

## Sunday Morning Message

September 19, 2021

### *Earnestly Contending for the Faith - Messages from Jude*

*Jude 1:14 - 15 – 16 The Enemies Among Us – Cautions from Our Predecessors – Part One*

Text – Jude 1:14 – 15; 17 - 19

Congregational Reading – Jude 1:14 - 15

### Introduction

We have been examining this little Epistle of Jude, which was written not to a specific church or person, but was intended to be circulated and used to instruct all Christians in all local churches in Jude's day. Of course, the Holy Spirit superintended over this writing and included it in the canon of Scripture where it would be used for millennia to help churches fight off error. The great emphasis of this letter is the encouragement for us to "earnestly contend for the faith:"

*"3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort [you] that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 1:3)*

The reason for our defending the faith is given in verse 4:

*"4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness (ἀσελγειαν from ἀσελγεια – aselgeia – NASF – unbridled lust; excess), and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 1:4)*

#### I. Characters from the Past (vs. 5 – 7; 11)

In the past three sermons from this letter, we looked at the examples that Jude cites from the Old Testament that would serve as warnings for the people of Jude's day in the first century and for us today.

##### A. The Rebels Who Opposed God in the Wilderness (v. 5)

In verse five, Jude talks about the Israelites who were delivered miraculously out from the bondage of slavery out of the land of Egypt in the days of Moses, only to later rebel against the God who saved them by refusing to trust Him to bring them into the Promised Land in Canaan. They didn't think their God was big enough, wise enough, or powerful enough to overcome all of the obstacles and giants that awaited them on the other side of the Jordan River:

*"5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." (Jude 1:5)*

## B. Fallen Angels (v. 6)

Then in verse six, Jude reminds us of fallen angels that committed sins that were so heinous that God bound them in a spiritual prison until the great day of judgment:

*"6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 1:6)*

Though we cannot be absolutely sure, we believe that these particular angels were the "sons of God" mentioned in Genesis six who cohabited with human women and produced offspring that were described in the Bible as "giants in the earth" and "men of renown" (Genesis 6:4) This period of time was just prior to Noah's flood when the "wickedness of man was great in the earth" (Genesis 6:5).

## C. Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7; Genesis 19)

Next, we examined from verse seven the wickedness of sexual impurity in general, and homosexuality in particular through the Old Testament example of Sodom and Gomorrah:

*"7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 1:7)*

In verses eight through ten, Jude will make the connection to the problems and people that we may face today in our New Testament churches:

*"8 Likewise also these [filthy] dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. 10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves." (Jude 1:8-10)*

Notice the reference to Michael the Archangel contending with a devil over the body of Moses. We have no account in the Old Testament that discusses this event, though we know that it did happen because God included it here in the New Testament. The point that Jude seems to be making is that the angel Michael did not take this devil on in his own power or authority, but deferred to the power and authority of God. We will examine these three verses (8 – 10) when we get to the next section of our study (Characteristics that are Present).

Three more Old Testament illustrations are given in verse 11:

*"11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." (Jude 1:11)*

#### **D. Cain – A Works-Based Religion Rather than a Faith-Based Righteousness (v. 11a; Genesis 4)**

Next, we examined the first part of this verse and considered Cain, the first of the three characters mentioned here. Cain tried to offer up to God the fruit of his hands – his own works as an acceptable sacrifice for sin. God was not pleased with his offering. Cain represents a works-based religion, or a works-based righteousness.

#### **E. Balaam – A Preacher Corrupted by Greed**

Then we looked at Balaam, who sold out the people of God for money. He was hired by an enemy king to curse the nation of Israel, and even though he was unable to do that, he did show the Moabites how to corrupt the Israelites by infiltrating them from the inside with pagan women and idolatry.

#### **F. Core (Korah – v. 11c; Numbers 16)**

Korah was the man that was a cousin of Moses and Aaron that led a rebellion against them, attempting to overthrow the God called and God ordained leadership of Israel. His rebellion ultimately caused the death of his family and thousands of others who were infected by his poison.

### **II. Characteristics in Our Present (vs. 1:8 - 10; 12 – 13; 16)**

In the last message, we started examining what Jude had to say about the ungodly characteristics that were present in his day, that are also remain in our day as well. These characteristics, and those who possess them and proliferate them need to be contended against; we need to fight to keep these characteristics out of our churches, and out of our homes.

You will notice that in each of the three sections of Scripture that we have classified as “characteristics in our present” begin with the word “these.” Notice vs. 8 – 10; vs. 12 – 13; and v. 16.

