

a paper:

SAINT PETER THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK OF II PETER

Robert Baral
1/11/2006 AD

PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is to examine the internal and external Biblical evidence for Saint Peter as the human author of The Book of II PETER, The HOLY SPIRIT being The Divine Author of This and The all canonical Books of The Holy Bible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

II. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE

III. OBJECTIONS TO PETER AS AUTHOR OF II PETER ON INTERNAL EVIDENCE

IV. GENERAL EVIDENCE ON SAINT PETER AS AUTHOR OF II PETER

A. THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY OF II PETER

B. THE SIMILARITY OF II PETER SPEECHES TO THOSE MADE BY PETER IN ACTS

C. LITERARY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN II PETER AND I PETER

D. LITERARY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN II PETER AND I PETER

V. SPECIFIC EVIDENCE ON ST. PETER AS AUTHOR OF II PETER

A. THE AUTHOR IDENTIFIES HIMSELF AS ST. PETER

B. THE AUTHOR OF II PETER USES SIMILAIR OPENING BLESSING AS I PETER

C. AUTHOR CLAIMS TO BE AN EYEWITNESS OF CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION

D. AUTHOR CLAIMS A PREVIOUS EPISTLE WRITTEN TO RECIPIENTS OF II PETER

E. AUTHOR CLAIMS THE PLACE OF A PROPHET AND AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST

F. THE AUTHOR CLAIMS AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH ST. PAUL

G. OTHER UNIQUE NEW TESTAMENT WORDS FOUND ONLY IN I & II PETER

VI. IN SUMMARY

VII. IN CONCLUSION

VIII. REFERENCES

ABSTRACT

The importance of defending Saint Peter as the human author of II PETER is paramount. If critics of II PETER can prove beyond doubt that the Apostle Peter did not write II PETER, then the historical claim of The Church to have received the unerring Bible canon from The Almighty under the direction and guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, directly from GOD's prophets and apostles, would be thoroughly discredited. This would lead to the shaking of the fundamental pillars of the Christian faith, which is exactly what the Bible criticism movement seeks.

But failing absolute proof in their aim to conclusively disprove St. Peter as the human author of this Book, Bible critic scholars resort to casting an avalanche of questions and doubts - no matter how unsubstantiated and heretical - upon the Church's traditional claim on the authorship of II PETER. Many of these Bible critics have long seen II PETER as the most vulnerable Book of The Bible in this regard. But in spite of the many centuries offered to critics of Holy Scripture, no absolute and conclusive proof has ever been offered to disprove the authorship, authenticity and accuracy of II PETER, nor of any other Books of The Bible!

We will consider four general point: A) The spiritual quality of II PETER; B) The similarity of speeches made in II PETER to those made by Saint Peter in The Book of ACTS; C) The literary differences between II PETER and I PETER are small; D) The literary similarities between II PETER and I PETER are strong.

We will then consider seven specific points: A) The author of II PETER identifies himself as Saint Peter; B) The author of II PETER uses similar opening blessings upon the recipients of his Epistle as used by Saint Peter in I PETER; C) The author of II PETER claims to be an eyewitness of CHRIST's transfiguration, of which Saint Peter was one of the three human witnesses; D) The author of II PETER claims a previous Epistle written to the recipients of his Epistle, which is presumably I PETER; E) The author of II PETER claims the place of a prophet of GOD and an Apostle of CHRIST, which fits Saint Peter well; F) The author of II PETER claims an intimate relationship with Saint Paul, which is known to have existed from other New Testament Books between Peter and Paul; G) There are a number of unique New Testament words common only between I and II PETER.

As we shall see, the evidence is overwhelming, and the "proof" of the Bible critics lacking, for any other conclusion than that which The faithful and historic Church has proclaimed down through the ages. That proclamation declares that all Holy Scripture is The unerring Special Revelation from GOD to man – mediated and inspired by The HOLY SPIRIT through first ancient Israel and now through The Church – upon which we may thus place absolute confidence as The Book of our Faith. For this reason, as Saint John declares in JOHN 10:35b, "The Scripture cannot be broken!"¹

DEDICATION

O LORD, grant that we, though we stumble and fall in our faith like Saint Peter did when he denied You, be in the end to be found as faithful to You as is he!

