

John 21:15-17 (*Jesus to Peter after the Resurrection*)

<sup>15</sup> When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” <sup>16</sup> He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”

## 2 Peter Outline

- I. Remember the Greatness of Salvation (1:1-11)
- II. Trust the Certainty of Scripture (1:12-21)
- III. Beware of Deceptive False Teachers (2:1-22)
- IV. Hope in the Promised Future (3:1-16)

### III. Beware of Deceptive False Teachers (2:1-22)

- A. High Alert for False Teachers (vs 1-3)
- B. Divine Precedent for False Teachers (vs 4-8)
  - 1. Supernatural Judgment (vs 4)
  - 2. World-Wide Judgment (vs 5)
  - 3. Hellfire Judgment (vs 6)
  - 4. Righteous Rescue (vs 7-8)
- C. The Lord Knows (vs 9)
  - 1. How to Rescue the Redeemed
  - 2. How to Guard the Guilty

<sup>9</sup> *then **the Lord knows** how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,*

“Rescue” - Gr. ῥύομαι (rhuomai) - deliver

“Trials/Temptations” - Gr. πειρασμός (peirasmos) - examination, submit another to a test, to learn the true nature or character, trial given for the purpose to make one stumble

Psalms 1:6

<sup>6</sup> for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

2 Timothy 2:19

<sup>19</sup> But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”

“Keep” - Gr. τηρέω (tēreō) - to watch over, guard, narrowly watch

“Under punishment” - Gr. κολάζομαι (kolazomai) - punish, chastise, restrain

Isaiah 66:16

<sup>16</sup> For by fire will the Lord enter into judgment,  
and by his sword, with all flesh;  
and those slain by the Lord shall be many.

D. Carnal Traits of False Teachers (vs 10-16)

1. **Unrestrained Licentiousness (vs 10a)**
2. Reckless Arrogance (vs 10b-11)
3. Senseless Impiety (vs 12)
4. Disgusting Deception (vs 13)
5. Pathological Sinner (vs 14)
6. Unmerciful Mercenary (vs 15-16)

***10 and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones,***

“Who indulge” (ESV), “Walk after the flesh” (KJV)

“Lust” - Gr. ἐπιθυμία (epithymia) - deep desire, longing (positive sense), coveting, craving (negative)

“Defiling passion” - Gr. μiasμός (miasmos) - defilement, corruption, pollution

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***10 and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, 11 whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.***

“Despise” - Gr. καταφρονέω (kataphroneō) - scorn, show contempt

“Authority” - Gr. κυριότης (kyriotēs) - ruling power, human authority, supernatural power, celestial dominion

“Bold” - Gr. τολμητής (tolmētēs) - darers, reckless ones, presumptuous

“Willful” - Gr. ἀυθάδης (authadēs) - arrogant, overbearing, stubborn self-will, self-pleasing

“Tremble” - Gr. τρέμω (tremō) - shake the body, fear, respect

“Blaspheme” - Gr. βλασφημέω (blasphēmeō) - insult, slander, curse

“Glorious ones” (ESV), “Angelic Majesties” (NAS), “Dignitaries” (NKJ)

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*12 But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction*

“Irrational” - Gr. ἄλογος (*alogos*) - not able to reason, brutish, absurd, contrary to reason

“Creatures of Instinct” - Gr. φυσικός (*physikos*) - natural, things of nature, physical

Romans 1:26

<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged **natural** relations for those that are contrary to nature;

“They are ignorant” - Gr. ἀγνοέω (*agnoeō*) - not knowing, no information, pay no attention, implying lack of capacity

“Destroyed” - Gr. φθορά (*phthora*) - ruin, disintegration

- Also can mean decay or to rot (Romans 8:21, 1 Corinthians 15:42) or moral corruption, depravity (2 Peter 1:4)

“will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed” (NAS)

“will utterly perish in their own corruption” (NKJ)

“and in their destruction they too will be destroyed” (HCB)

“Will also be destroyed in their destruction” - play on words emphasizing their demise

Jude 10

<sup>10</sup> But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

Matthew 23 (Seven Woes of Jesus to the Pharisees) - hypocrites, blind guides, fools, white washed tombs, serpents, brood of vipers

Revelation 20:9-10

<sup>9</sup> And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, <sup>10</sup> and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

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*13 suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.*

“Suffering wrong” - Gr. ἀδικέω (*adikeō*) - hurt, harm

Revelation 9:10

<sup>10</sup> They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to **hurt** people for five months is in their tails.

“Wage” - Gr. μισθός (*misthos*) - reward, recompense, what is paid back

Jeremiah 14:15

<sup>15</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who prophesy in my name although I did not send them, and who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not come upon this land’: By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed.

“Pleasure” - Gr. ἡδονή (*hēdonē*) - enjoyment, passion, sexual desire,

- Where we get “hedonism” - pleasure is the highest good, fulfilling pleasure as a way of life

Luke 8:14 (*Parable of the Sower*)

<sup>14</sup> And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and **pleasures** of life, and their fruit does not mature.

