

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 332 – November 28th – 2 Peter 2:1-22

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Peter

Bauckham, R. J.

Word Biblical Commentary: Vol 50: Jude, 2 Peter, Dallas, Word, 1998

Green, Michael

2 Peter and Jude (Tyndale Commentary), Leicester, IVP, 1968**2 Peter 2:1ff.**

"For the purpose of this attack [on false teachers] the author now begins to make use of the Letter of Jude, on which he is dependent for much of the passage 2:1–3:3. This dependence is never slavish. The author takes what he wants from Jude, whether ideas or words, and uses it in a composition which is very much his own." Bauckham.

Verse 1

Ἐγένοντο δὲ καὶ ψευδοπροφητῆται ἐν τῷ λαῷ,
ὡς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσονται ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι,
οἵτινες παρεισάξουσιν αἵρέσεις ἀπωλείας, καὶ
τὸν ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς δεσπότην ἀρνούμενοι,
ἐπάγοντες ἑαυτοῖς ταχινήν ἀπώλειαν·

ἐγένοντο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 pl
γίνομαι

ψευδοπροφητης, ου m false prophet

λαος, ου m people, a people

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι

ψευδοδιδασκαλος, ου m false teacher, one
who teaches what is not true

Peter's argument in this verse shifts from false prophets in OT times to false teachers in the Christian church. His argument follows a chiasmic structure:

A. apostles (1:16-18)

B. OT prophets (1:19-21)

B. OT false prophets (2:1a)

A. false teachers (2:1b-3)

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅτι
who, which

παρεισαγω bring in under false pretences,
bring in, insinuate

αἵρεςις, εως f faction, false teaching

ἀπωλεια, ας f destruction, utter ruin

ἀγοράσαντα Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s

ἀγοραζω buy, redeem

δεσποτης, ου m Lord, Master (of God and
of Christ), slave owner

'Master' for Christ is borrowed from Jude. "2 Peter does not deny that the false teachers are Christians, but sees them as apostate Christians who have disowned their Master." Bauckham.

ἀρνεομαι deny, disown, renounce

"Now these false teachers understood, no doubt, the liberation afforded by the cross of Christ; liberty was one of their war-cries (2:19). But they did not recognise the obligation of holy living imposed by the Crucified. By their lives they denied the Lord who bought them. Christianity is, indeed, a religion of liberty; but it also demands loving bond-service to Jesus the Redeemer." Green. Bauckham similarly comments, "Immoral living is flouting his authority as Master of his slaves who should obey him."

ἐπαγω bring upon

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

ταχινος, η, ον soon; swift, speedy

"The man who attempts to serve God and self is on the high road to *swift destruction*." Green. Bauckham comments, "Ironically, the false teachers incur judgment by teaching that there will be no future judgment and thereby leading themselves and others into immorality."

Verse 2

καὶ πολλοὶ ἐξακολουθήσουσιν αὐτῶν ταῖς
ἀσελγείαις, δι' οὓς ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς ἀληθείας
βλασφημηθήσεται·

ἐξακολουθεω follow, obey

ἀσελγεια, ας f sensuality, vice

"Their denial of the Lord is primarily ethical not intellectual." Green.

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

Having given some background to the use of 'way' in intertestamental literature, Bauckham comments, "This absolute use of 'the way' for a whole moral and religious way of life reappears in the designation of Christianity as 'the way' (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22...), which can be further specified as 'the way of the Lord' (Acts 18:25), 'the way of God' (Acts 18:26), and 'this way' (Acts 19:9...). It is clear from the context that 2 Peter uses the phrases 'the way of truth,' 'the way of righteousness,' and 'the straight way' in a similar manner, to designate the Christian way of life, Christianity considered not as a body of doctrine but as a way of life, a religious message which takes effect in an ethical life style." See also Matt 7:13-14.

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Cf. Ps 119:30.

βλασφημηθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s
βλασφημεω speak against, slander,
speak against God, blaspheme

Peter's strong words of condemnation are not prompted simply by the evil of the false teachers themselves, but also by the effect of their teaching on others, both in leading believers astray and in bringing the Christian faith into disrepute. Cf. Rom 2:24; Is 52:5.

Verse 3

καὶ ἐν πλεονεξία πλαστοῖς λόγοις ὑμᾶς
ἐμπορεύσονται· οἷς τὸ κρίμα ἔκπαλαι οὐκ
ἄργεῖ, καὶ ἡ ἀπώλεια αὐτῶν οὐ νυστάζει.

πλεονεξια, ας f greed, covetousness
πλαστος, η, ον made-up, invented
ἐμπορευομαι exploit, make profit of

Their 'feigned words' or 'phony arguments' were designed not to profit their hearers but to fleece them. Cf. 1 Tim 6:5.

