

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

2 Peter 02: 10-14

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the Bible again. We will continue to read 2 Peter chapter 2. Let's read from verse 8 to verse 11 today.

The burden of the second chapter is to deal with false teachers in the church. Peter uses the Old Testament as a reference, citing three examples from Old Testament history: the first is that God punished the sinful angels; the second is that God did not spare the ancient world but brought the flood on its ungodly people, saving only Noah and his family, eight in all; the third is that He turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes and delivered the righteous Lot. These three examples clearly tell us that God punishes the unrighteous and delivers the godly out of temptations. Likewise, in God's New Testament church, He will not spare those false teachers who corrupt the saints.

Therefore, from verses 10-22, this large paragraph can be seen as Peter outlining the portrait of false teachers. Although false teachers and the heresies they propagate often sneak into the church stealthily, their actions reveal them, showing that they are not truly saved. Therefore, Peter reminds the church to be cautious of these individuals.

Verse 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,"

Here Peter tells us that false teachers have two characteristics: one is following the flesh and indulging in filthy lusts; the second is despising dominion. Let us first look at the first characteristic. Peter says these false teachers follow the flesh and indulge in filthy lusts. Ever since Adam sinned, sin entered the world through one

man and dwelt in the flesh of man, amplifying, exaggerating, and exceeding the normal needs of the flesh, turning them into insatiable desires. For example, "eating," which was originally intended to sustain life, has been exaggerated to the point where every meal must be a feast of delicacies; "drinking," which was meant to quench thirst, has been exaggerated to the point where one must drink until they are utterly drunk; "sex," which was originally given by God for the enjoyment of intimacy between husband and wife, has now been exaggerated and has developed into unrestrained debauchery outside of the marriage relationship.

Paul says in Romans 7:23, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Paul discovers that there are two laws within him. One is called "the law of sin in my members," because Satan dwells in the flesh of man, exaggerating your needs, causing your members to sin. The other is "the law of my mind," which, according to the original text, should be translated as "the law of the mind," or more accurately, "the law of the mind to do good," which is the remaining consciousness of a person's conscience. This consciousness produces the teachings of ethics in human society, teaching people to do good and be good. This is the law of the mind to do good. As a result, within a person, there is a conflict between the law of sin in the members and the law of the mind to do good, thus the war between two laws. What is a law? It is something that happens naturally without you needing to exert effort or pay any price. For example, gravity is a law; if you hold something in your hand and let go, it will naturally fall downward.

We find that the law of sin in our members is a law, meaning it is very natural for us to sin, while the law of the mind to do good must constantly resist it. And what is the result of this conflict? Romans 7:19 says, "For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice." Paul describes the outcome of this battle vividly, indicating that the law of sin in the members greatly outweighs the law of the mind to do good. Perhaps occasionally, the law of the mind to do good can withstand the law of sin in the members, temporarily preventing one from doing evil, but this is merely an occasional occurrence. In the vast majority of situations, the law of the mind to do good is unable to hold back the law of sin in

the members. Here we see the condition of an unregenerate person who has not been saved by grace; it is impossible for him not to sin.

However, when a person is saved by grace, Paul tells us in Romans 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Once we are saved by grace, the Holy Spirit indwells within us. He can supply us with life, bringing in the law of the Spirit of life. This law can surpass the law of sin in our members, freeing us from sin and death. This is what the Bible tells us: through the mighty power of Jesus Christ's resurrection, we can be delivered from the power of sin.

But false teachers, because they do not acknowledge the redemption of Jesus Christ, are not saved at all, and they do not have the law of the Spirit of life within them. As a result, what manifests in them is the following of the flesh and indulging in filthy lusts. This is the first manifestation of false teachers.

The second characteristic is despising authority. "Authority" refers to those who hold power above us, including earthly kings and governments, as well as within the church, where Christ is the head and the elders established by Christ represent His authority. Romans 13:1 tells us, "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." Earthly kings are thus, and so are the elders in the church; this is the order established by God.

False teachers are bold and willful, refusing to submit to the order established by God. They often despise and neglect the divine order. Whether in human society or within the church, they lead people in rebellion, refusing to submit to authority, especially within the church. They secretly infiltrate, disobeying the order of life, which includes the elders of the church or some spiritually mature saints. Not only do they refuse to submit, but they also deliberately slander, spread rumors, and malign those in positions of honor. Their purpose is to destroy the saints' trust in these servants, aiming to replace them and lead the church into heresy.

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Dear brothers and sisters, It's crucial to respect and cherish those saints who serve you in the church. They earnestly teach God's word, leading you to His presence without seeking any benefits from you. Such servants deserve your respect. Be cautious of those who intentionally or unintentionally use negative words to undermine your trust in the church and diminish your respect and love for those in service. Don't listen to or believe what these people say; it's best to stay away from them. True servants of God lead you to His presence and help you learn to follow His guidance directly. They teach you to respect the order of life within the church, as these are all established by God.

Verse 11: “whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.”