EPIGRAPH

JOHN 10:35b - "The Scripture cannot be broken!" [KJV]

¹ 1, KJV, JOHN 10:35b.

I. INTRODUCTION

Through the ages since the forming of New Testament canon, some have expressed reservation and outright doubt as to if Saint Peter was the human author of II PETER. The mere fact that the early Church wrestled with the Apostolic authorship of II PETER, concluding by including it in the New Testament, is itself the ultimate proof that St. Peter is indeed the author.

Evidence considered through the centuries by those within The Church and outside of The Church as to St. Peter as the author of II PETER has generally fallen into two categories: internal and external. 'External evidence' may be labeled those sources outside of The Holy Scriptures that address the question of St. Peter as author of this Book. 'Internal evidence' may be labeled those source inside Holy Scripture and, in particular II PETER itself, which address the question at hand.

This paper will focus primarily on several select examples of internal evidence that comes directly from II PETER itself which support the traditional Church position, namely that St. Peter is indeed the human author of II PETER. Some observations on external evidence however can not be avoided. This internal evidence from II PETER may itself be considered in two sub-categories: first, regarding the general and overall nature of II PETER; second, specific verses within II PETER.

II. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE

Many of the supports for Saint Peter as the author of II PETER rests in great measure on Saint Peter also being the author of I PETER, as well as the reliability of other New Testament Books such as ACTS and LUKE. Wycliffe comments on the internal evidence within I PETER: "I PETER clearly claims to have been written by the Apostle Peter, and there seem to be no considerations of content or style that refute such a claim."² Further, the "external evidence strongly supports the genuineness of... [Peter as the human author of I PETER]."³

² 2, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, I PETER, Introduction, 4th paragraph, p 1441.

³ 2, Ibid., 3rd paragraph, p 1442.

In the study of Holy Scripture, Wycliffe rightly asserts that “the original assumption of genuineness and accuracy is not properly altered unless... studies reveal very compelling evidence” that a Book of The Bible is not fully reliable.”⁴ It has always been the position of the historical Church that “the Canonical Writings are not only the result of careful reporting by honest men, but that they embody also the element of Divine miracle; they are ‘GOD-breathed.’”⁵ And down through the ages to the present, no critic has been able to disprove the authenticity of any Book of The Holy Scriptures.

But it is this very assumption that Bible critics - both outside and within The Church today - seek to call into question. If they can succeed in casting sufficient doubt on II PETER, considered by many to be the most vulnerable Book of the New Testament Canon, they will then by extension cast the same doubt on the entire body of Holy Scriptures. Thus the intense efforts of such men.

III. OBJECTIONS TO PETER AS AUTHOR OF II PETER ON INTERNAL EVIDENCE

Walvoord and Zuck give an overview of some such arguments used to oppose Saint Peter as the author of II PETER: First, Petrine authorship has been questioned by some since the days of Saint Jerome based on "marked difference[s] of style between I and II PETER."⁶ Yet The early Church accepted II PETER into the New Testament Canon, identifying the author as Saint Peter.

It has long been the common view that formation of Bible Canon was guided by The HOLY SPIRIT. This is especially so of the New Testament Canon, where The Church received - not authored - The New Testament from GOD based on Apostolic authority and authorship. A difference of style between I and II PETER is certainly not sufficient to discard Peter as the human author of II PETER. A mere difference in subject matter, issues of priority or different assisting scribes taking dictation from Saint Peter is quite sufficient to account for literary style differences between the two Books.

⁴ 2, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, I PETER, Introduction, 2nd paragraph, p 1441.

⁵ 2, Ibid., 3rd paragraph, p 1441.

⁶ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary – New Testament, II PETER, Introduction, Authorship and Canonicity, 3rd paragraph, p 859.

Second, there has been the claim that II PETER was written by another author who fraudulently used Peter's name to obtain acceptance by early Christians and the early Church in the same way as did the writers of the pseudonymous books: "the Apocalypse of Peter, the Gospel of Peter, and the Acts of Peter."⁷ However, the literary quality and orthodox faith preached in II PETER is far above those other books of dubious authorship and quality - and was sufficient for the early Church to accept II PETER into the New Testament Canon. This criticism is not sufficient to discard the Book.

Third, others have suggested II PETER was written long after Saint Peter died because of "the mention of Paul's writings [in II PETER 3:16] and the problems raised by the false teachers [of hidden knowledge and]... regarding the delay of the Lord's return [in II PETER 3:4]."⁸ But there are many explanations for the slow familiarity of the early Church with St. Paul's writings, especially in view of their limited destinations. Another explanation might lie with the heretic Marcion, who brought Saint Paul's writings to wide attention in the later early Church by his heavy use of them in his so-called self-proclaimed Marcion pseudo-canon.

Further, the false teachers mentioned here by the author of II PETER need not refer only to the rise of gnosticism circa the 2nd Century AD, but earlier unorganized forms of that heresy or even infiltration of pagan mystic religion concepts with which the early Church was surrounded. There is thus no compelling need to reject Petrine authorship of II PETER based on these criticisms.

Fourth, some object to II PETER because "The Church literature of the second century includes no direct references to II PETER." But as Walvoord and Zuck observe so well, "silence argues neither for nor against Petrine authorship!"⁹ If the letter was destined to a limited destination, especially in view of its short length, its wide circulation in a world of communication by foot, horse and sailing ship is not particularly surprising.

⁷ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary – New Testament, II PETER, Introduction, Authorship and Canonicity, 4th paragraph, p 859.

⁸ 3, Ibid., 5th paragraph, p 859.

⁹ 3, Ibid., External evidence, 7th paragraph, p 859.

Or there may be evidence for early II PETER acceptance in The Church that has been lost to us. Or the early Church may have simply been slow to accept II PETER initially because of the number of pseudonymous Petrine books then in circulation. In any event, other explanations may be offered for this criticism against Peter as the author of II PETER. Once again, rejection of II PETER and Saint Peter as its human author are not justified.

IV. GENERAL EVIDENCE ON SAINT PETER AS AUTHOR OF II PETER

Here we will consider four general points that support Saint Peter as the human author of II PETER: A) The spiritual quality of II PETER; B) The similarity of speeches made in II PETER to those made by Saint Peter in The Book of ACTS; C) The literary differences between II PETER and I PETER are small; D) The literary similarities between II PETER and I PETER are strong.

A. THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY OF II PETER

The literary quality of II PETER in its Greek language is far superior to pseudepigraphic books attributed to St. Peter in their titles, but were rejected by the early Church as not worthy of inclusion in the New Testament canon. In particular, it was the lack of spiritual inspiration in such spurious books that claimed Peter as their author - "the Gospel of Peter, the Preaching of Peter, the Acts of Peter, and the Apocalypse of Peter" - that caused the early Church to discount them outright.¹⁰

The lack of these pseudepigraphic Petrine books is not so much in their inferior literary quality to that of II PETER, but in their inferior 'spiritual quality.' Guthrie, in "New Testament Introduction," observes that "spiritual quality is not a matter of skill [of the author], but of inspiration [of The HOLY SPIRIT.]" For, as Guthrie notes, "the discernment of the Christian Church decided in... favor [of II PETER] because the quality of its message suggested its authenticity. It was the same discernment which confidently rejected the spurious Petrine literature."¹¹ The early Church apparently

¹⁰ 4, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, Additional comments, #3, p 838.

¹¹ 4, Ibid.

recognized II PETER to be Divinely inspired, “not merely [because] of its claim to Apostolic authorship, but also [because] of its apostolic content.”¹²

B. THE SIMILARITY OF II PETER SPEECHES TO THOSE MADE BY PETER IN ACTS.

Speeches in II PETER are strikingly similar to speeches made by Saint Peter as recorded in ACTS. Guthrie finds examples of identical key words in the Greek between II PETER and ACTS, suggesting the author might well be St. Peter: "'received' - II PETER 1:1 and ACTS 1:17; 'godliness' in II PETER 1:6 and ACTS 3:12; 'day of the Lord' - II PETER 3:10 and ACTS 2:20; 'punishment' - II PETER 2:9 and ACTS 4:21." ¹³

However, studies for common words and phrases between Books of The Bible suggest at best merely a common faith-culture-language milieu in which related Books may have been written. But this adds to the case at hand.