κριμα, τος n judgement, condemnation
ἐκπαλαι for a long time, long ago

The judgments of the following verses mean that long ago God passed judgment on the likes of these false teachers.

ἀργεω be idle or inoperative
ἀπωλεια, ας f see v.1
νυσταζω grow drowsy; be asleep, be idle

'Perdition awaits them with unsleeping eyes' NEB. For use of this verb, cf. Matt 25:5. Maybe direct contradiction to the suggestion of the false teachers that judgment is 'idle.'

The latter half of verse 3 forms a transition between what precedes and the following verses 4-10a.

Verses 4-10a

"Peter now proceeds to give examples of the impartial judgement of God, and the certainty that it will come even though it lingers (cf. 3:8-10). He speaks first of fallen angels (verse 4), then of the flood (verse 5) and then of the cities of the plain (verses 6ff.)...

"Peter's examples differ slightly from those in the parallel account in Jude 5-7. Peter concentrates on the pride and rebellion of the angels, the apathy and disobedience of the men of Noah's day, and the sheer sensuality of the men of Sodom, presumably because these were all characteristic of the false teachers he was opposing." Green.

Bauckham adds, "The details of the references to the three examples in vv 4–6 bring out their typological character. The angels are detained in Tartarus awaiting condemnation and punishment at the final universal assize – which is to be the day of reckoning for all the wicked (cf. v 9b). The Flood destroyed a whole world of ungodly people, thus prefiguring the only other universal judgment which the world is to suffer, the coming eschatological judgment (cf. 3:6–7). The burning of Sodom and Gomorrah was a warning example of the fate in store for the wicked in the future, especially of the cosmic conflagration which threatens the ungodly of the last days (cf. 3:7).

"Into this argument about the certainty of punishment for the wicked, the author has woven a second theme: the deliverance of the righteous. If, as the false teachers allege, there is to be no eschatological judgment, then there will also be no deliverance of the righteous from their sufferings in a world where the wicked flourish. But the same examples which show the certainty of judgment on the wicked show the certainty of deliverance for the righteous. For God did not destroy the godly and ungodly indiscriminately. When he bound the angels in hell and destroyed the world in the Flood, he rescued Noah and his family, and when Sodom and Gomorrah perished, their single righteous inhabitant escaped."

Verse 4

Εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγγέλων ἁμαρτησάντων οὐκ ἐφείσατο, ἀλλὰ σειραῖς ζόφου ταρταρώσας παρέδωκεν εἰς κρίσιν τηρουμένου,

ἁμαρτησάντων Verb, aor act ptc, gen pl
ἀμαρτανω sin, commit sin
φειδομαι spare, refrain from, keep oneself from doing

Bauckham suggests that 2 Peter here reflects Jude which in turn depends on 1 Enoch's interpretation of Gen 6:1-4.

σιρα, ας and σειρα, ας f chain, rope

The textual evidence is very evenly balanced between σειραις and σιροις (σιρος = pit, cave).

ζοφος, ου m gloom, darkness

Bauckham comments, "If *σειραῖς* ('fettors') is the correct reading ... the author has interpreted Jude's 'chains' (*δεσμοῖς*; see Comment on Jude 6) metaphorically of the darkness (*ζόφος* is the gloom of the underworld: see Comment on Jude 6) in which the angels are confined. In a highly rhetorical description of the Egyptian plague of darkness, Wis 17:16 says that the Egyptians 'were bound with one chain of darkness' (*μιά ἀλύσει σκότους ἐδέθησαν*; cf. also 17:2), and it is not impossible that the author of 2 Peter recalled this expression."

ταρταροῦ put in hell

"*Cast them down to hell* is a single word in the Greek, occurring only here in the Bible, and meaning to 'consign to Tartarus'. Tartarus, in Greek mythology, was the place of punishment for the departed spirits of the very wicked, particularly rebellious gods like Tantalus. Just as Paul could quote an apt verse of the pagan poet Aratus (Acts 17:28), so could Peter make use of Homeric imagery." Green.

παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up
κρισις, *εως* f judgement
τηρεω keep

τηρουμένων (B C K L P.) should probably be preferred to *κολαζομένων* *τηρεῖν* (8 A), which has probably been influenced by v 9.

"There is a close parallel in Rev 20:10, where the devil, though bound now, is destined for final judgement hereafter." Green.
Bauckham comments, "Throughout this section the author emphasizes that the examples of judgment he has chosen prefigure the final judgment."

Verse 5

καὶ ἀρχαίου κόσμου οὐκ ἐφείσατο, ἀλλὰ ὄγδοον Νῶε δικαιοσύνης κήρυκα ἐφύλαξεν, κατακλυσμὸν κόσμῳ ἀσεβῶν ἐπάξας,

ἀρχαίος, *α*, *ον* old, ancient, former
ὄγδοος, *η*, *ον* eighth

"*Noah the eighth person* translates somewhat literally a common classical idiom. It means he was rescued with seven others, i.e. his wife, his three sons and their wives. Cf. 1 Peter 3:20." Green.