James 4:1-4

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your **passions** are at war within you? <sup>2</sup> You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your **passions**. <sup>4</sup> You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

“Revel” - Gr. τρυφή (*tryphē*) - carousal, delicacy, indulgence, a life lived in luxury and splendor *troo-fay*; from θρύπτω **thruptō** (to *break up* or [fig.] *enfeeble*, espec. the mind and body by indulgence); *effeminacy*, i.e. *luxury* or *debauchery*:—delicately, riot

Strong, J. (2009). [A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible](#) (Vol. 1, p. 73). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Romans 13:13 (*immorality at night*)

<sup>13</sup> Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

1 Thessalonians 5:7 (*Drunkenness at night*)

<sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night.

“Blots” - Gr. σπίλος (*spilos*) - stain, defiled, corrupted

“Blemishes” - Gr. μῶμος (*mōmos*) - defect, disgrace, to blame or ridicule

The graphic phrase *amōmou kai aspilou*, used in 1 Peter 1:19 to refer to the sinlessness of Christ as One without “blemish or defect,” is artfully rephrased in 2 Peter 2:13 as *spiloi kai mōmoi* (“blots and blemishes”) to refer to the character of the false teachers. The phrase is used again in 3:14, *aspiloi kai amōmētoi* (“spotless and blameless”), to challenge Christians to moral excellence in light of Christ’s return. The use of these and other unique words and phrases in these two epistles provides strong evidence of their common authorship.

Gangel, K. O. (1985). [2 Peter](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 860–861). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

1 Peter 1:19 (*Christ is opposite the false teachers*)

<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb **without blemish or spot**.

2 Peter 3:14

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, **be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish**, and at peace

“*Deceptions*” (ESV) - Gr. ἀπάτη (*apatē*) - to mislead, deceitfulness, treachery, trick, fraud  
“sporting themselves with their own deceivings” (KJV)  
“delighting in their deceptions” (HCB)

2 Timothy 3:13

<sup>13</sup> while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Colossians 2:8

<sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty **deceit** (*apatē*), according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

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*<sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!*

“*Adultery*” - Gr. μοιχαλῖς (*moichalis*) - unfaithful, seduce another, idolatry

James 4:4

<sup>4</sup> You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

“*Insatiable*” (ESV), “*cannot cease*” (NKJ), “*always looking for*” (HCB) - Gr. ἀκατάπαυστος (*akatapaustos*) - never stopping, endless, unceasing, restless, not giving up

“*entice*” - Gr. δელιάζω (*deleazō*) - lure into sin, be seduced, literally “to catch with bait”

“*Unsteady*” - Gr. ἀστήρικτος (*astērikτος*) - unstable, weak, easily changeable in views and attitudes, wavering

- Used in Greek literature of an unladen, tossed ship

2 Timothy 3:1-6

<sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

<sup>6</sup> For among them are **those who creep into households and capture weak women**, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions

“*Trained*” - Gr. γυμνάζω (*gymnazō*) - to practice, discipline oneself, experience vigorous training  
• Where we get “gymnasium”

Hebrews 5:14

<sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment **trained** by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

1 Timothy 4:7

<sup>7</sup> Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather **train** yourself for godliness;

“*Accursed*” - Gr. κατάρα (*katara*) - invoke a power to harm another, be under judgment

Ephesians 2:3

<sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature **children of wrath**, like the rest of mankind.

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*<sup>15</sup> Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, <sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

“*Forsaking*” - Gr. καταλείπω (*kataleipō*) - leave, depart, abandon, neglect

Acts 13:10

<sup>10</sup> and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, **will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?**”

“*They have gone Astray*” - Gr. πλανάομαι (*planaomai*) - wander about, move about without purpose, deceive, be deluded, be misled

- Where we get “planet” or “planetarium” - wandering star

2 Timothy 3:13

<sup>13</sup> while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

“*They have followed the way of Balaam*”

Numbers 22:5 Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River

Numbers 22:18

<sup>18</sup> But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, “Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more.

## 2 Peter 2:12-16

### Numbers 25:1-3

<sup>25</sup> While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. <sup>2</sup> These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. <sup>3</sup> So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.

### Numbers 31:15-16

<sup>15</sup> Moses said to them, "Have you let all the women live? <sup>16</sup> Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the Lord.

### Deuteronomy 23:3-5

<sup>4</sup> because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. <sup>5</sup> But the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam; instead the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loved you

### Revelation 2:14-15 (*Church in Pergamum*)

<sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.

*<sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

### Numbers 22:22-35 (Balaam's Donkey and the Angel)

<sup>22</sup> But God's anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as his adversary. Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. <sup>23</sup> And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey, to turn her into the road. <sup>24</sup> Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. <sup>25</sup> And when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again. <sup>26</sup> Then the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. <sup>27</sup> When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. <sup>28</sup> Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" <sup>29</sup> And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you." <sup>30</sup> And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No."

<sup>31</sup> Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. <sup>32</sup> And the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me. <sup>33</sup> The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live." <sup>34</sup> Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me. Now therefore, if it is evil in your sight, I will turn back." <sup>35</sup> And the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you." So Balaam went on with the princes of Balak.

Jude 11

<sup>11</sup> Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.

