

2 Pet. 2:4-10a (LD 52, Q/A 127) “Rescue and Keep”

For the Children: Perhaps you have heard of “Search and Rescue.” When people go missing in the mountains, or lost at sea, the Search and Rescue team spring into action. They send out helicopters or boats or people on foot to locate the people in trouble and save them. They are very good at what they do. But the Lord is even better at saving His people when we get into trouble. Most of the time we get into trouble because of our own sin! But the Lord knows how to save us even from that. He has shown how good He is at it over all history since the Fall. **Questions:** Give some examples (other than Noah or Lot) of people in the Bible who were rescued from human enemies. Give some examples of some who were rescued from their own sins. How does the Lord rescue us from sin and the devil?

Introduction:

First Point: A Confession of Need

- 1) Too Weak: When we ask the Lord to “Lead...deliver” we imply that we cannot protect or deliver ourselves. Q/A 127 says we are too weak even to hold our own, let alone advance spiritually, even for a moment. That is due to the old, sinful nature that still clings even to the believer. That implies that there is neither strength nor merit in us
- 2) The Need for Rescue: Though Noah was a faithful believer and preacher (Gen. 6:9, 2 Pet. 2:5) he needed preservation. Lot needed rescue (v. 7). We need rescue from temptation (v. 9) – not from being faced with it, but from giving in to it. We need rescue in the sense of forgiveness for falling into it; help to resist it; and total removal from it in the next life. We can supply none of these things for ourselves

Second Point: An Awareness of Hostility

- 1) The Devil: Our need is heightened by the greatness of our “sworn enemies.” Satan has great (though limited) power to deceive, seduce, accuse, and persecute God’s people. He is relentless – he “never stops attacking us” (Q/A 127). See Rev. 12. 1 Pet. 5:8
- 2) The World: Much of Satan’s attack upon us comes through the world – through unbelieving friends, family or associates. The world promises great pleasures if we compromise and unpleasantness if we do not. We see that there were few believers in Noah’s time and few in Sodom & Gomorrah in Lot’s time. These believers were sorely oppressed. Some in these respective families were badly influenced. But no matter how small a minority, we must remain faithful
- 3) Our Own Flesh: In some ways we are our own worst enemy, because of our old nature. See Jam. 1:14-15. Satan and the world would have little success if part of us did not want to be tempted and to give in to it! That is why Peter singles out our need to be rescued from temptation e.g. to indulge our own flesh in its corrupt desires (vss. 9-10a)

Third Point: A Request for Help

- 1) The Request for Rescue: Rescue is what we need; only the Lord can provide it; therefore we should ask Him for it. We ask Him to uphold us; to motivate us with gratitude, love and fear of the Lord and a desire to please Him. We ask Him to strengthen us with His Spirit to resist sin and pursue holiness. We ask Him to forgive us and save us, and finally to remove us from even the possibility of temptation
- 2) Rescue by Judgement: Part of the Lord’s rescue involves His sending of judgements against our enemies. If the Lord punished fallen angels, He certainly won’t spare wicked men who oppose Him and His people – as we see with Noah’s generation and Sodom and Gomorrah. Today, too, the Lord knows how to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgement (vss. 9-10a)
- 3) The Expert in Rescue: The Lord has likewise demonstrated over the centuries that He knows how to preserve and rescue His people through all our temptations, no matter how strong the temptation or how bitter the opposition. If we continue to sin, it is not His failure – it is because *we don’t know* how to rely upon His offered help as we should.

Conclusion: