

## Contending for the Faith "Faithlessness" Jude 5-8

### Introduction

Today we will look at Jude 5-8 and examine his examples of faithlessness. Faithfulness is a subject Jude understood. Jude was the half-brother of Jesus. They grew up together. But Jude did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah until after the Resurrection.

In this letter, there is no doubt that Jude believes Jesus is God. He writes to the church to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. He is concerned about those who are perverting the gospel about Jesus. He describes these persons as arrogant, self-promoting, greedy, and promiscuous. Jude warns that those who pervert God's Word will face judgment and gives us three examples of what will happen to those who rebel against God.

Jude uses as his examples Israel and the Exodus, Fallen Angels, and Sodom and Gomorrah. Every Jew would be familiar with Jude's examples. So Jude draws a parallel between these Old Testament false teachers and those the Church has let slip in unnoticed.

Today we'll look at these three Old Testament examples of rebelliousness. Then we'll look at how these examples apply to those in Jude's day and also to our day. Let's begin with verse 4, "For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." ([Jud 1:4 NKJV](#))

Then in verse 5, Jude says, "But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe." ([Jud 1:5 NKJV](#))

### I. Faithlessness Destroys Hope

The first lesson for us to consider is that faithlessness destroys your hope for the future. It's important to realize God's love and grace will not keep Him from judging the wicked. It was faithlessness that destroyed the Exodus generation and cost them their lives. Tragically, they listened to the wrong leaders.

Jude's examples are memorials that preserve the lessons we need to learn from the past. You can't erase your history and ever hope for a better future. We are a product of our past. The people of the Exodus illustrate that even if you have received the greatest of privileges, you can still fall away, and your faithlessness will end in disaster.

Jude refers to the writing of the Old Testament, the teachings of Jesus, and the letters of the apostles as witnesses of God's plan for man. As the first-century came to a close, the Church became more dependant upon those written records. Once the apostles and early Christian leaders died, many false apostles and teachers sprang up like wolves in sheep's clothing. The early church was well acquainted with the Gospel message preached by the Apostles, in contrast to the perverted Gospel of these newly self-appointed false teachers.

The first-century leaders believed that Jesus Christ would return in their lifetime, but they also instructed the Church that if the "Parousia" should be delayed, not to become faithless. The New Testament writings would guide them in matters of faith and Christian practice just as God gave the Commandments to guide the people until the Messiah was revealed.

God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage and gave them many signs and miracles to help them believe in Him. But they chose to focus on the negatives. When Israel got to the Promised Land, they chose to believe the false report of the ten spies over the witness of Joshua and Caleb. The ten spies focused upon the giants and the walled cities while Joshua and Caleb reported the beautiful landscape flowing with an abundance of grapes and honey.

You can learn from the past, but you can't live in the past. The Apostle Paul told the Philippians, "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Php 3: 13-14 NKJV)

Israel kept looking back instead of looking ahead. If they would have believed they would have received salvation and the Promised Land. Sadly, their rebellion brought about their final destruction. Like Israel, the believers of Jude's day experienced and knew God's Word and had plenty of time to accept Jesus as God's Messiah. Instead, some of them chose their own path and refused to accept the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles.

Israel's love of the world triumphed over their love for God, and they perished in the wilderness. Jude says the Lord destroyed those who did not believe. The word "destroy" used here does not mean "to cease to exist"; it means to render useless. That generation of Israelites was no longer fit to serve the purpose for which they were designed. They were religious, but they were so far from God; they had no faith. They could no longer be called upon to represent God. And just as Israel chose foreign gods to replace their faith in Yahweh, these false teachers sought to replace the people's faith in Jesus with love for this world.

But remember this, the consequences of faithlessness are eternally costly. The Lord said to Moses in Numbers 14, "How long will these people spurn Me, and despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?" "Faith acknowledges God's revelation of Truth, but those who do not, will believe what is false and be judged because they did not accept the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." (2Th 2: 11-12 NASB)

John 1:12 says, " But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:" (Joh 1: 12 NKJV)

Intellectual belief does not save anyone. A genuine Christian is one that has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and demonstrates faith in Him. We will never get beyond the need to believe and trust in Christ. All apostasy stems from faithlessness in God. It is a belief that God's intentions are evil rather than good and that God maliciously dooms us to a life in the wilderness rather than a land flowing with milk and honey.

A life of faith requires us to heed these words from the Apostle John, "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in

Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." (1Jn 1:5-10 NKJV)

Warren Wiersbe says, "The main point is that privileges bring responsibilities, and God cannot lightly pass over the sins of His people. If any of Jude's readers dared to follow the false teachers, they too would face the discipline of God.."

Anyone who believes that God's plan is hopeless, and Christians are doomed to failure has succumbed to the teachings of the apostates. Faithlessness causes a person to act in disobedience to God that will ultimately result in their own destruction.

## **II. Faithlessness Rejects Authority**

Look at verse 6, " And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; (Jude 1:6 NKJV)

The second lesson to learn is that faithlessness rejects authority. The Jews had a very highly developed doctrine of angels as the servants of God. They believed that every nation had its presiding angel.

In the Septuagint, which was the Hebrew scriptures translated into Greek, Deuteronomy 32:8 says, "When the Most High divided the nations, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God."

The Jews believed that there was a group of fallen angels. In the Apocrypha Book of Enoch, there's a whole section devoted to describing these fallen angels. The Apostle Peter also wrote about these sinning angels in 2 Peter 2:4. He says, "God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;" (2Pe 2:4 NKJV)

It seems the angels did not guard something that was in their possession. Somehow, they did not stay within the watchful care of the authority God gave them. These angels did not fulfill their obligation to guard and maintain the purpose of their creation. They transgressed by invading territory that was forbidden to them and given to the human race. The idea is that these angels acted improperly, going outside the bounds prescribed to them by God.

Angels were assigned specific responsibilities, but some of them perverted their created purpose. The Book of Enoch calls them the Watchers who abandoned heaven and defiled themselves with women producing a race of giants in the earth. (Enoch 12:4) These angels left Heaven behind. It was apostasy with a vengeance. They descended to earth to join Satan in his efforts to destroy the human race.

Henry Morris writes, "A certain segment of the devil's angels not only followed Satan in his primeval rebellion against God but also attempted to corrupt all humanity by taking physical possession of the daughters of men to produce giants in the earth in those days.

They have been confined to the lowest and darkest compartment of Hell, waiting for the final judgment.

But, Satan still has many other fallen angels and demons under his direction that will be cast into the Lake of Fire at the end of the age. (Eph. 6:12, Rev. 12:3-9 and Rev. 20:10-15) Jude's point is that these angels violated the sacred trust God gave them and abandoned their position and responsibility. The apostates Jude speaks of were doing the same thing. Instead of carefully guarding the faith and the good news about Jesus, they used their influence to undermine the faith of believers and persuade them to follow a different path.

The path of faithlessness can only lead to your demise. And instead of fulfilling God's creative purpose for your life, it will end in separation from God and an eternally useless existence. Faithlessness renders a person unfit to fulfill the purpose for which they were created. This is the sad picture you see over and over in our society today. There are a tremendous number of wounded individuals today whose faith Satan and his false teachers have destroyed. It makes it rather impossible to reach out to them with hope apart from a miracle of Holy Spirit divine intervention.

But that's precisely what Jude want's the faithful to do! Don't follow the example of the fallen angels who, though they once stood in God's presence, have fallen to the depth of the abyss. No matter how deep the darkness around you, keep the faith and continue to reach out with the good news that God can rescue anyone who will turn to Him.

### **III. Faithlessness Despises Godliness**

Jude's final lesson is that faithlessness despises godliness. Jude makes a close comparison between the fallen angels in verse 5 and Sodom and Gomorrah in verse 7. Look at verse 7, "as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 1:7 NKJV)

The Bible refers to the destruction of these cities as an example of God's judgment. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah during the time of Abraham and Lot, about 450 years after the Flood. Genesis 18 and 19 describe their destruction. The reason for their destruction was their apostasy. The cities of the plains completely abandoned belief in God and despised those with any sense of godliness.

Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed about 100 years after the death of Noah, while Shem was still living. That would mean these people were aware of Noah's preaching about the righteousness and judgment of God. There was apparently a total of 5 cities of the plains that came under judgment. We know about Sodom and Gomorrah, but there was also Admar, Zeboiim, and Zoar. God spared Zoar from destruction because that is where Lot and his family fled. The sin of Sodom is one of the most horrible stories in history.

Jude's point is that sin and judgment go hand in hand and that a person should repent while they still have time to do so. Both the fallen angels and the cities of the plains were guilty of lusting after something unnatural that perverted their created purpose. They sold their minds and their bodies to a depraved desire, and they spent every waking minute thinking and seeking ways to gratify their unnatural lusts.

Gross immorality is a sign of total depravity. Grossly immoral people prey on the innocent and pure. The prophet Ezekiel writes, "Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit." (Eze 16:49-50 NKJV)

Sodom and Gomorrah are reminders to every generation; there will be a day of reckoning for your sins. That is why the Apostle Paul says, "Today is the day of salvation." And the Hebrew writers adds, "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION, IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS," (Heb 3:7-8 NKJV)

Perpetual, eternal judgment awaits those who turn their backs on God and rail on the goodness of His saints. Hell is a destruction so utter and permanent, that simply a glance at Sodom and Gomorrah ought to be a warning to every person to put their faith in Jesus.

## **Conclusion**

Verse 8 says, "Likewise also, these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries." (Jud 1:8 NKJV)

It's incredible that even though we have these examples of Divine Judgment, there are still those who despise God and run after the Devil. Their arrogance blinds them to the warning of history, and they brazenly follow the path to destruction, rejecting the love and power of God to save them. Jude says the dreams and pictures these apostates have are false images. The utopia they claim their dreams will bring will only bring chaos and heartache in the end.

The ESV Study Bible says, "They are led astray by relying on their dreams that they claim are from, but that lead them to disobey God's written Word. And that following their dreams, they are immoral, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones." John MacArthur says the apostates are phony visionaries, and their dreams support their ungodly doctrines.

Warren Wiersbe says, "These people live in a dream world of unreality and delusion. They believe Satan's lie, "You shall be as gods (Gen. 3:5). They have turned away from God and feed their minds with false doctrine that inflates their egos and encourages their rebellion."

When a person despises authority, they feel free to be disobedient. Jude says the cause of the apostates is not only destructive to your faith; it will end in the destruction of their lives.

Jude's words should make every believer overwhelmingly grateful that Jesus has rescued us from the wrath to come. It should also stimulate a deep compassion for those who have lost their way and don't know about God's love for them. It is that compassion that should motivate us to pray for them and share with them the message of hope and faith in Jesus.

Does it bother you that so many today stand on the edge of the abyss, in danger of eternal fire and judgment, and worst of all, complete separation from our Creator? Do

the signs of the times we are seeing all around us, move you to aggressively reach out to warn people of the coming eternal judgment? Does your heart cry out to them to turn from sin and embrace God's love through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the salvation of their soul? Satan wants to isolate you and silence your witness!

People today need a word of hope and encouragement, but they also need to know the consequences of sin and disobedience. Here is my prayer for you: If you need and want the peace of God to rule in your life, today is the day and now is the time to ask Jesus to help you.