C. LITERARY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN II PETER AND I PETER

This must be mentioned here because, although not a proof in itself, much has been made of the criticism that assumes Saint Peter, a mere “Jewish fisherman,” could not be the author of II PETER because of the superior quality of the Greek language, style and vocabulary therein.¹⁴ Certainly an Apostle of CHRIST over several decades like St. Peter would be well exposed to a wide variety of Old and New Testament literary works. This criticism assumes St. Peter was not capable of learning in this regard!

Further, in I PETER 5:12, we find St. Peter using a scribe named Silvanus to dictate his Book of I PETER. There is no reason that, if St. Peter dictated II PETER to a different scribe, differences in literary style and vocabulary would not emerge. This was the explanation offered by Saint Jerome. As Walvoord and Zuck observe, “the differences in style [between II PETER and I PETER] are no greater than might have been expected, considering the different subject matter and different purposes for writing the two letters.”¹⁵

¹² 4, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, 1st paragraph, p 841.

¹³ 4, Ibid., Additional considerations, iv. 1, p 837-838.

¹⁴ 4, Ibid., Additional considerations, 2nd paragraph, p 837.

¹⁵ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, Introduction, “Internal evidence,” 4th

D. LITERARY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN II PETER AND I PETER

There are significant similarities in the language used in both II PETER and I PETER. For example, Walvoord and Zuck note a term that refers to words used only once in the New Testament, of which there are 686 examples. The term is “hapax legomena”... [in which] I PETER contains 62 and II PETER has 54 - more, proportionately, than most New Testament books their size.” The relatively large presence of hapax legomena in II PETER and I PETER “may point to a common author who had a rich vocabulary and a public speaker’s flare for fresh creative expression.”¹⁶ So if II PETER and I PETER were both written by a common author - The Apostle Peter - “it should not be considered remarkable, then, that a number of words and phrases are found only in these two Epistles.”¹⁷

Further, Walvoord and Zuck note a significant number of similar vocabulary words used in both II PETER and St. Peter’s sermons as found in ACTS. For example, II PETER 2:9 warns that the ungodly on the Day of Judgment will be “punished,” which in Greek is “kolazomenous.” In ACTS 4:21, we find the High Priest and Elders of the Jewish people not being able to “punish” St. Peter and St. John for preaching CHRIST The Messiah to the people. This is translated from the Greek word “kolasontai.”¹⁸

V. SPECIFIC EVIDENCE ON ST. PETER AS AUTHOR OF II PETER

Here we will consider seven specific points of evidence that support Saint Peter as the human author of The Book of II PETER: A) The author of II PETER identifies himself as Saint Peter; B) The author of II PETER uses similar opening blessings upon the recipients of his Epistle as used by Saint Peter in I PETER; C) The author of II PETER claims to be an eyewitness of CHRIST’s transfiguration, of which Saint Peter was one of the three human witnesses; D) The author of II PETER claims a previous Epistle written to the recipients of his Epistle, which is presumably I PETER; E) The

paragraph, p 860.

¹⁶ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, Introduction, Internal evidence, 1st paragraph, p 860.

¹⁷ 3, Ibid., Internal evidence, 3rd paragraph, p 860.

¹⁸ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, Introduction, Internal evidence, 1st paragraph, p 861.

author of II PETER claims the place of a prophet of GOD and an Apostle of CHRIST, which fits Saint Peter well; F) The author of II PETER claims an intimate relationship with Saint Paul, which is known to have existed from other New Testament Books between Peter and Paul; G) There are a number of unique New Testament words common only between I and II PETER.

