

# The Coming Judgement

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Date: 21 September 2025

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     The scripture reading, once again, is taken from Jude chapter 1. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called beloved in God the Father and kept in Jesus Christ.

! May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write, appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation.

Ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

[ 1 : 3 1 ]     And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the day of judgment.

Until the judgment of the great day. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulge in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

Yet in like manner, these people also rely on their dream. Defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious one.

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke you.

But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand. And they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

[ 2 : 5 7 ]     Woe to them! Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain, and abandoned themselves for the sake of Cain, to Balaam's error, and perished in Korah's rebellion.

These are hidden reefs that your love feasts. As they feast with you without fear. Shepherds feeding themselves.

Waterless crowds swept along by winds. Fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted. Wild waves of the sea casting up the foam of their own shame.

Wandering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever. It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Abram, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of their deeds of ungodliness.

But they have committed in such an ungodly way. And of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against them. These are grumblers, mild contents, following their own sinful desires.

[ 4 : 22 ] They are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage. But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They said to you, In the last time, there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passion. It is these who cause divisions.

Worldly people, devoid of the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord. Sorry.

I missed my spot. It is these who cause divisions. Worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. Would you, beloved, building yourselves up in the most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

And have mercy on those who doubt. Save others by snatching them out of the fire. To others, through mercy with fear. Hating even the garments stained by the flesh.

[ 5 : 37 ] Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy. To the only God, our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Glory, majesty, dominion, and authority. Before all time. Now and forever. Amen.

Two weeks ago, after the first sermon in this series in Jude, someone came up to me and said, Boy, you have chosen a very controversial book to preach from.

And he was right. The letter of Jude is a controversial book of the Bible.

And this morning, we come to the section of Jude that has all the controversy. Verses 5 to 16. Though we read the entire letter, we will only direct our attention to verses 5 to 16.

[ 6 : 43 ] And as I said, this is where we find controversies in this section. And no doubt, some of you are aware of them. But if you came expecting that I'm going to resolve the controversies, I hate to disappoint you.

At the end of the sermon, these controversies will continue to exist. And no doubt, they will continue to exist until the Lord returns. Here's what I can promise.

I can promise you that despite these controversies, the message of Jude rings clear and unaffected by those controversies.

My prayer is that we will see that message. We will hear the message of Jude as we hear this sermon. Jude, take a moment and pray.

Heavenly Father, we, our hearts, morning as we always do, Lord, not out of ritual, but out of a deep sense of belief.

[ 7 : 51 ] But I need you. I need you to anoint me by your spirit that I will be faithful to handle your word, that it will profit your people and glorify you.

God, we all need your help. We need the spirit to grant us illumination, grant us attentiveness, and help us to apply your word to our hearts.

Would you draw near to us now, Lord, and speak to our hearts? We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Last week's sermon, you may remember if you were here or you listened to the sermon, that we considered verses 3 and 4.

You recall that in these verses, we looked at Jude's reason for writing the letter. Jude wrote this sharp but short letter, and he wrote it because he wanted his recipient to contend for the faith that was once delivered to all the saints.

And also, he did it because there were false teachers who had crept in among them and who were perverting the grace of God and turning it into a license.

[ 9 : 14 ] These false teachers lived lives that denied the Lordship of Jesus Christ. And so when we come to this section of the letter this morning, Jude is continuing, and what he is doing is he is reminding the recipients of his letter of two sober realities.

First, that God judged sin in the past. And second, that God is going to judge sin in the future.

Jude was laying a case for the judgment, the appropriate judgment, the fitting judgment that was to be meted out against these intruders in the church, these false teachers who had come into the church.

Jude saw the need to remind his original audience. Brothers and sisters, I think there's a need for us to be reminded as well. And so this morning, in our remaining time, I want to consider these two reminders of God's judgment from Jude, starting with the first one, which is a reminder of past judgment.

We see this reminder of past judgment in verses 5 to 7. And in these verses, we have what may be rightly referred to as three iconic judgments that God meted out against sin and against sinners.

[ 10 : 48 ] First, we see that God meted out judgment on the unbelieving Israelites in verse 5. Those he brought out of Egypt, they did not believe and did not enter into the promised land.

And then we see in verse 6, God's judgment against the angels who violated their God-ordained boundaries. And then in verse 7, we see the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Theologians who are much smarter than I say that Jude chose these three examples of judgment because in Jewish traditional writing, these three judgments were paired, were connected together and they seem to be held in Jewish understanding of God's judgment to be above all the other judgments that God has needed of.

They were linked together in various books that taught about the traditions of the Jewish people and things that they believed.

Now, you would notice that Jude does not cite any particular source for these three traditions that he, these three judgments that he is going to mention.

[ 12 : 09 ] But again, theologians who are smarter than I say that he is using them with reference to these particular texts. Not that he is quoting them, but Jude is showing that he has the same understanding of these three texts that was traditionally held among the Jewish people.

And I think it's sufficient for us to say that. I don't think we need to go further to say that Jude was in any way endorsing any of the sources where these three judgments would often be linked together.

It's enough to say Jude uses them because he had the same understanding that was held in Jewish tradition. Again, it would be going too far to say that Jude was somehow endorsing as inspired the sources in which these three judgments are often linked together.

So first, let's consider the first judgment that Jude refers to, the judgment of God on Israel, which we see in verse 5.

Look again at what he says. I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved the people out of the land of Egypt afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

[ 13 : 44 ] Now, right in this verse, a controversial point jumps out, and that is this reference to Jesus as the one who saved a people out of the land of Egypt and then afterwards destroyed them.

There are some who say that there's no reference to Jesus in the Old Testament, and therefore this doesn't seem to be a valid reference to Jesus. I think what happens is oftentimes when we read in the Old Testament references to the Lord, we tend to think that those are references always to God the Father.

That is not necessarily the case. It is just as legitimate to say that Jesus delivered a people out of Egypt as it is to say God the Father delivered a people out of Egypt, as legitimate as it is to say that our triune God delivered a people out of Egypt.

But I believe that the reason that Jude uses Jesus here, again, which is legitimate for him to do, is that it fits with the point that he's trying to make about these ones who came out of Egypt and did not continue to believe and therefore were destroyed.

And he's connecting them back to these false teachers who would have had some appearance of following the Lord, but clearly trying to wait from that.

[ 15 : 19 ] And Jude is saying that they likewise will be destroyed. Jude is making a very important point. if you want to read the background to this account of the destruction of these who came out of Egypt, you can find it in the book of Numbers, Numbers chapter 14.

And this was right after they had sent the spies into the land, they spied out the land, and they came back and two of them gave a good report, the others gave a bad report, said that land is going to engulf us, the giants in the land, and the people believed the bad report, and they began to cry out to the Lord, and they complained, and they said to Moses and Aaron, why did God bring us out of Egypt, to destroy us in the wilderness, and to let our wives and our children be prey to the enemies in the land?

They said it would have been better if we had never left Egypt, and then they said what we need to do is we need a new leader, we need to appoint somebody else other than Moses, and we need to go back to Egypt.

What we read in Numbers 14 is that Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the Lord, and God intervened, and God spoke, and he spoke a word of judgment, a very sobering word, when you hear it, and I'm not going to display it for you this one, but I want you to hear the weightiness and the soberness of these words of judgment that the Lord uttered on these who came out of Egypt, and did not believe that he was taking them into a good land, as he had promised.

Listen to what it says, beginning in verse 26, Numbers 14, beginning in verse 26. verse 26. And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying, How long will this wicked congregation grumble against me?

[ 17 : 25 ] I've heard the grumbings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against me. Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord, what you have said in my hearing, I will do to you.

Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and all of your number, listed in the census from 20 years old up, who have grumbled against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, that Caleb, the son of Japhne, and Joshua, the son of Nun.

But your little ones who you said would become a prey, I will bring them in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lie in the wilderness.

according to the number of the days in which you spider the land, forty days, a year, for each day you shall bear your iniquity forty years, and you shall know my displeasure.

I, the Lord, have spoken. Surely this will I do, all this wicked congregation who gather together against me in this wilderness, they shall come to a full end, and there they shall be.

[ 19 : 11 ] The word that God spoke over those who did not believe, his promise to take them into a fruitful land, a wonderful land, and the record is that God kept his word, and they marched around the wilderness for forty years, until all of them had died out.

