

The Judgment of False Teachers – Part 6

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Jude applies the apocalyptic judgments of the past to the false teachers of the present
2. aim – to cause us to seek the purity of the gospel of grace and warn those who attempt to pervert it
3. passage – Jude 5-16

b. outline

1. The Judgments Upon Rebels (Jude 5-7)
2. The Judgments Upon Blasphemers (Jude 8-13)
3. The Judgments Upon Malcontents (Jude 14-16)

c. opening

1. the **difficulties (handicaps)** of this letter
 - a. **the reasons why this book is so very difficult to understand ...**
 - b. Jude uses language that is both 1) difficult to interpret into English, and 2) obsolete within the modern church – **e.g. v. 8** uses words that are *uncommon*, to both the N.T. and the modern ear
 1. **e.g. blasphemy** = a word *assumed* to mean “Jesus claiming to be God”, but rarely understood to mean “belittling something that deserves honor or respect”
 - c. Jude (**also**) uses **examples** that are 1) obscure (even to his own audience), 2) barely known or recognizable within the modern church, and 3) often filled with *mythology*
 1. **e.g. v. 11**: the stories of Cain, Balaam, and Korah – a *decreasing* knowledge by modern people of these events from Scripture (**i.e.** Cain, maybe; Balaam’s donkey; Korah – who’s he?)
 2. **e.g.** the *mythology* of stories like The Flood: the *simplistic* belief that Noah took two of each animal into the ark, when **Genesis 7:2** refers to *seven (7)* [pairs] of the clean animals, **some to be sacrificed (see below)** when he came out of the ark on dry land
 - d. thus, we will need to carefully **examine** the detail within each story so that we can make the connection that Jude is assuming from them to the false teachers in the church (**e.g. Sodom**)
2. **thesis: part 2 (v. 8) – those who come to pervert the grace of God in the gospel start from a basis of emotionalism rather than an objective standard of truth, and they ignore (or deny) the grave danger that they put themselves (and others) in by doing so**
 - a. **IOW**: those who “blaspheme” are belittling the evil spiritual realm by failing to grasp the danger of being manipulated by it – **i.e.** those who are **driven by emotion** are easy prey for manipulation
 - b. so, Jude continues this thesis by turning to speak more *specifically* of the danger the false teachers bring upon themselves and their hearers ...

II. The Judgments Upon Blasphemers (Jude 8-13)

Content

d. the woe upon the blasphemers (v. 11)

1. the opening phrase of the verse: “Woe to them!”
 - a. “woe” (*ouai*) = an interjection as a particle; a simple word that can stand alone to express a particular *emotion*; **e.g.** whew!, alas!, the horror!; gasp!; in text-messaging, an **emoji**
 - b. “to them” (*autois*) = a plural, personal pronoun (**i.e.** them) in the *dative* (**i.e.** “to” them) – someone upon which an action is being performed
 1. together with “woe”, an expression of danger (or, **e.g.** in **Matthew 23**, of warning) coming against someone (**i.e.** in this context, the “these people” of **v. 10**, referring back to **v. 4**)
 - a. **note**: the phrase is translated “woe [un]to them” in every English Bible
 2. an expression by Jude of the **realization** of what he had just written about: “blaspheming the glorious ones” – his horror of seeing people *flaunt* the danger of being manipulated by evil
 - c. **IOW**: Jude knows that the false teachers are in *grave danger*, and they put their *followers* in the same danger – the three names to follow are simply **examples of that danger**
2. the danger of walking in the way of Cain (**from Genesis 4:1-9**)
 - a. the context of the story (**Genesis 3**)
 1. **because**: the events of **Genesis 4** are the **natural result of the events of the Fall**
 2. after the initial formation and placement of Adam and Eve, Satan *slithers* into the Garden
 3. Eve (and Adam) eat the Forbidden Fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

