

“The Righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ”

The First in a Series of Sermons on Second Peter

Texts: 2 Peter 1:1-11; Genesis 6:1-8

We begin an eight-part study of the Second Epistle of Peter, continuing our larger series on 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude. From the moment we open this all-too often overlooked, but very important letter ascribed to the Apostle Peter, it soon becomes apparent that there are a number of problems to be faced by anyone who attempts to preach through this letter, or treat it as a genuine apostolic document that belongs among those God-breathed writings which make up the canon of the New Testament. In fact, the problems we encounter with this epistle are significant enough that the vast majority of biblical scholars dismiss even the possibility that this epistle was written by the Apostle Peter—in spite of the opening words in which the author claims to be “*Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.*”¹ Despite the judgment of so many scholars to the contrary, I think a good case can be made for Petrine authorship of this short epistle, and that it does indeed belong in the canon of the New Testament.

A sermon is not a good (or really even an appropriate) place to tackle complicated questions of New Testament introduction. Since these difficulties are so apparent in 2 Peter, and since we will spend several Sundays in this letter, we cannot ignore the matter. So, we will address the questions of authorship and authenticity, and then survey some of the theological themes in this epistle, before we conclude by briefly taking up the opening greeting from Peter found in the first two verses.

Called the “ugly stepchild” of the New Testament²—because there are so many issues surrounding its authenticity—the reader of this epistle will soon notice two important difficulties. First, even upon a cursory reading, it is clear that there are significant differences in the style of writing and choice of words between 1 and 2 Peter—a problem which must be addressed if the Apostle Peter is responsible for both epistles. As Richard Bauckham has pointed out, there are some fifty-seven words in 2 Peter not found anywhere else in the New Testament (so-called *hapax legomena*), as well as thirty-two words used in 2 Peter which are not found in the LXX.³ This means that many of the words the author uses are not “biblical” in the sense that they are not drawn directly from the Old Testament. Since many of these unique words are widely used in Hellenistic Greek writings, this fact suggests to many that the author was someone more cosmopolitan than a man like Simon Peter, a Galilean fisherman.

¹ Two scholars well-known for their critical skills and conservative temperaments, such as Charles Cranfield and Richard W. Bauckham, reject the traditional position, which is that despite the problems associated with this epistle, it was written by the Apostle Peter. See C. E. B. Cranfield, *I & II Peter and Jude*, Torch Bible Commentaries (London: SCM Press, 1960), 148-150; Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, Vol 50, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word Books, 1983), 158-163.

² Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2006), Logos Bible Software, “introduction.”

³ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 135-136.

Even John Calvin had reservations about this epistle on this same ground, noting “there were some who were led by the diversity of style to think that Peter was not the author. Although some difficulty can be traced, I admit that there is a clear difference which argues for different writers.” Yet, despite such reservations, Calvin accepts the epistle as genuine on the grounds that the “majesty of the Spirit of Christ expresses itself in all parts of the epistle, [therefore] I have a dread of repudiating it, even though I do not recognize in it the genuine language of Peter.”⁴ Calvin raises the question many others have asked as well. How could the same writer produce two letters so different in both style and wording?

The second difficulty we find in 2 Peter arises from the fact that there are a number of instances in which either the author of this epistle is quoting from the short Book of Jude (which contains a mere 25 verses), or Jude (who is believed to be the half-brother of Jesus) is quoting from 2 Peter.⁵ Some 19 of the 25 verses in Jude are also found in 2 Peter. Despite the obvious connection between these two letters, and the likelihood of some sort of literary dependence between them, neither epistle slavishly borrows from the other. If Peter borrowed from Jude, he changed 70% of the words Jude used. If Jude borrowed from 2nd Peter, then he changed an even higher percentage of Peter’s words.⁶

It is difficult to tell with any precision who was borrowing from whom, but it does appear as though one author consulted the other in the preparation of his epistle. While it is possible that the two authors may be quoting from a common source, this seems unlikely. Most scholars believe that Peter utilized Jude’s short letter, adapting its contents to his own situation, warning about false teachers who were once part of the church, but have departed from the faith, adding to Jude’s main point his own warning about how false teachers were distorting the doctrine of Christ’s second advent.⁷ The use of one letter as a source by another biblical author is not necessarily problematic. In the first four verses of his gospel, Luke tells us that he consulted the work of others who had written gospels before he did (presumably Matthew and Mark). Christians believe that the final product (even if sources are used) is given by the Holy Spirit through the means of a human author (in this case, the Apostle Peter).