And Jude refers to this judgment to make a simple but a profound point. And his point is that it is not enough to start on the journey of believing God and following him.

It is not enough. We have to continue to believe and continue to follow the Lord in obedience. the children of Israel ceased to believe the Lord and they gave evidence that they were not part of the people of God by not continuing to believe.

And they were therefore destroyed. Just like the false teachers who did not continue. They were among God's people. And over time it became evident that they were not a part of God's people.

And Jude is warning those who who exposed to them. And he's telling them likewise. You have to continue to believe. You have to continue to obey. You have to continue to persevere to their release.

[ 20 : 39 ] And there are some people who use verse 5 to try to make a case that it is possible for a true believer to lose his or her salvation simply because the reference here is to Jesus saving a people out of the land of Egypt.

But the salvation that is in view here is a deliverance. It is a physical salvation as a not a spiritual salvation. The Bible is very clear that among those who came out of Egypt, God had two sets of people.

There was a natural set of people, part of the political of the natural nation of Israel. Then there was also a spiritual people, those who were the true descendants of Abraham, those who were the true men, women, and children of faith.

And if you want to see this more clearly, I encourage you to take some time, look at Romans chapter 9, verses 6 to 9 in particular, that Paul makes the point, he says, not all those who are of Israel, physical Israel, belong to spiritual Israel, and are the son of Abraham.

And so Jude's point is not one about whether a believer can lose his salvation. Jude's point is the need to persevere, the need to continue to believe, and that those who do not believe will be destroyed, and they will, by their lack of belief, give evidence they never belong.

[ 22 : 29 ] The second example that Jude refers to is in verse 6, and it's the example of the angels who did not stay within their authority, their positions of authority.

God's judgment. Jude is linking these three acts of God's judgment, past judgments together. The destruction of those in the wilderness, the judgment on the angels, and also the judgment on Solomon and Gomorrah.

Again, it points to that Jude had a traditional understanding of the three judgments. And one in particular that is very controversial is this second one, the judgment of the angels.

Now, in Jewish traditional writings, the understanding of this judgment on the angels is referenced in Genesis chapter 6, 1-4, and their understanding was that this was angels who engaged in sexual relations with women and God as a result of that judgment.

Now, while this may seem far-fetched on its face, I think if we consider it in the biblical context, it is not that far-fetched at all.

[ 23 : 58 ] Because we have examples in Scripture where angels have come down to the earth and they have taken on the form of human beings and they were viewed and referred to in Scripture as human beings.

So, for example, when we think of the account of Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 18, where three angels came to them and they were referred to as men.

And Sarah cooked food for them and they sat down and ate the food. And there's nothing in that account that gives any indication that they were anything other than humans who were interacting with them.

Another example is in Genesis 19, when the Lord sent two angels to Sodom to deliver Lot and his family.

And these angels are referred to as men. And the men of Sodom, who were practicing homosexuality, saw these men and wanted to engage in homosexual relations with these men.

[ 25 : 14 ] so it's very clear that these angels had every indication of being humans. And so although we don't know all the ins and outs of that, what we're able to see is these angels who came down, they could eat, they could present themselves as humans, so much so that homosexual men wanted to have relations with them.

And it does not therefore sound unusual that in Genesis 6, 1-4, when it talks about the sons of God taking wives of the daughters of men and having children by them, that this would be a far-fetched thing.

One other example we can think about is in Hebrews 13, verse 1. where we are told to entertain strangers because we might entertain angels unawares.

Clearly, the point is that angels can present to us as human beings. Otherwise, there would be no point to say entertain strangers, if these strangers did not seem to be normal strangers, human beings who we might welcome into homes.

So, it is not far-fetched to see that these sons of God in Genesis 6, 1-4, are actually angels who came down, had taken on human form, and what it says about them is when they saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful, they took to themselves as many wives as they desired.

[ 27 : 07 ] And it seems like they acted without restraint, without control, and also Peter refers to this very same thing in 2 Peter chapter 2.

Now, this is a controversial point because not all theologians believe this. Some believe that they weren't angels, that they were just human beings, and so for them, this explanation of angels taking on human form, they would say it's unnecessary because they were humans to begin with.

My own conclusion, as I land, is that I believe that they were angels that took on human form, and I come to this conclusion just reading the text, and also reasoning that if they were men, there would not have been anything remarkable about them having sexual intercourse with women.