Bauckham comments, "Noah, preserved from the old world to be the beginning of the new world after the Flood, is a type of faithful Christians who will be preserved from the present world to inherit the new world after the judgment."

δικαιοσύνη, *ης* f righteousness
κηρυξ, *υκος* m preacher, herald
φυλασσω keep, guard

κατακλυσμος, *ου* m flood, deluge
ἀσεβης, *εξ* godless, impious

Cf. Gen 6:17. Suggests that they had no time whatever for God.

ἐπάξας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s *ἐπαγω*
bring upon

Verse 6

καὶ πόλεις Σοδόμων καὶ Γομόρρας τεφρώσας καταστροφή κατέκρινεν, ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων ἀσεβέσιν τεθεικώς,

πολις, *εως* f city, town
Σοδομα, *ων* n Sodom
τεφρωω reduce to ashes

"The word ... is unique in the Bible, but is used by Dio Cassius... in his account of the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 when Pompeii and Herculaneum were burned in lava." Green.

καταστροφή, *ης* f ruin, destruction

Metzger comments, "It is difficult to decide whether *καταστροφή* was added by scribes or whether it was original and accidentally fell out of the text of p⁷² etc."

κατέκρινεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
κατακρινω condemn

Cf. Gen 19:29.

ὑπόδειγμα, *τος* n example
μελλω be going, be about, coming, future
ἀσεβω live or act in an ungodly way

The reading *ἀσεβέσιν*, 'to the ungodly' (p⁷² B P syr^{ph,h}) is preferable to *ἀσεβεῖν*, 'to act ungodly' (8 A C K). The latter could easily have been suggested by the common construction of *μελλόντων*, followed by the infinitive, whereas the former makes better sense in context (Mayor, Chaine, Kelly, NIV).

τεθεικώς Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s *τιθημι*
place, set, appoint

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is a warning example to all following generations. Green comments, "There are curious parallels between our contemporary scene and Sodom, for that city was as famed for its affluence and softness as for its immorality – and, of course, like any men come of age, they thought they had outgrown the idea of God. They found out their mistake too late." Bauckham adds, "Undoubtedly the author sees the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire as a pattern for the fiery judgment of the ungodly at the Parousia (3:7)."

Verse 7

καὶ δίκαιον Λὼτ καταπονούμενον ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν ἀθέσμων ἐν ἀσελγείᾳ ἀναστροφῆς ἐρρύσατο – δίκαιος, *α*, *ον* righteous, just

Bauckham comments, "Genesis does not portray Lot as entirely blameless (see Gen 19:30–38), but Jewish tradition interpreted Abraham's plea on behalf of the righteous in Sodom (Gen 18:23–32) as referring to Lot (Pirqe R. El. 25; *Gen. Rab.* 49:13), and so could speak of him as a righteous man (Wis 10:6; 19:17)."

καταπονεω trouble
 ἀθεσμος, ον morally corrupt, lawless
 ἀσελγεια, ας f sensuality, vice
 ἀναστροφή, ης f manner of life, conduct
 ἐρρύσατο Verb, aor midd/pass dep indic, 3 s
 ῥυομαι save, rescue

Verse 8

βλέμματι γὰρ καὶ ἀκοῇ ὁ δίκαιος ἐγκατοικῶν
 ἐν αὐτοῖς ἡμέραν ἐξ ἡμέρας ψυχὴν δικαίαν
 ἀνόμοις ἔργοις ἐβασάνιζεν –

βλεμμα, τος n what is seen
 ἀκοη, ης f report, news, hearing
 ἐγκατοικεω live (ἐν) among
 ψυχη, ης f self, inmost being, life, 'soul',
 living being, person
 ἀνομος, ον lawless, outside the law,
 Gentile
 ἔργος, ου work, action
 βασανιζω torment, disturb

Bauckham comments, "The point of this extended description of Lot's righteous distress must be to heighten the contrast between the righteous whom God delivers and the wicked he punishes, and hopefully to echo the feelings of 2 Peter's readers in their own situation." And Green adds, "It is customary for Christians today, living in a secularised society, no longer to be shocked by sinful things which they see and hear. They will, for example, without protest sit through a television programme presenting material which a generation ago they would never have contemplated watching at a theatre or cinema. But when a man's conscience becomes dull to sin, and apathetic about moral standards, he is no longer willing to look to the Lord for deliverance."

