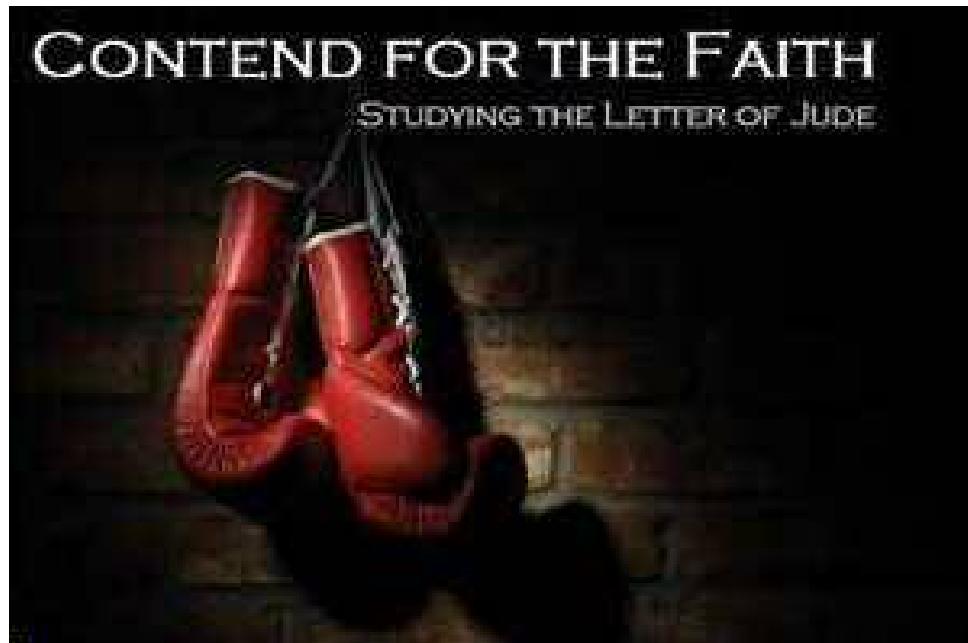


THE EPISTLE OF JUDE



Notes of Dr. Cooper Abrams
Revised by
Rev Brad Montsion
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The Salutation

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:"

Jude 1

There were two Apostles named Judas, Judas Iscariot (Matthew 26:14-16) and another Judas who was known as Lebbeus and Thaddeus (Matthew 10:3). Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13 identifies this Apostle as "**Judas the brother of James**" and it he who wrote this small Epistle.

Some have questioned who was the James that was Judas' brother. There are several James's mentioned in the New Testament. One was the Apostle John's brother and there was the son of Alphaeus (Luke 6:14-15). Jude in identifying himself as the "**brother of James,**" stated his relationship with his well-known brother James, who was the half-brother of the Lord Jesus.

Like Jesus's, half-brother James in his Epistle, Jude does not state his relationship to the Lord. Both brothers rather humbly stated they are the "**servants**" of the Jesus Christ. The word both brothers use is "**doulos**" meaning "**a slave.**" It refers to both an involuntary and voluntary bond slave who sold himself into slavery or servitude.

The book of Jude was written in the period of 70-80 A.D. near the end of the First Century. At least three decades had passed since the Lord Jesus returned to heaven. It has been said that the Book of Acts describes the beginning of the institution of the local church and Jude deals with the ending or the end of the early Church Age. The subject of the Book of Jude is extremely serious and must be carefully studied. The whole of the book deals with apostasy and a turning away from the faith.

The English word "**apostasy**" does not appear in the Bible, but the phrase "**turn away**" is the Greek word "**apostrepho**" used five times in the New Testament. (See Romans 11:26, II Timothy 3:5, II Timothy 4:4, Hebrews 12:25). Robertson states the word means "**turn thyself away from.**"

The State of Believers in Jesus Christ "Sanctified"

Jude states that he is addressing the letter to those who are "**sanctified.**" The word "**sanctify**" means "**to make holy or to purify being set apart to serve God.**" The Sabbath Day was sanctified by God, meaning set apart for special service (Genesis 2:3). The Tabernacle and its furniture were set apart as the place of God's presence and for worship (Exodus 29:43, Leviticus 8:10). Jesus was sanctified by the Father (John 10:36); food is sanctified when offered in prayer (I Timothy 4:5). The believer is instructed to sanctify God in his heart (I Peter 3:15).

Sanctification does not mean to purify or to make sinless, but to set apart something for God and for His service. In relation to the Christian, sanctification refers to being set apart unto God from sin. There are three distinctly different aspects of this sanctification, which refer to time. The believer has a past, present, and future sanctification. Every Christian can say, *"I have been sanctified; I am being sanctified; I will yet be sanctified."* David Cloud presents sanctification in three tenses:

"PAST SANCTIFICATION means the believer is already positionally set apart in Christ (Acts 20:32; I Corinthians 1:2; 1:30; 6:9-11; Hebrews 10:10,14). At the new birth, every believer is sanctified in Christ, is brought from the power of the devil into the family of God (John 1:14; Galatians 4:4-6). The Corinthian believers were far from sinless, yet they were called saints and were said to have been sanctified (I Corinthians 1:2,30). In this sense, the Christian can say, **"I AM** sanctified in Christ."

PRESENT SANCTIFICATION is the process by which the Holy Spirit gradually changes the believer's life to give victory over sin. This is practical sanctification. This is Christian growth, putting away sin and putting on godliness (Romans 6:19,22; I Thessalonians 4:3,4; I Peter 1:14-16). This present process of sanctification never ends in this life (I John. 1:8-10). The Christian must resist sin until he is taken from this world at death or at the return of Christ. In this sense, the Christian can say, **"I AM BEING** sanctified by God's power."

FUTURE SANCTIFICATION is the perfection the believer will enjoy at the resurrection (I Thessalonians 5:23). At Christ's coming, every believer will receive a new body that will have no sin. The Christian will no longer have to resist sin within or to grow toward perfection. His sanctification will be complete. He will be wholly and forever set apart to God from sin. In this sense, the Christian WILL BE sanctified at Christ's return."

The State of Believers in Jesus Christ "Preserved"

Jude states that believers are also *"preserved"* in Jesus Christ. This word denotes *"a continuing action of watching and guarding and keeping one's eye on something."* Twenty six times in the New Testament God states the believer has eternal life. An additional ten times this word is translated *"everlasting life"* stating the believer is assured of an unending salvation. The word *"eternal"* means *"something that is perpetual or without end."*

The State of Believers in Jesus Christ "Called"

Jude lastly states that believers are *"called."* The word Jude uses refers to *"one who is invited or summoned"* (I Corinthians 1:9; Revelation 3:20; Luke 19:10). Thus, God has called all men to come and receive the salvation through Jesus Christ the Lord. The calling is the Good News that Jesus the Christ has come and He suffered and died for our sins and was resurrected on the third day, victorious over sin and death. Thus, because of Christ Jesus' atoning work, a person in simple faith can repent of their sins, be forgiven, and received eternal life.

The Source of Strength in the Christian Life

"Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied."

Jude 2

Jude in his salutation extends his well wishes for those who would read his epistle. He first wishes for them that they experience the wonderful mercy of God. Mercy is only needed by those that are guilty and have experienced sin. The word "**mercy**" addresses need for relief from the misery that sins causes. All sin has a destructive effect in our lives, and Jude is wishing that believers would experience God's comfort from sin. This would naturally apply to the believer, but it would also apply to those around us. Other men's sins affect us also. Sin makes a victim of the one committing the sin and also those to who come in contact with the sinner.

Jude continues by stating his desire that their peace and love be multiplied. The peace of God is available to the one who believes and puts their trust in Jesus Christ (See John 14:27).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Romans 5:1-2

Though we have the peace of God in our hearts, it does not mean that we automatically experience the comfort that peace brings.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Romans 8:6

Love too is multiplied by the same process. Both peace and love come from the quality of one's walk in Christ. Both grow in the fertile soil of a contrite heart which directs the believer in obedience and commitment to God.

No one can serve God apart from serving others. The one who has experienced God's love is grateful for it. They will then pass the love they received onto others. Biblical love is the sincere desire for the well-being of others that is placed into action.

Judas' Purpose in Writing this Epistle (Jude 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 3

The Bible has more negative things to say than positive. Jesus spoke more about hell than He did about heaven. The largest percentage of His teaching was warning against sin and disobedience to God.