It would have been sexual sin, but it would not have been remarkable sexual sin that would have caused God to the languages to keep them in gloomy darkness, in eternal chains, in gloomy darkness, until the day of judgment, for lusting after and committing sexual immorality with women.

If that was a true human being doing that, with true human beings, these women, what would be the point in doing that? Because I'm sure that they were not the only ones who would have committed sexual sin in that day, so they should not have only been the only ones who were kept in these internal chains, in gloomy darkness, waiting for the day of judgment.

[ 29 : 00 ] Seems to be alluding to a special circumstance that warranted that. Now, one of the other things that we should bear in mind as well is, in Genesis chapter 6, it goes on to talk about the flood, and in the Jewish traditional writings as well, this is where they believe that the offspring of these angels and of these women were giants.

Now, people would say, well, how come there are no giants around today? Well, because they were all destroyed in the flood. God saved only a handful of people, Noah, his wife, and his sons, and their wives.

But I think another hint that points to them being more than just humans, mere humans, is the reference in verse 6 where Jude says that they did not stay within their own position of authority and they left their proper dwelling.

It doesn't sound like language that would refer to human beings. Because we don't have any special authority, we don't have any special kind of dwelling place, but angels certainly have a special kind of authority and they certainly had a boundary that God had set for them and what the indication is, is it seems to be that they violated those boundaries when they were in the form of men for whatever purpose God had them in the earth at that time and they engaged in sexual relations with these women.

Now, where our person lands on this, whether you believe it's angels or not, it really doesn't matter. It doesn't matter for the point that Jude is making.

[ 31 : 04 ] The point that Jude is making is that whoever these individuals were, whether they were men or whether they were angels who were transformed as men, they committed a sin that God considered to be worthy of a special kind of punishment, where he reserved them and kept them in chains, internal chains, in gloomy darkness until the day of judgment.

That's the point that Jude is making. So we don't need to be distracted about were they angels, were they not? We simply need to see Jude's point that God brought judgment against these persons.

And then the third example of past judgment that Jude gives us is in verse 7, which is Sodom and Gomorrah. Notice that Jude links the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah to the sin of the angels when he says, in verse 7, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued a natural desire, serve as an example for undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

So let's read both together, starting in verse 6. And the angels who did not stay within their own position authority, but left their proper dwelling, he kept in eternal chains, under gloomy darkness, until the day of judgment, until the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued a natural desire.

angels. The point seems to be that these angels who violated what was right and appropriate by going into sexual relations with these women, in the same way that Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities were violating the boundaries that God gave in sexual relations between a man and a woman, they pushed it aside and they engaged in what ought not to have been done.

[ 33 : 36 ] They engaged in what was inappropriate with men having sexual relations with men and Jude seems to be connecting the two. He's saying what the angels did was a violation of the boundaries that God gave and what they did in Sodom and Gomorrah was a violation of the boundaries that God gave and the result is that God brought judgment on all of them.

I'm having reminded his heroes of these three examples. Jude then goes on and in verses 8 to 10 he points to some of the specific sins of the false teachers, sins that similarly warranted God's judgment.

Verse 8 he refers to them as those who are relying on their dreams and defiling the flesh, rejecting authority and blaspheming the glorious ones.

Jude seems to be making the point that these leaders were not being guided by sound doctrine, by apostolic doctrine. They're being guided by their dreams and their dreams he is saying was leading them to do the unthinkable.

This term defiling of the flesh it's a reference to sexual anarchy. It's a reference to violating what was appropriate.

[ 35 : 02 ] and it would include heterosexual and homosexual sexual immorality because homosexual sexual immorality going with the same sex, there's also vile heterosexual sexual conduct that can take place outside of the boundaries of marriage.

and the indication is that these false teachers followed their dreams, whatever demonic dreams they had, no matter how contrary it was to what was appropriate, they were following it and they were defiling their flesh in the process.

What Jude has in view is some kind of aggravated sexual misconduct, defiled, they defiled them.

And here again, let us hear this, brothers and sisters. It is not only homosexual sexual activity that is a defilement.

That is a given because it is a natural. But we should not think for a moment that anything heterosexual goes.

