

Examples from the Past (vv.4-10a)

Fornicating Angels (v.4)

VERSE 4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned (Εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀγγέλων ἁμαρτησάντων [*part./conditional, ei, if; here, in a first class condition, + conj., gar, + def.art.w/n.m.s., theos, + neg. + aor.dep.ind.3.s., φείδομαι, pheidomai, spare, free; avoid doing, + gen.m.p., aggelos + aor.act.pt.gen.m.p., hamartano, sin*]), **but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment** (ἀλλὰ παρέδωκεν σειραῖς ζόφου ταρταρώσας τηρουμένους εἰς κρίσιν [*conj., alla, but, + aor.act.ind.3.s., paradidomi, give over, hand over; “committed”, + dat.f.p., σειρά, seira, cord, rope, chain, + gen.m.s., ζόφος, zophos, gloom; a designation for the underworld; translation: but handed them over to chains of darkness, + aor.act.pt.n.m.s., ταρταρώω, consign to Tartarus; IX; “cast them into hell”, or “consigned them to Tartarus”, + pres.pass.pt.acc.m.p., tereo, keep, hold in reserve, guard, + prep.w/acc.nt.s., krima, judgment*]);

ANALYSIS: VERSE 4

1. Like Jude (Jude.1:5-7), Peter bases the certainty of retribution on historical precedence.
2. Peter cites three examples out of the past.
3. Two of these agree with Jude (the sinning angels and Sodom and Gomorrah).
4. Jude’s first example is that of the Exodus Generation, while Peter’s second example is the Flood.
5. Peter, arranging his examples in chronological order, begins his list by making mention of certain fallen angels who “sinned”.
6. He is, of course, referring to the Genesis 6 episode in which certain fallen angels took beautiful women from among men and spawned a hybrid race of “mighty men”.
7. These angels are called “the sons of God” in Gen.6:2.
8. Proof that this phrase exclusively refers to angels and not human beings in the O.T. is based on the fact that of the three times this expression occurs outside Gen.6 (vv.2,4); all three clearly refer to angels and not humans (cp. Job.1:6; 2:1; 38:7).
9. Job.38:7 refers to the entire race of angels before certain angels fell.
10. Nowhere in the O.T. does the expression ever refer to believers (5X; 2X in Genesis and 3X in Job).
11. This, of course, took place sometime during the antediluvian civilization (1656 years, from Adam to the Flood).
12. The Satanic plot was to corrupt true humanity (over time) and negate the possibility of Messiah being true humanity in accordance with God’s promise in Genesis 3.
13. The expression “seed of the woman” points to the true humanity conceived under special conditions.
14. The hybrid race that began developing before the Flood posed a threat to a pure human gene pool.

15. Certain fallen angels (aliens) mated with women to their liking and produced a third category, the half men/half angels that are the subject of pagan lore.
16. The legends of Hercules and the Titans are examples of this lore that prevailed among the postdiluvians.
17. Pagan mythology is filled with stories of the gods (and goddesses) cohabiting with certain humans and producing demi-gods.
18. The true demi-gods are the “mighty men” of Gen.6:4.
19. These men are also known as “men of renown” for their sensational exploits.
20. During this time, the community of the adjusted became more and more a beleaguered and marginalized minority.
21. At the time of the Flood God destroyed all land-breathing mammals, which included the demi-gods.
22. The particular angels who abandoned their celibacy were denied their freedom and confined to “pits”, or “chains of gloom”, in the underworld of Tartarus.
23. Peter agrees with the Homeric legend of the subterranean abyss in which rebellious gods and nefarious humans were punished.
24. The apocryphal books of *Enoch* and *Baruch* read: “And some of them descended and mingled with women. And those who did so were tormented in chains”.
25. Those particular angels are still confined by the power of God for their sensational and brazen sin.
26. There they wait (as do all unbelievers) for a date with future judgment; hence, the words “reserved for judgment”.
27. They will share the Lake of Fire with Satan and all the fallen angels.
28. Hence, the words “reserved for (future) judgment”.
29. By the way, Peter says the resurrected humanity of Christ appeared before these angels and made a victorious proclamation on the occasion when He relocated all O.T. saints into the third heaven (cf. 1Pet.3:19,20).
30. These angels, among all the fallen angels, have not fared very well to say the least!
31. The human race before the Flood looked up to these celebrities and their illustrious offspring.
32. But God is more than able to abase the affluent, proud, and lawless.
33. By the way, these are the only demons in hell.

