

2 Peter 1:16-21

Hope in the Fight

You Would Do Well to Pay Attention!



People lie all the time! There have been so many charismatic types over the millenniums that have recognized their own unique gift of being able to basically mesmerize people with their communication skills, leadership skills, and charisma. It is like they can leave a spell on certain personality types who will then respond to them, cling to them, follow them! But these prophet-type people then use their personal powers to gather a crowd of people to themselves - to feed their own egos and to use these people, and to personally profit from their follower's finances and their energies. They control these people, and it makes them little gods in their own minds, filled with their own powers, imagining themselves special! Being born narcissists and being pathological (without conscience) they connive, manipulate, and lie, for their own benefit! If there is one, there is 10K or more of these false types across the face of this planet during any given generation!



Peter, knowing this was out there, is differentiating both Jesus, himself, and the other apostles, from this grotesque human phenomenon! If a person is true, and not leading others down a path of falsehoods, and not in it for their own profit, and always telling the truth, then they are not like the false, or misguided teachers/leaders. They are someone that **anyone** would do well to follow! Jesus, for instance, was demonstrably from God! The unprecedented miracles he performed daily proved that He had the very **powers of creation** at His disposal! The blind were given sight out of recreated eyeballs and nerve pathways! The paralyzed had their severed and useless nerves restored instantaneously! That simply cannot be done – not EVER – even today with all our medical knowledge, technique, and technology! But certainly it had NEVER happened 2000 years ago when medical practices were still in the stone ages! But Jesus did not do medical procedures! He **commanded** genetics and cell structures and the laws of physics! And all things material and spiritual obey His commands! Jesus was the real deal!

Vs. 16 - “We did not follow cleverly invented stories,..” - The Gospel of Jesus, His birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and heavenly advocacy, was not a cleverly invented story. Jesus Himself certainly did not profit from it! Money/material wealth clearly held no value for Jesus! Neither did His 12 apostles profit from the efforts of Jesus, before or after! Judas, the betrayer, was the only one concerned with money. But the 11 lived their lives without seeking material gain from their many associations with people across Eurasia and Northern Africa. They could have! But they didn't! So sure were they of the Gospel, that their investment was in the next life – in eternal life when they *knew* they would connect back up with Jesus! They had seen close and upfront that Jesus was true and authentic, and modeling themselves after Him, they relayed the message of Jesus to this world with unwavering authenticity. These were honest men who could do nothing but tell the truth! Unfortunately, like Jesus warned His disciples there would be, there were wolves among sheep in the churches, people who sought to discredit the apostles by saying they were not truthful and were doing this for themselves. But then these same people were trying to siphon off people to gain their own following, and these people ***WOULD NOT*** hesitate to profit off those who broke away from the church with them! Peter will have more to say about these fakers later in his letter.



So he differentiates Himself and the other apostles from the many charlatans that seemed to be always slinking about and trying to stir up trouble with their own aberrant gospels! Peter's life and the life of the other apostles gave indisputable evidence that they were completely convinced that what they had seen with their own eyes pointed to the veracity of Jesus both as Messiah and as Creator/God! That last part was completely unexpected! No one expected God Himself to be the Promised One! But the Spirit of God showed them that despite all their objections that it couldn't have been God, they had actually witnessed the glory and majesty of God in the person of Jesus!

Vs. 18,19 - “We were eyewitnesses of His majesty”. Peter is specifically referring to two separate incidents during the 3 ½ year ministry of Jesus where God the Father actually spoke from the heavenly realms and his voice broke through the veil that separates the realms so that they could hear His voice as He verified that Jesus was His Son and the obvious inference was that He approved of everything Jesus had said and done! This happened both at the beginning of the 3 ½ ministry years - on the banks of the Jordan River with John the Baptist, and toward the end, high on a mountain!



[Matthew 3:16,17; 17:1-9]

So, Peter had witnessed these two verifications from heaven. First He and the other disciples had seen the Holy Spirit descend and rest upon Jesus while the Father claimed Him as His “*well-loved Son*”. Later, Peter, on an unidentified “high mountain”, along with James and John, had seen Jesus glorified in blinding light! They had seen Elijah and Moses, briefly transplanted from heaven to earth, in conversation with Jesus. I don’t know how the disciples knew Moses and Elijah by sight, but Jesus must have explained who it was later.