[ 36 : 27 ] And this is even true in the context of marriage. There's nothing to be supported in Scripture that anything sexual goes in marriage because it is heterosexual in the context of marriage.

The marriage bed can be defiled by breaking the normal boundaries that God has given to us to enjoy sexual relations within the context of marriage.

And in our day and age, one of the driving forces of this pollution that creeps in even into heterosexual relations in the context of marriage is the pervasiveness of pornography that is all around us.

Where people are swimming in pornography and believing that once they act out those imaginations and vile conduct in the context of marriage, it is okay.

Brothers and sisters, it is not okay. It is not okay. It is a defilement of the flesh. It is a defiling of the beautiful gift of sex that God has given to us to be glorified, to be enjoyed in the context of marriage.

[ 37 : 51 ] Jude says of these false teachers as well, following their dreams, they reject authority. And the implication seems to be that those to whom they should have been submitted to in the church, they were conveniently using their dreams to reject those authorities.

He says they also blasphemed the glorious ones. Jude is saying that relying on their dreams, they blasphemed these glorious ones.

Here we come to another controversial point in Jude's letter. There's much debate about who are these glorious ones. What does it mean that they were blasphemed?

Some say that these glorious ones refer to demons, that these men, in their bravado, and their spiritual arrogance, were having encounters with and doing all manner of things, which we don't have the exact account of what they were doing.

Obviously, it was known to the original audience, the home Jude wrote, and so he did not have to give any explanation for what he was saying. But there are those who believe that these glorious ones refer to angels, good angels, and that these false teachers and their spiritual arrogance, was blaspheming these good angels.

[ 39 : 23 ] My own thinking, as I naturally read the text, I believe that the glorious one seems to point to them being good angels, rather than demons.

And I think this becomes clearer when we read verse 8 in conjunction with verse 9. Verse 9, where there's this reference to Michael, the archangel, contending with the devil, disputing over the body of Moses.



And Jude points to this account with Michael, the archangel, and the devil, and he says that Michael did not utter blasphemous speech against the devil.

He was respectful, and he said, the Lord rebuke you. And so the implication is that these, what he seems to be saying is this, if Michael, the archangel, would be respectful to the greatest form of evil, which is Satan himself, how much more should you be respectful to angels.

You have less authority than Michael, the archangel, and if Michael is not abusing Satan in that way, with language that kind of matches him, but he says instead, the Lord rebuke you, then you, whatever you're doing, whatever that blasphemy is, it seems like Jude is saying to them, you definitely should not be acting in the way that you're acting towards those angels.

[ 41 : 06 ] Here again, there is no need for us to have consensus on this. What is important is that we don't miss the point that Jude is making.

Now, on this particular reference to Michael, the archangel, clearly Jude was referring to, he was appealing to the traditional Jewish writings because they had reference to this, but again, theologians who are smarter than I say that they have not been able to discover any source from which this reference is to Michael and the devil disputing over the body of the devil.

All we know in scripture is what we have in Deuteronomy 33, that the Lord took Moses, Moses died, and it says that the Lord buried him in Moab, and no one knows where his body is to that day.

But Jude, for his own purposes, chose to refer to this incident in Jewish history, not to say that he was endorsing whatever book it may have been found in.

It simply suited his purpose in making the point that he was making. And I think this is the consistent explanation for these either references or citations to these non-biblical books, these non-inspired books, that they just seem to fit the purpose that Jude had in mind as he was addressing this situation of these false teachers.

[ 42 : 56 ] Jude goes on in verse 10 and he says that they were blaspheming what they did not understand. They were being destroyed by what they did understand.

Jude refers to them as acting as animals who were instinctive. And it seems to point to their lack of bridling their appetites.

In the same way that animals act instinctively with their animalistic instincts, and whether it is a desire for sexual relations, it doesn't matter that that's in public.

I'm sure all of us have lived long enough to watch dogs and the way they would operate in an ongoing way. And Jude is saying these men were like that.

They were acting like animals. They were instinctive. They thought they knew a lot. They knew nothing. They were blaspheming the things that they didn't understand, and the things they understood instinctively, that's what they were living out, and they were being destroyed by those particular things.

[ 44 : 06 ] And rightly, we see Jude in verses 11 to 13 uttering a prophetic judgment against them.

He begins in verse 11 by saying, woe to them. Woe to them. And he likens their conduct to three notoriously sinful men in Scripture.

Cain, who only had an outward appearance of godliness, but was an ungodly man, brought an offering, but had no interest in pleasing God. And then Balaam, who was motivated by money, and then Korah, who was filled with pride, and was not content to be in the position that God had set for him.

And in your own time, you can read about Cain's ungodliness in Genesis 4, and Balaam's greed in Numbers 22 to 24. and Korah's pride in Numbers 16.

Jude 12 to 13, and then in verse 16, we have some of the most poetic words of judgment found in Scripture.

[ 45 : 26 ] These verses, Jude points out the danger that these false teachers pose to the people of God since they had infiltrated their midst. In verse 12, he says they are hidden reefs.

And hopefully most of us know that reefs are one of the most dangerous things that a ship can ever encounter.

They're not seen. And when a ship sometimes is trying to get safely into harbor, and they run into a reef, that reef can actually sink the ship. And Jude is likening these false teachers in the middle of God's people amidst the congregation, and he's saying they are hidden reefs in your love feasts.

This occasion, this love feast where they would have the Lord's Supper, and they would enjoy fellowship together, Jude is saying, as safe as that seems, those who do not belong to Christ, they are in there, they have infiltrated, and they are as dangerous to you as reefs are to a ship.

In the shipwreck, those who are affected by them, in the same way a reef would shipwreck a ship. Jude says they have no fear of God, no fear of the Lord.

[ 46 : 47 ] Brothers and sisters, that is the most dangerous place to be in, where we do not have a fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is one of the best gifts we could have.

The fear of the Lord will keep us. The fear of the Lord will preserve us. The fear of the Lord will prevent us from going beyond boundaries that are not appropriate.

Jude says of these who put themselves forward as teachers and who had infiltrated the church, he said they have no fear in what they're doing.

They have no fear that they've taken the grace of God, the most precious gift to sinners, and they have turned it into license to sin. Really think about that.

We get licenses to do all kinds of things, like to drive a car. You don't take a license to drive a car and say, well, I could drive anything.

[ 47 : 51 ] I could drive a ship, I could drive a plane, I could do whatever, and you take that license that was for one thing and you just turned it into something else. And what these men did, Jude said, they took the grace of God and they reasoned because God by grace forgives us, we can just sin.

And that grace of God, they turned into a license for sin. And Jude was saying they do this without any hint of fear.

Brothers and sisters, let us pray for the fear of the Lord. Let us pray for the fear of the Lord. Let's ask the Lord, God, help me to live before you in righteous and holy fear.

Jude says that they were all shepherds. They were shepherds who were feeding themselves. They were doing the opposite of what a shepherd is supposed to do. The shepherd is to feed the sheep and they were feeding themselves, pointing to their greed and the financial gain that they were getting by having infiltrated the church.

He refers to them as waterless clouds. When we see clouds, we're supposed to expect rain, large clouds. And Jude says, these men, they promise rain, but they bring no rain.

[ 49 : 21 ] They're clouds without water. They're being swept along by the wind easily because they're not laden with any water. He describes them as fruitless trees in late autumn.

Autumn is the time, fall, when we harvest. That's when the fruit is supposed to come. And Jude says, even if you wait until late fall, if you wait until right the end of the harvest, these men have no fruit.

They will produce no fruit. He describes them as trees that were uprooted. Trees, he says, they were twice dead.

And his point is that they were not in the source of the soil of Christ where they could bear spiritual fruit. Verse 13, Jude refers to them as wild waves of the sea casting up the foam of their own shame.

And the idea is the sea being turbulent and as the waves are coming and foaming, they're pulling up all the debris and all the dirt from the bottom and it's coming to the fore.

[ 50 : 27 ] And Jude said that's what their lives are. That's all they're doing. He calls them wandering stars. He's saying they are unreliable for any form of guidance.

If you follow them, they will be led astray because they are going astray. He also describes that in verse 16. He says they are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires.

They're loud mouth boasters. They're boasting of gifts they didn't have, abilities they did not have. And they were showing favoritism to gain advantage, again, financial gain.

