

# A STUDY OF 2 PETER

## False Teachers Continued (2 Peter 2:12-16)

In this lesson, we continue our discussion of false teachers and their ultimate destruction. In verse 12, Peter is in the middle of a comparison between the angels and the false teachers. The angels would not even blaspheme the wicked angels while these false teachers were uncontrolled in their speech and action. They had no reference, no restraint, no moral character.

False Teachers are  
Dangerous!

Look at this further description of the false teachers:

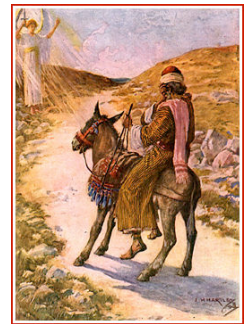
They Were Ignorant	They Were Immoral	They Abused Others
Irrational like animals	They were Hedonistic	They desire to entice the unsteady
Acted on instinct like animals	They reveled in the daytime	They are greedy
Were born to be caught and destroyed like animals	They attended Christian feasts and tried to deceive people there	
Blaspheme about matters of which they are ignorant	Their eyes were full of adultery	
Their destructive acts would destroy them	Their appetite for sin was insatiable	
	They had forsaken the right way	
	They had followed the way of Balaam (loved gain from wrongdoing)	

These false teachers were “out of control.” They did what they wanted, when they wanted, with whomever they wanted. They lived to satisfy self with a hedonistic, self-centred lifestyle that abused and took advantage of others. They acted irrationally and instinctively without any regard for the consequences of their actions or the people they harmed along the way.

Their lifestyle and actions would bring their own demise. W. H. Bennett observes, *“As animals are trapped through their eagerness to satisfy their appetite, so self-indulgence betrays these men to their ruin.”*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The General Epistles, James, Peter, John, and Jude, in The Century Bible: A Modern Commentary. p. 274.

1. The word translated as “pleasure” in the ESV is the Greek word “*hēdonē*” from which we get the English word “hedonism.” What is the meaning of this word and what does it tell you about the false teachers?
2. What is reveling?
3. Why is it significant that the false teachers reveled in the daytime?
4. The story of Balaam is found in Numbers 22-24. In a few words describe the story of Balaam and his donkey.
5. How were these men like Balaam?



### False Teachers Fail to Deliver (2 Peter 2:17-22)

There is nothing good, noble, or just about these false teachers. They lived lives that were useless like “*waterless springs*” and “*mists driven by a storm*.” Water is often used in the Bible to refer to divine teaching. The teaching of the false prophets brought no lasting satisfaction. It brought no refreshment. Likewise, a mist or a cloud brought the hope of rain, but failed to deliver.<sup>2</sup> Their doom was the gloom of utter darkness.

The false teachers speak “*loud boasts of folly*.” The NIV says “*they mouth empty, boastful words*” while the NASB translates this phrase: “*speaking out arrogant words of vanity*.” These teachers make grand promises, but their teachings are worse than useless.

They “*entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error*.” They literally appealed or baited new and weak Christians through sinful lusts. They taught that sexual and moral purity were not essential parts of the Christian life.

6. Why did the false teachers concentrate their efforts on new or weak Christians?
7. What if any modern parallels to the false teachers do we see taught today?
8. Explain Peter’s phrase “*for whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved*.”

<sup>2</sup> Smith, James E. *Teacher’s Commentary: General Epistles*. Lulu.com, 2010. p. 149.

Verse 20 records a warning that those who become Christians and turn away are in a worse state than they were before coming to Christ. Hebrews 10:26-27 states, *“For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.”*

**9. Why would turning away from Christ be worse than never coming to him?**

**10. What are the two proverbs in verse 22 and what is their meaning?**