

June 2022

## An Evaluation of 2 Peter as a Testament

Joel Thomas

Baptist Bible Seminary of Clarks Summit University, joel.d.thomas@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/elevol6iss1>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Thomas, Joel. 2022. "An Evaluation of 2 Peter as a Testament." *Eleutheria* 6, (1).  
<https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/elevol6iss1/10>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Rawlings School of Divinity at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in Eleutheria by an authorized editor of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact [scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu](mailto:scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu).

---

## **An Evaluation of 2 Peter as a Testament**

### **Abstract**

The authorship of 2 Peter is one of the most disputed areas of NT studies. There are many facets to this issue. This paper will address the contention by many scholars that 2 Peter is testamentary in nature and is therefore pseudepigraphal. The various testamentary genres will be analyzed for characteristics, and then those characteristics will be compared to 2 Peter to determine whether 2 Peter is testamentary in nature and the likelihood that it is pseudepigraphal. The conclusion of this study is 2 Peter does not meet the characteristics of any testamentary genre and that it is in fact quite possibly and decretal form of letter as argued by Danker.

### **Keywords**

2 Peter, Genre, Testament, Pseudepigrapha

### **Cover Page Footnote**

Joel Thomas is currently a PhD student in New Testament Studies at Baptist Bible Seminary of Clarks Summit University. He hold Master of Arts in Religion and Master of Divinity degrees from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary as well a Master of Sacred Theology from Dallas Theological Seminary.

### Introduction

The authorship of 2 Peter is one of the most disputed areas in NT studies.<sup>1</sup> This is not simply a case of modern skepticism, there were many doubts about the authorship of this book in ancient times. 2 Peter was scrutinized more stringently than any other book of the NT, and it was the last book of the NT accepted as canonical.<sup>2</sup> Gene Green explains this very cogently when he states:

However, not a few in both ancient and modern times have questioned the authenticity of the letter. They declare this to be a pseudonymous writing, possibly written during the second century, which placed the name of Peter in the opening greeting and added the personal notes enumerated above as part of the mechanism of pseudepigraphy.<sup>3</sup>

E. M. B. Green clearly lays out the five basic categories of arguments against Petrine authorship:

These arguments turn on (i) the external attestation of the book, (ii) the relationship between 2 Peter and Jude (iii) the contrast between its diction and that of 1 Peter, (iv) the contrast between its doctrine and that of 1 Peter, and (v) various anachronisms and contractions. Arguments (i) and (iii) alone were used in antiquity; the remainder are of more recent origin.<sup>4</sup>

Accepting 2 Peter as pseudepigraphal would result in the rejection of the ancient church's judgement that 2 Peter is canonical. There is no evidence that any pseudepigraphal document was ever accepted as canonical. The treatment of

---

<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, *2 Peter and Jude*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 2005), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, ed. Leon Morris, vol. 18 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 19-23.

<sup>3</sup> Gene L. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2008), 139.

<sup>4</sup> E. M. B. Green, *2 Peter Reconsidered* (London: Tyndale Press, 1968), 5.

the author of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*<sup>5</sup> is an excellent example. Tertullian states:

But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name, claim Thecla's example as a licence for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter who composed that writing, as if he were augmenting Paul's fame from his own store, after being convicted, and confessing that he had done it from love of Paul, was removed from his office.<sup>6</sup>

Various scholars such as Johannes Munck, Bo Reicke, and Richard Bauckham have proposed that 2 Peter is testamentary in nature.<sup>7</sup> Munk saw 2 Peter as being an example of an OT farewell address. Reicke proposed that 2 Peter is similar to independent testaments, such as the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Bauckham argues that 2 Peter is actually a hybrid genre, which he calls a testament letter, that combines elements of the epistles and farewell addresses/testaments.<sup>8</sup> Bauckham argues that the recipients of the letter would have recognized the genre, and they would not have seen it as an attempt at deception. The readers would have seen 2 Peter as following in a tradition similar to certain Second Temple epistles, thus leading to its acceptance.<sup>9</sup> The various testamentary genres will be analyzed for characteristics, and then those characteristics will be compared to 2 Peter to determine whether 2 Peter is testamentary in nature and the likelihood that it is pseudepigraphal.

---

<sup>5</sup> Dennis R. MacDonald, "Thekla, Acts Of," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David N. Freedman, vol. 6. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 443.

<sup>6</sup> Tertullian *Bapt.* XVII.

<sup>7</sup> Mark D. Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 21, no. 1 (2011): 54-55.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-62.

<sup>9</sup> Richard J. Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, Word Biblical Commentary, ed. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker, vol. 50 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), 132-34.

## Characteristics of Testamentary Literature

### *Characteristics of a Farewell Addresses*

As previously stated, Munke argues that 2 Peter is an example of the farewell speech genre.<sup>10</sup> The farewell speech has several typical characteristics. First, the speech is typically in the form of direct address, spoken shortly before the speaker's death. Second, the speaker typically mentions his impending death and exhorts the readers in guidelines for living. Third, the speaker is usually a significant historical figure such as Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, or David.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the OT examples, there is a possible example in 1 Macc 2:49–70.<sup>12</sup> Each of these examples of farewell addresses will be examined to see if they correspond to these characteristics.

The farewell speech by Jacob is found in Gen 49.<sup>13</sup> This chapter begins with a third-party narrator introducing Jacob's call for his sons to assemble and listen to him tell them about the future. Jacob then proceeds to address his sons, beginning with Reuben. Jacob, in vv. 3–4, calls out Reuben for his sexual immorality with Jacob's concubine, and prophecies that, as a result, the tribe of Reuben will never lead. Jacob then proceeds to Simeon and Levi in vv. 5–7. Jacob prophecies that, because of their massacre of the men of Shechem in Gen 34, their descendants will be scattered among the remainder of the tribes. In vv. 8–12 Jacob proceeds to prophecy that Judah will become the royal tribe and lead all Israel. Jacob reproves his next two sons, Zebulun and Issachar, in vv. 13–15 for being willing to accept servitude for peace and riches.<sup>14</sup> Jacob compares Dan, in

---

<sup>10</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 54.

<sup>11</sup> William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 335.

<sup>12</sup> Burke O. Long, *I Kings: With an Introduction to Old Testament Historical Literature*, *Forms of the Old Testament Literature*, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 42.

<sup>13</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 57.