In part one of Characteristics in Our Present we examined vs. 8 – 10, where we learned that in Jude’s day as well as in ours there were filthy dreamers who:

#### **A. Defile the Flesh (v. 8a)**

#### **B. Despise Dominion (v. 8b)**

#### **C. Denounce Dignities (v. 8c)**

Then in last week’s message from vs. 12 – 13. We saw some more characteristics of those that may creep into our churches today:

#### D. They are Problems

*"These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, (v. 12a)*

#### E. They are Profitable to Themselves

*"feeding themselves without fear:" (v. 12b)*

#### F. They are Pointless

*"clouds [they are] without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;" (v. 12c)*

#### G. They are Passionate

*"13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; (v. 13a)*

#### H. They are Passing

*"wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." (v. 1:13b)*

#### I. They Complain About Everything

*"16 These are murmurers (γογγυσταί from γογγυστής – gongystēs), complainers (μεμψίμοιροι from μεμψίμοιρος – mempsimoiros)," (v. 16a)*

Murmuring accomplishes nothing except to discourage the people who you complain to. We are murmurers by nature.

#### J. They Lack Control

*"...walking after their own lusts;" (v. 16b)*

We have referred before in our study of Jude to the similarities to what Peter said:

#### K. They Compliment and Convince with Words

*"...and their mouth speaketh great swelling [words]," (v. 16c)*

Paul warned the believers in Rome about these types of people:

*"17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Romans 16:17-18)*

These people talk a lot, boasting about themselves, and often use flattery so they can butter up the people they are trying to deceive,

#### L. They Connect with People Who Can Promote Them

*"...having men's persons in admiration because of advantage."* (v. 16d)

These people know just who to gravitate to. They become friendly with people who can promote them or who can profit them. They care nothing about people who are in need.

They also connect with people whom they have discerned to be leaning in their direction. In other words, they can spot people who are likeminded; people who they can influence. Birds of a feather flock together.

### III. Cautions from Our Predecessors (vs. 14 – 15; 17 – 19)

This brings us now to the next division in this letter. Jude will not introduce cautions from our predecessors in the faith. These are good men from the past who have warned us about the same things that Jude is warning us about today.

Illustrate – When I teach my students how to prepare messages or lessons, I encourage them to quote from some prominent saints from the past in order to give their arguments a little more weight. That is exactly what Jude is doing here. He reminds his readers that what he was telling them was no different from what other men have said in the past.

#### A. Enoch

##### 1. Who He Was

We know very little from the Bible regarding Enoch, and we need to be careful while studying him, because there are at least two Enochs mentioned in the Scripture. We need to make sure that we are examining the right one.

The first Enoch is mentioned in Genesis 4:17 and 18 as being the son of Cain.

The second Enoch, which is the one referred to here by Jude, because he is the seventh from Adam is found in Genesis 5:

*"18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: 19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. 21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: 22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: 24 **And Enoch walked with God: and he [was] not; for God took him.**"*

(Genesis 5:18-24)

There is also two verses in the New Testament that reference Enoch:

The first is found in Luke 3:37, which places Enoch was in the genealogical record of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second reference is in Hebrews eleven, the great “hall of faith” chapter:

*"5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:5-6)*

Hebrews gives us a commentary on what we knew from Genesis. Genesis stated that Enoch walked with God and God took Him. Hebrews tells us that Enoch pleased God because of his faith and was “translated” (μετετέθη from μετατίθημι – *metatithēmi* – meaning to transfer or to change), meaning that he did not die a natural death. God just took Him to be with Him. It seems that, like Elijah, he was taken bodily, without physically dying, and by having this experience, he is a picture of the Rapture of the Church. The church, too, will someday, maybe soon, be translated into Heaven through a bodily resurrection:

*"13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)*

*"51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [must] put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Corinthians 15:51-54)*

The important thing for us to know about Enoch’s life was that he walked with God, meaning that he had a close, intimate relationship with God. He communicated often with his God.

If we want to please God as Enoch did, we will also need to have an intimate relationship with Him. We will need to walk closely with God as Enoch did, which means that we will have to have regular times when we read His Word and communicate with Him in prayer.

How is your walk with God? Are you spending time daily in the Word and in prayer?

## 2. What He Said

The only other passage of Scripture that mentions Enoch is in our text in Jude:

*"14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard [speeches] which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 1:14-15)*

Usually when a New Testament writer quotes from an Old Testament saint, we can also see the record for ourselves from another Bible passage. However, here we see that Jude is referring to something that he was aware of familiar with, but we have no record of it. Apparently there was an oral tradition of what Enoch prophesied, and perhaps even a written record somewhere that has since disappeared.

There is an apocryphal book known as *The Book of Enoch*, which the scholars say is where this quote originally came from. The following is what is written in the first chapter of *the Book of Enoch*:

*Enoch's word of blessing that blessed the righteous elect, who will be present in the day of tribulation when all enemies are removed; for the just shall be saved. Taking up his proverb, Enoch said: "The man is just: The vision from God was opened to him. He possesses the vision of the Holy One and heaven." He explained this to me, and I heard holy sayings as I listened; and beholding these things I knew. I did not intend these things for this generation, but I speak on behalf of the one that is far off. About the elect ones I speak now, and concerning them I take up my proverb: "My Holy Great One will come out from his dwelling place. And the God of the ages will walk upon the earth, upon Mount Sinai. He will appear from his encampment and shine forth in the strength of his power from the heaven of heavens. All will be afraid and the watchmen will believe. They will sing hidden in all the high places of the earth. And all the high places of the earth will shake; trembling and great fear will take them unto the end of the earth. And they will shake and fall; the lofty mountains shall break up and the high hills will be humbled that slip through the mountains. They will melt like beeswax from the face of the flaming fire. And the earth will be divided, a division like grapes. As much as is upon the earth will destroy itself and judgment will be against everyone. With the just he will make peace and upon the elect there will be preservation and peace. Upon them mercy will come and they all shall belong to God; and he shall give approval to them and will bless them all. He will help them all and help us; light will shine on them and he will make peace over them. For he comes with his ten thousands and his holy ones to enact judgment against all. He will destroy everyone who is*

*ungodly and reproach all flesh concerning all works of the ungodly: the things they did impiously, the harsh words that they spoke and all that ungodly sinners spoke against him.”*

*And He will help them all,  
And light shall appear unto them,  
And He will make peace with them.*

*<sup>9</sup> And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones*

*To execute judgement upon all,*

*And to destroy all the ungodly:*

*And to convict all flesh*

*Of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed,*

*And of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.<sup>1</sup>*

Today, we have fragments of the original book. We must be careful to remember that if God wanted this book to be included in the Canon of Scripture, we would have the complete book today. The only part of that book that should be considered inspired is the part that is quoted here by Jude. According to John Phillips: “The Book of Enoch is generally regarded as apocryphal, not part of the divine canon of Scripture. It seems to be a composite work, written at different times and by different authors.”<sup>2</sup>

McGee states this about the book in his *Thru the Bible* commentary on Jude:

Now let me quote what Dr. Wuest has written about this Book of Enoch:

The quotation is from the apocryphal Book of Enoch. This book, known to the Church Fathers of the second century, lost for some centuries with the exception of a few fragments, was found in its entirety in a copy of the Ethiopic Bible in 1773 by Bruce. It consists of revelations purporting to have been given to Enoch and Noah. Its object is to vindicate the ways of divine providence, to set forth the retribution reserved for sinners, and so show that the world is under the immediate government of God.

Enoch prophesied regarding the false teachers of the last days, and that is a remarkable thing! God apparently did not want the Book of Enoch in the canon of Scripture or it would be there—you may be sure of that. Godly men recognized that it was an

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Henry Charles, ed., *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 188–189.

<sup>2</sup> John Phillips, *Exploring the Epistle of Jude: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009), Jud 14–15.



apocryphal book, but here is one prophecy that God wanted put into His holy Word. It is a prophecy concerning the coming of Christ with His saints.<sup>3</sup>

The important thing for us to remember is that Enoch prophesied or foretold that the Lord would come back to the earth with his saints (ἁγίας from ἅγιος – *hagios* – meaning “holy or sacred”) to judge this world. The Bible refers to this time of judgment on the lost of this world in Revelation 19, a reference to *the Battle of Armageddon*:

*"11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes [were] as a flame of fire, and on his head [were] many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he [was] clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies [which were] in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Revelation 19:11-15)*

The word, “convince” (ἐξέλεγχαι from ἐξελέγχω – *exelegchō*, meaning to prove to be in the wrong) used by Jude in v. 15 means to convict. God will convict all of those who rejected His offer of grace and they will be judged. Sometimes we wonder when God will finally judge all of the evil in the world. Sometimes we think that wicked people are just getting away with evil. God will eventually take care of it. He is coming back: first, to take His Bride, the Church, out of here; and then, He will return to the earth with us, in order to end the rebellion and war that fallen humanity has been waging against him since the time of Adam.

## Conclusion

### 1. Know that God will someday judge the wicked and reward the righteous.

*"19 Fret not thyself because of evil [men], neither be thou envious at the wicked; 20 For there shall be no reward to the evil [man]; the candle of the wicked shall be put out." (Proverbs 24:19-20)*

Just be thankful that you will not be judged for your sins. If you are saved, your sins were all paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ when He died on the Cross.

### 2. Remember that you who are saved were once under that same judgement.

*"18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18)*

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<sup>3</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 865.

**Our job today is to:**

**a. Work in Prayer for Lost Sinners**

- i. Pray for their hard hearts to be softened.
- ii. Pray that their eyes will be opened to the Truth.

*"3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)*

- iii. Pray for more laborers:

*"36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly [is] plenteous, but the labourers [are] few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:36-38)*

**b. Weep for Lost Sinners**

*"5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves [with him]." (Psalm 126:5-6)*

*"22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling [them] out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 1:22-23)*

**c. Witness to Lost Sinners**

*"15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)*