When Jesus began His ministry of teaching and performing miracles, great numbers of people followed Him. His theme was of the coming kingdom God had promised the Jews. It along with His feeding the people, was well received. However, when He began to rebuke the Jewish leaders and people of their sin and hypocrisy, they began to leave Him in mass. The religious leaders even began to plot to kill Him. His message, like ours should be today, was one of hope, salvation and also warning people about the consequences of sin.

Jude states his heart's desire was to write on the subject of their common salvation in Jesus Christ. However, because many were turning away from the faith, and there was a great need to bring to their remembrance the growing apostasy and challenge them to earnestly contend for the faith.

He begins by addressing them as **"beloved."** The term refers to people loved by God and also by the writer. It is a term that denotes a special endearment. The word carries the meaning of someone deeply caring for another person.

He reminds them of the need to **"contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints."** It is a sad fact that as time progresses many professing Christians and churches abandon the biblical heritage and truth they once held.

The Pretenders - the Apostate False Teachers (Jude 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, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Jude 4

The fact these false teachers were able to creep into a church shows the shepherd of the church and/or the people let their guard down. They clearly were complacent and content watchmen asleep on the job.

The word "**ordained**" means it was "**fore written.**" The Lord Jesus warns us of these "wolves in sheep's clothing."

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Matthew 7:15-20

Paul also warned of the future turning from the faith:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

I Timothy 4:1

Churches are rarely destroyed from the outside. It is the devil's cunning trick to send in an uncalled man who is poorly trained and equipped for the ministry. These "hirelings" having no call of God, aspire to the ministry as a profession. They are smooth talkers. Their message is weak and watery and contains little meat. In order to hold the crowd they turn to music and emotion.

Every church of God that loves the Lord and His word needs to be on guard. Satan has leaders ready and available to move and take over every sound biblical church. These outward charismatic preachers change the grace of God into lasciviousness, which means something indecent, wanton and without restraint.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Titus 1:9-11

As Jesus warned in Matthew 7:15 there are men, false teachers, the actual enemies of God, who will come into a congregation of God's people to destroy them by corrupting God's truth. Jesus said they are wolves who come in sheep's clothing to disguise their true identity and intent.

The phrase *". . .before of old ordained to the condemnation,"* means their appearance and sinful work was predicted. The Greek word translated *"crept in unawares"* is a unique word only used this once in the New Testament. It describes the use of cunning words and clever deceptions. In extra biblical use in the First Century, the word was used of a criminal who secretly slipped back into the country after being expelled. It literally means to *"go down into and alongside."* So these "certain" men who are cunning deceivers secretly slip into a church and cleverly begin to destroy it.

Jude uses the term "lasciviousness" to describe the acts of these men who pervert God's grace. The word *"lascivious"* means *"to be wanton or lustful in nature."* These false teachers engage in shameless conduct. Further, the word "lasciviousness" is used to describe a person who is lewd or sexually sensual even involving the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. These are undisciplined, unruly, ungodly people who are hard to control.

Paul repeatedly warned against these people who creep into churches and destroy them. When he left Ephesus, he gave them stern instructions. This was a serious matter for the Apostle.

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Acts 20:28-31

They are the agents of Satan.

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

II Corinthians 11:14-15

Satan is not some hideous red creature with horns and a pointed tail, and he comes as an "angel (messenger) of light." He comes with some new teaching that tickles the ears of his hearers, and he leads unwary people astray. Note what Paul said about them to young Timothy.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

II Timothy 3:1-5

They appear to be godly sincere people who have a form of godliness. These are not outwardly evil people, but people who are very religious and have a charisma about them that disarms people and causes people to follow them.

Jesus warned us to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees in Matthew 16:6. Leaven in the Bible represents an evil influence that permeates the congregation. It perverts God's truth and work

Satan's plan is to send unbelievers into a church to disrupt it. It is clear that by their actions, as Jude says that they are, ". . . **denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.**"

Understand that outwardly these deceivers are very subtle in how they deny the Lord. They will outward claim to love God, but actually are apostates who do not believe God's Word. In a real sense, a person who claims to be a Christian and does not live for the Lord is, in truth, denying Him. Such people do not fear God and have no appreciation for His person and righteousness. They live in a false sense of immunity from God's judgment of sin as unbelievers.

