

Introduction: Jude 5-16

Vs. 1-2 is who Jude is writing to, the called out of darkness who are loved and kept by God. Vs. 3-4 is Jude's desire to write to them about the common salvation, but he must write to them warning them of false prophets and apostates who have made or are making their way into the church. And the great warning that was given by Jude is also the most prolific warning today in the modern day church, grace isn't a license to sin.

Pt. 1 - What We Need To Be Reminded Of (Vs. 5a)

Let's not forget Hebrews 2:1, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it." For context, Hebrews 1 spoke of God's final Word in His Son, as Hebrews 1:1-2, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son."

The writer of Hebrews warns that we don't drift from the words of God and Jude warns that we don't allow certain persons to creep into the church. If we don't heed and remember the words of God, we drift, and thus allowing a creeping in of false doctrine, lack standards and a distorted version of Christianity.

Pt. 2 - The Reminders (Vs. 5B-7)

Remember those who did not believe and what happened to them (vs. 5). We find this account in Numbers 13 and 14. The land did flow with milk and honey and Caleb said we should go and possess it no matter the men there, but they didn't and they listened to the bad report. They all died, Numbers 14:37, "Even those men who brought out the very bad report of the land died by a plague before the Lord." The point here is to remember to trust the Lord and follow Him no matter the circumstances. But Joshua and Caleb remained alive out of those men who were to spy out the land, cf. Numbers 14:38.

Jude reminds them of the angels who did not keep their domain. This verse is of many differing opinions as to what is referenced to here. Some refer to this even as that of Genesis 6:1-7. Whatever historical incident may lie behind verse 6, the important point is that these angels abandoned the sphere which God had marked out for them and are now in chains and in darkness until the time when they will receive their final sentence to perdition. Again the point here is to remember what happens to those who rebel.

The third apostasy is that of Sodom and Gomorrah. The phrase "just as" indicates that the sin of the Sodomites had features in common with that of the angels. It was gross immorality that was utterly against nature and abhorrent to God. Paul describes this specific sin in Romans 1:26-27, "For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error." The description of going after strange flesh is clear that homosexuality is contrary to nature and the natural order of God's creative work.

This serves as an example (vs. 7) of what apostates will receive, and that is eternal fire. It is not the fire which destroyed the city, but the eternal punishment that awaits those who rebel against God's commands and requirements.

Pt. 3 - The Descriptions (Vs. 8-13)

Jude reverts to the subject of present-day apostates, and launches into a description of their sins, their indictment, their counterparts in nature, their doom, and their ungodly words and deeds.¹

First is their dreaming, also described as “filthy dreamers.” Their thought life is polluted. Living in a world of filthy fantasies, they eventually find fulfillment in their sexual immorality just as the men of Sodom. The application for us today is whatever we dwell and think on, will settle in our hearts and out of the heart flow the springs of life.

Second, they reject authority. They are rebels against God and His established institutions. They depend on the proponents of lawlessness and anarchy.

Third, they speak evil of angelic dignitaries. They in fact deny Romans 13:1, “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.” They scorn authority and deny the authority of God, and that of man which is given by God. They deny and speak against every authority established by God and governed by men.

3A - The example of Michael the archangel and his respect of authority and how they are contrary to this. The best interpretation that I can come to is “We have no definite knowledge why the dispute arose between Michael and Satan about the body of Moses. We do know that Moses was buried by God in a valley of Moab. It is not unlikely that Satan wanted to know the spot so that he could have a shrine built there. Then Israel would turn to the idolatrous worship of Moses’ bones. As the angelic representative of the people of Israel (Dan. 10:21), Michael would strive to preserve the people from this form of idolatry by keeping the burial site secret. But the important point is this. Even if Michael is an archangel, the one whom God will use to cast Satan down from heaven (Rev. 12:7-9), still he did not presume to speak reproachfully to the one who rules in the realm of demons. He left all such rebuking to God.”

3B - These apostates speak disrespectfully in areas which they are ignorant. They revile or use abusive or speak scurrilously about someone. They do not realize that in any ordered society, there must be authority and there must be subjection to that authority. And so they surge forward and swagger around in arrogant rebellion.² They don’t recognize any order in society but the natural instincts of gratifying sensual appetites and like animals they abandon themselves to sexual gratification and corrupt and destroy themselves.

3C - Woe! The imperative language of warning. Because of their stubborn heart they are storing up for themselves wrath, Romans 2:5, “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” Furthermore we have a description of their plummeting fall.

The way of Cain, basically describes the rejection of the blood sacrifice. Cain resembles man’s effort in pleasing God with his best or a sacrifice of what he has. Many today wrongly assume they can offer God something and He will be pleased.

The error of Balaam is the desire to become wealthy by making business of the service of God. Balaam professed to be a prophet of God, but he was covetous, and willing to prostitute his prophetic gift for money. This is never more true today than the name it claim it and prosperity gospel movement. Many of these apostates are leading millions astray because they speak an element of truth and literally out of both sides of their mouths. Proper hermeneutics isn’t their area of expertise. William MacDonald notes, “Christendom today is leavened by the sin of simony (the buying and selling of ecclesiastical privileges). If the profit motive could somehow be removed, much of what passes as Christian work would come to a screeching halt.”

They have perished in the rebellion of Korah, who rebelled against the leadership of Moses and Aaron and desired to intrude into the priestly office, cf. Numbers 16. For their insubordination, they were swallowed alive in a great earthquake. God thus showed His extreme displeasure at rebellion against those whom He has set up as His representatives.

3D - The five similes from the world of nature to show the character of these apostates. They are hidden reefs in your love feasts, which were held in the early church with connection to the Lord's Supper. In these cases they neither feared God nor the ordinances and cared only for themselves. They are clouds without water, which promise rain and refreshment but simply are carried along and leaving you with disappointment. Late autumn leaves which are stripped of fruit, twice dead literally meaning thoroughly dead or it may mean dead in the root. And they are pulled up by the root leaving no stump.

Furthermore, they are wild waves of the sea ungovernable, boisterous, and furious. To put it this way, there is nothing to show but the foam of their shame. They glory in what they should be ashamed of and leave nothing of substance and value behind.

Finally and tragically they are describes as wondering stars for whom the black darkness has been reserved. Wandering stars are celestial bodies that do not move in regular orbit. They are worthless as navigational aids. How appropriate a description of the false teachers! It is impossible to get spiritual direction from these religious meteors, falling stars, and comets who blaze brightly for a moment, then fizzle out into darkness like firework rockets.³

Pt. 4 - Jude's Final Description (Vs. 14-16)

We need a little bit of hermeneutics here, the doom of the apostates was foretold by Enoch in the seventh generation from Adam. It is a prophecy that is found only in Jude's Epistle. Some think it is taken from the apocryphal Book of Enoch, but there is no proof that that spurious book existed in the time of Jude. The most plausible explanation is the Holy Spirit revealed this to Jude as other writers of the Scriptures.

The prophecy is Christ will execute judgment on all. The rest of the verse all means the ungodly. True believers won't be included, John 5:24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." And what will this involve, He will judge their deeds, and all the harsh things which the ungodly have spoken against Him. Every word will be given account for.

4A - The words they spoke are now described in more detail. They are grumblers, they complain against the providence of God. Instead of being thankful, they grumble, and grumbling against God is proof He despises it as a result of the punishment of Israel in the wilderness.

They are finding fault. Why does He permit wars and suffering? Why doesn't He put an end to all the social injustice? If He is all-powerful, why doesn't He do something about the mess the world is in? They also find fault with God's people for being narrow-minded in creed and conduct.

They live in lust, indulging in the passions of the flesh. They speak in arrogance and this is real attention getter for me. Pride goes before destruction. Speaking arrogantly about your own devices and lusts and wisdom will result in death. Thinking God won't judge you. Thinking there's no consequences for the propaganda they spread as the gospel.

Finally, and this seems to be the most common stigma of our day, they flatter people. The external appearance and message is more like a sales pitch than a gospel call to repentance. The props that go with many false ministers today attract the eye and they fill the ear with attractive words. Paul sent this warning to Timothy in his day, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths." Proverbs 26:28, "A lying tongue hates those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin." Romans 16:18, "For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting."

Conclusion And Application

- Do not forget that men will creep in and attempt to distort the gospel and the truth. It has been done in the past and will not stop until the Lord returns.
- Apostates are about themselves, their own ideas and they only flatter and build themselves up.
- You will know them by their fruits, grumblers against the commands of the Lord, clouds without water and speaking arrogantly.

As Christians we must be on alert, every single day, to not allow or follow an apostate theology. Let us be reminded as Paul warned young Timothy in his last letter to him, 2 Timothy 3:14, "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them." Furthermore, in 2 Timothy 4:5, "But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

JUDE - PART 3

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