The Corrupt Flood Generation (v.5)

VERSE 5 and did not spare the ancient world (καὶ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀρχαίου κόσμου [*conj. + neg. + aor.dep.ind.3.s., pheidomai, spare; cp. v.4, + adj.gen.m.s., ἀρχαῖος, archaios, ancient, + gen.m.s., kosmos, world*]), **but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others** (ἀλλὰ ἐφύλαξεν Νῶε κήρυκα δικαιοσύνης ὄγδοον [*conj., alla, but, + aor.act.ind.3.s.; φυλάσσω, phulasso, protect; “preserved”; cf. vv.4,5 + acc.m.s., κήρυξ, kerux, herald, + gen.f.s., dikaiosune, righteousness, + adj.acc.m.s., ὄγδοος, ogdoos, eighth; subst. the eighth one; “with seven others”*]), **when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly** (ἐπάξας κατακλυσμὸν κόσμῳ ἀσεβῶν [*aor.act.pt.n.m.s., ἐπάγω, epago, bring upon; 3X:*

Acts.5:28; 2Pet.2:1,5 + dat.m.s., kosmos, + adj.gen.m.p., ἀσεβής, asebes, ungodly, irreverent; here, as subst.]);

ANALYSIS: VERSE 5

1. Peter's second example is the Noahic Flood, the narrative of which dovetails with the misdeeds of the "sons of God".
2. Two features stand out in this unprecedented event.
3. First, God "did not spare the ancient world" when He surveyed the mushrooming evil (Gen.6:12ff).
4. On the contrary, God did not hesitate to bring "a flood upon the world of the ungodly".
5. The second feature Peter draws our attention to is that the cataclysm reveals another aspect of God's character and dealings with humanity.
6. The words "He preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, along with seven others" reveal God's grace and faithfulness.
7. The expression "Noah...with seven others" is, literally, "Noah the eighth person", and is a common classical idiom.
8. It, of course, means he was rescued with seven others, *i.e.*, his wife, his three sons, and their wives, as in 1Pet.3:20.
9. God is for the righteous and vindicates their positive volition no matter how small their numbers are!
10. Only eight souls survived the antediluvian world.
11. There is no mention in the O.T. of Noah's evangelistic ministry.
12. But it was well known in Jewish tradition.
13. What the O.T. does speak to is his righteous conduct in connection with the description "a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God" (Gen.6:9).
14. He then must have appeared so different from the wicked, who lived for the flesh.
15. The point of the Noah illustration to Peter's readers is that they should choose apostolic doctrinal orthodoxy over liberal heresy.

Sexual Perversion of Sodom and Gomorrah (vv.6-10a)

A Lasting Reminder (v.6)

VERSE 6 and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction

by reducing *them* to ashes (καὶ κατέκρινεν πόλεις Σοδόμων καὶ Γομόρρας [καταστροφῆ] τεφρώσας [conj., kai, + aor.act.ind.3.s., κατακρίνω, *katakрино, condemn*, + acc.f.p., polis, city, + gen.nt.p., Sodom, + conj. + gen.nt.s., Gomorrah, + dat.f.s., καταστροφή, *katastrophe, destruction; here, of extinction*, + aor.act.pt.n.m.s., τεφρώω, *tephroo, reduce to ashes; IX*]), **having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter** (τεθεικώς ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων ἀσεβέ[σ]ιν [pf.act.pt.n.m.s., τίθημι, *tithemi, put, lay {a foundation}*, "having made them", + acc.nt.s., ὑπόδειγμα, *hupodeigma, example, model, prototype, carbon copy; 6X: Jn.13:15; Heb.4:11; 8:5; 9:23; Jam.5:10; 2Pet.2:6 +*

pres.act.pt.gen. {objective} nt.p., mello, be about; “to those who would...thereafter”, + pres.act.infin. {dependent} infin. with no article; ἀσεβέω, asebeo, live ungodly]);