Many of the critical scholars who reject the Petrine authorship of this letter, betray an underlying “hermeneutic of suspicion”—a term coined by French philosopher Paul Ricoeur in regard to the method of analysis used by the likes of Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. Someone operating with a hermeneutic of suspicion challenges foundational assumptions of any world-view they may encounter. Any document which a critical scholar finds problematic is assumed to be guilty until proven innocent, and even then suspicion remains. When applied in biblical studies, such a hermeneutic tells us that if there is the slightest hint of doubt, or if there are any historical/documentary issues with a text (no matter how minor), and in spite of any worthy or substantial arguments which are contrary to such suspicions, benefit always goes to the critical viewpoint. To put the matter bluntly, many critical scholars really do think

⁴ John Calvin, Hebrews and I and II Peter, Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries, trans. W. B. Johnston, editors., David W. Torrance and Thomas T. Torrance (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1979), 325.

⁵ See the discussion in, Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, Logos “V. Jude and 2 Peter.”

⁶ Donald Guthrie, New Testament Introduction (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 925 n. 1.

⁷ Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, Logos “V. Jude and 2 Peter.”

that only ignorant fundamentalists believe things like all the books in the New Testament are attributed to those whose names are attached to them—which is the historic, legal, and proper scholarly position which has always held that we take ancient documents on their face, unless there are good and compelling reasons to do otherwise.⁸ A critical scholar’s weakly supported assertion that Peter did not write this epistle is not to my mind a good or a compelling reason to reject it.

This hermeneutic of suspicion can be seen in the work of noted New Testament scholar W. G. Kümmel, who after citing the two reasons just mentioned (and then adding several more weakly supported assertions) writes that “it is certain, therefore, that II Pet does not originate with Peter, and this is today widely acknowledged.”⁹ Kümmel dogmatically asserts, “this letter cannot have been written by Peter.”¹⁰ Based upon the critical assumption that many New Testament books were written in late in the first century, or even early in the second century (long after those named in them as their authors had died), Kümmel contends that this particular letter was written as late as 150 A.D. This means that Peter was long since dead when this epistle was written by an anonymous author who wrote in Peter’s name, and which was then accepted as canonical by gullible Christians who didn’t know any better, or who, supposedly did not care about authenticity because they found the contents of this epistle to their liking.

Kümmel follows the well-worn route taken by many critical scholars, boldly asserting (as though it were overwhelmingly true merely because he asserts it) that it was common-place in the ancient world for a letter like 2 Peter to be written by an anonymous writer long after the events purported in the epistle would have occurred, and who then writes in the name of a mentor or well-known figure, in this case Simon Peter. The problem for such a view is that the author of 2 Peter claims to be an eyewitness to events associated with the life of Jesus—such as the Transfiguration (2 Peter 1:18). The author of this letter even claimed to have heard the voice from heaven while with Jesus on the “holy mountain.”

But if this is not Peter the Apostle writing this letter (but is instead someone claiming to be Peter, many decades after Peter died), then the author is claiming to be a participant in an event which occurred a hundred years or so beforehand. How can the author make such a claim, and yet not be guilty of lying? All the more so when the author empathically states in verse 16, “*for we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*” Is the author lying, or was he an eyewitness? Critical scholars do not accept the author’s claim, but then will not dare to actually express the logical conclusion to which their view pushes them—the person claiming to be Peter is openly lying. He is a deceptive fraud, not a pious Christian honoring his favorite apostle. And if he is a fraud, why did the early church canonize 2 Peter?

Given the great stress in the early church upon truth-telling (one immediately thinks of the account of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 who were struck dead because they lied to the Holy Spirit), how could someone write an epistle in the name of Peter, and then claim to be an eyewitness to events he did not witness, nor could have? And why did he pick the transfiguration? Why not the cross or the resurrection? Or even the ascension? On these terms, how can 2 Peter not be a deliberate fabrication,

⁸ Source needed

⁹ W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, trans. Howard Clark Kee (London: SCM Press, 1973), 433.

¹⁰ Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, 430.

and therefore guilty of bearing of false witness?¹¹ That critical scholars make such assertions as though they are unassailable, reveals that their underlying hermeneutic of suspicion simply will not allow them to even consider the weighty and compelling arguments used by Christians in response to challenges brought against apostolic letters such as 2 Peter.¹² Nothing is so stubborn as an opinion lacking facts.