God will Judge False Teachers (Jude 5-7)

"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. 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. 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 5-7

Jude uses several examples of God's actions in past history as a reminder that God is a just God and will judge sin and disobedience. When God delivered the Children of Israel from Egypt, He did so with many miracles. Israel was crying out in their bondage and asking God for deliverance from Pharaoh (See Exodus 2:23-25). God then graciously brought them out of Egypt and promised to protect and care for them. Many believed God, but others, although physically delivered from Egypt, had not been delivered spiritually. That was apparent by their murmuring and disobedience.

At Kadesbarnea God brought them to the threshold of their new land, a land of milk and honey. He promised to fight for them as He had when He delivered them from Egypt. God promised that He would deliver them also from the Canaanites. However, when the spies returned out the land, only Joshua and Caleb showed themselves to be believers. The rest did not believe God's promises and refused to move into Canaan by faith trusting in God. Their unbelief caused God to not be able to bless them. He cannot bless when people will not walk in faith and believe His Word. So God condemned them all. They wandered in the desert for forty years until every adult in Israel had died that had not believed God. Only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to live and go into Canaan.

God's past blessing does not assure that He will continue to bless when people follow false teachers and go into apostasy and reject God by their unbelief. At Kadeshbarnea, God's man, Moses, told them of God's plan and of His promise to give them the land. Nevertheless, the people listened to the ten faithless and unbelieving spies. Rather than believe God's Word, delivered to them by Moses, they followed the ungodly spies who denied God.

This is the warning of Jude. God's people must be discerning and believe God or suffer the consequences. With God's people, it is not a matter of not knowing God's will and truth, because we have God's word, to instruct us. However, the problem is that faithless men ignore God's promises and allow themselves to be deceived.

Today, there are many faithful men in God's pulpits preaching God's truth and warning their congregations of sin and disobedience. Yet, often comes along a more impressive leader with charisma who cunningly leads the people astray. The result will always be the same as it was with Israel. God destroyed not only the unrighteous spies, but all the unbelievers in Israel who followed them. This a solemn warning of what He will do whenever people reject Him.

Many a church, because of following false teachers, has gone into apostasy and should have the name Ichabod written across its doors, meaning that the glory of the Lord had departed. (See I Samuel 4:19-22). Rarely, if ever does a church that abandons God's truth, ever repent and return to God.

Satan rebelled against God and led a multitude of the angels in heaven to disobey God (See Ezekiel 28:12-14, Isaiah 14:12-15). God, however, did not spare them and has reserved them for **"everlasting chains under darkness"** to be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. These angels committed a terrible atrocity by willingly rebelling against God and following Satan. God judged them and confined them in a special place where they are there today. Note the statement, **"under darkness"** is added to describe further their plight. The Lake of Fire is permeated by fire, yet this fire produces no light. The place is in utter or complete darkness. There is no contact with others in the darkness of the Lake of Fire, and this verse seems to imply the inhabitants are in complete isolation. Such is the judgment of God against rebellion.

It is vital that we understand that the angels chose to leave **"their first estate."** With the full knowledge of God and who He is, they willingly refused to believe Him and thus rebelled and condemned themselves. In the same way, Jude is warning people who know of God, even with a head knowledge of His existence which all men have, (See Romans 1:18-23) that if they reject God they too put themselves beyond God's mercy and into His wrath.

Peter also uses the same examples in presenting the truth of the judgment of God against those who reject God's truth.

"And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly."

II Peter 2:3-6

At this point, it needs to be emphasized that those that went into apostasy were unsaved angels and people. The angels were untried and when the test came of whether they believed and honored God a portion of them rejected Him.

In verse seven, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha are presented as a further demonstration that God will judge and punish sin. Jude says the Sodomites gave themselves over to the gross sin of homosexuality. In other words, they willingly chose the lifestyle they knew was wrong. God destroyed both cities and its inhabitants in judgment for their blatant sin. Here the extent of the judgment is stated in that their judgment was the ***"vengeance (punishment) of eternal fire."***

Jude Denounces the Apostates (Jude 8-10)

"Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. 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. 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 8-10

Jesus in the parable of the sower described the seed that fell by the way side. The Lord speaking of these seeds,

"And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended."