ANALYSIS: VERSE 6

1. Thirdly, we have the spectacle of “the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah”.
2. Four of the five “cities of the valley” along with the surrounding fertile valley (Gen.13:10,12; 19:25,29) were destroyed by a supernatural judgment that involved the raining of “fire and brimstone” (*i.e.*, sulfur) out of the sky reducing the cities to ash (Gen.19:24; cp. Deut.29:23).
3. The cities had become so morally corrupt in the days of Abraham and Lot that the righteousness of God called for their spectacular and total incineration by “fire and brimstone.”
4. The Bible states that “the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of furnace” (Gen.19:28).
5. Some speculate that the cities could have been destroyed by volcanic upheaval.
6. But there is a vast difference between the sites of Sodom and Gomorrah and other sites destroyed by volcanic action.
7. For example, Pompeii, the city destroyed in 79AD by the eruption of Mt Vesuvius, the ash smothered everything and buried the city.
8. In recent times, the structures have been dug out from under the ash remaining in a state of remarkable preservation as if life was held in suspension.
9. But these ashen cities are totally destroyed.
10. Nothing remains but the “shadows” or shapes of what were once city walls, stone buildings, sphinx-shaped statues, and temples.
11. The organized pattern of the city streets is still evident.
12. There is no example in the world of any ‘natural’ phenomena that displays even remotely the destroyed remains of these cities.
13. During the 1980s Ron Wyatt (discoverer of the Red Sea crossing site and the real Mt. Sinai in Arabia) discovered the remnants of that “rain.”
14. Balls of almost pure sulfur, not in a crystalline form, as would be expected in its natural state, but in the form of pressed power.
15. This is the Biblical brimstone (Heb. *gaphrith* Gk. *theion*).
16. These “death balls” are embedded throughout the ashes.
17. Surrounding each one is a shell of vitrified ash.
18. It appears that as these burning balls of brimstone fell from the sky and consumed literally everything.
19. The brimstone would have had to generate extremely high temperatures at a steady burn rate.
20. According to the report sulfur has been found at four sites and geologists contacted say there are no other examples of similar naturally occurring sulfur balls anywhere in the world.
21. The best-preserved site is just below (south of) Masada.
22. When a chunk of this ash is broken off and crushed, it disintegrates like talcum powder.
23. How it all happen merits further study, but we are sure of the result—the remains of these ancient cities are exactly as the Bible states, “... condemned the cities ...to destruction by reducing *them* to ashes” (2Pet.2:6).
24. At the time of their destruction, these cities/towns were located in one of the most fertile and prosperous river valleys on earth (Gen.13:10).

25. Life was easy and the prosperity level of the average person was high.
26. These cities of the plain had experienced a close call when they were invaded and plundered of wealth and people by a coalition from the east (Gen.14).
27. Apparently, they had reneged on the tribute they were paying to king Chedorlaomer and allies.
28. Abraham conducted a nighttime raid that freed the people, including his nephew Lot.
29. This event was warning discipline to the people of these cities, but they did not take it to heart and continued to practice unrestrained homosexuality on a scale unheard of in the region (Gen.13:13; cp. 18:20; 19:1-8).
30. For the evidence that this civilization was destroyed specifically for the practice of this abnormal sexual perversion, see Gen.19:1-8 and Jude.1:7 which reads: “just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire”.
31. Peter’s description of the judgment that dramatically and suddenly slammed that society into a brick wall (one hour of one day, to turn a phrase) begins (in the Greek) with the aorist hapax participle “by reducing them to ashes” (τεφρώω).
32. This verb is used by the Dio Cassius (lxxvi) of the destruction of Pompey and Herculaneum in 79AD by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.
33. The next verb, “condemned” (aor.act.ind.3.s., *katakrino*, condemn), is found in some manuscripts with the noun “destruction” (*katastrophe*, ruin, destruction).
34. A translation: “and reducing the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, He condemned *them* to extinction...”.
35. This total destruction was brought on by God in order to impress on succeeding generations that the vice of homosexuality will be punished.
36. In the extreme, whole societies are subject to annihilation.
37. False teaching and resultant corrupt behavior, be it in Lot’s day or Peter’s day (Pompey) or in our modern age, will not be tolerated beyond a point.
38. They had convinced themselves that they had outgrown the old fashioned morality, but in so doing they made a fatal mistake.
39. The ecology of the Dead Sea region remains a constant reminder of what God thinks about this vice.
40. The Dead Sea being the lowest point on the earth and a place of death (absence of life forms), salt, ash, sulfur and heat constitute “an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter”.
41. Virtually nothing grows here.
42. The shore of the Dead Sea is utterly desolate.
43. No fish can live in its waters, as the salt content is 28%.
44. The ancient Greeks reported poisonous gases rising from its surface.
45. Until recently the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and three sister cities were known only from the Biblical record, hence critics labeled the story a legend.
46. Things changed in 1975 when archaeologists excavating an ancient royal palace in Elba, Syria, uncovered 2,000 tablets.
47. Of these, #1860 mentioned the same five cities in the identical order to that given in Gen.14:8!
48. Furthermore, the kings named matched those stated in the Bible.

49. For example, the tablet states that the king of Gomorrah at the time was a man named Birsha—the exact name recorded in Gen.14:2.
50. The Biblical evidence (Book of Genesis) and the physical evidence matches so that men are without excuse in these last days.
51. The US will be destroyed in a fiery cataclysm that is comparable to that of Sodom and Gomorrah (see Isa.13:19; Jer.50:40; Rev 18:10, 17, 19).
52. We as a civilization with all our advanced research tools have turned away from the evidence as will suffer an equally dramatic end.
53. The destruction of S&G remains “an example” to all succeeding generations.
54. America is more culpable than others as we are a Christian civilization who has been granted much light.
55. God cannot and will not tolerate the particular vice that brought “fire and brimstone” upon the cities that practiced the abnormal perversion of homosexuality.