

2 TIMOTHY VERSE BY VERSE

Session 8 | 2 Timothy 3:8-13

2 TIMOTHY 3:8-9 | A COMPARISON AND ULTIMATE DEMISE OF THE MEN OF THE FUTURE

- Verse 8 –
 - Continuing to speak of the evil behavior and mindset of the men of the last days, Paul compares these future men to two infamous men of the past, **Jannes and Jambres**. But who are these men?
 - Neither are mentioned in any other place in Scripture.
 - Most cross-references point to Exodus 7:11, mentioning **the magicians of Egypt**, but the scripture does not give their names.
 - The only source for these two names is from Jewish sources (for example, Targum Jonathan) from the fourth century AD and beyond.
 - From this, the only real conclusion we can make is that the later-recorded Jewish teachings of Jannes and Jambres were known in Paul's day. The rabbinical teachings range from the chief magicians of Egypt to the sons of Balaam.
 - The men of the last days will be like these and will **also resist the truth** being **men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith**.
 - The word **corrupt** is καταφθείρω [kataphtheiro], or *the ultimate degree of corruption*.
 - To be **reprobate** is to be ἀδόκιμος [adokimos], *absent of any judgment concerning the faith*. And **the faith** in question is *the Jewish faith*, since this is speaking of **the last days** (v. 1).
- Verse 9 –
 - The men of the future **shall proceed no further** than did Jannes and Jambres, but **their folly** will be quickly seen by all.
 - A number of the Jewish sources speak of Jannes and Jambres death, though not always in consistency of details. However, they all bring the two to an ignominious and public death. For one example, see here: https://www.sefaria.org/Legends_of_the_Jews.3.1.54?lang=bi

2 TIMOTHY 3:10-13 | PAUL'S SUFFERED, BUT THINGS WILL GET WORSE

- Verse 10 –
 - Paul reminds Timothy of his life. Verse 10 gives the positive virtues displayed in Paul.
 - While the life and ministry of Paul is the source of our doctrine, this particular verse is the basis of an illustration concerning the coming persecution of the last days.
- Verse 11 –
 - Having spoken of the positive aspects of Paul's virtuous life, he now speaks of some of the negative physical results.
 - He mentions three places specifically:
 - **Antioch** - where he was chased out of town and *shook off the dust* from his feet, Acts 13:50-51.
 - **Iconium** - where there were a great many new believers, but the city was divided and both Jews and Gentiles gathered against Paul to stone him, Acts 14:1-5.

- **Lystra** - The Jews from Antioch and Iconium chased Paul down to Lystra where they stoned him and left him for dead, Acts 14:19.
 - There were other places of persecution also, but since Timothy was from either Lystra or Derbe (where Paul fled after Lystra), these three were well known to Timothy. From these persecutions, Paul testifies that **the Lord delivered me**.
- Verse 12 –
 - If this verse is not taken in its context with chapter 3, a “doctrine of suffering” develops, and such a doctrine will be invariably unscriptural.
 - An unscriptural doctrine of this sort will lead to a “martyr complex” as well as a legalistically negative view of those who live in comfort.
 - There is simply no way that we can justify a doctrine that says that *anyone, anytime, anywhere* who **live godly in Christ Jesus** will be persecuted. It is not true under any stretch of the imagination.
 - However, if we apply this to *the future*, namely the **perilous times** of the **last days** (v. 1), then the truth aligns with everything we know about godly living and persecution during the tribulation.
 - Paul taught that **through much tribulation** the Jewish people will **enter into the kingdom of God** (Acts 14:20), and such an idea is in harmony with all the prophets and the words of Jesus.
 - Harry Ironside (a dispensationalist who was adamantly opposed to **rightly dividing**) gives typical comments in his commentary, saying,

“If to some extent we are not the objects of the world’s hatred, if we do not have the disapproval of those who despise Christianity, if we are not evil spoken of as were the prophets of God of old, then we may very well raise the question as to whether we are living godly lives or not. Persecution is inevitable for those who are faithful to God”¹

 - His comment requires that we view **persecution** as *not everyone agrees with us, and they say mean things about us*. Such is not worthy of even being considered persecution.
- Verse 13 –
 - Paul summarizes the men described in detail in verses 1-7 as **evil men and seducers**. During the final days, these men will get **worse and worse** both **deceiving, and being deceived**.
 - This verse is likely given in contrast to those who **live godly** and thus is a continued instruction for the last days. However, it could also be viewed as a transition point to the next topic in verse 14.
 - If this approach is taken, an argument could be made that the verse describes the current day, and thus would be safe for the development of doctrine.
 - I have chosen to keep the verse with verses 1-12 rather than begin a new section.

¹ H. A. Ironside, *Addresses on the First and Second Epistles of Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1947), 224.