<sup>14</sup> Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis Commentary*, 1st ed., *The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 337-40.

vv. 16–18, to a snake, which seems to be calling Dan out for treachery.<sup>15</sup> Jacob further predicts in v. 19 that Gad will be harassed by marauders.<sup>16</sup> Unlike most of the negative predictions, Jacob predicts that Asher will produce fine food that will be provided to royalty, in v. 20.<sup>17</sup> The prediction for Naphtali in v. 21 is a bit unclear, but generally favorable.<sup>18</sup> Jacob's pronouncement about Joseph in vv. 22–26 is a clear exposition of the blessings that God will give the tribe.<sup>19</sup> The predictive section concludes in v. 27, where Jacob predicts Benjamin will be a tribe of fierce warriors.<sup>20</sup> Once this exhortation/prophetic statement is completed, Jacob predicts his own death in vv. 29–32, and gives explicit instructions concerning his burial. This passage definitely has the characteristics of a farewell speech.

The second possible farewell speech, this one by Moses, is found in Deut 32:48–34:8.<sup>21</sup> The section found in vv. 48–52 recounts God commanding Moses to go up Mount Nebo, where he will be able to see the land, but will die before

---

<sup>15</sup> Allen Ross, "Genesis," in *Genesis, Exodus*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, ed. Philip W. Comfort; Tremper Longman III, vol. 1 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 250.

<sup>16</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 672–73.

<sup>17</sup> John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, ed. F. E. Gaebelin, vol. 2. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 278.

<sup>18</sup> John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 2nd ed., International Critical Commentary, ed. C. E. B. Cranfield J. A. Emerton, G. N. Stanton (New York, NY: Scribner, 1910), 528.

<sup>19</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, ed. James Luther Mays and Patrick D. Miller Jr. (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1982), 366–67.

<sup>20</sup> K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, New American Commentary, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 1b (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 910.

<sup>21</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 57.

entering it.<sup>22</sup> The next section, chapter 33, is very similar to Jacob's blessing of his sons in Genesis. The difference is that Jacob's blessing was predictive in nature, but this section is framed as a blessing that God would bestow on the various tribes.<sup>23</sup> This farewell address shares the same basic criteria as Jacob's farewell message.

Joshua, in Josh 23–24, gives the third possible farewell address.<sup>24</sup> The complexity of this passage is that there are actually two similar, yet different, speeches.<sup>25</sup> Chapter 23 conforms closely to the form of the farewell speeches that were given by Jacob and Moses. It includes a section directly addressing the audience with a series of exhortations and warnings to be faithful and obedient to God and His law.<sup>26</sup> In addition, there is also a clear prediction by Joshua of his imminent death in v. 14.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, chapter 24 is structured as a formal covenant<sup>28</sup> reaffirmation ceremony. It bears a striking resemblance to what Moses did with the children of Israel at the end of his life in Deut 29.<sup>29</sup> In summary, chapter 23 seems to match up quite closely to the characteristics of the farewell

---

<sup>22</sup> Earl S. Kalland, "Deuteronomy," in *Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary with the New International Version, ed. F. E. Gaebelien, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 217-18.

<sup>23</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, New American Commentary, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 4 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 431-50.

<sup>24</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 57.

<sup>25</sup> David M. Howard Jr., *Joshua*, New American Commentary, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 5 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 416.

<sup>26</sup> Donald H. Madvig, "Joshua," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, ed. F. E. Gaebelien, vol. 3. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 361.

<sup>27</sup> Marten H. Woudstra, *The Book of Joshua*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1981), 339.

<sup>28</sup> For a good explanation of the covenant/treaty form and its application to Deuteronomy see Jack R. Lundbom, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 20-21.

<sup>29</sup> E. John Hamlin, *Inheriting the Land: A Commentary on the Book of Joshua*, International Theological Commentary, ed. Fredrick Carlson Holmgren and George A. F. Knight (Grand Rapids, MI; Edinburgh: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Handsel Press, 1983), 189-90.

speech we have seen so far. Chapter 24, on the other hand, does not match up well at all.

The fourth possible farewell speech is given by Samuel in 1 Sam 12.<sup>30</sup> This speech is very different from the others in two key ways. First, there is no prediction of Samuel's death, in fact Samuel does not die until 1 Sam 25:1.<sup>31</sup> Second, the content of the speech is very different from the other speeches. This speech begins with a defense of Samuel's time as judge of Israel.<sup>32</sup> The remainder of the speech is much more similar to a covenant renewal ceremony, as in Josh 24.<sup>33</sup> In light of these differences, it should not be included with the speeches of Jacob, Moses and Joshua when identifying characteristics of farewell speeches.

The fifth possible farewell speech is given by David in 1 Kgs 2:1–10.<sup>34</sup> The message begins in v. 1 with a third-person introduction of David's impending death, switching in v. 2 to a first-person prediction by David.<sup>35</sup> The remainder of the passage is a direct exhortation spoken to Solomon, consisting of two distinct parts. The first section, in vv. 3–4, is an exhortation to keep God's commands.<sup>36</sup> The remainder of the passage, vv. 5–10, consists of a series of practical and

---

<sup>30</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 57.

<sup>31</sup> Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. D. J. Wiseman, vol. 8 (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 156.

<sup>32</sup> Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, New American Commentary, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 7 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 140-41.

<sup>33</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, "1, 2 Samuel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, ed. F. E. Gaebelin, vol. 3. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 645.

<sup>34</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 57.

<sup>35</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 1st ed., Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 51.

<sup>36</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. D. J. Wiseman, vol. 9 (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993), 82.



political exhortations to help Solomon secure the kingdom.<sup>37</sup> This example is the closest to Jacob's farewell speech because of the presence of David's prediction of his own death and an exhortation. In contrast to Jacob's exhortation, David gives no predictions for Solomon's future, or blessing. The only characteristic present is direct address.

The final possible example is in 1 Macc 2:49–70.<sup>38</sup> Goldstein describes this speech: "Mattathias give a series of examples of the great deeds and great rewards of ancient Israelite heroes (2:51–60) in order to exhort his sons to do likewise and earn glory and eternal fame (2:51; cf. 2:64)."<sup>39</sup> There are two deviations from Jacob's farewell message. The first is that only the third-party narrator predicts Mattathias' death. The second is the presence of a predictive element similar to David's farewell speech.

In summary, the following examples contain the element of a direct prediction of death in the third-person: Jacob, Moses, Joshua 23, David and Mattathias. All these examples, except that of Mattathias, also contained a first-person prediction of the speaker's impending death. All of the examples include a speech given directly to the intended audience. The message of Jacob, Josh 23, David and Mattathias contain exhortations. The speech of Moses contains blessings for the tribes. The Josh 24 and Samuel speeches are covenantal renewal ceremonies. There are significant differences in those with exhortations, such as Jacob's predictions and David's political advice.

This evidence indicates that there are very few common characteristics to define a farewell speech genre. It is also common for a prediction of death but that is also variable. Some have both third- and first-person prediction, some only have a third-party prediction, and some have no prediction at all. Most, but not all, have an account of the speaker. The only characteristic that is absolute is the presence of a direct address to the recipients. One key observation, for this author, in all of these examples is that they are not pseudepigraphal in nature, each is a recounting of the actual words of a famous individual.

---

<sup>37</sup> Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, New American Commentary, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 8 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 97-98.

<sup>38</sup> Jonathan A. Goldstein, *1 Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 41 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2008), 239.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

### *Characteristics of an Independent Testament*

As stated previously, Reicke asserts that 2 Peter is an example of an independent testament.<sup>40</sup> Three documents need to be examined in order to define an independent testamentary genre: *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *Testament of Job* and *Testament of Moses*.<sup>41</sup> Reicke gives set of proposed characteristics possessed by independent testaments. Reicke states: “The characteristic setting depicts a man of God as he bids farewell to his intimate associates. He speaks about his imminent death and offers admonitions and edifying words, specifically pointing out that his survivors will have to endure the calamities that are about to come upon them without the support of his presence in their midst.”<sup>42</sup> Each of these characteristics will be compared to each document, with the goal of identifying characteristics of an independent testament genre.

The first characteristic is a prediction of death by the patriarch. The prediction of the death of the patriarch comes in two different forms. The first form is by the third-person narrator, which can be seen in the following testaments: *Testament of Reuben*,<sup>43</sup> *Testament of Levi*,<sup>44</sup> *Testament of Judah*,<sup>45</sup> and the *Testament of Joseph*.<sup>46</sup> The second form is the prediction by the patriarch of his own imminent death. This form is in the following testaments: *Testament of Reuben*,<sup>47</sup> *Testament of Judah*,<sup>48</sup> *Testament of Zebulon*,<sup>49</sup> *Testament of Naphtali*,<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 54-55.

<sup>41</sup> J. J. Collins, "Testaments," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, ed. Michael E. Stone, vol. 2. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 326.

<sup>42</sup> Bo Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*, 1st ed., Anchor Bible, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 37 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), 146.

<sup>43</sup> *T. Reu.* 1.2.

<sup>44</sup> *T. Levi* 1.1.

<sup>45</sup> *T. Jud.* 1.2.

<sup>46</sup> *T. Jos.* 1.1.

<sup>47</sup> *T. Reu.* 1.2.

*Testament of Joseph*,<sup>51</sup> and the *Testament of Benjamin*.<sup>52</sup> This is not a consistent characteristic of the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* because only half the testaments have a direct prediction by the patriarch.

---

<sup>48</sup> *T. Jud.* 26.2.

<sup>49</sup> *T. Zeb.* 10.1.

<sup>50</sup> *T. Naph.* 1.3.

<sup>51</sup> *T. Jos.* 20.1.

<sup>52</sup> *T. Benj.* 10.2.

The second characteristic is a direct address given to the patriarch's intimate associates. The direct address to his intimate associates consists of two different aspects: admonition and edification,<sup>53</sup> and a predictive element concerning the patriarch's descendants.<sup>54</sup> The *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*' exhortation section is completely consistent, and the predictive element is in nine of the twelve testaments, so it also seems to be a consistent characteristic of an independent testamentary genre.

In summary, the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* is inconsistent in the prediction of death by either the patriarch or the third-party narrator. It is completely consistent in its exhortation section, and it is reasonably consistent in its predictive element concerning the patriarch's descendants. The last characteristic is that each testament contains an account of the death of the patriarch.<sup>55</sup>

The *Testament of Job* consists of three sections.<sup>56</sup> The first section consists of an implied deathbed scene, without an explicit prediction of death by Job.<sup>57</sup> The second section is a direct address to Job's daughters composed of three

---

<sup>53</sup> *T. Reu.* 1.4-6.12. *T. Sim.* 2.1-7.3. *T. Levi* 2.1-13.9, 19.1-3. *T. Jud.* 1.2-21.9, 26.1-3.

*T. Iss.* 1.2-5.8, 7.1-7. *T. Zeb.* 1.2-9.4, 10.1-5. *T. Dan* 1.2-5.3, 6.1-11. *T. Naph.* 1.3-3.5, 7.1-8.10.

*T. Gad* 1.2-7.7, 8.3. *T. Ash.* 1.2-7.4. *T. Jos.* 1.2-18.4. *T. Benj.* 1.2-10.6.

<sup>54</sup> *T. Levi* 14.1-18.14. *T. Jud.* 22.1-25.5. *T. Iss.* 6.1-4. *T. Zeb.* 9.5-9. *T. Dan* 5.4-13.

*T. Naph.* 4.1-6.10. *T. Gad* 8.1-2. *T. Ash.* 7.5-7.7. *T. Jos.* 19.1-20.1. *T. Benj.* 10.7-11.5.

<sup>55</sup> *T. Reu.* 7.1. *T. Sim.* 8.1. *T. Levi* 19.4. *T. Jud.* 26.4. *T. Iss.* 7.9. *T. Zeb.* 10.6. *T. Dan* 7.1.

*T. Naph.* 9.2. *T. Gad* 8.4. *T. Ash.* 8.1. *T. Jos.* 20.4. *T. Benj.* 12.2.

<sup>56</sup> R. P. Spittler, "Testament of Job: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 832.

<sup>57</sup> *T. Job* 1.2-7.

different parts:<sup>58</sup> a recounting of an embellished version of Job's life,<sup>59</sup> a short exhortation,<sup>60</sup> and a recounting of the daughters' inheritance.<sup>61</sup> The last section of the document is a description of Job's death.<sup>62</sup> The general characteristics found in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarch* are present in modified form. A prediction of death is present, but only in a modified form by the third-person narrator, and indirectly by stating that "now on the day when, having fallen ill, he began to settle his affairs."<sup>63</sup> The direct address is very different in that it consists primarily of the life of Job, with a very small section of exhortation, and still later a section laying out the daughters' inheritance. As with the other testaments, a description of Job's death included. This demonstrates that the testamentary genre is very flexible with few fixed characteristics.

The last independent testament is the *Testament of Moses*. The *Testament of Moses* is different from the others.<sup>64</sup> It begins with a commissioning of Joshua by Moses.<sup>65</sup> A second section is a purported prophecy by Moses of the history of Israel from the time of Moses up until the early first century.<sup>66</sup> The third section is an eschatological section containing predictions concerning the end of time.<sup>67</sup> The fourth section is the prediction by Moses of his death.<sup>68</sup> The fifth section is a

---

<sup>58</sup> Spittler, "Testament of Job: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, 832.

<sup>59</sup> *T. Job* 2.1-44.5.

<sup>60</sup> *T. Job* 45.1-3.

<sup>61</sup> *T. Job* 46.1-50.3.

<sup>62</sup> *T. Job* 51.1-53.8.

<sup>63</sup> *T. Job* 1.2.

<sup>64</sup> John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 132.

<sup>65</sup> *T. Mos.* 1.10-17.

<sup>66</sup> *T. Mos.* 2.1-8.5.

<sup>67</sup> *T. Mos.* 9.1-10.10.

<sup>68</sup> *T. Mos.* 10.11-15

response from Joshua.<sup>69</sup> The last section consists of a final speech to Joshua.<sup>70</sup> The *Testament of Moses* exhibits several important characteristics. A prediction of death is present, but in a peculiar location, coming in chapter 10 before two more chapters of direct address. Normally the prediction of death is either at the beginning or just before the account of the patriarch's death. There is a section of direct address by Moses, which is predictive in nature, not an exhortation. However, Moses is not the only speaker, Joshua responds to Moses in chapter 11. The account of Moses' death is missing, but the end of the document is missing so we cannot make any conclusions about that characteristic.

In conclusion, there are really only two absolute characteristics of a possible independent testament genre. The first is a direct address by a patriarch, given to a person or persons at the time of the patriarch's death. The second is an account of the patriarch's death (with the exception of the *Testament of Moses*, which may be due to the missing ending).

#### *Characteristics of a Testament Letter*

Bauckham argues that 2 Peter is an example of a testament letter.<sup>71</sup> He proposes two possible examples of this type of document, the *Epistle of Enoch* and 2 Bar. 78–87.<sup>72</sup> The matter of the *Epistle of Enoch* is complicated because there is a dispute as to the exact extent of the epistle within *1 Enoch*.<sup>73</sup> Bauckham believes that the *Epistle of Enoch* is from *1 En.* 91-104.<sup>74</sup> Stuckenbruck, in contrast, thinks that the extent is *1 En.* 92.1–5; 93.11–105.2;<sup>75</sup> and Nickelsburg

---

<sup>69</sup> *T. Mos.* 11.1-18.

<sup>70</sup> *T. Mos.* 11.1-13.

<sup>71</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 55.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-62.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-61.

<sup>74</sup> Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, 131.

<sup>75</sup> Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91-108*, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 1.

believes the extent of the section as being *1 En.* 92.1 to 105.1.<sup>76</sup> Bauckham includes *1 En.* 91 because it contains the testamentary section, which allows him to define the *Epistle of Enoch* as a testament letter.<sup>77</sup> Based on the inclusion of *1 En.* 91 the *Epistle of Enoch* seems to be a letter<sup>78</sup> that contains a final farewell address<sup>79</sup> written to Enoch's descendants.<sup>80</sup> The major problem with Bauckham's use of this passage is that it seems very unlikely that *1 En.* 91 is actually a part of the *Epistle of Enoch* because *1 En.* 92 begins with "(Book) five, which is written by Enoch, the writer of all the signs of wisdom among all the people."<sup>81</sup> This clearly indicates that the fifth book of *1 Enoch* is starting. In addition, it does not seem the *Epistle of Enoch* is truly an epistle in the typical Greco-Roman style. The consensus pattern for epistolary literature is that it consists of three sections: an opening, a body and a closing.<sup>82</sup> In particular, the *Epistle of Enoch* does not seem to conform to the standard opening which "is comprised the following elements: the superscriptio (sender) to the adscriptio (recipient) with salutatio (greetings), often accompanied by a wish for good health."<sup>83</sup> There also does not seem to be an indication that this is a farewell address at all, because of the lack of any references to Enoch's impending departure. It seems best to see this document as simply being a work of exhortation and prediction directed towards Enoch's descendants. In conclusion, this document does not seem to be a good candidate at all to support Bauckham's assertion of the genre of testament letter.

---

<sup>76</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, ed. Klaus Baltzer, Hermenia (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2001), 416.

<sup>77</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 61.

<sup>78</sup> *1 En.* 92.1, 105.2.

<sup>79</sup> *1 En.* 92.2-105.2

<sup>80</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 421.

<sup>81</sup> *1 En.* 92.1.

<sup>82</sup> Anthony R. Cross, "Genres of the New Testament," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 402.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

*2 Baruch*, in contrast, is a very different case. *2 Bar.* 78-87 exhibits all of the characteristics of an epistle.<sup>84</sup> The greeting is “2 Thus speaks Baruch, the son of Neriah, to the brothers who were carried away in captivity: 3 Grace and peace be with you.”<sup>85</sup> This greeting matches exactly the normal epistolary greeting of the sender, recipients and greetings.<sup>86</sup> This section includes a clear body<sup>87</sup> and closing, which exhibits final exhortations to the recipients<sup>88</sup> as well. This letter shows a strong affinity with NT epistolary literature, in particular *2 Peter*.<sup>89</sup>

There are, however, two issues that need to be evaluated concerning *2 Bar.* 78–87. The first is whether the letter is a constituent part of *2 Baruch* or was attached later.<sup>90</sup> The second is an evaluation of the date of *2 Baruch*; both the complete document, as well as the constituent letter, must be evaluated to determine the probability of it being available to the author of *2 Peter*.

---

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 402.

<sup>85</sup> *2 Bar.* 78.2-3a.

<sup>86</sup> Cross, "Genres of the New Testament," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 402.

<sup>87</sup> *2 Bar.* 1.3b-85.15.

<sup>88</sup> *2 Bar.* 86.1.

<sup>89</sup> Mathews, "The Genre of *2 Peter*: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments," 62.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*



Evidence for 2 *Bar.* 78–87 being an independent composition that was joined to the rest of 2 *Baruch* is mixed. There are 36 different texts in Syriac for 2 *Bar.* 78–87, but only two that contain the entire book.<sup>91</sup> This demonstrates that 2 *Bar.* 78–87 did circulate separately, but since all copies that contain the entire book also contain 2 *Bar.* 78–87, it is just as likely that the epistle was separated for some reason from the rest of the book, since chapter 77 is a seamless transition from the actual apocalyptic section to the letter. In addition, even the independent manuscripts all begin with a third-party introduction that is identical to the third-party introduction found in the manuscripts containing the whole book.<sup>92</sup> This differs from the normal epistolary structure, which does not contain a third-party introduction. Neither of these supposed testaments give any support to the idea of the existence of a testament letter. If 2 Peter is testamentary in nature it must either be a farewell speech or an independent testament. The probable characteristics of farewell speeches and independent testaments, which have been identified in this section, will be applied to 2 Peter in the next section.

---

<sup>91</sup> A. F. J. Klijn, “2 Baruch: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 615–16.

<sup>92</sup> Mathews, “The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments,” 62n51.

## 2 Peter Analysis

### *2 Peter Dating*

Before proceeding to the genre analysis of 2 Peter, it is necessary to identify latest possible date for 2 Peter so we can compare it to the likely dating of the preceding documents. The most significant piece of evidence setting the latest possible date for 2 Peter is the use of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter*.<sup>93</sup> There are five passages in this small fragment that seem to be related to 2 Peter.<sup>94</sup> The first passage has a reference to “false prophets” who will teach false teaching.<sup>95</sup> This seems to be an echo of 2 Pet 2:1 because it uses the semi-rare word ψευδοπροφήτης (“false prophets”) and warns against their false teaching. The passage in the *Apocalypse of Peter* is much more vivid than 2 Peter, but other than that it seems to match 2 Pet 2:1. The second passage is the use the phrase “prove their souls in this life.”<sup>96</sup> It has been asserted that this is a reference to 2 Pet 2:8, but really the only correlation is the use of the word “souls.” This is not enough to merit it being a reference. The general context is about the soul of righteous people, but again that does not seem to be enough support for this coming from 2 Pet 2:8. The third passage is a supposed allusion to 2 Pet 1:19 because of the words τόπον αὐχμηρόν being present in both documents.<sup>97</sup> It is doubtful that *Apol. Pet.* 21 contains an allusion to 2 Peter 1:19 because while both words are used in both documents the words used very differently. This was verified both in

---

<sup>93</sup> J. N. D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, Black’s New Testament Commentary (London: Continuum, 1969), 236.

<sup>94</sup> Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), 207.

<sup>95</sup> *Apol. Pet.* 1.

<sup>96</sup> *Apol. Pet.* 3.

<sup>97</sup> Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 207.

a translation of the *Apocalypse of Peter*,<sup>98</sup> as well as the most current reconstructed Greek text.<sup>99</sup> The fourth passage, “those who blaspheme the way of righteousness,”<sup>100</sup> seems to be a conflation of 2 Pet 2:2 and 2:21. The passage takes “those who blaspheme” from 2 Pet 2:2 which has ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς ἀληθείας βλασφημηθήσεται (“the way of truth will be blasphemed”) and 2:21, which has τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης (“the way of righteousness”). The usage of “blasphemed” and “the way” in 2 Pet 2:2 is unique in the LXX and GNT, and the phrase “the way of righteousness” is unique to 2 Pet 2:21. The last passage contains “the law,”<sup>101</sup> which is also used in a similar sense of commands from God in 2 Pet 2:21 and 3:2.<sup>102</sup> This usage by itself would not be that remarkable, but since the text is clearly related to 2 Pet 2:21, and used in a similar sense, this should be seen as also being related to 2 Peter. Based on the evidence it seems clear that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is related to 2 Peter in some way. The next question that needs to be addressed is whether the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on 2 Peter.

The *Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne*<sup>103</sup>, which we have recounted by Eusebius in his book *Ecclesiastical History*, is useful in helping to date the *Apocalypse of Peter*.<sup>104</sup> This document is significant because since it is the stories of the martyrdom of saints in the same region as Irenaeus, which dates to the seventeenth year of the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, which is A.D. 177.<sup>105</sup> This allows us to date documents used in this letter. This document seems

---

<sup>98</sup> Apol. Pet. 21.

<sup>99</sup> "Apocalypse of Peter," last modified 3/22/2014, accessed 8/5/2020, <http://markgoodacre.org/ApocPet.htm>. Apol. Pet. 21.

<sup>100</sup> Apol. Pet. 2, 28.

<sup>101</sup> Apol. Pet. 30.

<sup>102</sup> Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 207.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 206-07.

<sup>104</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History: Books I–V* Hist. eccl. V.1.1-63.

<sup>105</sup> Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* V.1.1.

to contain a reference to the *Apocalypse of Peter*,<sup>106</sup> which we have demonstrated is related to 2 Peter. This is important since it would allow us to more accurately date the *Apocalypse of Peter* to sometime between A.D. 120 and 140, with A.D. 140 being the absolute latest because it would take a couple of decades to circulate before being used in in this letter in A.D. 176-177.<sup>107</sup>

The context of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is that of persecution (hence its use by the *Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne*).<sup>108</sup> 2 Peter, on the other hand, has no hint of persecution in it. It seems more likely that 2 Pet 1:15, which talks about remembering and recounting what Peter taught after he dies, lead to the creation of spurious works such as the *Apocalypse of Peter*, not the other way around.<sup>109</sup> In addition, it seems clear from the text that the *Apocalypse of Peter*<sup>110</sup> is dependent on Greco-Roman poet Virgil for images<sup>111</sup> that are not in the Bible.<sup>112</sup>

Based on this evidence the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on 2 Peter, and the *Apocalypse of Peter* can be dated with reasonable certainty to A.D. 120 to 140. Based on this dating, it stands to reason that the latest 2 Peter could have possibly been written would be sometime around A.D. 100, in order to give it

---

<sup>106</sup> *Apol. Pet.* 2, 22.

<sup>107</sup> Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 207.

<sup>108</sup> *Apol. Pet.* 27, 34.

<sup>109</sup> Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 207.

<sup>110</sup> *Apol. Pet.* 3, 5, 6, 8-11, 16

<sup>111</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid* Aen. I.402, 588-93, VI.427, 534, 55, 70, 638, IX.431-37, .

<sup>112</sup> Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 208-09.

time to circulate and be available for use by the writer of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

113

### *Testamentary Literature Dating*

Based on this analysis of the dating of 2 Peter, it is now necessary to tentatively date each of the documents that have been proposed as examples of the testamentary genre to determine if they were available to the author of 2 Peter. For a document to have an influence on 2 Peter there must be clear evidence that document was written and in circulation for a suitable amount of time to be accessible by the author of 2 Peter. The scholarly consensus of dating for The *Epistle of Enoch* is the second century B.C. at the latest.<sup>114</sup> The situation with 2 *Bar.* 78–87 is more complicated. Stone and Henze sum up the evidence for the dating of 2 *Baruch* well when they state:

We can confidently narrow the time window during which the apocalypse was composed to the half century in between the two failed Jewish revolts

---

<sup>113</sup> Up until around 2015 this evidence, which was developed by Bauckham, was pretty much accepted in academic circles as proving that the *Apocalypse of Peter* depended on 2 Peter. Since 2015 Jörg Frey has written several different works that argue for the dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. For this study I was not able to do a comprehensive analysis of his arguments but from the brief reading I did I am not convinced of the new evidence. A full examination of this will be necessary in the later research in order to deal with it in a future dissertation. Here are two significant works that will be necessary for further research.

Jörg Frey, den Matthijs Dulk, and Jan van der Watt, eds., *2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Towards a New Perspective* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2019).

Jörg Frey, *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*, trans. Kathleen Ess (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018).

In addition the author of this study does not believe that 2 Peter should be dated as late of A.D. 100 only that the broader scholarly community would be likely to accept that date and the reasoning behind it which allows for the date to be used to exclude certain documents most prominently 2 *Bar.* 78–87 which is the best example of a pseudonymous document which resembles 2 Peter. The current conclusion of the author is that 2 Peter is best dated to sometime in the mid A.D. 60s shortly before the death of the apostle Peter

<sup>114</sup> E. Isaac, “1 Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 6-7.

against Rome. *Second Baruch* makes frequent reference to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem (e.g., 7:1–8:5; 32:2–4) and therefore must have been written after 70 CE, and it never refers to the Bar Kokhba Revolt in 132–135 CE, presumably because the author did not know of it. Beyond that, there is little in the text that guides us to a more specific date. The dramatic setting of Baruch’s lament on the demolished temple (10:4–5) and the great sadness that saturates every part of the book suggest that not much time elapsed between the fall of the city and the composition of the apocalypse. The author of 2 *Baruch* lived close enough to the destruction that the pain was still raw. And yet, the author shows no signs of hope that things might turn around any time soon and that Jerusalem be rebuilt within the bounds of history, a hope that must have been widespread among Jews living in the aftermath of the destruction, at least initially. A date toward the end of the first century CE therefore seems most plausible, though we cannot be certain.<sup>115</sup>

Based on the latest possible dating of 2 Peter, to around A.D. 100, and the likely dating of 2 *Bar.* 78–87 to approximately the same era, it is extremely unlikely that it was available to the author of 2 Peter.

The independent testaments are a mixed bag in terms of dating. There are two possible date range when the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* was written. The first is after translation of the LXX around 250 B.C. to slightly before the Maccabean revolt in 167 B.C. The second is from 137 to 107 B.C. during the reign of John Hyrcanus.<sup>116</sup> Either date range would allow sufficient time for it to be available to the author of 2 Peter. The *Testament of Job* has a large range of scholarly opinion concerning its dating. The book was probably written in the first century B.C. or A.D. The Montanist and their opponents knew and use it in the second century A.D. therefore it must have been written before

---

<sup>115</sup> Michael E. Stone, and Matthias Henze, *4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: Translations, Introductions, and Notes* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 10-11.

<sup>116</sup> H. C. Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 775.

A.D. 100 at the latest.<sup>117</sup> Based on this, it seems likely to have been known in Christian circles in the first century and would have been available to the author of 2 Peter. The last testament is the *Testament of Moses*. The dating of the *Testament of Moses* is controversial.<sup>118</sup> In his introduction to his translation of the *Testament of Moses* J. Priest sums up the options well by stating:

Widely differing estimates have been proposed for the date of the document, but these may be classified into three broad categories: (1) in the first half of the second century A.D., most likely in the period just following the war of A.D. 132–135; (2) during the period of the Maccabean revolt, i.e. 168–165 B.C.; and (3) in the first century A.D., before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and most likely during the first three decades of that century.<sup>119</sup>

The scholarly consensus is that option three is the most likely, but the only option that would categorically rule out influencing 2 Peter is option one, which while possible is not likely.<sup>120</sup> This evidence leads to the conclusion that 2 Peter could have been influenced by the *Testament of Moses*.

Finally, all of the examples of OT farewell addresses evaluated were available to the author of 2 Peter. The only document that would not have been available to the author of 2 Peter was 2 *Bar.* 78–87.

### *Testamentary Genre Argument*

Now that the examples of testamentary literature have been examined for their characteristics as well as dating, this study will move on to considering specific evidence from 2 Peter in order to determine whether 2 Peter is

---

<sup>117</sup> Spittler, "Testament of Job: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, 833-34.

<sup>118</sup> J. Priest, "Moses, Testament of," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, vol. 4. (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 921.

<sup>119</sup> J. Priest, "Testament of Moses: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 920.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 920-21.

testamentary in nature. This section will examine the proposed genre identifications by Reicke, Bauckham, and finally Munke to determine the validity of their arguments.

Reicke argues that 2 Peter is the same genre as the independent testaments. 2 Peter contains direct address, the most basic characteristic of an independent testament. The identification will depend on two other unique characteristics. The first characteristic is the description of the death of the patriarch. The second is that with all of the independent testaments (as well as the *Epistle of Enoch*) there is an introduction by a third-person narrator before the first-person speech. Both of these characteristics are absent from 2 Peter and therefore prevent the classification of 2 Peter as an independent testament.

Bauckham's argument that 2 Peter is a testament letter hinges on evidence from three passages in 2 Peter he argues provide evidence that the genre of 2 Peter is testamentary. The first is 1:3–11, which he sees as a mini homily, similar to pseudepigraphal farewell speeches found in 4 Ezra 14:28–36 and the *Acts of John* 106–7. The second is 1:12–15, which he sees as indicating a prediction by Peter of his impending death. The third and fourth passages are 2:1–3a and 3:1–4, which Bauckham argues is as a prediction of the rise of false teachers.<sup>121</sup>

The validity of Bauckham's assertion that 1:3–11 is similar to pseudonymous farewell speech is dependent on two issues. The first is whether 1:3–11 is a farewell address. The passage definitely shows similarities to farewell speeches because of the presence of a direct address by a historical figure (Peter), which contains an exhortation to Godly behavior, but there is another option. Danker argues that the author of 2 Peter used the decretal form, which was a common Hellenistic literary form, and can be documented as unambiguously existing before the time of Christ.<sup>122</sup> This form was used in many official documents in order to make a "solemn call to faithful allegiance to One whom the Christian community would recognize as the greatest Benefactor."<sup>123</sup> Danker give the characteristics of the decretal form when he states:

---

<sup>121</sup> Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, 132.

<sup>122</sup> Frederick W. Danker, "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1978): 65.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*



This decree and hundreds of others like it follow a tripartite outline: 1 . Identity of the celebrating community, often with mention of specific officials. 2. A preamble of varying length, expressed in a circumstantial clause usually introduced by *epeidē*, citing the signal contributions and virtues of the Benefactor. 3. The resolution, usually introduced by *edoxe* or *dedochthai* , with specific recommendations for recognition of the Benefactor.<sup>124</sup>

Danker admits that 2 Peter does not match up exactly with this form because the benefactor and the beneficiaries are not completely distinguishable, but he believes that there is enough common terminology found in 2 Pet 1:1-11 that demonstrates that the passage is a use of this form.<sup>125</sup> Neyrey in his commentary summaries Danker's argument when he states:

Cities frequently issued a decree which first acknowledged the gifts and virtues of a patron and then resolved on specific ways to recognize the patron. Danker noted twenty-seven specific phrases in 1:3–4 which correspond closely to the common language used in typical decrees of honor. (1) Such decrees begin with a phrase such as “Whereas ...” to which “As ...” (*ōs*) in 1:3 corresponds. (2) Similar to the acknowledgment of the patron's virtues and gifts in a decretal, our letter cites the benefaction of its heavenly patron: “His divine power has bestowed on us everything for a life of piety ... precious and greatest promises given us ... become sharers of the divine nature and be freed from the corruption of the world” (1:3–4). (3) By the recognition of specific benefactions the patron is acknowledged and so honored: “... through the acknowledgment of the one who has called us” (1:3b). (4) Subsequently, as civic officials passed a resolution for specific recognition of the patron, 2 Peter exhorts the clients of God to honor their patron by living lives that will redound to God's praise and glory. Often people in the Bible are told “Be ye holy as God is holy” (1 Peter 1:17; see Lev 11:44–45) or “Live a life worthy of God who calls you into his own kingdom and glory” (1 Thess 2:12). Here the clients of God are exhorted to have excellence (*aretē*) in imitation of God's excellence (*aretē*, 1:3, 5). Moreover, they are to acquire other

---

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 65-66.

virtues, thus becoming holy and more honorable, which is a way of honoring their patron in return. And so the world will honor God by observing the honorable lives which flow from loyalty to such a patron (see 1 Cor 14:25; 1 Thess 4:12).<sup>126</sup>

Danker's argument presents a viable alternative to Bauckham's argument that 1:3–11 is a farewell speech.

The second issue is whether 4 Ezra 14:28–36 and/or *Acts of John* 106–107, which Bauckham uses as evidence for pseudonymous farewell speeches, were available to the author of 2 Peter. In the case of the *Acts of John* the content of the passage does not matter since it was written in either the second or third century A.D., which is much later than even the latest date for the writing of 2 Peter, A.D. 100.<sup>127</sup> The *Acts of John* is a good example of many pseudonymous works, which were universally rejected by the church. 4 Ezra 14:28–36 does seem to be an example of a farewell speech, but the consensus dating of 4 Ezra is from around A.D. 100.<sup>128</sup> It is incredibly unlikely that 4 Ezra would have influenced 2 Peter because the latest date for 2 Peter is A.D. 100. There would not have been enough time for 4 Ezra to circulate and become available to the author of 2 Peter. Neither document provides evidence for contemporary pseudonymous documents with a farewell address.

The second passage Bauckham uses as evidence of the testamentary nature of 2 Peter is 1:12–15. This passage contains a prediction of Peter's death. The real question is whether this type of prediction conforms to type of predictions in testamentary literature. Testamentary literature generally had a call for the patriarch's family to assemble, and then a prediction of death. This call is not present in 2 Peter. Based on this it is unlikely that this can be used to establish the testamentary nature of 2 Peter.

---

<sup>126</sup> Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 37c (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 151.

<sup>127</sup> James R. Mueller, "John, Acts of,," in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* ed. Allen C. Myers David Noel Freedman, and Astrid B. Beck (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 722.

<sup>128</sup> B. M. Metzger, "4 Ezra: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 520.

Bauckham's last argument is that 2:1–3a and 3:1–4 are a prediction of the rise of false teachers. These passages are predictions of the rise of false teachers, but it not certain at all that these sections correspond to the testamentary apocalyptic/predictive sections. There are predictive or warning passage in all of various testamentary genres (farewell speeches, independent testament and testament letters), but they are not an absolute characteristic of them and warning/prophetic passages are found in multiple other types of genres, including normal epistolary literature, therefore this does not provide convincing proof. In addition, there is no example of a testament letter that can be found to have existed before 2 Peter was written.

### Conclusion

Based on the previous analysis, the following conclusions are likely. First, 2 Bar. 78–87 is not possible as a model for 2 Peter since it was not written until after the latest possible date for the writing of 2 Peter. Second, it is extremely unlikely that 2 Peter is the same genre as an independent testament or the *Epistle of Enoch*. Third, it is a distinct possibility that 2 Peter could be utilizing the farewell address in the mold of the examples seen throughout the OT, as well as the example of Mattathias in 1 Maccabees. Since this is the case, there is no reason to see 2 Peter as pseudonymous given the examples of farewell speeches are not pseudonymous. Danker's theory is also a distinct possibility, and is very attractive because of the numerous parallels with documentary evidence that clearly precedes the writing of 2 Peter. Danker's theory has the advantage of falling neatly within the Hellenistic epistolary genre, as well as the generally accepted Hellenistic background of 2 Peter.<sup>129</sup> It is possible to see 2 Peter as being an example of OT farewell address as argued by Munke, but this does not provide an argument against Petrine authorship since there are no OT examples of farewell addresses that are pseudonymous. It is the conclusion of this study that it is more likely that 2 Peter is simply epistolary in nature with certain added Hellenistic characteristics, as explained by Danker's theory, because this provides

---

<sup>129</sup> Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, Pillar New Testament Commentary, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 131.

a better explanation for the structure of the letter as well as its likely recipients.<sup>130</sup> Even if one wants to accept 2 Peter as being an example of a farewell address, that in fact argues against pseudonymity because 2 Peter best matches up with OT farewell addresses which are not pseudonymous. One of this author's presuppositions when studying a piece of literature is that the declared author of a book should be given the benefit of the doubt, and that the identification should only be rejected when overwhelming evidence demonstrates the identified author is not actually the author. No compelling evidence has been presented to dispute the authorship by Peter of 2 Peter because it might have a testamentary genre,<sup>131</sup> therefore the presumption of Petrine authorship should be maintained.

---

<sup>130</sup> This conclusion that Danker's proposal for 2 Peter is correct is tentative that needs further research to validate the conclusion. This research would look at the background of 2 Peter and attempt to determine whether the audience was Jewish (either Hellenistic or Palestinian) or gentile. The farewell address would be much more likely if the audience was Jewish. Danker's argument is much more likely for either Hellenistic Judaism or gentile audiences.

<sup>131</sup> There are other arguments such as style, vocabulary and reception by the church that still need to be evaluated. One area which I am considering for my dissertation is the idea of determining a unified Petrine Biblical theology. This would provide solid evidence for 2 Peter being consistent with Petrine teaching and doctrine.

### Bibliography

- “1 Enoch.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by E. Isaac, 13-89, ed. James H. Charlesworth. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “2 Baruch.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by A. F. J. Klijn, 621-52, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Apocalypse of Peter.” In *The Apocryphal New Testament: Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses*, translated by M. R. James, 505-24. Oxford: Clarendon, 1963.
- "Apocalypse of Peter." Last modified 3/22/2014. Accessed 8/5/2020.  
<http://markgoodacre.org/ApocPet.htm>.
- “Testament of Asher.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 816-18, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Benjamin.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 825-28, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Dan.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 808-10, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Gad.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 814-16, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Issachar.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 802-04, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

- “Testament of Job.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by R. P. Spittler, 839-68, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Joseph.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 819-25, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Judah.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 795-802, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Levi.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 788-95, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Moses.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by J. Priest, 927-34, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Naphtali.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 810-14, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Reuben.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 782-85, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Simeon.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 785-88, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- “Testament of Zebulun.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, translated by H. C. Kee, 805-07, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

- Baldwin, Joyce G. *1 and 2 Samuel: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, edited by D. J. Wiseman, vol. 8. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988.
- Bauckham, Richard J. *2 Peter, Jude*. Word Biblical Commentary, edited by Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker, vol. 50. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983.
- Bergen, Robert D. *1, 2 Samuel*. New American Commentary, edited by E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 7. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996.
- Bigg, Charles. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Genesis*. Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, edited by James Luther Mays and Patrick D. Miller Jr. Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1982.
- Collins, J. J. "Testaments." In *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, edited by Michael E. Stone, 325-55, vol. 2. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Collins, John J. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016.
- Cross, Anthony R. . "Genres of the New Testament." In *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, edited by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, 402-11. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Danker, Frederick W. "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1978): 64-82.
- Davids, Peter H. *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*. Pillar New Testament Commentary, edited by D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006.

- Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical History: Books I–V*. Translated by Kirsopp Lake. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926.
- Frey, Jörg. *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*. Translated by Kathleen Ess. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018.
- Frey, Jörg, den Matthijs Dulk, and Jan van der Watt, eds. *2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Towards a New Perspective*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2019.
- Goldstein, Jonathan A. *I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, edited by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 41. New York, NY: Doubleday, 2008.
- Green, E. M. B. *2 Peter Reconsidered*. London: Tyndale Press, 1968.
- Green, Gene L. *Jude and 2 Peter*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, edited by Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2008.
- Green, Michael. *2 Peter and Jude: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, edited by Leon Morris, vol. 18. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.
- Hamlin, E. John. *Inheriting the Land: A Commentary on the Book of Joshua*. International Theological Commentary, edited by Fredrick Carlson Holmgren and George A. F. Knight. Grand Rapids, MI; Edinburgh: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Handsel Press, 1983.
- House, Paul R. *1, 2 Kings*. New American Commentary, edited by E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 8. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995.



- Howard Jr., David M. . *Joshua*. New American Commentary, edited by E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 5. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Isaac, E. . “1 Enoch.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, 5-12, edited by James H. Charlesworth. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- Kalland, Earl S. “Deuteronomy.” In *Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, 1-236. The Expositor’s Bible Commentary with the New International Version, edited by F. E. Gaebelin, vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
- Kee, H. C. . “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, 775-81, edited by James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- Kelly, J. N. D. *The Epistles of Peter and of Jude*. Black’s New Testament Commentary London: Continuum, 1969.
- Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004.
- Klijn, A. F. J. . “2 Baruch: A New Translation and Introduction.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 615-20, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- Long, Burke O. *I Kings: With an Introduction to Old Testament Historical Literature*. Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 9. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984.
- Lundbom, Jack R. *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013.
- MacArthur, John. *2 Peter and Jude*. Macarthur New Testament Commentary. Chicago: Moody, 2005.
- MacDonald, Dennis R. “Thekla, Acts Of.” In *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, edited by David N. Freedman, 443-44, vol. 6. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

- Madvig, Donald H. "Joshua." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, edited by F. E. Gaebelin, 237-374, vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
- Mathews, K. A. *Genesis 11:27–50:26*. New American Commentary, edited by E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 1b. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005.
- Mathews, Mark D. "The Genre of 2 Peter: A Comparison with Jewish and Early Christian Testaments." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 21, no. 1 (2011): 51-64.
- Merrill, Eugene H. *Deuteronomy*. New American Commentary, edited by E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 4. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.
- Metzger, B. M. "4 Ezra: A New Translation and Introduction." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, 517-24, edited by James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- Mueller, James R. "John, Acts of,." In *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* edited by Allen C. Myers David Noel Freedman, and Astrid B. Beck. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000.
- Neyrey, Jerome H. *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, edited by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 37c. New York: Doubleday, 1993.
- Nickelsburg, George W. E. *1 Enoch*. Edited by Klaus Baltzer. Hermenia. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2001.
- Priest, J. "Moses, Testament of,." In *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, edited by David Noel Freedman, 920-22, vol. 4. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992.
- Priest, J. "Testament of Moses: A New Translation and Introduction." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 919-26, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

- Reicke, Bo. *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*. 1st ed. Anchor Bible, edited by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 37. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964.
- Ross, Allen. "Genesis." In *Genesis, Exodus, 1-258*. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, edited by Philip W. Comfort; Tremper Longman III, vol. 1. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008.
- Sailhamer, John H. "Genesis." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, edited by F. E. Gaebelin, 1-284, vol. 2. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
- Sarna, Nahum M. *Genesis Commentary*. 1st ed. The JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.
- Skinner, John. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*. 2nd ed. International Critical Commentary, edited by C. E. B. Cranfield J. A. Emerton, G. N. Stanton. New York, NY: Scribner, 1910.
- Spittler, R. P. "Testament of Job: A New Translation and Introduction." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 829-38, vol. 1. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
- Stone, Michael E., and Matthias Henze. *4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: Translations, Introductions, and Notes*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.
- Stuckenbruck, Loren T. *1 Enoch 91-108*. Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007.
- Sweeney, Marvin A. *I & II Kings: A Commentary*. 1st ed. Old Testament Library. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.
- Tertullian. "Baptism." In *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, translated by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, 670-81, vol. 3. Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1866-72. Reprint, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973.

Virgil. *Aeneid*. Edited by Charles W. Eliot. Translated by John Dryden. The Harvard Classics 13. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.

Wiseman, D. J. *1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, edited by D. J. Wiseman, vol. 9. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993.

Woudstra, Marten H. *The Book of Joshua*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1981.

Youngblood, Ronald F. "1, 2 Samuel." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, edited by F. E. Gaebelain, 551-1104, vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.