The abilities and authority of angels surpass those of humans, yet they do not dare to bring slanderous accusations against certain individuals before the Lord. Who are “them” refer to in this verse? There are various interpretations, but personally, I believe it refers to those mentioned in verse 10, those in positions of honor. Among angels, there are different ranks, so this statement implies that even angels refrain from using slanderous words to harm those of higher rank. It emphasizes that angels deliberately uphold the order established by God and do not dare to violate it.

Peter is likely referring to Jude 9, where it is recorded, "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!'" Before his

fall, the devil was a bright star, the morning star, with a rank above that of the archangel Michael. However, after his fall, he became the devil and opposed God in every way. In this instance, we are unsure why the devil sought to take Moses' body. Perhaps it was because Moses was greatly respected by the Israelites, and the devil intended to use Moses' body to lead the Israelites into idolatry, but this is speculative. Nevertheless, the archangel Michael, following God's will, had a conflict with the devil. Even then, he did not dare to speak evil or bring a reviling accusation against the devil; he simply said, "The Lord rebuke you." Peter tells us here that even angels do not dare to revile the devil but instead submit to the order established by God. Despite the devil's disruption of God's order, the obedient angels still respect God's original order, highlighting the lawlessness of false teachers.

Verse 12: "But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,"

These individuals seem to lack spirituality and are born like animals. The term "lack of spirituality" in Greek is "Ra-logos," where "Ra" denotes a negative meaning, and "logos" refers to the word of God or logic. Therefore, it is generally translated as "irrational," meaning they are not logical or rational. Hence, a more accurate translation is that these people lack reason (not spirituality); they are like savage animals, irrational beasts destined for capture and slaughter from birth.

Peter is pointing out here that these false teachers are not saved; their souls do not understand God's Word at all. God's Word, Logos, is the most reasonable and has the highest moral logic. Only those who are saved by grace have their spirits quickened, enabling them to truly understand God's Word and live a life regulated by it, living a rational life. However, these false teachers, being unsaved, slander what they do not understand. When they corrupt others with slanderous words, they themselves are undergoing corruption. They harm others and themselves, setting traps for others while falling into those traps themselves. Not only are they

harming themselves with their deceit in this world, but they will also face judgment before Christ at the Great White Throne in the future.

Verse 13: “and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,”

They who practice unrighteousness will receive the wages of unrighteousness; they will reap what they sow. The wage of sin is death. Just like Judas, who betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver, received the payment for his betrayal but never enjoyed it, ending up hanging on a tree. He practiced unrighteousness and received the wages of unrighteousness. These false teachers also delight in feasting during the daytime when they should be working. Instead of working, they indulge in eating, drinking, and revelry during the day, being idle. "They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you." False teachers sitting at the table with saints likely refers to partaking in the Lord's supper, commemorating the Lord's sacrifice with the saints. However, they are not saved at all. They think they have deceived the simple saints and take pride in their deceitfulness.

Peter says they are indeed spots and blemishes in the church. They defile themselves and take pleasure in defiling others. God sees the church as holy and without blemish. These false teachers are the blemishes in the church. Although they mingle in the life of the church, they do not belong to it. The church was purchased by Jesus Christ with His blood, but they do not acknowledge Christ's redemption, so they are not part of the church.

Verse 14: “having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children.”

They are full of adultery and cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls and leading them into sin. They are accustomed to greed and are cursed individuals. Peter's words are very straightforward; they don't require much explanation as we understand them when we read. Perhaps we might wonder, since these false teachers are cursed individuals and don't belong to the church, how do they manage to infiltrate the church? Why doesn't God remove them?

Matthew 13 contains seven parables about the kingdom of heaven, all of which serve as prefiguration of the church, depicting various abnormal and unhealthy situations that arise after the church is established. The second parable, found in verses 24-30, describes the kingdom of heaven as a man sowing good seed in his field. This good seed represents those who have heard the life-giving message of Jesus Christ and are truly saved; they are the wheat in the field.

But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. The weeds are the work of the enemy, and these false teachers are like the weeds sown by the enemy. At first, you can't tell the difference because the weeds and the wheat look very similar. It's only when they start to grow and produce grain that the weeds become evident.

The servants then ask the master if they should go and pull out the weeds, but the master says no, lest they uproot the wheat along with them. Each stalk of wheat has been redeemed by Jesus at a great cost, so every single one is precious to God. Therefore, the master says to let both grow together until the harvest, when the wheat is ripe and the heads are heavy enough to bend the stalks, while the weeds are light and stand straight. At that time, it's easy to tell them apart. During the harvest, the weeds are gathered and burned, but the wheat is gathered and stored in the barn, according to God's will.

Peter warns us that in the last days, false teachers will arise, sneaking into the church to disrupt God's work. We must focus on following the Lord and diligently study God's word. Only by truly understanding the Bible can we avoid being deceived by false teachers and their heresies.

Let's pray together: Lord, thank You for giving us discernment through Peter's description, helping us recognize the image of false teachers. Grant me a discerning spirit to distinguish false teachers and their heresies. Help me follow the guidance of the church and root myself in your word daily, understanding Your heart and living a godly life. By doing so, we can naturally overcome the desires of the flesh and enjoy a sweet church life with a group of dedicated followers. Bless my church, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ.