

Jude 1:5-8 “Three Cautionary Accounts”

For the Children: Have you had days where it seems that you are warned about your behaviour by parents or teachers more than usual. Perhaps it made you feel miserable. Perhaps you thought that you were being picked on. But it made you take extra care so that no one would have an excuse to tell you off. Some parts of God’s Word have a lot of warnings, rebukes and accounts of God’s judgement. These things may make us feel a bit down, especially when we look at our own sins. But that is to get us to look again to the Lord Jesus, so that we may know that we are forgiven, and reminded to serve and obey Him faithfully. Questions: What kind of behaviour brings down God’s judgement? Is any sin too bad for Him to forgive? How worried should we be about the evil in our society?

Introduction:

First Point: Three Ancient Judgements

- 1) The Source of Information: Jude is reminding the readers of what they know well (v. 5) – the accounts from the OT to which he will refer. Some believe that Jude (like Peter in 2 Pet. 2) is using the speculative, Jewish writing, “The Book of Enoch” for source-material. However, the 3 examples given can easily be explained on the basis of the OT.
- 2) Unbelieving Israel: The first example is of the generation of covenant people delivered from Egypt. The OT describes their rebelliousness – lack of trust in God, idolatry and immorality e.g., Num.14. A generation saved from Egypt were destroyed by God in the wilderness as a result.
- 3) Fallen Angels: V.6 describes the fall of angels who were not content to keep to the level of authority (“domain”) or the habitation given them. Satan’s temptation of Adam and Eve suggests that the issue was pride. Those who rebelled are kept in eternal confinement, under darkness, for the judgement of the Last Day. See Is. 24:21-22. The Book of Enoch misuses Gen. 6:1-4 to prove that the angels were also guilty of immorality, but angels are not physical creatures and Gen. 6 does not teach this false idea. