

2 Peter 2:1a

The ending of 2 Peter 1 focused on the sacred scriptures as they are God breathed and inspired by God. Chapter 2 begins with the word “but” which is contrasting the words of God which is truth to the words of false prophets which are lies. This chapter focuses on false prophets, false teachers, apostates, heretics, and those who profess faith in Christ, but are not truly regenerated. False prophets were present in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament and are present in our day. This chapter discusses the characteristics of these people and the condemnation, judgment, and wrath that is upon them. Scripture is clear that in every generation of humanity there will be false prophets, apostates, and heretics who profess to be Christians, but are not and lead people astray by their empty words and attempt to destroy the church. The church has been warned and is to be on guard to recognize these people, refute their lies, and defend the truth. These false prophets are clever and use “religious words” to sound clever and Biblical, but they twist the Word of God and distort the true meaning for their own agenda. How can so many people who profess Christianity fall for the lies and distortion that these people claim? The answer is simple, they do not know the truths of the Bible. This is why the authors of the Bible are relentless in instructing us to grow in the knowledge of God and be able to rightly handle the word of truth. If we don’t know the truth, we fall for the lie. Growing in the truth of God and His word is how we spot these people, correct them, and defend the faith. God takes false prophets, apostates, and heretics seriously as so should the Church as we defend the words of our God!

- **False prophets were present in the Old Testament**

- Jeremiah had been sent by God to proclaim the message that unless Judah repented, God would bring judgment and exile on the people. Those in authority and those who heard that message did not like the words that Jeremiah was proclaiming. At the same time, false prophets were proclaiming another message “on behalf of the Lord” and their message was more popular and well received. Their message was that God is good, loving, and peaceful and He would not bring about this judgment, hardship, and exile on the people of Judah. They promised peace to the people even if they did not repent or turn from wicked ways. This is the same as false teachers, preachers, prophets, apostates, and heretics today: they never preach on judgment, repentance, conviction of sin, or hardship, but rather proclaim prosperity, wealth, healing, and unconditional love of God. As was the case in the time of Jeremiah, the message of the false prophets was headed and welcomed more favorably than the actual truth and the words of God.

- **Isaiah 30:9-14** For this is a rebellious people, false sons, Sons who ^[e]refuse to listen To the ^[b]instruction of the Lord; ¹⁰Who say to the seers, “You must not see *visions*”; And to the prophets, “You must not prophesy to us what is right, Speak to us ^[c]pleasant words, Prophecy illusions. ¹¹“Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, ^[d]Let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel.”¹²Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, “Since you have rejected this wordAnd have put your trust in oppression and guile, and have relied on them,¹³Therefore this iniquity will be to you Like a breach about to fall, A bulge in a high wall, Whose collapse comes suddenly in an instant,¹⁴Whose collapse is like the smashing of a potter’s jar, ^[e]So ruthlessly shattered That a sherd will not be found among its pieces To ^[f]take fire from a hearth Or to scoop water from a cistern.”
- **Jeremiah 14:13-22**
- **Jeremiah 23:9-40**
- **Jeremiah 28:1-17**
- **Jeremiah 29** (take note of verses 8-9, 24-32 especially)
- **Ezekiel 13**
- **Deuteronomy 13:1-5, Deuteronomy 18:20-22**

The Word of God puts great weight and seriousness in regards to speaking on behalf of God things that are not from God. This strikes to the heart of the 3rd commandment of taking the Lord’s name in vain. False Christians and deceivers have been among the true Christians from antiquity and are present today. These people will be among us until the last day. We must be diligent to study and know the Word of God so that we can identify heresy and false teaching when we hear it as to defend and honor the infallible and sacred words of our Lord and to rescue those who may be going astray to these false words and teachings. We must protect, guard, and defend the Bible and the Church from the greatest threat we have: false teachers, false prophets, apostates, and heretics.

These are the words of truth versus words of lies, the words of freedom versus the words of bondage, the words of life versus the words of death!

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.