[1 John 1:1-4] - so the Peter appealed to his own eyewitness accounts of his experience w/Christ!

Then Peter appeals to the Old Testament scriptures. He advises Christians to pay attention to the Messianic prophecies. If they do, they will *see too* – they will have their own verification, even though most had never actually seen Jesus in person. From what they were told of Him by the apostles eyewitness accounts, compared with the scripture’s depiction of who the Messiah would be, they would have their own clear verification. Then, all they had to do was to decide if the disciples were completely honest men – if they could be believed!

Then Peter goes on to verify prophecy itself. *“Do not doubt the prophecies,”* he says. The prophets did not get the chance to edit and refine their written impressions. They just wrote down what they heard from God’s Spirit - in a hurry! These were men that had so much respect for God, coupled with a healthy fear of Him, that they would **never** have presumed to put words in His mouth – never presume to speak for Him! What you have in prophecy - specifically Messianic prophecy - is raw data from the Holy Spirit on the plan of God to bring the Christ into the world as His very own Son – fully human, with real human flesh, and and fully God, with the unbelievable powers and perfection of God the Creator. But it was what the Promised One was coming for that was so hard for people to comprehend - even to the prophets who were **“carried away”** by the Spirit, and wrote it down as it was given to them!



There ended up being two distinctly different types of Messianic prophecies – the first was the suffering Savior prophecies!

[Isaiah 9:4-7; Ps. 22; Isaiah 53]

The second type was **“the end-game prophecies”** (my own label), the very end prophecies - actually **“the Kingdom prophecies”**, or **“the empire of God”** regarding the **2nd coming** of Jesus the Christ – a coming in power! **[Isaiah 11:1-9]**

The two types of Messianic prophecies did not seem make sense together! In one kind, you have someone who is rejected and oppressed, tortured and killed. In the other you have a King who rises to power, or seizes power, and takes over the world! The Jews could not picture themselves rejecting, oppressing, and killing their own Promised Messiah. So they opted to ignore those prophecies and focus on the world Kingdom, or empire, of God prophecies! But it makes complete sense if there are two Messianic appearances of the same Messiah. Jesus fit that description to a tee!!

Obviously, if he had had political aspirations in His first coming, Jesus could have made that happen with ease. He had more power in His little finger than any King on earth had power to resist Him from *taking* power! But He did not have those plans and intentions the first time around during His first coming! His mission was not political but spiritual in nature! He had to provide a means of reconciliation with God by taking care of the sin barrier between God and humanity! He also had to gather to God a people for God – a people called out from among all the nations to form a multi-ethnic nation of called-out ones – called out from their own nations to be included in His! This nation’s citizens were made up of a minority of positive respondents, and their positive response to Jesus separated them out from among the great majority of negative respondents to Jesus! We refer to this nation, scattered among the nations, as “**the church**”, or “**Christendom**”! God speaks to His church, *and the people of His church listen!* He speaks primarily through His apostle’s original writings, letters to the churches that were uniquely influenced by the Holy Spirit! Yet, those writings also retained the personalities of their human writers. That did not make them any less inspired by God, but it did put a stamp of humanness upon these writings that the readers would need if they were to relate to it! Think of Paul’s Romans 7, as he bares his soul, addressing the great struggle of the Christian between the new nature driven by the Holy Spirit, and the old nature driven by our cursed desire for excess and self-service! It provides such insight into our own nature. It puts a finger on our own struggles and we do not feel alone – like we are the only ones that fight with our base impulses, lusts, appetites, and selfish desires! Yet, it concludes that, “**Thanks be to God**” there **IS** victory over our cursed flesh through Christ! Only a collaboration of the Spirit of God and a willing human servant could produce such an effective literary and spiritual masterpiece! It is a repository for all the knowledge that our Creator deems necessary for us to know if we are to know Him personally, know His plan, and know His purposes! You will do well to learn it and pay heed to it!