Rather than spend a moment's more time replying to the position of critical scholars, there are very good and compelling reasons why we should accept this epistle as coming from the Apostle Peter, despite the previously mentioned difficulties. The strongest argument is the one just mentioned. The author claims to be Simon Peter (v. 1), and states unequivocally that he was an eyewitness to the event he recounts, i.e., the transfiguration of Jesus (vv.16-18). He asserts that he is not following myths or a fables, and he is a witness to the events to which he now appeals. If such a claim was made by someone outside the known apostolic circle, it would be rejected immediately by early Christians because they knew that there were only three people were up on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus, and one of them was Peter. Anyone claiming to be there (other than James and John) would be immediately recognized as a fraud.

There is also an important connection made between Peter's statement in verse 14 (of chapter 1) and Jesus' prediction regarding Peter's eventual fate. In John 21:18, Jesus says to Peter, "*truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.*" In 2 Peter, we read of the author's awareness of his impending death, when he writes "*since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me,*" an obvious reference to both the author's expected death and Jesus' prophecy given to Peter, and recorded by John. Why would an anonymous author make such an obvious connection between the likelihood of his imminent death and the prophecy of Jesus, if he was writing long after Peter had died?¹³ Peter's poignant awareness of his impending death fits well with what we know about Peter's death in Rome at the hands of Nero, after that time Jude was composed by the brother of our Lord, and likely between the time of the great fire in Rome (A.D. 64), and Nero's death in A.D. 68.¹⁴

Under the circumstances mentioned in the letter itself (i.e., internal evidence), it is far more likely that the author is the Apostle Peter describing his current state of affairs in Rome when writing, than it is that some anonymous author is portraying himself as though he were Peter. Although this letter was likely composed in Rome, there is nothing in the letter to tell us where or to whom Peter was sending it. No church, or churches, or geographical regions are identified, and no individuals are named, only those "*who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus*

¹¹ See the discussion in Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, 838-842.

0. I can only wonder how Kümmel's glib dismissal of Petrine authorship would fare in comparison with B. B. Warfield's over-looked but substantial defense of the authenticity of this epistle (1882). See "The Canonicity of Second Peter" reprinted in Selected Shorter Writings, Vol. 2., ed., John E. Meeter (Philipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1980), 48-79.

¹³ Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, 821.

¹⁴ Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, Logos "III. Date, Language and Style," and Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), Logos Bible Software, "Date and Destination."

Christ" (v. 1). Peter's first epistle was sent to "to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," Christians who had been displaced by an edict of Claudius.¹⁵ There is nothing like this found in 2 Peter.

Since Peter's second letter deals with the heresies known to be confronted by Christians in Asia Minor,¹⁶ it is reasonable to assume that this second letter from Peter is intended for the same general area as the first epistle (Asia Minor), to which, by the way, Peter refers in 3:1. "This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder." If 2 Peter was written by an anonymous author claiming to be Peter (as critical scholars assert), the author also would be lying about composing an earlier letter to gain credibility for his forgery. The occasion for the writing of this letter—the nearness of Peter's death—obviously makes far more sense to believe that the author is Peter, and the earlier letter to which he refers is the letter we now know as 1 Peter.

Yet another reason why critical scholars reject the authenticity of this epistle is the fact that it is supposedly poorly attested in the early church—i.e., that it is not cited by name by any church father until the third century.¹⁷ But as B. B. Warfield convincingly argues, there are a number of allusions to this epistle in the writings of the church fathers, including Irenaeus (A.D. 175), Justin Martyr (c. 147), and Barnabas (c. 106). There is even the possibility, Warfield contends, that Clement of Rome uses a phrase unique in the New Testament to 2 Peter as early as 97 A.D.¹⁸ But such significant evidence in favor of the wide-spread acceptance of this epistle in the early church is cavalierly discarded by all those operating with a hermeneutic of suspicion, and who are guilty of what Warfield describes as a methodology which bends the facts to fit our theories, and not the other way around.¹⁹

Although 2 Peter may well be the most poorly attested of all of the books in the New Testament canon, we do well to keep in mind the wise words of Michael Green, who reminds us that this epistle "has incomparably better support for its inclusion than the best attested of the rejected books."²⁰ Warfield points out that even as the most poorly attested of New Testament books, the fact is that the antiquity and authenticity of 2 Peter is far better attested than the classical writers, Herodotus, Thucydides, or Tacitus. In other words, the case for the authenticity of 2 Peter is weak for a New Testament book, but far stronger than any number of works from antiquity whose authenticity is rarely challenged. If 2 Peter is the most questionable book in the New Testament, this means that the rest of the New Testament books have substantial evidence for their authenticity, and this is but another reminder that the hermeneutic of suspicion has lead critical scholars down yet another blind alley.