Verse 9

οἶδεν κύριος εὐσεβεῖς ἐκ πειρασμοῦ ῥύεσθαι,
 ἀδίκους δὲ εἰς ἡμέραν κρίσεως κολαζομένους
 τηρεῖν,

οἶδα know, understand
 εὐσεβης, ες godly, religious
 πειρασμος, ου m period or process of
 testing, trial, temptation

Here carries "a meaning somewhat analogous to the 'bring us not to the test' of the Lord's Prayer, the final test of apostasy from God. It was from this test that Noah and Lot emerged victorious; they stood alone among mockers and unbelievers." Green.

ῥύεσθαι Verb, pres midd/pass dep infin
 ῥυομαι
 ἀδίκος, ον evil, sinful, unjust
 κρισις, εως f see v.4
 κολαζω act & midd punish
 τηρεω keep, observe, maintain

"If we are to construe the Greek exactly, it seems to imply that men are now being punished, and are being kept for final judgement later. How can this be? Bigg may be right in taking it to indicate the present torment of deceased sinners, but Calvin probably judges the sense of the passage correctly when he takes κολαζομενους, *to be punished*, as proleptic (they are being kept *now* for a judgement that is *future*)." Green. Bauckham also thinks a future sense is probably preferable.

Verse 10

μάλιστα δὲ τοὺς ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ
 μiasμοῦ πορευομένους καὶ κυριότητος
 καταφρονούντας.
 Τολμηταί, αὐθάδεις, δόξας οὐ τρέμουσιν,
 βλασφημοῦντες,

μαλιστα especially
 ὀπισω prep with gen after, follow
 σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh

Green thinks that the phrase 'those that go after/walk after the flesh' refers to sodomy.

ἐπιθυμια, ας f longing, lust, passion
 μiasμος, ου m corruption, defilement
 πορευομαι proceed, conduct one's life
 κυριοτης, ητος f (angelic) power; authority
 καταφρονεω despise, treat with contempt

"There are three ways of explaining the *government* or 'lordship' they are said to *despise*. It may mean some angelic hierarchy (as in Eph 1:21; Col 1:16, and the parallel passage in Jude 7,8; in these passages κυριότης, 'lordship', is used, as it is here). Alternatively, Peter may be returning to the theme of verse 1, and indicating that the false teachers despise the lordship of Christ (as in *Didache* 4:1). It is also possible that by κυριότης Peter means church leadership, that is to say the 'authority' (RSV) of Peter and the officially constituted presbyterate in their locality. A similar instance of this sort would be the situation in *1 Clement* and 3 John. The first of these explanations would perhaps be most likely if 2 Peter is subsequent to Jude and dependent upon it, while either of the other two would be more probable if 2 Peter was written first. In any case there is little enough evidence to show that these libertines were interested in the different ranks of angels; on the contrary, they seem to have been very materialistic in their world view." Green. Bauckham argues that the singular κυριότης cannot mean ranks of angels and must refer to the lordship of Christ (both here and in Jude). By the two phrases of v 10a 2 Peter sums up the character of the false teachers.

τολμητης, ου m daring or reckless man
 αυθαδης, ες arrogant, self-willed
 δοξα, ης f glory; power; glorious
 heavenly being

Here could mean 'angels' or 'church leaders'. Bigg prefers the latter commenting, "The rulers of the church would naturally rebuke false teachers, and these would naturally reply in unmeasured language." Bauckham, however, says this makes no sense in context. Bauckham argues, "The most natural reading of v 11 is that the ἄγγελοι ('angels') are to be distinguished from the δόξαι ('glories'), and that κατ' αὐτῶν ('against them') refers back to δόξας, which must therefore designate evil angels."

τρεμω tremble, be afraid, fear
 βλασφημεω see v.2

Verse 11

ὅπου ἄγγελοι ἰσχύϊ καὶ δυνάμει μείζονες ὄντες οὐ φέρουσιν κατ' αὐτῶν βλάσφημον κρίσιν.

ὅπου adv. where, whereas, while
 ἰσχυς, υος f strength
 δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις
 μείζων, ον and μείζοτερος, α, ον greater
 φερω bring, carry, bear
 βλασφημος, ον blasphemous, insulting,
 slanderous
 κρίσις, εως f judgement, condemnation

The meaning is difficult to discern because of several ambiguities:

