TNTC, 110). “Why some evil angels are imprisoned and others are free to serve Satan as demons is not explained in Scripture” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on 2Pe 2:4) – a possible explanation: “Tartarus in Peter’s conception appears not so much to represent a place of final and endless punishment (as our ‘hell’ often does), but the limitation on sphere of influence that God imposed on the angels who fell” (Moo, 103).

vv. 5, 6 *ungodly* Gk. *asebōn*, “suggests they had no time whatever for God” (Green, 110). “God first demonstrated that He would judge ungodly sinners with fire when He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. ‘The ungodly’ from then on should not

expect to escape the same fate” (Constable, 48).

v. 7 *righteous man* “Lot hardly comes across as a righteous man; possibly godliness was not a consistent mark in his daily conduct. But in his standing before God he was a justified man (‘righteous,’ occurring three times in 2 Peter 2:7-8, is *dikaion*, ‘justified’” (Kenneth O. Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 871). “In the New Testament, this word often refers to a person’s status before the Lord rather than to one’s innate moral virtue” (Moo, 105).

v. 7 *depraved conduct* Cf. “sensual conduct” (ESV); “immoral conduct” (GNT); “debauched lifestyle” (NET); “shameful immorality” (NLT); “filthy conduct” (NKJV).

vv. 7, 8 *lawless* Cf. “lawless men” (NET). “**Lawless men** translates the plural of *athesmos*, used of one who bursts through the restraints of moral law to gratify lust. The term occurs in the NT only here and in 3:17” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 194).

vv. 7, 8 *tormented* Cf. “he was tormenting his righteous soul” (ESV). In Greek the verb is in the active voice. “We recall that Lot ended up in Sodom by his own choice. And Genesis makes clear that Sodom was already a notoriously sinful place when Lot made this choice (see Gen. 13:11-13). Perhaps, then, Peter has used the active voice here to suggest that Lot was himself considerably responsible for the anguish that his ‘righteous soul’ experienced” (Moo, 105). “The description of Lot focuses on the predicament from which he was rescued: the mental torment of the conscientious person surrounded by blatant evil and helpless to prevent it” (Richard J. Bauckham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 50, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 256).

v. 9 *trials* The word can also be translated “temptations” (cf. ASV, NKJV). “But Peter’s two other uses of *peirasmos* both mean ‘trial’ (1 Peter 1:6’ 4:12), and this is the more common meaning in the New Testament” (Moo, 106).

v. 9 *day of judgment* See Rev 20:7-10 and comments on page 1.

v. 10 *authority* Possibly a reference to angelic hierarchy, church authority, or the authority of Christ. “Most likely, however, it refers here to their rejection of the rule of the Lord (*kyrios*) Jesus Christ over them” (Edwin A. Blum, “2 Peter,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 12, 279) – or perhaps, authority in general (Moo, 108).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

God judges those who obstinately disregard his commands,
while he protects those who stay faithful to him.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

When my kids were little, I'd give each of them a cookie as a little treat. Inevitably, there would be an all-out war over who got the bigger cookie or whose cookie had more chocolate chips. If one was really bothered, they would try to use a little sweet talk to trade with another. One of them always got mad and screamed, "It's not fair!" Sometimes things got physical as they fought for cookie justice. I'm not going to deny that their hard little hearts were hard and selfish, but that sense of justice is something we can speak into for both discipline and correction and to point them to God. First, we must help them understand that we don't hit our brother over a cookie. Our hands are used for love, not anger. Secondly, we must help them understand that every good and perfect gift is from the Lord through their mother, and they will get what they get and not throw a fit. Lastly, let's take this sense of justice and use it to honor God and build them up. How can we take a situation like fighting over a cookie to honor God? Here's a little script: "I see that justice really matters to you. It's important to you that things are fair. Justice is important to God, too. God gave you this desire for justice to bring glory to Him! We can't fight about cookies, though. What are some things that are important to God that we can fight for?" These few words honor God and affirm His work in your child. We're praying for you as you administer cookie justice!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 2 Peter 2:4-10a

1. List the three different groups that God did not spare. Why were they condemned?
2. List the two different people God rescued. Why did He rescue them?
3. What does the Lord know how to do (v. 9)?

What Do You Think?

Is it hard for you to think of God as both filled with justice and mercy? Why or why not?

What Do You Do?

Play a few games of heads or tails with your family. Discuss how one side represents judgment and the other represents mercy, but they are both the same coin. How is this like God?

CORE COMPETENCY: Eternity

I believe in heaven and hell and that one day Jesus will come again.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 5:7

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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OUR MISSION
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.