¹⁵ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic; 2007), 1015-1016.

¹⁶ For example, the doctrine of the Nicolaitans mentioned in Revelation 2:8,

¹⁷ Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, 433.

¹⁸ Warfield, "The Canonicity of Second Peter," 57.

¹⁹ Warfield, "The Canonicity of Second Peter," 76.

²⁰ Cited in D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, An Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 434.

How then do we explain the obvious differences in style between 1 and 2 Peter? There are several very plausible explanations to consider. One is that Peter wrote one epistle (likely 2 Peter) and that a professional scribe composed 1 Peter under Peter's supervision.²¹ A second possible option is that a professional scribe composed both letters, since the Greek of 2 Peter is described as refined with ornate speech, something we would not expect from a Galilean fisherman.²² Since we have no real biographical details of Peter's education and early life, we can only speculate about Peter's education and writing skills (or lack thereof). All we can say is that two letters are very different, that one or more scribes composed this letter, and Peter oversaw the composition of any apostolic letter sent in his name.

One very plausible explanation for the differences between them is found by examining the purpose of each letter. 1 Peter is written for a Gentile audience, who were then undergoing great trials at the hands of the civil authorities (1 Pet. 1:6), and which was to be delivered by Silvanus, who may have been Peter's scribe (1 Pet. 5:12) to the churches mentioned in 1 Peter 1:1. But this second letter seems to have been composed with some sense of urgency—as Peter's death is near (2 Pet. 1:14). There are no recipients named, no locations mentioned, no thanksgivings offered, only a formal greeting (vv. 1-2), a summary (2 Pet. 3:17-18a) and then a final doxology (18b). 2 Peter is very general in terms of its contents, so it was probably intended to circulate from church to church—rather than to be sent to a particular congregation (or group of churches in the same area), as with Peter's previous letter.

The actual content of the body of 2 Peter reflects a common Greek rhetorical style, typical of farewell speeches. This may mean that some of Peter's final words (given in a sermon or a speech) were recorded by a scribe, then edited into the form of a letter (2 Peter) which was intended to be circulated in the churches. If Peter is referring loosely to Jude's letter throughout his speech, and offering a final warning about false doctrine to the churches, this would easily explain the differences in style and word use between the two epistles (1 and 2 Peter).²³ To put the matter as simply as I can, these are two letters, penned by two different scribes (each under Peter's direction), and composed for two completely different reasons and for two different sets of circumstances—2 Peter being that occasion where Peter is, in effect, saying “farewell” to those Christians who will be receiving this letter.

It is worth noting that although 1 Peter has a “rich profusion” of Old Testament citations and echoes, not so in 2 Peter. Peter quotes the Old Testament (perhaps) but a single time (2 Pet. 3:13) and whatever allusions to the Old Testament he makes are in those texts also found in Jude (to which Peter is likely referring).²⁴ Peter compares his world with the world as it was in the days of Noah (chapter 2), he refers to the story of Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as the account of Balaam and the talking donkey. Peter also contrasts how the final judgment (by fire) will come upon the world just as the flood did in the Genesis account (Genesis 6-9). Peter describes the final judgment to come upon these false teachers against the backdrop of Genesis 6:1-8 (our Old Testament lesson), a passage which is illustrative of the

²¹ Peter H. Davids, The First Epistle of Peter, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 5-7.

²² Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, Logos “III. Date, Language and Style.”

²³ See the very helpful discussion in, Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, Logos “V: Literary Form.”

²⁴ Beale and Carson, Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, 1015, 1047.

wickedness of those on the earth when God brought judgment upon them.

What about the contents of this letter? And who are the false teachers Peter mentions throughout the second chapter?²⁵ The main theme of this letter (2 Peter) then, in contrast to Peter's first epistle, is the danger of false teaching and the perilous conditions, and ungodliness such teaching produces. It is difficult to tell just who these false teachers are, but from Peter's comments in chapter 2:1-3, it is clear that they were at one time professing Christians who have now gone off the rails, doctrinally speaking. Peter says of them, "*but false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.*" Despite their former orthodoxy, Peter regards these people as false teachers whose false doctrine leads to sinful conduct. As a consequence, God's judgment upon them is certain.