A. THE AUTHOR IDENTIFIES HIMSELF AS ST. PETER

II PETER 1:1 opens The Book with These Words: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of JESUS CHRIST, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of GOD and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST.”¹⁹

The dual names of “Simon” and “Peter” used by the author to identify himself fit well with St. Peter, who was a Jew, an Apostle of CHRIST and first a missionary to his fellow Jews. First, the author desires to give no offense to his Jewish Christian readers, and so uses his Hebrew name -Simon - “which was given him when he was circumcised.”²⁰ This first name is chosen as an assurance to Jewish readers that the author has not cast away what the Old Covenant held in great regard.

The author identifies himself as the Apostle Peter. JESUS Himself conferred the name of “Peter” upon this particular Apostle when he confessed CHRIST to be The Messiah and the very Son of The Almighty. For following this confession of St. Peter, Scripture reports that our Lord declared in MATTHEW 16:18, “And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”²¹ Saint Peter was both a servant and Apostle of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. The author identifies himself as both a “servant” and an “Apostle” of CHRIST, as we would expect the Apostle Peter to do.

¹⁹ 1, KJV, II PETER 1:1.

²⁰ 5, Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible, II PETER 1, Verse 1-4, 2nd paragraph, p 2434.

²¹ 1, KJV, MATTHEW 16:18.

B. THE AUTHOR OF II PETER USES SIMILAIR OPENING BLESSING AS I PETER

II PETER 1:2 continues the opening of The Book: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of GOD, and of JESUS our Lord.”²²

Here in II PETER 1:2a we find Peter blessing his readers in The Name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, declaring, “Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” Walvoord and Zuck observe that these same words in Greek "exactly correspond with I PETER 1:2b – ‘Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.’”²³ The similar phrasing of this early Christian greeting in both I and II PETER is noteworthy, again suggesting a common author for the two Books - the Apostle Peter. This does not rise to the level of proof, but adds to the case at hand.

C. THE AUTHOR CLAIMS TO BE AN EYEWITNESS OF CHRIST’S TRANSFIGURATION

II PETER 1:16-19 states, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from GOD the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the Excellent Glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount.”²⁴

The language used here is similar to the language used by St. Luke in his account of the transfiguration of CHRIST in LUKE.²⁵ Further, the author clearly claims he both saw CHRIST’s transfiguration and heard the voice of GOD from Heaven. “Since only Peter, James and John were present with CHRIST on the mount,” the author thus claims to be the Apostle Peter himself.²⁶

²² 1, KJV, II PETER 1:2:.

²³ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, II PETER 1:2, p 864.

²⁴ 1, KJV, II PETER 1:16-19.

²⁵ 4, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, Additional comments, p 837.

²⁶ 2, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, II PETER 1:16-18, p 1459.

The emphasis in II PETER by Saint Peter on the Second Coming of CHRIST is better understood when we recall that the Apostle was an eyewitness to our Lord's transfiguration. Walvoord and Zuck observe of Peter, "His defense of the doctrine of the Second Coming therefore is based on his eyewitness experience on the Mount of Transfiguration at which time he truly saw CHRIST's majesty."²⁷ Thus Peter's constant and eloquent reminders to look for the Day of our Lord's Return, which -driven by this unique and miraculous experience - can not easily be forged by a false author!

D. AUTHOR CLAIMS A PREVIOUS EPISTLE WRITTEN TO RECIPIENTS OF II PETER

In II PETER 3:1 we have, "This second Epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance."²⁸

Here the author reminds his readers that he was writing a second time to them, having already written a first Epistle to them. "Many scholars assume that the earlier letter is I PETER," although this does not prove the point. However, if the author's first letter to these readers was indeed I PETER - which the Church has long accepted as having been written by St. Peter - then this present Epistle is very likely to be II PETER written by St. Peter.²⁹

E. THE AUTHOR CLAIMS THE PLACE OF A PROPHET AND AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST

II PETER 3:2 exhorts the recipients of the Epistle, "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:"³⁰

Here the author places himself on the same level as that of the Old Testament prophets and as one of CHRIST's Apostles. As Wycliffe notes, he claims "a continuity and congruity with the witness of the OT Scriptures, [which is] the principle authentication for genuine Christian preaching in the apostolic age, and also with the

²⁷ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, II PETER 1:16, p 868.