- i) Compared with whom are these angels 'greater in power and might'? Is the contrast with the δοξαι (either church leaders or inferior angels) or with the false teachers?
- ii) Who are referred to by the κατ' αὐτῶν? Does it mean that the angels, unlike the false teachers, refuse to accuse the δοξαι (so Bauckham), or is the reference to refusal to accuse the false teachers?
- iii) There are textual variants after φέρουσιν κατ' αὐτῶν. Some ancient MSS read παρα κυρίου, 'from the Lord'. This difficult reading is preferred by the UBS committee. Many MSS read παρα κυριῳ, 'to the Lord' or 'in the presence of the Lord' (so NIV). However, other MSS omit the phrase altogether. The omission is thought original by Metzger who writes, "In view of the absence of the prepositional phrase from a wide variety of Greek, versal and patristic witnesses, one suspects that scribes added it either in the form παρα κυρίου or παρα κυριῳ. If such a phrase is to be included in the text at all, the least unsatisfactory decision is to adopt the reading of the great uncials (⊗ B C), but to enclose the words παρα κυριῳ within square brackets." Green argues for παρα κυριῳ and thinks that the verse means, "Unlike the false teachers who are careless of the lordship of Christ and are free with insults, the angels so revere their Lord as to live all their lives in his presence, that no insulting language is allowed to pass their lips, even though it would be richly deserved." Bauckham favours παρὰ κυρίου (with the UBS text) as the harder reading and says that it is 2 Peter's equivalent of Jude's Ἐπιτιμήσαι σοι κύριος, 'May the Lord rebuke you.'

Having considered the various arguments, Green concludes, "In any case, Peter is asserting that these men were more free with their language than the angels themselves, and it would be no bad thing if Christians remembered that any condemnations of others are necessarily 'before the Lord'.

Consciousness of his presence tames the tongue."

Bauckham writes, "The most plausible view is that in their confident immorality the false teachers were contemptuous of the demonic powers. When they were rebuked for their immoral behavior and warned of the danger of falling into the power of the devil and sharing his condemnation, they laughed at the idea, denying that the devil could have any power over them and speaking of the powers of evil in skeptical, mocking terms. They may have doubted the very existence of supernatural powers of evil. This explanation has the advantage of accounting for 2 Peter's redactional emphasis on the false teachers' foolhardy disregard for the power and might of the δόξαι ('glorious ones'). It is also consistent with the general attitude of skeptical rationalism which seems to characterize the opponents' stance."

Verse 12

οὔτοι δέ, ὡς ἄλογα ζῶα γεγεννημένα φυσικὰ εἰς ἄλωσιν καὶ φθοράν, ἐν οἷς ἀγνοοῦσιν βλασφημοῦντες, ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ αὐτῶν καὶ φθαρῆσονται,

ἄλογος, ον unreasoning, wild
ζῶον, ου n living creature; animal
γεγεννημένα Verb, perf pass ptc, n nom/acc
pl γενναω pass be born
φυσικος, η, ον natural

The picture is borrowed from Jude 10 and expanded.

ἄλωσις, εως f capture, capturing
φθορα, ας f decay, corruption, depravity

Here the meaning of φθορα is 'destruction.' The picture is of animals who were deemed to be born only to be captured and eaten – wild game! "What a graphic indictment of the effect on a man of living like a beast! First he gets captured and then he gets destroyed by his passions." Green.

ἀγνοεω not know, be ignorant

'speaking ill of things they don't understand'

φθαρῆσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl
φθειρω corrupt, ruin, destroy

The phrase is another Hebrewism, 'they shall in their destruction, certainly (καὶ) be destroyed', i.e. they shall certainly and utterly perish.

Verse 13

ἀδικοῦμενοι μισθὸν ἀδικίας· ἡδονὴν ἠγοῦμενοι τὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τρυφῆν, σπιλοὶ καὶ μῶμοι ἐντρυφῶντες ἐν ταῖς ἀπάταις αὐτῶν συνευχοῦμενοι ὑμῖν,

ἀδικεω wrong, treat unjustly

ἀδικοῦμενοι 'suffering harm' (p⁷² κ* B P. al) is preferable to κομιούμενοι, 'receiving' (κ; C A C K al). Scribes will have changed ἀδικοῦμενοι to κομιούμενοι to obtain a simpler construction and avoid the apparent attribution of wrongdoing to God.

μισθος, ου m pay, wages, gain
ἀδικια, ας f wrongdoing, evil

Green argues that ἀδικουμενοι has the meaning here of being defrauded. Thus the phrase means 'being defrauded of the wages of fraud'. "Peter is using a highly evocative commercial metaphor to stress that immorality is not worthwhile. In the end it will rob you not pay you." Bauckham thinks it more likely that the sense is 'suffer harm' ie. 'suffering harm in reward for the harm they have done' – the word play embodies a sense of *jus talionis*.

ἡδονη, ης f pleasure, passion
ἠγεομαι think, regard, consider
τρυφη, ης f luxury, self-indulgence

'self-indulgence in daylight is their idea of enjoyment.' "Daylight debauchery was frowned on even in degenerate Roman society (cf. 1 Thess 5:7)." Green.

σπιλος, ου m spot, blemish, stain
μωμος, ου m blemish i.e. a disgrace

Cf. 3:14 for the contrasting picture of what the church should aim to be for the Lord's coming. By their conduct these false teachers are frustrating the intent that the church should be a sacrifice fit for offering to God.

