

False Prophets and Teachers ~ Part 1

2 Kefa 2:1-11

In my last post, we examined **Yeshua's Glory and Prophetic Word** in **2 Kefa 1:16-21**. In this post, we begin to unpack **Kefa's** denunciation of **False Prophets and Teachers**.

David Stern introduces this chapter by stating:

"This chapter is the first century's picture of the *"sleaze factor"* at work. Then, just as now, immoral and greedy persons misled **God's** people by assuming the role of teachers and had a devastating effect on the morale and reputation of the **Messianic Community**." ¹

¹ But among the people, there were also false prophets, just as there will be false teachers among you. Under false pretenses, they will introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them and thus bring on themselves swift destruction.

But among the people, there were also false prophets. Kefa continues the parallel begun in 1:20 between the time when he was writing and the time of the Prophets in the **Tanakh**.

In the first century, heresy referred to a faction or a school of thought. Therefore, **Kefa** has to specify that **destructive heresies** are not just any teachings but destructive ones. We will see this again when we explore 2 Kefa 3:7, 16).

² Many will follow their debaucheries, and because of them, the true Way will be maligned. ³ In their greed, they will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their punishment, decreed long ago, is not idle; their destruction is not asleep! ⁴ For God did not spare the angels who sinned; on the contrary, He put them in gloomy dungeons lower than Sh'ol to be held for judgment.

Likely based on a false characterization of the freedom and grace **Yeshua** offers, the heretics taught a form of liberty that promoted **Believers** enjoying sexual debauchery. **Kefa** appeals to the **Tanakh** to explain how to deal with **false teachers**. He makes four of the same claims as **Y'hudah** (Jude) (see vv. 4–5) to emphasize that dangerous heretics will perish like the heretics of the wilderness wanderings (see Num 14:26–38; 16:1–35). In doing so, **Kefa** creates a practice for identifying heretical leaders.

The angels who sinned are the ***b'nei-ha'elohim*** ("sons of God" or "sons of angels"; Genesis 6:2), also called ***nefilim*** ("fallen ones"; Genesis 6:4), who fell from heaven, which was ***"their proper sphere"*** (Y'hudah 6), and ***"came into the daughters of men"*** (Genesis 6:2, 4). But now they are ***"imprisoned spirits"*** (1 Kefa 3:19), whom God has ***put ... in gloomy dungeons lower than Sh'ol to be held for judgment, "in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for the Judgment of the Great Day"*** (Yd 6). In these descriptions, **Kefa** and **Y'hudah** are not using their imagination but drawing on elaborations of the Genesis narrative, which can be found in earlier Jewish writings, such as 1 Enoch. ²

⁵ And he did not spare the ancient world; on the contrary, he preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, and brought the Flood upon a world of ungodly people. ⁶ And he condemned the cities of S'dom and' Amora, reducing them to ashes and ruin, as a warning to those in the future who would live ungodly lives; ⁷ but he rescued Lot, a righteous man who was distressed by the debauchery of those unprincipled people; ⁸ for the wicked deeds which that righteous man saw and heard, as he lived among them, tormented his righteous heart day after

¹ Jewish New Testament Commentary.

² Ibid.

day. ⁹ So the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and how to hold the wicked until the Day of Judgment while continuing to punish them, ¹⁰ especially those who follow their old natures in lust for filth and who despise authority.

In urging his hearers to be alert and ready for *the Day of Judgment*, **Yeshua** also used the cautionary examples of the Flood (Mt 24:37–39), *S'dom and 'Amora* (Mt 10:15, 11:23–24; Lk 10:12), and both together (Lk 17:26–30). **Kefa** makes further use of the example of the Flood in chapter 3.

Kefa further assures his readers that despite the **false teachers'** immorality, the unrighteous, especially those who followed the flesh's polluting desires and despised authority, would not escape God's sovereignty or punishment.

Presumptuous and self-willed, these false teachers do not tremble at insulting angelic beings; ¹¹ whereas angels, though stronger and more powerful, do not bring before the Lord an insulting charge against them. ~ 2 Kefa 2:1-11 (CJB)

We will continue to unpack **2 Kefa 2:12-22** dealing with the **False Prophets and Teachers**, in my next post.