- a. and, they immediately discover they are naked – their nakedness becomes a *shame* over them: their nature as *intimately formed creatures* by God (from the dust) is corrupted
- b. and, they try to cover themselves with *plant material* – hoping it will “hide” their shame
 - 1. **note:** the evolutionist cannot explain the need for humans to clothe themselves!
- 4. upon their *confession* of having eaten, God curses all the actors in this melodrama:
 - a. he curses Satan to be in constant conflict with humanity, but unable to subdue him
 - 1. **i.e.** he will “eat dust”, constantly “under” the heel of man, particularly the “seed”
 - b. he curses Eve to experience pain and suffering and misery in childbirth
 - 1. **i.e.** in doing the *one thing* for which she was formed: to *multiply* by bringing forth children
 - c. he curses Adam to scratch and claw at the dirt of the ground to grow his food
 - 1. **i.e.** Adam would be forced to toil and sweat and fight the earth to feed his family
 - 2. **i.e.** a toil that would send him back to the ground from which he came (a work of death)
- 5. but, in response to his own curses, God extends two (2) specific **acts of mercy** over them
 - a. he covers them in the animal skins – the preincarnate Christ kills a sheep to cover them
 - 1. **i.e.** the One who would *eventually* be the “Lamb of God” kills a sheep *in their sight* to give to them *life* – he “imputes” the life of the sheep to them so that they might live on
 - b. he banishes them from the Garden – he prevents them access to the Tree of Life
 - 1. **i.e.** he prevents them from living “forever” in their corrupted nature, in anticipation of a day of resurrection and glorification
- b. the details of the story (**Genesis 4:1-9**)
 - 1. **vv. 1-2a** – the *birth* of the two men is outlined (Adam and Eve begin to *multiply*)
 - a. **note:** these verses tell us *nothing* except that Cain was the older brother – it does not tell us anything about the *other children* of Adam and Eve or *when* they were born
 - 2. **v. 2b** – the *profession* of the two men is outlined (they begin to *work*)
 - a. **note:** the assumption from the *outcome* that Cain as “ignoble” being a farmer *is wrong*
 - 1. Cain follows in the footsteps of his father in doing the *noble* task of toiling the ground to bring forth the food necessary to support his family
 - b. **note:** the work of keeping flocks by Abel was *not for the sake of food* – the consumption of animals was not put in place by God until *after the Flood (Genesis 9:3)* – these animals were being kept *for another reason (see below)*
 - 3. **vv. 3-4a** – the *offering* of the two men is outlined (they come before God)
 - a. **note:** the men bring an offering to God *because that’s what they were taught to do*
 - 1. undoubtedly, Adam and Eve would have instructed their children on how to approach their Creator *in their sinfulness* – the example to them in the Garden would be the basis
 - b. **note:** the *initial* assumption that an offering *of food itself* was unacceptable is too simplistic
 - 1. specifically, God *would* institute grain offerings in the Mosaic law, thus the offering of Cain *would have been acceptable in the right circumstances (see below)*
 - 4. **vv. 4b-5a** – the *reaction by God* to the two men is outlined (God rejects Cain’s sacrifice)
 - a. **question:** why does God *reject* Cain’s sacrifice, but accept Abel’s?
 - 1. quick: because Cain does not bring a *blood* sacrifice, only a grain offering (**true, but ...**)
 - 2. deeper: because Cain brings a “sacrifice of death”; Abel brings a “sacrifice of life”
 - a. the product of Cain’s work represents the curse of death – Cain brings that which is the result of a toil that will *literally* drive him back into the dust of the ground
 - b. **e.g.** the Sabbath is the day in which we rest from the toil *that leads to death* in order to do the *work of life (i.e.* worship, prayer, meditating on the Word, etc.)
 - c. **e.g.** the man who skips church to go to the office has chosen to do the work of death
 - d. Abel brings a “sacrifice of life” in that he brings *in the animal* a “source” of life that can be “imputed” to the sinner – no such “life” exists in the food Cain brings
 - 5. **vv. 5b-6** – the *reaction by Cain* to his rejection is outlined (he is *angry* and *disappointed*)
 - a. **note:** he is angry and disappointed because he has *worked hard* to produce this offering, and believes that God should accept it *on his own terms* – **IOW:** although God is *perfectly within his rights* to dictate the *terms* of entry into his presence, Cain is angered that God *rejects* his terms of approach (**the key point cf. Jude; see below**)
 - 6. **v. 7** – the *instruction of God* to Cain is outlined
 - a. “if you do what is right ...” – **question:** what *should* Cain have done at this moment?
 - 1. **answer:** he should have gone to his brother and procured a sheep and offered it
 - 2. Abel would have *gladly* given him an animal from his flock (**IMO:** this is the *entire reason* that Abel kept these flocks: to provide *atonement* [coverings] – **i.e.** as in the Garden)

- b. “if you do not ... sin is crouching” – the temptation to a *permanent brokenness with God* is “crouching” (i.e. waiting to master him), but he must “rule over it”
 - 1. i.e. just as Cain attempts to “take dominion” over the earth, he must now do that here
 - 2. specifically, Cain must overcome his pride in thinking that he gets to dictate what a relationship with the Creator looks like – failure to do so means eternal brokenness
- 7. **vv. 8-9** – the *murder of Abel* is outlined
 - a. **note:** it is “in the field” that Cain kills his brother – i.e. Cain takes his brother *out to the place where he toils for food* and sends his brother *back to the dust of the ground*
 - b. **question:** why does Cain kill *his brother*? if his anger is *with God*, why strike down Abel?
 - 1. **1 John 3:12:** because “his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous”
 - 2. **answer:** because Abel “represents” the image of God – Cain’s *hatred* of God is “focused” on someone who “represents” that image – **Cain strikes back at God** for refusing to accept him “as God” (i.e. as the one who gets to dictate the terms of relationship)
 - a. the *primordial* temptation of Satan: “you will be like God ...”
 - 3. **Hebrews 11:4** lists Abel as the first member of the “Faith Hall of Fame” – Abel has a *relationship with God* (a righteousness) that is based on faith in the promises of God
 - 4. so, Cain kills his brother because he sees that connection of Abel to God (by faith) and despises it, because it is not how *Cain wants to approach God*
 - c. the application of the story to **Jude 11**
 - 1. the false teachers “walked” in the way of Cain = they have *also fallen* under the **dangerous** belief that “we” get to dictate the terms of how one approaches God
 - a. Cain believed that his sacrifice was “perfectly fine” and that God should have accepted it – he was looking for the “happiness” that comes from being accepted *on his own terms*
 - b. **the false teachers “pervert” the gospel of grace by teaching that we can come to God by any means “we” desire, and that God is obligated to accept our “offering” and make us happy – we can ignore the sacrifice he has made for us and bring our own!**
 - 2. **principle: like Cain, we must “take dominion” over the tendency to diminish that which God demands of us (on his terms) in favor of our personal desire to just “be happy”**
 - a. unlike Cain, we must understand that God demands self-denial, discipline and discipleship, the pursuit of holiness as our “*living sacrifice*” (Romans 12:1)
 - b. **not the “sacrifice of death” (that we toil to make), but the “sacrifice of life” that he has given to us as his free gift of grace by faith in the “Lamb of God”**