²⁸ 1, KJV, II PETER 3:1.

²⁹ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, II PETER 3:1, p 874-875.

³⁰ 1, KJV, II PETER 3:2.

witness of his fellow Apostles." ³¹ It is interesting how the author indicates he is an Apostle of our Lord more in passing than as a declaration. This suggests the author was known to be St. Peter by his readers.

F. THE AUTHOR CLAIMS AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH ST. PAUL

In II PETER 3:15 the author counsels his audience, "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you." ³²

Here the author refers to Saint Paul, not merely as a contemporary or even a fellow Apostle of CHRIST, but as a beloved brother in the Lord. This reference to Paul suggests that the author was part of Paul's inner circle of Christian evangelists. Walvoord and Zuck note that the adjective of brother the author uses in the Greek - "agapetos," which is from the verb "agapao" - is a Divine love of the highest order on the part of GOD for man - the love which men are called to have towards GOD and to one another! And although "years before Paul had severely rebuked Peter..., this did not sever their love and respect for each other." ³³

G. OTHER UNIQUE NEW TESTAMENT WORDS FOUND ONLY IN I & II PETER

There are other words and phrases used in II PETER and I PETER that appear similar in the English, which derive from the same root words in Greek. Here are but a few examples, which speak strikingly of St. Peter as the author of both II PETER and I PETER.

Walvoord and Zuck offer this example: in I PETER 2:9 we find Peter using the word "praises," which is translated from the Greek word "aretas." In II PETER 1:3 we find the author using the word "goodness," which is translated from the Greek word "arete." Both of these words "are forms of the same unique [Greek] word and refer to the moral excellence and goodness of GOD." Another example noted by this same

³¹ 2, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, II PETER 3:2, p 1461.

³² 1, KJV, II PETER 3:15.

commentary is this: in I PETER 3:21 we find the word “removal” and in II PETER 1:14 the words “put... aside.” Both of these words are translated from “the [same Greek] word ‘apothesis,’ [which] is used in the New Testament only...” in these two verses.³⁴

Walvoord and Zuck cite yet another remarkable example: I PETER 1:19 speaks of CHRIST as being without sin in a particular way - being devoid of “blemish or defect” - which is translated from the Greek “amomou kai aspilou.” In II PETER 2:13 we find CHRIST again being described as without “blots and blemishes,” which comes from the Greek “spiloi kai momoi.” And yet again in II PETER 3:14, the author calls upon Christians to be as “spotless and blameless” as is CHRIST, which comes from the Greek “aspiloi kai amometoi.”³⁵

VI. DISCUSSION

We began with an overview of several common objections to Saint Peter as the author of II PETER based on internal evidence: A mere marked difference in the Greek language literary style between I and II PETER is not sufficient grounds to reject Peter as the human author of II PETER. Nor is the existence of pseudonymous books bearing Saint Peter’s name, all of which the early Church long ago rejected as candidates for the New Testament canon, while accepting II PETER. Nor can references in II PETER to the writings of Saint Paul, the infiltration of false teachers into The Church or the subject of the seeming delay of the return of CHRIST disprove the Apostle Peter as the author of II PETER. Nor can the apparent slow acceptance of II PETER in the early Church world disprove St. Peter’s authorship of II PETER.

General internal evidence on Saint Peter as author of II PETER was considered: Attempts to place II PETER on the same level as the pseudonymous Petrine books further fails because of the disparity in spiritual quality in which II PETER clearly excels. The

³³ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary – New Testament, II PETER 3:15, p 878.

³⁴ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, II PETER, Introduction, Internal evidence, 3rd paragraph, p 860.

³⁵ 3, Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament, II PETER, Introduction, Internal evidence, 3rd paragraph, p 860.

presence of identical key words and phrases used by St. Peter as recorded in ACTS and the author of II PETER is positively suggestive. Reasonable explanations for the literary difference between I and II PETER were noted as alternatives to rejecting St. Peter as author of II PETER. ‘Hapax legomena’ - the presence of key words used only once in the New Testament - common only between I and II PETER is considered remarkable by some scholars.

