

Series: 2 Peter
Title: The Lord Knoweth How
Text: 2 Peter 2: 9-12
Date: May 20, 2012
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

2 Peter 2: 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

The Spirit of God warns believers about this day in which we live.

Amos 8:11: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

As religious as this world is and yet as ungodly as this world is—especially this nation—we should always remember that God is fulfilling his purpose even with false teachers and false religion in this world.

The Lord knoweth how!

As certainly as the Lord knows how to deliver his elect out of temptation, God knows how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. Comfort for the believer is in knowing that our gracious God is fully in control.

Psalm 76: 10: Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

Note: We may not understand how he is doing so, but rest assured that even in the deceptions of false teachers and false religion—God is bringing glory to his name. Were it not so, God would not permit it. Christ himself accomplishes his purpose by turning Satan loose upon the nations of the world (Revelation 20: 1-3). God sends men a strong delusion that they should believe a lie—this one way God reserves them unto the day of judgment (2 Thess 2: 1-12)

Proposition: The children taught of God can identify false teachers—“**my sheep hear my voice**”, “**a stranger they will not follow**” I am thankful the verse reads, “**if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect.**” By God’s grace, it is not possible. The Spirit of God gives us some characteristics in our text.

Divisions: 2 Peter 2: 10: But chiefly [false teachers is Peter’s subject here] 1) They point sinners to their flesh—**v10: them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness;** 2) They despise God’s dominion, particularly Christ’s Lordship over his church—**v10:...and despise government;** 3) They are not afraid to speak evil of those God has put in a place of honor—particularly Christ’s preachers and his saints-kings and priests unto God—**v10: Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.**

I. THEY ARE FLESHLY—UNREGENERATE—SO THEIR MESSAGE POINTS SINNERS TO THEIR FLESH— v10: them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness;

We want to see God’s people brought to saving faith in Christ. But religion seeks men to build their churches, to fill their treasuries, and so on. They go after flesh like the Sodomites lusted after one another—**v14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices;**

Jude 1: 8: Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh.

They teach doctrines urging men to mind the things of the flesh—rather than preaching Christ. Their doctrines have the same relation to truth that dreams do to good sense. They defile those that follow them with their:

2 Peter 2: 1:...**damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them** (their teaching denies the very redemption Christ accomplished which they claim to have been redeemed by)

They teach big man, and a little god

- Salvation by the will of man's flesh—rather than by the power of God—A-Z.
- Justification by works of man's flesh—rather than by Christ who declared God just and Justifier
- Sanctification by works of man's flesh rather than by election, redemption and the work of the Spirit in the new birth.
- They teach evil is in things, not that the fleshly heart is desperately wicked!
- Rewards or Loss of Rewards based upon man's works

THEY CLAIM TO PREACH REDEMPTION FROM ALL THIS BONDAGE BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, BUT THEY DENY IT IN THEIR DOCTRINE AS WELL AS THEIR PRACTICE.

Isaiah 51: 4: Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

“The law”, here, is the gospel proceeding from Christ, from heavens Zion, to his people. This "judgment," is the gospel--the declaration that judgment is accomplished for his people by the death of his Son. His gospel rest for a light of the people—those he calls out.

In Romans 8: 1—we find that law—that gospel—that judgment of God—that light that rests upon his people

Romans 8: 1: *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5: For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6: For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. 7: Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the LAW OF GOD, neither indeed can be. 8: So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

“Them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness” are false teachers who cannot subject themselves to **the law [the gospel]** of God our Savior which declares that there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. They will not submit to the truth that the believer is not under the law but under grace, neither can they. Those in the flesh cannot please God and the only way to please God is to walk by faith, not by sight, by minding the things of the Spirit rather than the things of the flesh.

Romans 8: 9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his...12: Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

What “deeds of the flesh” has Paul been speaking about through this epistle? He has been speaking against the old spirit of bondage to the law.

Romans 8: 15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Peter says of those false teachers who here this that they speak evil...

2 Peter 2: 12: But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

Colossians 2: 18: Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

The pride and self-righteousness of man's heart makes sinners deny the completeness of the fall of man and the completeness of reconciliation and salvation by Christ alone. These two deceits of the sin-dead heart attempt to bring man up and Christ down. If a man can do something to save himself then the fall of man is not complete—man is brought up. If man must do anything in addition to Christ's work then Christ's work is not complete—Christ is brought down.

Yet, the Holy Ghost reveals in the gospel in the heart of his elect, that they are made righteous by the obedience of Christ and delivered by Christ as completely as the condemnation of the elect of God was by the disobedience of Adam. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5: 19.)