ἐντρυφαω revel, carouse
ἀπατη, ης f deception

One well attested textual variant here is ἀγαπαις, meaning 'love-feasts', i.e. meetings for the Lord's Supper. Green comments, "This is certainly the right reading in the parallel passage in Jude 12 and would make good sense here... Hippolytus tells us that the Agapae were conducted in daylight in order to avoid slanderous rumours. The charge against the heretics would then be that they disgraced the sober daytime Agapae by their licentious behaviour. Even if the reading ἀπαταις (*deceivings*) be preferred here, as may well be right, the meaning could well be 'mock love-feasts', and the allusion would still be to the Agapae, though Peter would be using biting paranomasia." Green suggests that their lasciviousness extended to 'rape at the meal table' which they rationalised as "sacred prostitution, enacting in the cultic meal the unity between Christ and his Church."

Bauckham, however, comments, "αὐτῶν shows that the reading ἀπάταις, 'deceitful pleasures' (p⁷² 8; A* C K P. al) is original, and ἀγάταις, 'love-feasts' (A^c B al) is an assimilation to Jude 12." He thinks that Peter may have deliberately substituted ἀπάταις for Jude's ἀγάταις as a pun, as if to say they feast with you at your common meals [love feasts], but it is their deceits.'

συνευωχεομαι eat together; perhaps
carouse together

Verse 14

ὄφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες μεστοὺς μοιχαλίδος καὶ ἀκαταπαύστους ἀμαρτίας, δελεάζοντες ψυχὰς ἀστηρίκτους, καρδίαν γεγυμνασμένην πλεονεξίας ἔχοντες, κατάρας τέκνα,

μεστος, η, ον full

μοιχαλις, ιδος f adulteress, unfaithful

They lust after every girl they see.

ἀκαταπαυστος, ον unceasing, insatiable
ἀμαρτια, ας f sin

Their sin never satisfies but only leaves them
hungering for more. By way of contrast, see 1
Peter 4:1-3.

δελεαζω lure, entice; catch, trap

The picture is that of fishing with a line –
catching with a bait.

ἀστηρικτος, ον unsteady, weak; insecure
γεγυμνασμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
γυμναζω train, exercise

πλεονεξια, ας f greed, covetousness

Unbridled desire for more. Bauckham
comments, "Unlike their inexperienced pupils
the false teachers are experts – in greed! They
make disciples in order to make a profit out of
them (cf. 2:3a)."

καταρα, ας f curse, something accursed
τεκνον, ον n child

Another Hebrewism. Cf. Is 57:4. The meaning
is that God's curse is upon them.

Verse 15

καταλιπόντες εὐθειαν ὁδὸν ἐπλανήθησαν,
ἐξακολουθήσαντες τῇ ὁδῷ τοῦ Βαλαάμ τοῦ
Βοσόρ ὃς μισθὸν ἀδικίας ἠγάπησεν

καταλείποντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom pl
καταλειπω leave, leave behind

εὐθους, εια, υ straight; right

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road

Cf. Acts 13:10.

ἐπλανήθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
πλαναω lead astray; pass go astray
ἐξακολουθεω follow

Cf. Jude 11. Βοσόρ is by far the best attested
reading, but since this form of the name of
Balaam's father is not found elsewhere, it has
been corrected to the LXX form Βεωρ in a few
MSS and versions. The form 'Bosor' may be a
traditional piece of Jewish word-play from *bsr*
meaning 'flesh'. "Balaam's immoral character
would be indicated by calling him 'son of flesh'
(so already Luther; Wettstein; Vitringa, cited
by Bigg)." Bauckham.

μισθος, ου m see v.13

ἀδικια, ας f see v.13

ἀγαπαω love, show love for

"Now it is quite true that the main point of the
Balaam account in Numbers 22-24 is his
avarice; but Numbers 31:16 attributes to his
influence the immorality of the Israelites at
Baal-Peor (Num 25). These two factors surely
combined to make him a most useful prototype
of the immoral false teacher out for gain. Such
a type appears in Jude 11, where the reference
to Baal-Peor is implicit (cf. 1 Cor 10:8), and
also in Revelation 2:15, where the same charge
occurs again." Green.

Verse 16

ἔλεγξιν δὲ ἔσχεν ἰδίας παρανομίας· ὑποζύγιον
ἄφωνον ἐν ἀνθρώπου φωνῇ φθεγξάμενον
ἐκόλυσεν τὴν τοῦ προφήτου παραφρονίαν.

ἐλεγξις, εως f rebuke; ἔχω ε. be rebuked

ἔσχεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔχω

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

παρανομια, ας f offence, wrongdoing

ὑποζυγιον, ου n donkey

ἄφωνος, ον dumb, silent

φθεγξάμενον Verb, aor midd/pass dep ptc, m

acc & n nom/acc s φθεγγομαι speak

κωλυω hinder, prevent, forbid

παραφρονια, ας f madness, insanity

"A dumb ass possessed sounder prophetic
vision than a religious official whose moral
sense had been perverted by gain from
wrongdoing." Barnett.