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## Additional Resources:

### 2 Peter 2:12

The reckless blasphemies of God and angels by false teachers demonstrate that they are like **unreasoning animals** (cf. Jude 10). They are comparable to beasts that have no rational capability, operating solely on self-indulgence and unthinking passion. **Animals are born as creatures of instinct**, meaning that their responses to stimuli are preprogrammed, having been built into their genetic makeup by God (cf. Gen. 1:30). Because they operate on instinct, animals are not rational; thus they make no intellectual contributions to society. In fact, for most of them, their primary role in the ecological system is **to be captured and killed**, thereby providing meat for other members up the food chain.

Spiritual pretenders, dishonestly presenting themselves as true teachers, exhibit an animal-like ignorance, **reviling where they have no knowledge**. They ridicule divine truth and heavenly authority, including things they do not even understand. Like animals, they make no positive contribution and would actually serve others best by being dead. Hence the end of verse 12 predicts that they **will ... be destroyed**; they will not escape God's future wrath. When God's fire consumes the entire world and all its creatures (3:7, 12), false teachers will **also** be finally wiped out **in the destruction of those creatures**. Jude adds that false teachers' instinctive evil programs them to be destroyed (v. 10). As God's enemies, having intentionally distorted the message of His Word, they will all face eternal punishment in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:9–15).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2005). [2 Peter and Jude](#) (p. 99). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

### Jude 12-13

<sup>12</sup> These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; <sup>13</sup> wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

### 2 Peter 2:13

*"While they Feast"* - Gr. συνευωχέομαι (syneuōcheomai) - join with others in eating an elaborate meal, entertain sumptuously

- Possibly the love feast of communion

As a general rule, sinners tend to engage in debauchery at night: "For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night" (1 Thess. 5:7). According to historians, pagan Roman society tolerated dissipation and revelry as long as it was discreetly confined to the cover of darkness. But it frowned on and disapproved of debauchery during the daytime when it could be viewed by everyone. Because of its public nature, such behavior was considered inappropriate, even by Roman unbelievers. Nonetheless, the false teachers of Peter's day were so consumed with lust, greed, and vice that they considered **it a pleasure to revel in the daytime**, not wanting to wait until nightfall.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2005). [2 Peter and Jude](#) (p. 100). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

## 2 Peter 2:14

The picture is a terrible one. The word which is used for *trained* is the word which is used for an athlete, exercising and training himself for the games. These people have actually trained and equipped and taught their minds and hearts to concentrate on nothing but the forbidden desire. They have deliberately fought with conscience until they have destroyed it; they have deliberately wrestled with God until they have thrown God out of life; they have deliberately struggled with their finer feelings until they have strangled them; they have deliberately trained themselves to concentrate on the forbidden things. Their lives have been a dreadful battle to destroy virtue and to train themselves in the techniques of sin.

(*The Letters of James and Peter*, rev. ed. [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976], 332; italics in the original)

Without question, Peter understood that their actions were not accidental. Their offenses were crimes of premeditation, not momentary lapses of judgment. As masterminds of sin, the false teachers had planned their attacks and purposed their hearts toward sensual and materialistic ends.

With understandable disgust, the apostle responds with a blunt but appropriate appellation, **accursed children**. As liars and hypocrites, the false teachers epitomized those whom God has cursed to hell. Peter's phrase is a Hebraism expressing the idea that people are "children" of whatever influences most dominate their lives (cf. Gal. 3:10, 13; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Peter 1:14). As servants of Satan and slaves to sin, they were rightly denounced as children of hell's curse.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2005). [2 Peter and Jude](#) (pp. 101-102). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

Their deceit was aimed at seducing (from *deleazō*, "bait, entice"; used only here and in 2 Peter 2:18) **the** unwary or unsteadfast (cf. 3:16), and **they** had become specialists in **greed** (cf. 2:3; lit., "having a heart exercised in greed"). **Experts** ("exercised," kjv) translates *gegymnasmenēn*, from which comes "gymnasium." They "work out" in covetousness, practicing and sharpening greedy skills. Yet they never have enough. No wonder Peter called them **an accursed brood** (lit., "children of a curse," a Hebraism denoting certain destruction from the hand of God). Sensuality, deception, greed—all are deserving of God's wrath.

Gangel, K. O. (1985). [2 Peter](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 872-873). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

## 2 Peter 2:15-16

22:4b-5. **Balak** knew that Israel was far too powerful to defeat militarily so he decided to employ a famous diviner (cf. 24:1; Josh. 13:22), **Balaam son of Beor**, to invoke curses on Israel. Balaam was from **Pethor**, a city on **the River**, probably the Euphrates. Possibly Pethor was not far from the great city of Mari, discovered in 1933 in the Euphrates Valley. The discovery of a vast number of cuneiform tablets at Mari, beginning in 1933, revealed among other things the existence of a complex cult of prophets and seers whose activities precisely resemble those of Balaam. The fact that he undoubtedly represented the prophetic customs and practices of Mari and vicinity makes possible a better understanding of Balaam's narrative in Numbers.

Merrill, E. H. (1985). [Numbers](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 241). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.