And Jude's last words about them in verse 13, he says that the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved for them forever. more. So Jude reminds the recipients of this letter of God's past judgment, the example of the unbelieving Israelites, the angels, and then Sodom and Gomorrah, and the surrounding cities.

And then he highlighted the sins of these teachers, and his whole point is they're going to be judged. judged. And Jude then transitions to talk about this future judgment that's coming, that is my second and final point.

[ 51 : 59 ] Jude reminds them of future judgment. We see this in verses 14 and 15. He says that these false teachers were the ones that Enoch prophesied about.

And here we come to the singular direct reference that Jude makes to an uninspired Jewish text.

One of the Jewish writings, the book of 1 Enoch, where Jude actually quotes out of this text, a verbatim quote, a verbatim quote, which you will see the quotation marks around them.

And the quote is, behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment on all and to convince all the ungodly of their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way and all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Now, I think the first thing that we could say about the book of Enoch is it is not an inspired book. It wasn't then, it isn't now. This book was not inspired in Judaism, not inspired in Roman Catholicism, not inspired in Greek or Russian Orthodox Christianity, not inspired in Protestantism.

[ 53 : 28 ] It's not a book that was ever considered to be inspired. But it suited Jude's purposes to quote from this particular prophecy perhaps because of the sense of how old it was.

He said the seventh from Adam prophesied this. Enoch, the seventh from Adam prophesied this. In other words, long ago. And he had these false teachers in view.

Not just them, but certainly had them in view as well. And so this ancient prophecy seemed to fit the purpose that Jude chose to use this quote out of 1 Enoch.

But here Jude is not alone in using an uninspired text to make a point. Paul has done this in his writings in 1 Corinthians 15:33.

We have one example of that where he quotes from an uninspired text. Titus 1, 12, a pagan text.

[ 54 : 42 ] And we have a quote from Paul as well in Acts 17 and 28. And so it's certainly legitimate what they did.

The way we can think about it is this way, that under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they referred to these uninspired, non-biblical texts to bring God's inspired word to us to make the point that they were seeking to make.

I think that's the best way that we should understand this use of these uninspired texts, rather than spending a whole lot of time on them and wringing our hands and say, should I now go and read the book of 1 Enoch because maybe I'm missing out on something.

No, scripture is complete, the canon is closed, and the book of 1 Enoch is not a part of it.

Again, what is more important is that we are aware of Jude's message, and let us not be distracted from it. His message is God judged in the past, God will judge in the future.

[ 56 : 04 ] Brothers and sisters, once again notice that Jude is doing more than just pointing to the false teachers. Look again at verses 14 and 15. If you look at verse 15 in particular, he says that the Lord is coming with his holy angels, and here's why he's coming, verse 15, to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against them.

Brothers and sisters, this is a universal judgment against universal sin, and not just for the false teachers. And there's only one way to escape this judgment.

There's only one way to escape this judgment against all ungodliness, and that is to be found in Christ, to be among those who can say Jesus died for me, and Jesus took my place on the cross, and he was the substitute for me and bore my sins.

These false teachers were rejecting their only hope. They were rejecting the only means by which they could be spared this future judgment that was coming against all sin and all sinners.

Brothers and sisters, the only way that we can escape this judgment is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 57 : 57 ] And if you're not found in Christ this morning, then this coming judgment is coming for you. This coming judgment, the full, furious, and unmitigated wrath of God will be poured out on sin and sinners.

The full strength of God's wrath, not held back, will come against sinners. Jude wanted his heroes to know this.

And here's what's important to notice about this letter. this letter is not written to the false teachers. Jude does not write this letter to the false teachers.

Jude writes this letter to the saints about the false teachers. And he was warning them, do not follow them, do not go in their way.

Brothers and sisters, we need to likewise be warned. We need to continue to follow Christ. cling to Christ.

[ 59 : 12 ] We need to persevere to the end by the grace of God. But if you don't know Christ this morning, whether you are watching my live stream while you're here, I say to you, come to Jesus, turn from sin, and trust Christ.

Christ. Father, would you help us to hear the message of Jude undistracted?

Would you help us to be reminded this morning that the God who cannot lie brought judgment in the past against sin and will be bringing judgment against sin in the future and against all ungodliness of men.

And Lord, would you help us find a refuge, the only refuge, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.