But by bringing men back under bondage—these filthy dreamers defile men.

Galatians 5: 2: Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

2 Peter 2: 18: For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19: While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment [the gospel] delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Haggai 2: 12 If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. 13 Then said Haggai, If *one that is* unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean. 14 Then answered Haggai, and said, So *is* this

people, and so *is* this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so *is* every work of their hands; and that which they offer there *is* unclean.

Titus 1: 10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.... 15 Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Matthew 7: 22: Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23: And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

II. THEY DESPISE GOD'S DOMINION, PARTICULARLY CHRIST'S LORDSHIP-- v10:...and despise government

The chief thing—the heart—of this despising government and dominion is the despising of Christ who has taken the Kingship and Priesthood over his people so that sinful men no longer can do what only he can.

Colossians 2: 13: And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15: *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Christ took away the power and authority of the Jewish church rulers, by abolishing the ceremonial law; BUT men still want to be high priests—in protestant church just like in the church of Rome.

Christ is the Head of his church, the Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption of his people—and ye are complete in him. We have but one thing to do—to support and preach the finished work of Christ—in boldness and simplicity and clearly. Christ shall add to the church daily such as should be saved and not one shall be lost. Those he uses submit to him, look nowhere else for strength, righteousness, or holiness and wait on him to do as he promises. He filleth all in all those whom he elected, redeemed and calls out.

But all false prophets, and all who reject God's revelation of himself in the gospel, preach what they do, and practice what they do, because the carnal heart can not bow to our Gospel and they despise the fact all power in heaven in earth belongs to Christ—he is the believer's completion—not man.

Luke 19: 14:...We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

III. THEY ARE NOT AFRAID TO SPEAK EVIL OF GOD'S Glory—his dignities--v10: Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

These dignities include all whom God places in an office of honor—civil and ecclesiastical—but especially those true messengers of the gospel which Christ has sent and his saints who he makes kings and priests unto God by his grace.

Paul, before he was converted, spoke evil of dignities.

1 Timothy 1: 13: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

But after conversion he himself suffered it from false teachers.

2 Timothy 2: 9: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

2 Peter 2: 10: Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. 11: Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

Jude 1: 9: Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

The name “*Michael*” signifies “one who is God.” The word “*Archangel*” means “chief or head of the angels.” Michael the Archangel is our Lord Jesus Christ who as our God-man Mediator is, “*Head of all principality and power*” (Col. 2:10). We find Jude’s example in Zechariah 3.

Zechariah 3: 1: And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

Joshua is one of those dignities of the Lord—the high priest—a picture of Christ’s redeemed.

The Angel of the LORD standing by is our Advocate, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God—called in Jude—Michael the Archangel. He is called “*the Angel of the LORD*,” because he is Jehovah’s Messenger, the Angel of the covenant

Satan is standing at Joshua’s right hand “*to resist him*”. Joshua and his sons had broken the law of God because they had taken heathen wives to themselves from among the women of Babylon (Ezra 10:18). Satan stands to accuse and dispute against him using the law of Moses—the **body of Moses**.

False teachers operate like Satan does—not afraid to speak evil—to accuse--God’s ambassadors or of his saints resurrecting the body Moses—the law of Moses. Jude says, “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil...durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” Now read Zech 3: 2...

Zechariah 3: 2: And the LORD said unto Satan, [the Angel of the Lord, Michael the Archangel—Christ Jesus our Advocate, said to Satan] The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: *is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*

This is the Lord Jesus Christ making intercession for his elect as our Advocate.

1. Our Advocate intercedes, asking the Father to rebuke our accuser, “**The LORD rebuke thee, Satan.**”

1 John 2:1-2) My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

2. Our Advocate pleads electing grace-- **the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee**

Romans 8:33: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

3. Our Advocate pleads not our righteousness but his own--**Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?**—He is yet a sinner in himself, but his righteousness is of the Lord.

Romans 4: 7: Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8: Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

False teachers, like Satan, use the law of Moses and accuse rather than begging our Advocate to intercede, rather than rejoicing in mercy. But Christ's Advocacy prevails for his redeemed children:

Zechariah 3: 3: Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. 4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. 5: And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.

Application: Here's the lesson for us.

1. God is on his throne—he is using even the wrath of false teachers and false religion to work his eternal purpose—he knows how to deliver us and to reserve the unjust for judgment.
2. Rest in Christ he is our Advocate with the Father—he shall plead our case—we are righteous in him, forgiven, and no sin can be laid to our charge.
3. Never speak evil of or slander anyone in authority, even when someone is wrong. Trust the Lord our God to do that which is right.

Romans 12:19: Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

AMEN!