

Jude 5 to 13

I. Introduction:

A church across town decides to do a series on comparative religion. They invite a Catholic priest, Buddhist monk, Mormon missionary, and Muslim cleric to give a sermon each Sunday. They reason that listening to these perspectives will strengthen the faith of the faithful, as a meaningful dialogue with other religious leaders will bring them to a greater understanding of their own faith.

- A. What do you think of this strategy?

- B. What is the danger of bringing in these false teachers and letting them address the flock on Sunday morning?

II. Background:

In *verse 3*, Jude tells us *what* he is writing — urging believers to cling tenaciously to the truth about Christ that has been handed down to them from the apostles. In *verse 4*, he tells us *why* he is writing — because false teachers have infiltrated the church and are putting the truth of Christ at risk. Jude returns to the positive thrust that he announced in *verse 3* at the end of the letter (*vv. 17 – 23*). But in *verses 5 – 16*, he elaborates on *verse 4*, describing and condemning the false teachers. These verses fall into three major sections, in each of which Jude cites Old Testament or Jewish traditional material and then applies it to the false teachers. And in each of these sections, Jude also uses the word “these” (*houtoi*) to move from his examples to his application.¹

III. Proposition:

Today, we will examine the fate of false teachers so that we will be vigilant not to follow them on their path to destruction.

IV. Text:

A. Three Examples of God’s Judgment (*vv. 5-7*)

Jude 5-7 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their

¹ Moo, Douglas J. *NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: 2 Peter and Jude*. 238. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 1996.

proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,⁷ just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

1. What does the phrase “*Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all*” (v. 5) indicate about the audience’s familiarity with what Jude is about to say?
2. Why does Jude go out of his way to give a chilling reminder to the church? What does this suggest about the function of warnings?
3. Jude mentions that the unbelieving Israelites were delivered from Egypt. What might this suggest about the origin of the false teachers?
4. How did the Israelites respond to God’s gracious acts of deliverance? What prompted such a reaction?
5. What example does Jude cite in *verse 6*?

Note: In Jude’s day, a popular tradition about angels who sinned was associated with the enigmatic reference in *Genesis 6:1 – 4* to “sons of God” who came down to earth and cohabited with “the daughters of men.” Jewish interpreters had built an elaborate story on the basis of this text, identifying the “sons of God” with angels and attributing much (or even all) evil in the world to their pernicious influence. These stories find their greatest elaboration in the intertestamental book *1 Enoch*, and since Jude quotes from this very book in *verses 14 – 15*, we are almost certainly correct in identifying this story as the one he has in mind in *verse 6*.²

6. What desires drove the angels to forsake their assigned positions of authority? What does this suggest about the motives for the false teachers?
7. What is the consequence of the angels’ actions?

² Moo, Douglas J. *NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: 2 Peter and Jude*. 241. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 1996.

8. What is the connection between the angels of *verse 6* and the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah?

9. Commentators disagree over whether or not the phrase “went after strange (lit. different) flesh” refers to the men’s lustful desire for angels or homosexuality. In view of the following questions, which is the best option?
 - a. How did the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah view the angelic messengers?

Genesis 19:5 and they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them.”

- b. How might the use of the term “flesh” inform our discussion? Does this term usually describe men or angels?

10. How did the punishments for the unbelieving Israelites, the disobedient angels, and the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah incrementally change (*vv. 5-7*)? What does the final phrase suggest about the fate of the false teachers?

B. What they Teach about False Teachers (8-10)

Jude 8-10 Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties. ⁹ But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” ¹⁰ But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

1. With what three sins does Jude charge the errorists in *verse 8*?

2. How do each of these sins in *verse 8* correspond with the three examples of *verses 5* through *7*?

3. What does the phrase “*by dreaming, defile the flesh and reject authority*” indicate about the content of their dreams (v. 8)?

2 Peter 2:10-12 and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties,¹¹ whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord.¹² But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed,

4. What does the action of reviling angelic majesties (v. 8) reveal about the false teachers’ self-assessment?
5. How do the false teachers’ actions contrast with those of Michael the archangel? How did Michael view himself?

Note: Nowhere else in Scripture is this struggle over the body of Moses mentioned. Michael had to fight with Satan to do God’s bidding, as he did on another occasion in ***Dan. 10:13***. Moses died on Mt. Nebo in Moab without having entered the Promised Land and was secretly buried in a place not known to man (***Deut. 34:5,6***). It would likely be that this confrontation took place as Michael buried Moses to prevent Satan from using Moses’ body for some diabolical purpose not stated. Perhaps Satan wanted to use it as an idol, an object of worship for Israel. God sent Michael, however, to be certain it was buried. This account was recorded in the pseudepigraphal *Assumption of Moses*.³

6. How does Jude describe the false teachers in ***verse 10***, and how might this contrast with their view of themselves?

C. The Future Judgment of False Teachers (11-13)

Jude 11-13 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.¹² These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;¹³ wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

³MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Jud 7

1. What does the phrase “*Woe to them*” imply about the fate of the false teachers?

Matthew 23:13 “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

2. What three examples does Jude cite in *verse 11*?
3. What was the defining characteristic of each of the following sins?
 - a. Cain:

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

- What was the difference between Abel’s sacrifice and Cain’s? In the same way, what is missing from the false teacher’s faith?

- b. Balaam:

Numbers 22:16-17 They came to Balaam and said to him, “Thus says Balak the son of Zippor, ‘Let nothing, I beg you, hinder you from coming to me; ¹⁷ for I will indeed honor you richly, and I will do whatever you say to me. Please come then, curse this people for me.’ ”

- What motivations were tugging at Balaam’s heartstrings? How does this compare with the false teachers?

- c. Korah:

Numbers 16:3 They assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?”

- How did Korah and crew view Moses, himself, and the Lord? How does this compare with the false teachers?

- How did Korah’s sin impact those around him? Again, how does this parallel the false teachers?

Note: *Blemishes* are perhaps better translated as ‘hidden rocks’ which shipwreck sea-faring vessels. In mentioning the love feasts, he alludes to meals which were regularly held with the Lord’s Supper in the early church. Apparently, these men used this feast to infiltrate the church.

4. What does the above note indicate about how false teachers gain a following with the flock?

Note: Additionally, the hallmark of these false pastors (*shepherds*) is that they use their position to further their own selfish ends, and not to feed the flock. *Trees* that have no fruit at harvest time have failed to fulfill the function for which they exist, they are *uprooted*- a picture of judgment. These men are *twice dead* because they have tasted spiritual life (as well as physical life) and rejected it. *Wild waves* suggest the restlessness of the tide, which, after all its noise and fuss, only leaves a deposit of scum and rubbish on the shore. *Wandering stars* refer to the planets whose movements disrupted the predictable and static state of the starry night, confusing navigators and leading them astray.⁴

5. What will be their final fate (v. 13)? In light of this, why should these false teachers be avoided?

V. Thought Questions:

- A. What do we make of the fact that Jude quotes extra-canonical sources? Does this validate them as Scripture? Why or why not?

Titus 1:12 One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

- B. Does this seem like a loving portrayal of false teachers? Why or why not?
- C. What seems to be Jude’s primary objective in blasting false teachers? In the same way, how should we treat such men and women when they enter our body with the intent to dispense their false doctrine?

⁴Carson, D. A.: *New Bible Commentary : 21st Century Edition*. 4th ed. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA : Inter-Varsity Press, 1994, S. Jud 8

VI. Conclusion:

Clearly, Jude seems to be more concerned with protecting the sheep than converting the false teachers. As long as God's people continue to bring His truth to bear on this planet, Satan will send a legion of false teachers to sidetrack their advance. The best way of dealing with false teachers is not to seek understanding, but to seek their exit.