Based on several hints given us by Peter, it may even be the case that these people misused the letters of Paul to justify their antinomian behavior. In 2:19, Peter writes, "*they promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved,*" before he goes on to state in 3:15-16, "*and count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*" Apparently, Paul's letters were distorted in the apostolic age, even as they are in our own.

We also learn that these false teachers denied that Jesus would return a second time. In 2 Peter 3:4-7, Peter says of them, "*they will say, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.' For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.*" Skepticism and confusion about Christ's return was common in the early church (one can think of Paul's two Thessalonian letters), even as it is in our own, as Bible prophecy pundits have made so many wild and irresponsible predictions about the second coming of Jesus Christ, that non-Christians no longer pay any attention to the Bible's teaching that Jesus is going to return to judge the world, raise the dead, and make all things new.

As we wrap up then, we turn to the opening greeting in verses 1-2. "*Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*" Peter identifies himself as "Simeon" Peter, as in Acts 15:14 (the Jerusalem Council), which is a Hebrew spelling of the more familiar Greek "Simon" Peter. The use of this spelling points in the direction of an early date for this epistle, since "Simeon" does not appear in any second century Christian writings. Whoever composed this epistle (Peter, or his scribe) was a Jew, and when

²⁵ Helpful discussions of the identities of the false teachers and the doctrinal matters discussed by Peter can be found in: Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, Logos "VII. Theology"; Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, Logos, "Opponents."

used in conjunction with Peter's office (apostle), this lends great credibility to the view that this epistle comes from Peter.²⁶ If this is not Peter, then the anonymous author is a liar.

Typical of first century epistolary greetings, Peter introduces himself, and then describes himself both as a servant of Christ and an apostle. Peter's authority is given him by Christ, whom he serves in his apostolic office. Atypical of such greetings is that Peter says nothing about the intended recipients of this letter, only that they are believers "*who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.*" The word translated "obtained" is better rendered "received" (*lanchousin*) and indicates the reception of something by lot. The faith which justifies is a gift from God given through Jesus Christ—the source of the righteousness of God, and is therefore something which is "received."²⁷ All those who have been given such faith, are said to be of the same faith as "ours" i.e., as that of the Apostles. All those in Christ through faith (or who believe "the faith") are of the same status before God, even if some, like Peter, have been called to offices of authority (i.e., apostle). Believers obtain this righteous standing before God through the instrument of faith ("by" in the sense of "by means of") in Jesus Christ, who, the Greek sentence tells us is God.²⁸

This righteousness standing is contrasted throughout the rest of this letter with the unrighteous—the false teachers and those who follow them. Peter says that they once knew the way of righteousness (i.e., they professed to believe the gospel preached by Peter and the Apostles) but have since departed from it. Peter will say of them in 2 Peter 2:21, that "*it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.*" Peter makes a contrast between the false teachers and an Old Testament saint like Noah (2 Peter 2:5), who was "*a herald of righteousness.*" Jesus is God, and it is through the gift of faith—through which we have received the righteousness of God—which is the basis of our standing before him (an equal standing which all Christians share). The reception of this wonderful gift of faith differentiates the righteous from those who will inevitably find themselves facing the judgment of God because they departed from the truth, and who introduce destructive heresies, denying Jesus Christ, who is God. The departure from the truth is a serious matter, and Peter will address this matter head-on in the second chapter of this letter.

Finally, in verse 2, as found in many New Testament letters, Peter extends God's grace and peace to those reading this letter, through their knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. *May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*" All hearing this letter are reminded that the only reason *why* they are presently believers and "*have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ*" is because God, in his grace, and through his word of Shalom ("peace") gives his people the gift of faith and then even multiplies his blessings to them through their knowledge of Jesus Christ. Peter exhorts his hearers to realize that the more God's people know about Jesus Christ and his saving work, the stronger their faith will be, as will their ability to detect and resist the false teachers then plaguing the churches which will receive this letter.

In conclusion then, despite the difficulties we face when working our way through this epistle, the case is strong that this letter comes to us from the Apostle Peter, that it belongs in the New Testament canon,

²⁶ Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, Logos on 1:1.

²⁷ Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, Logos on 1:1.

²⁸ Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, Logos on 1:1.

and that it contains one of the most powerful and direct warnings from any apostle about the dangers of false teachers. But Peter also reminds us in 2 Peter 3:13, that such false doctrine cannot undermine either the power or authority of God's prophetic word, which proclaims to all—despite the presence of scoffers—that “*according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*”