

Jude 14 to 16

I. Background:

In *verses 5 – 16*, Jude 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.¹ At the end of this section, Jude caps his denunciation of false teachers with a prophecy. This is nothing new for Jude or any of the other New Testament writers. Yet, the unusual source for his prophecy has troubled many, as the use of an extra-canonical book may lead to some speculation regarding what else should be included in our Bible. A little thought can calm these qualms, but our concerns should not shroud the greater message. Jesus is coming back to judge the wicked.

II. 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.

III. Text:

A. False Teachers Condemned (vv. 14-15)

Jude 14-15 It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,¹⁵ to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Note: The book of Enoch was a compilation of five books composed over a 300-year span beginning in 250 B.C. The section that Jude quotes from is likely the second section written. In it, the author recounts the visions of Enoch, a righteous man. Enoch received a number of revelations regarding judgment upon angels who had illicit sexual relationships with women, producing a wicked race of giants. Ultimately, God destroyed these giants through the sweeping worldwide judgment of the flood. This book was widely respected in New Testament times, but it was not accepted into the Christian, Jewish, or Catholic Canon.

1. Why would many find this quotation from the 1 Enoch troublesome?

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

2. How does Paul use non-canonical writers? Does this validate them as Scripture? Why or why not?

Acts 17:28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.' Cleanthes and Aratus (Phaenomena 5)

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." Menander (Thais 218);

Titus 1:12 One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." Epimenides (De oraculis).

3. What is the essence of Jude's citation of Enoch? How does it compare with the following passages?

Deuteronomy 33:2 He said, "The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; At His right hand there was flashing lightning for them.

Zechariah 14:5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

Matthew 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

4. Why do you suppose Jude decides to quote from Enoch instead of the aforementioned passages? Given its stature at the time of this writing, how might the audience respond to it?
5. What are the possible definitions of "prophesied"?
6. Does Jude's use of the aforementioned term necessarily validate Enoch as inspired? Why or why not?

Note: Even though this reference to 1 Enoch has caused quite a bit of consternation among thoughtful readers, we should realize that it does not validate the book. Jude was simply appealing to a source that his audience would be familiar with. In doing so, he chooses a selection that fully accords with the broader Scriptural teaching regarding the Lord's return. We would do well to realize that the point of this passage is not to stimulate a discussion on the canon and the inspiration of Scripture. The reference in Scripture deals with the fate of false teachers.

7. Who was Enoch? What do we know about him?

Genesis 5:21-24 Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. ²² Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters. ²³ So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

8. What was the spiritual climate of Enoch's era?

Genesis 6:1-6 Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, ² that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

Jude 6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

9. What truth did Enoch prophesy (vv. 14-15)?

10. When Jude mentions "the Lord," who is He talking about? When will this take place?

11. What two-fold purpose does Jude give for Jesus' return (v. 15)?

12. What actions will be judged and convicted (v. 15)?

13. In light of *verses 5* through 7, what “ungodly deeds” and “harsh things” did Jude have in mind?

B. False Teachers Exposed (v. 16)

Jude 16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

1. What sins did these false teachers commit?
2. What common thread pervades all of these sins?
3. How can grumbling be used to get a following? How did the aforementioned Korah use this device (v. 11)?
4. What does grumbling indicate about one’s relationship with God – namely, how does God relate to the grumbler?

1 Corinthians 10:10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

Numbers 11:1 Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the LORD; and when the LORD heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.

Note: The term for “fault finder” is *mempsmoiros*. It was a standard Greek character cited in this intriguing passage from Lucian:

“You’re satisfied by nothing that befalls you; you complain at everything. You don’t want what you’ve got, you long for what you haven’t got. In winter you wish it were summer, and in summer that it were winter. You are like the sick folk, hard to please, and mempsimoiros.”²

5. What does fault-finding reveal about how one views God?

² Cynic, xvii

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

6. What does the phrase “*following after their own lusts*” (v. 16) suggest about the content of their complaining?
7. How did these false teachers view themselves according to *verse 16*?
8. What do the phrases “*speak arrogantly*” and “*flattering people*” indicate about the tactics of the false teachers?
9. What was their motivation for “*flattering people*”? What end were they trying to achieve?

One commentator says, “As the fear of God drives out the fear of man, so defiance of God tends to put man in His place, as the chief source of good or evil to his fellows.”³

10. Why do false teachers rely upon the good favor of other men? Why is this critical to their success?

IV. Thought Questions:

- A. In general, how do people – especially men like these false teachers – respond to the promise of future judgment?

2 Peter 3:3-4 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”

- B. How is grumbling and complaining tolerated in our day and age? What innocuous names do we apply to this sin?
- C. Why does God take such a low view of grumbling and complaining?

³ Michael Green, 2 Peter and Jude, p. 194.

V. Conclusion:

The licentious lifestyle of the false teachers likely led many of them to doubt the reality of God's judgment. In their minds, God was a God of grace and love to the exclusion of His justice and revulsion towards sin. The absence of holy fear led to a desperate desire to please men, flattering and bragging to bring them into their fold. Yet, the God they refuse to fear will strike terror in their hearts when they behold His Son coming in glory with His holy angels.