Verse 17

Οὗτοί εἰσιν πηγαὶ ἄνυδροι καὶ ὀμίχλαι ὑπὸ
λαίλαπος ἐλαυνόμεναι, οἷς ὁ ζόφος τοῦ
σκότους τετήρηται.

πηγη, ης f spring, fountain; well

ἄνυδρος, ον waterless

Cf. Jer 2:13.

ὀμιχλη, ης f mist, fog

λαίλαψ, απος f storm, squall

ἐλαυνω drive

May describe the changeable and ephemeral nature of their teaching, or may express a thought parallel to the previous phrase (the two phrases are an expansion of a single phrase in Jude 12) – they are like approaching clouds, promising rain but which pass without producing anything of profit. "The false teachers supply their followers with no ... life-giving teaching." Bauckham.

ζοφος, ου m gloom, darkness

σκοτος, ους n darkness, evil

τητήρηται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s τηρεω
keep

Cf. Jude 13. They have no place in the kingdom of light. Cf. 1 Peter 1:4 for the same verb used of believers.

Verse 18

ὑπέρογκα γὰρ ματαιιότητος φθεγγόμενοι
δελεάζουσιν ἐν ἐπιθυμίαις σαρκὸς ἀσελγείαις
τοὺς ὀλίγως ἀποφεύγοντας τοὺς ἐν πλάνῃ
ἀναστρεφόμενους,

ὑπερογκος, ον boastful, high sounding
ματαιοτης, ητος f worthlessness, futility

They use large words, but their speech is empty of meaning.

φθεγγομαι speak

δελεάζω see v.14

ἐπιθυμια, ας f see v.10

σαρξ, σαρκος f see v.10

σαρκός is probably best taken with ἐπιθυμίας rather than ἀσελγείαις

ἀσελγεια, ας f see v.7

"Grandiose sophistry is the hook, filthy lust is the bait." Bigg. Bauckham adds, "By removing the sanction of eschatological judgment, the false teachers were encouraging their followers to return to the morally lax ways of pagan society."

ὀλίγως barely, just

ὀλίγως (p⁷² A B al) is to be preferred to ὄντως (x K L P al) and ὄντας.

ἀποφευγω escape

The present participle ἀποφεύγοντας is better attested than the aorist ἀποθύγοντας (K L P), which could be the result of assimilation to v 20.

πλανη, ης f error, deceit, deception
ἀναστρεφω pass live, conduct oneself

They are corrupting 'those who are just shaking themselves free of pagan associations.' They target new converts who have not yet completely broken free of the influence of pagan society.

Verse 19

ἐλευθερίαν αὐτοῖς ἐπαγγελλόμενοι, αὐτοὶ
δοῦλοι ὑπάρχοντες τῆς φθορᾶς· ᾧ γὰρ τις
ἦττηται, τούτῳ καὶ δεδούλωται.

ἐλευθερια, ας f freedom, liberty

'Freedom' was their catchword, "with all its deep attraction and ambiguity." Bauckham. The freedom promised was probably freedom from eschatological judgment.

ἐπαγγελλομαι promise, profess, claim

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἰμι)

φθορα, ας f see v.12

Bauckham thinks that φθορά here means 'corruptibility' or 'mortality' "which is the consequence of sinful desire (1:4) and which ends in eschatological destruction... by yielding to sin they put themselves in the power of corruptibility and destruction." Cf. Rom 8:21.

ἡτταομαι be defeated, be overcome

δεδούλωται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s

δουλωω enslave, make (someone) a
slave

Cf. Rom 6:16; 7:5; John 8:34. "No man can serve two masters; but all men must serve one. These men were not the last to set liberty against law. Yet their vaunted liberty turned into licence, and generated a new bondage. On the other hand glad bondage to the law of Christ, which was so disparaged by the false teachers, leads in fact to an emancipation more complete than the errorists could ever have imagined. Peter has already shown, in 1:3,4, that true liberty, true escape from the relentless grip of φθορα, comes through knowing Jesus Christ. So here he shows that precept and love, charity and chastity, law and gospel are not combatants but correlatives. It is ever the way of licence to champion gospel over law, and of dead orthodoxy to champion precept over love. Healthy Christian living comes when God's commands are seen as the kerbstones of His highway of love, the hedge encompassing His garden of grace." Green.

Verse 20

εἰ γὰρ ἀποφυγόντες τὰ μιάσματα τοῦ κόσμου
ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ κυρίου καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ
Χριστοῦ τούτοις δὲ πάλιν ἐμπλακέντες
ἦττωνται, γέγονεν αὐτοῖς τὰ ἔσχατα χεῖρονα
τῶν πρώτων.

ἀποφυγόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl

ἀποφευγω see v.18

μιασμα, τος n corruption, defilement

ἐπιγνωσις, εως f knowledge

It is difficult to know whether or not to read ἡμῶν (after κυρίου: P⁷² & A C P. and most MSS). The expression occurs with ἡμῶν in 1:11; 3:18; without ἡμῶν in 3:2. It could have been omitted by mistake (in B K *al*) or added from the more familiar form of the expression." Bauckham.

σωτηρ, ηρος m saviour

Green thinks the verse refers to the false teachers who were once orthodox Christians (so also Bauckham). Others think that Peter continues to speak of and warn those who would be led astray by their teaching.

παλιν again, once more

ἐμπλεκέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl
ἐμπλεκομαι be mixed up in or involved in

Green suggests another fishing metaphor from Peter.

ἡτταομαι see v.19

γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι
ἐσχατος, η, ον adj last, final
χειρων, ον gen ονος worse, more severe
πρωτος, η, ον first, earlier

"There appears to be an allusion here to the words of Jesus in Luke 12:47f. But there is no less clear an allusion to the last state of the man who got rid of one unclean spirit only to be invaded by seven others (Mt 12:45; Lk 11:26). Indeed, it is almost a straight quotation. The only difference is illuminating. Jesus says 'The last state of that man gets (or becomes) worse than the first', and prophesies 'So shall it be also unto this wicked generation'. Peter says, in effect, that Jesus' prophecy has come true: the last state of the false teachers has turned out to be worse than the first. This would be a most natural adaption of Jesus' words if Peter is indeed the author of this Epistle; in a forger it would be a most sophisticated touch." Green.

Verse 21

κρεῖττον γὰρ ἦν αὐτοῖς μὴ ἐπεγνωκέναι τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἢ ἐπιγνοῦσιν ὑποστρέψαι ἐκ τῆς παραδοθείσης αὐτοῖς ἀγίας ἐντολῆς·

κρεῖττον and κρεῖσσον adv. better
ἐπεγνωκέναι Verb, perf act infin ἐπιγνωσκω
know

ὁδος, ου f see v.15

δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness

Cf. Matt 21:32.

ἢ or, than

ἐπιγνοῦσιν Verb, aor act ptc, m dat pl
ἐπιγνωσκω

ὑποστρέψαι Verb, aor act infin ὑποστρεφω
return, turn back

"ὑποστρέψαι ἐκ (P⁷² B C P. *al*) is the best attested reading, but ἐπιστρέψαι (K L *al*) or εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ἀνακάμψαι ἀπὸ (N A *al*), which looks like an explanatory gloss, would make little difference to the meaning." Bauckham.

παραδοθείσης Verb, aor pass ptc, f gen s
παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up

Alludes to the instruction given to new Christians.

ἅγιος, α, ον holy

ἐντολη, ης f command, instruction

The phrase 'the holy commandment' is used here as a description of Christianity considered as a body of ethical teaching (cf. 'the way of righteousness' above). The first stage in their apostasy was the rejection of constraint as having anything to do with the Christian.

Verse 22

συμβέβηκεν αὐτοῖς τὸ τῆς ἀληθοῦς παροιμίας· Κύνων ἐπιστρέψας ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον ἐξέεραμα, καί· Ὑγ λουσαμένη εἰς κυλισμὸν βορβοροῦ.

"This verse is the author's final extension of his comparison of the false teachers with ἄλογα ζῷα ('unreasoning animals,' 2:12, cf. 16). He sees them now as unclean animals, dogs and pigs, which to the Jewish mind symbolized the immorality of Gentile life (cf. Rev 22:15)." Bauckham.

συμβέβηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s
συμβαίνω happen, come about
ἀληθής, ες true, truthful

Here used as a substantive, 'truth.'

παροιμία, ας f parable, proverb

κύνων, κυνος m dog

ἐπιστρέψας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

ἐπιστρεφω turn back, return

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

ἐξέεραμα, τος n vomit

Cf. Prov 26:11.

ὑς, ὕος f sow

λουω wash, bathe

κυλισμος, ου m wallowing

βορβορος, ου m mud, mire

"The gospel is a medicine that purges us as a wholesome emetic, but there are many dogs who swallow again what they have brought up, to their own ruin. Likewise the gospel is a basin which cleanses us from all our dirt and stains, but there are many pigs who, immediately after they have washed, roll back into the mud. Thus the godly are warned to beware of both dangers if they do not want to be included in the ranks of dogs and pigs." Calvin.

In his concluding remarks on this chapter, Green says "It does our generation little credit that such passion for truth and holiness strikes an alien note in our minds."