Mark 4:15-17

Clearly, Jesus is saying that although they initially assented to God's word outwardly they never allowed it to take root in their lives. What they learned of God was not believed from their hearts.

In verses 5-7, Jude warned about past apostasies in the Old Testament and of its consequences. God judged those who turned from God's truth and He *"in like manner"* (verse 8) will continue to do so with all who reject Him today. Jude calls these false teachers *"filthy dreamers."* The word *"filthy,"* correctly added by the King James Bible translators explains the state of these apostate teachers. It emphasizes the seriousness and degree of sin they commit. Paul describes them in Romans 1:21-23.

Jude identifies them *"dreamers,"* which means *"to see dreams or delusions."* The word is a verb, meaning *"being given over to sensuous dreamings."* The word used by Jude for *"dreamers"* is not the word that normally refers to a dream. Rather this word refers to a confused state of the soul, an abnormal imagination that holds the dreamer captive by ungodly sensuality. In other words, their teachings are the rooted in their delusional and sinful minds warped by sin. It is the mark of an apostate, as well as a cult, that their teaching is unrealistic and unnatural. These are like Charles Manson and Jim Jones (See I Corinthians 2:14).

How frustrating it is to try and explain God's truth to these blind and unhearing people. In their own feelings of pride in their intellect and knowledge reject God's truth off hand. They do not see themselves as sinners and will not repent and be saved. Thinking themselves to be wise, they make themselves to be fools and "blind guides" (See Matthew 23:16, 24).

Jude explains that these unregenerate false teachers, masquerade as speaking for God, and will eventually expose themselves as hypocrites. In some way, their immoral hearts will be revealed and they will be shown who they are inwardly. There are many examples in Christianity.

Another mark of these false teachers is that they hate authority. That is what the term "**despise dominion**" means. Dominion refers to authority. God's plan for His ministers is to be responsible to the local church. God's plan is that those who lead and teach His people are accountable to God's local congregation as that assembly follows God's Word. The authority of a Bible believing church is God's Word. The apostate will reject that God's Word is the only authority.

Another trait of the false apostate teachers is speaking evil of dignities. In verse nine, Jude explains the seriousness of this gross sin by saying that even Michael the Archangel when contending with Satan over Moses' body did not speak a word against him. Rather, Michael responded by saying the "**Lord rebuke thee.**" The degree of the depravity to which these false teachers descend is the point of this statement.

These people having no respect for authority other than themselves will slander and criticize God's pastors and children who are following truth. Many people who without study, training, or any real grasp of biblical truth, set themselves up as authorities on the Bible. They read someone's book, and they become authoritative Bible scholars and have no respect for those who have dedicated their lives to truthfully studying God's Word.

Jude 10 states the true condition of false teachers. They can run shod over the Gospel, the deity of Jesus Christ, the supernatural Being of our God and Creator, and His works and Word without a twinge of conscience. Spiritually, false teachers are morally corrupt, intellectually, and certainly spiritually blind. They are arrogant, disrespectful and blaspheme God's truth with a false sense of impunity. They boldly criticize God's truth, which they do not know anything about. It is very difficult to carry on a sensible conversation or dialogue with them.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

I Corinthians 2:14

"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;"

II Peter 2:12

In referring to these unregenerate teachers both Jude and Peter refer to them as "**brute beasts.**" This is a harsh statement that says the state of their minds are such, that they think like an animal. Animals are not capable of reasoning, but are controlled by their animal nature.

Describing the False Teachers (Jude 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 Korah."

Jude 11

Jude associates the sin of these false teachers with three Old Testament characters. Each one of these mentioned had a particular sin that marked their lives in opposing God and misleading God's people. Cain was an arrogant man who knew of God and His truth, but willingly rejected Him. Instead of accepting God's Word literally as God instructed Adam and Eve, who conveyed it to their two sons, he twisted it to fit his own ideas. Cain had no respect for God. He rejected God's stated instruction about offering an animal sacrifice and as a farmer offered fruit from his fields to God (See Genesis 3:15).

Cain would not accept giving a blood sacrifice because he had no faith or trust in God (See Hebrews 11:4). When it was rejected by God, Cain showed his rebellion by becoming *"... very wrath, and his countenance fell."* Sin and evil are always accompanied with false doctrine. Cain in anger, rose up against his brother Abel and murdered him.

Liberal theologians and apostates of our day, like Cain, reject God's literal instructions and formulate their own religious practices that are contrary to God's Word. They deny the Gospel, the deity of Jesus Christ and God as our Creator, and the Supreme Being of the Universe.

These apostate teachers pervert God's very Word and deny what it clearly teaches. In our day, liberal theologians have concluded that God is not against homosexuality in spite of God overwhelmingly condemning it repeatedly in both Testaments. They say the account of God destroying Sodom and Gomorrah was not about God judging the sin of homosexuality. Rather, the Sodomites were destroyed because they were planning to assault the angels that visited Lot. Their sin was only in not showing oriental hospitality to these strangers (See Genesis 19:4-5).

The liberals blatantly deny what the words state. The words *"know"* or *"knew"* is used in Genesis 4:17 of Cain having relations with his wife and producing a child. It is also used in the same way of Adam and Joseph referring to sexual relations with their wives. Clearly, when men stated they wanted to *"know"* the angels, it meant they wanted to have a homosexual relations with them. This is but one of hundreds of examples of how the apostate "theologians" of our day pervert God's word and deny Him.

Jude uses the example of Balaam in Genesis 22-25. When Balak, the king of Moab, wanted to defeat Israel he called upon a false prophet to aid him. He could not defeat them militarily, so he sought another method. God then visited Balaam and told him not to curse Israel because He had blessed them.

Balaam, fully knowing the will of God, and having received instruction directly from Him went to Balak and said he could not curse Israel and he left. Balak, unsatisfied with Balaam's refusal, sent princes to persuade him to help. Balaam again, knowing God's will, said he would come if the king would give him *"a house full of silver and gold"* (Genesis 22:18). Balaam then headed to see Balak and collect the payment. However, an angel blocked his way. The donkey that Balaam was riding saw the angel and refused to go forward. Three times Balaam beat the donkey and finally God opened the mouth of the donkey and it spoke to Balaam, rebuking him for his actions. God then opened Balaam's eyes so he could also see the angel.

Balaam fell to the ground and confessed that he had sinned against God. He returns to Balak and once again refuses to aid him telling him that God has forbidden him to do so. Balak the king is undeterred and again seeks Balaam sending him sheep and oxen to entice him to come. Once again, God meets Balaam when he offers sacrifices on seven altars. God tells Balaam He has blessed Israel and Balaam is not to curse them. Balaam, in Balak's presence, offers a blessing on Israel.

Numbers 31:16 records in spite of what God said, Balaam advised Balak to instruct the women of Moab to commit idolatry and immorality with the men of Israel. They did and corrupted the men of Israel and that brought on Israel God's judgment. God had instructed Israel not to allow relations with the women of Moab. Thus, the sin of Balaam was in disobeying God for financial gain and Israel for sensual lust. God then judged Israel for their disobedience and allowing themselves to be misled.

Jude says these false teachers have *"perished in the gainsaying of Korah."* The word *"gainsaying"* means *"against the word."* Korah was Moses' cousin who resented that he was excluded from being a priest. He, in pride, envied Moses for being Israel's leader. Korah then led a rebellion against Moses telling the people the false message that they did not need Moses or priests. Two hundred and fifty in Israel followed Korah in his rebellion against God and Moses. They rejected God's order of having an appointed priest and leader before Him for the people. The reason for the priesthood was to pre-shadow the coming of the Messiah as our high priest, who would be the intermediary for the people. (See Hebrews 4:14-15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26).

Korah told the people they did not need an intermediary, and could administer for themselves, thus denying God's promise of the Redeemer and clear instructions. God dealt with Korah directly and the ground opened up and swallowed him, his family and even their houses and goods. God sent a fire and consumed those two hundred and fifty men who believed Korah and offered a false incense on the altar to God.

Korah taught that men could save themselves by their own works and in doing so rejected God's salvation. Those that follow in Korah's footsteps deny the need of Jesus Christ, His atoning work on the cross, or His word. They preach a works-based salvation. The idea so often heard says, *"We all are working in our way to God, only in different ways and God honours them all."* Part of their strategy is to belittle God's true servants who preach and believe His Word.

The Condemnation of False Teachers (Jude 12-13)

"These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

Jude 12,13

The feasts that Jude refers to are called "**love feasts**" and are addressed by Paul in I Corinthians 11:20-22. The verse is saying these apostates, who were at the love feasts, were "**spots**" in their fellowship. A spot normally is thought of as something that has contaminated what otherwise would be pure.

Here the word refers to "**a hidden rock or reef under the sea that could rip the bottom out of a ship.**" The false teacher is an ever present danger lurking just out of sight waiting to destroy the unwary ship.

They are described as clouds without water carried about by of winds. A cloud without water can produce no rain on which plants must live. These waterless clouds look like productive clouds, but are empty. Further, they are carried about of the wind. Within the last decade we have seen examples of a number of these teachers who with great fanfare and excitement promote new movements.

Jude says they are like trees whose fruit withers, who are "**. . . twice dead plucked up by the roots.**" The analogy is that these apostate teachers are like barren, dead trees that are good for nothing but to be plucked up and destroyed. False teachers are also spiritually dead inside and cannot produce good fruit. Jude says they are "**twice dead**" which means they are like trees in the winter, dead and devoid of leaves and fruit. Even when summer comes these trees remain dead showing they have no life in them.

Jesus spoke them as well.

"But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."

Matthew 15:13

Several times the Bible uses a raging sea to characterize the unbeliever. **“Raging waves of the sea”** describes turmoil, so is the one who does not believe God. Jude paints a picture of despair which typifies the life of a man apart from God, wandering without true purpose and headed into the darkness of the final judgment reserved for the sinner who rejects God.

God's Faith Prophets (Jude 14-16)

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 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. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage."

Jude 14-16

It's interesting that Jude mentions Enoch, who was the seventh generation from Adam, and prophesied of the coming of these apostate teachers. Genesis 5:24 says of Enoch, *"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."*

He was unique because he pleased God and the Lord took him to heaven directly, without him seeing death. Enoch was the only prophet before Noah that the Bible mentions. Only Jude mentions the prophecy of Enoch. God revealed through him this truth that no one else recorded.

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

II Peter 1:21

Enoch further prophesied of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus and of the apostates who would also come. Enoch, foretold that Jesus would come with **“ . . . ten thousands of his saints”** (Jude 14).

The word **“saints”** means a **“holy one.”** The number **“ten thousand”** is the word **“urias”** and refers to an **“innumerable multitude or unlimited number”** of God's saints. What a comfort and joy it is to know that those who have believed and placed their faith in Jesus Christ will be among this great throng of God's children.

We will return to earth after being Raptured at the beginning of the Tribulation and then stand before Christ at the BEMA judgment (See I Corinthians 3:10-15). The born-again Christian will return at the Second Coming, and in the Lord's army will serve Him in His Millennial Kingdom which He promised to Israel for all eternity.

Enoch says that when the Lord returns He comes to execute judgment. This is given as a stern warning to the apostate teachers and predicts their doom. In this present time, the false teachers boldly proclaim their false teachings and practice their unbiblical deeds. By their actions, they defy Almighty God, but at this time, they will not escape God's judgement.

The phrase "**. . . convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed,**" should shake the apostates to their core. The word "**convince**" means "**to bring conviction.**" They denied God in their lives, but at the Second Coming, they will no more rebel and blaspheme God's Word. No longer will these rebellious people deceive the people. Their end will come; God's longsuffering will be over. The Lord will summon them to appear before Him. After 1,000 years they will be sentenced to an eternal hell.

They are murmurers or grippers, forever complaining about something. Their lives are marked by pursuing the lusts of their flesh. They are great talkers, always having a comment on everything that is brought up, and they with "**swelling words**" meaning, with pompous arrogance, present themselves as experts on everything.

The phrase, "**. . . having men's persons in admiration because of advantage**" is a literal rendering of the Greek text. It means these people used flattery to get the advantage over people. Everyone likes to be complimented and have nice things said about them, and it is a powerful tool for those seeking to dupe other people and control them.

These are the "positive" preachers who play up to the audience and preach to please the crowd. They are the leaders of Protestant denominations who have removed the word "hell" from their preaching and from their hymn or song books. Further, they never mention the shed blood of Jesus Christ lest the mention of blood offends anyone. Preaching on sin, the blood of Christ, hell, or warning men of the consequences of unbelief is avoided. They certainly would not say anything that would offend the sinner or expose his sin.

Mockers of the Last Days (Jude 17-19)

"But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Jude 17-19

If the letter had stopped at verse 16 surely, the believer would be left discouraged and frustrated at learning of the power of Satan and his apostates who work against truth and the gospel. It is always disquieting to know that one's church could be so easily penetrated by those that follow Satan, and who disrupt the work of God. No one wants to learn there may be traitors in their group.

However, Jude offers encouragement and reminds the child of God of the words of the Apostles about the Lord Jesus. Jude is saying this is not something that was unexpected, but it was predicted. The Apostles plainly said these apostates would be in the last times who would be in the churches and who would be living for themselves, satisfying their ungodly lusts (See Acts 20:29; I Timothy 4:1-2; II Timothy 3:1-5, 13; 4:3; II Peter 2:1, 3:3).

Once again, Jude uses the word *"sensual."* These apostate false teachers were all exposed to the truth and the Word of God, but each of them rejected God's truth and like Cain invented their own religion. Jude is saying these men present themselves as great spiritual leaders, but they in truth are totally physical or men driven by sensual lusts. Lust and sexual immorality are found in all these people. These ungodly men thought themselves spiritually higher and superior than the ordinary man. Think of the sexual scandals associated with the founders of the modern cults who peddle their false gospel to line their pockets. Jude said in verse 12, *" . . . they are barren of life and twice dead."*

Encouragement for Believers (Jude 20-23)

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

Jude 20-23

The contrast between the false apostates and those who believe and serve God is without comparison. One is empty, vain, ungodly, and devoid any glimmer of anything spiritual or worthwhile. These apostates parade on their stages with great pomp and ceremony offering those who follow them a higher religion and a false hope. Yet, those that have the truth and true hope are those who are so simple minded, that they in childlike faith accept God's Word.

The apostate has only contempt for the humble child of God, who has believed and received the very Spirit of God, in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. True and godly believers are growing in the Lord and building their lives on a most holy faith. They are those that are the prayer warriors realizing their frailty and dependence on God and are ever praying seeking God's help and guidance for their lives. These saints of God by their faithfulness and obedience keep themselves in the love of God, seeking His mercy and salvation through the work of Jesus Christ. These are the ones who honour our wonderful loving God and serve Him. However, their very existence is a rebuke to the apostates and for centuries they have borne the contempt.

Our Consolation and Sure Hope (Jude 24-25)

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Jude 24-25

In the face of such powerful forces that are working against the cause of Christ, one could become discouraged. It often seems like the devil is winning all the battles and our efforts to reach the lost are constantly being sabotaged. The false teachers have great resources that they use to reach millions of people. Their deceptive message is cunning, and it lures gullible men and women. We feel like John the Baptist, who was a ". . . voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Matthew 3:3).

Jude is saying that in spite of the false teachers, the believer is secure in Christ Jesus. God is able to keep us from falling. It is God who keeps us saved and will not allow any of His children to be lost. God assures the believer saying,

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

I Peter 1:3-5

God says true disciples of Christ will one day be presented faultless before the presence of the Lord. That will be a wonderful day to see unobstructed the glory of God and experience the **"exceeding joy"** of finally being delivered from the sin of this world. It will be a joyous moment for those who have put their faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. They will be going home and will see the One who redeemed them and has made them His children.

We should take great comfort in the truth of our promised homecoming. We cannot, in this life understand fully, what a great salvation God has prepared for us. However, this we know, it will be wonderful and beyond our most imaginative expectations. This truth should stir our hearts toward praising and honoring Him who is our Savior. Yes, all glory and majesty, dominion, and power are His, and we have been given a taste of what is to come. Overcoming Christians have the abiding presence of the Lord to aid them in their struggles with sin and in the opposition of Satan and those misguided by his schemes.