

# 2 Timothy 2:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

## Analysis

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**Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.** Paul specifies Hymenaeus and Philetus's error: "concerning the truth have erred" (hoitines peri tēn alētheian ēstochēsan, oītinecs pεrī tēn ālēthεiān īstōχησān). The verb astocheō (ἀστοχέω) means miss the mark, deviate from, go astray—used of archers missing targets. In matters of ultimate truth, close isn't sufficient; missing the mark is fatal.

Their specific error: "saying that the resurrection is past already" (legontes anastāsin ēdē gegonenai, λέγοντες ἀνάστασιν ἔδει γεγονέναι). They taught that believers' resurrection had already occurred in some spiritual or metaphorical sense—perhaps at conversion or baptism. This denies future bodily resurrection, a core Christian doctrine (1 Corinthians 15:12-19). Such teaching likely blended with Greek philosophy's disdain for physical bodies and proto-Gnostic spiritualizing of biblical promises.

The devastating result: they "overthrow the faith of some" (kai tēn tinōn pistin anatrep ousin, καὶ τēn tinōn pistin anatrepō). The verb anatrepō (ἀνατρέπω) means overturn, upset, destroy—like capsizing a boat. Some believers, hearing this error, shipwrecked their faith. Paul doesn't say they lost salvation but that their faith was seriously damaged. This shows that even genuine believers can be harmed by false teaching, underscoring the need for vigilance.

## Historical Context

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Denying bodily resurrection was common in Greek thought. Platonism taught that souls were imprisoned in bodies; salvation meant escaping physicality. Many Greeks found resurrection absurd (Acts 17:32). Some false teachers apparently "spiritualized" resurrection promises, teaching that believers experienced spiritual resurrection at conversion but no future bodily resurrection awaited. This contradicted Paul's clear teaching (1 Corinthians 15, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) and undermined Christian hope. The error persists today in various forms—those who deny literal resurrection or reduce it to mere metaphor.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How firmly do you believe in future bodily resurrection, or have you reduced it to mere spiritual or metaphorical concepts?
2. What contemporary false teachings pose similar threats to biblical truth and believer's faith?
3. How can you help establish new or weak believers in core doctrines so they won't be 'overthrown' by error?

## Interlinear Text

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οἵτινες περὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἡστόχησαν λέγοντες τὴν  
Who concerning G3588 the truth have erred saying G3588  
G3748 G4012 G225 G795 G3004 G3588

ἀνάστασιν ἥδη γεγονέναι καὶ ἀνατρέπουσιν τὴν  
that the resurrection already is past and overthrow G3588  
G386 G2235 G1096 G2532 G396 G3588

τινων πίστιν  
of some the faith  
G5100 G4102

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 15:12** (Resurrection): Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

**1 Timothy 1:19** (Faith): Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

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