Specific internal evidence on Peter having written II PETER was also presented: In II PETER 1:1, the author identifies himself as the Apostle Peter, and in a way consistent with the Biblical accounts of Saint Peter’s apostolic Christian mission primarily to his fellow Jews. The opening greeting of “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you” from II PETER 1:2 corresponds exactly with that of I PETER 1:2. In II PETER 1:16-19, the author of II PETER claims to be present as an eyewitness at the miraculous transfiguration of CHRIST, and in a way consistent with those events as recorded in LUKE, thus powerfully identifying himself as the Apostle Peter.

Further: In II PETER 3:1, the author reminds his readers of his previous “Epistle” written to them, which many have long presumed to be I PETER. In II PETER 3:2, the author of II PETER clearly places himself on the level of both prophet of GOD and apostle of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, thus further strengthening his claim to be the Apostle Peter himself. Although not conclusive, the author of II PETER claims an intimate relationship with St. Paul in II PETER 3:15 beyond that of mere contemporary or fellow Apostle to that of ‘brother’ with the same kind of “agapao” love that sent CHRIST to The Cross to redeem fallen man. Further unique New Testament words found only in I and II PETER were noted.

VII. IN CONCLUSION

The importance of defending Saint Peter as the author of II PETER has been noted with all urgency. To this end, this paper has focused mostly on the internal evidence on the authorship of II PETER. The defense of the Petrine authorship of this Book rests in great degree on the authenticity of other Books of The Holy Scriptures,

especially I PETER, LUKE and ACTS. If critics of II PETER can prove beyond doubt that the Apostle Peter did not write II PETER, then the historical claim of The Church to have received the unerring Bible canon from GOD by the Holy Spirit directed mouths of the prophets and apostles would be thoroughly discredited. This would lead to the shaking of the fundamental pillars of the Christian faith, which is exactly what the Bible criticism movement seeks.

But failing absolute proof in their aim to conclusively disprove St. Peter as the human author of this Book, Bible critic scholars resort to casting an avalanche of questions and doubts - no matter how unsubstantiated and heretical - upon the Church's traditional claim on the authorship of II PETER. As noted, many have long seen II PETER as the most vulnerable Book of The Bible in this regard. But in spite of the many centuries offered to critics of Holy Scripture, no absolute and conclusive proof has ever been offered to disprove the authorship, authenticity and accuracy of II PETER, nor of any other Books of The Bible!

Indeed, the internal evidence reviewed is highly supportive of St. Peter as the human author of II PETER. For there are only two possibilities: Either there has been a two-millennium-long conspiracy between countless hordes of Christians of the traditional Church on earth with a spurious writer or writers who have taken on the identity of the Apostle Peter so deeply that - in order to think and write as St. Peter did - have been rendered actually thinking themselves to be Saint Peter! Or the human author of II PETER is indeed the Apostle Peter himself!

Thus, barring any absolute external evidence that conclusively disproves Petrine authorship of this Book - none of which has ever been found - the internal evidence must compel the honest and CHRIST-centered man to conclude that St. Peter is indeed the human author of II PETER. For, as it is written in JOHN 10:35b, "The Scripture cannot be broken!"³⁶

³⁶ 1, KJV, JOHN 10:35.

VIII. REFERENCES

1. "The Bible, King James Version - Old and New Testaments, with the Apocrypha." The Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia.
<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/kjv.browse.html#kjvbrowse>
2. "The Wycliffe Bible Commentary." Edited by Charles F. Pfeiffer & Everett F. Harrison. The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Moody Press. 3rd printing, 1966.
3. "The Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament Edition." Edited by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Scripture Press Publications Inc., USA. 1983. Ninth printing 1988.
4. "New Testament Introduction - Revised Edition." Donald Guthrie. Intersity Press, Downers Grove, IL. 1990.
5. "Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible [Complete and Unabridged in One Volume]." Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., United States of America. 11th printing July, 2000.