

## Jannes & Jambres

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by Wayne Goff

**2 Timothy 3:8** reads “Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith.” One is made to wonder who are these two named men. Most Bible commentaries I have identify them with the Egyptian magicians who contended with Moses as he stood before Pharaoh with the plagues, **Exodus 7:11-12, 22 & 8:7**. So how do they know that?

**Zondervan’s International Bible Backgrounds Commentary (NT)** says: “These two names were assigned in Jewish sources to the Egyptian sorcerers who counterfeited the miracles of Moses in order to deceive Pharaoh (**Ex. 7:11-22**). While the names do not appear in the Old Testament text, Paul refers to them as commonly accepted figures with which many people were acquainted....” (**vol. 3; Romans-Philemon**). The commentary goes on to quote the “Damascus Document” from Qumran and Pliny the Elder who identify these men as the Egyptian magicians. It is obvious from Paul’s writing in 2 Timothy 3:8 that this is common knowledge to Timothy, and probably everyone else familiar with Old Testament history.

So false teachers and trouble-makers are those akin to Jannes and Jambres, and Satan has his servants who have the powers of imitation to duplicate spuriously what God does for certain. Paul mentions “false apostles” in **2 Corinthians 11:13** who are found to be “transforming themselves into apostles of Christ”! One had better be well-informed in the Scriptures to determine the difference between a true teacher of the gospel and a false one! The Egyptian magicians were quite skilled at deception, and false teachers in and out of the church today are as well. Don’t assume that because a fellow is charismatic, handsome, and intelligent that he must be okay! Search the Scriptures to confirm truth from error.

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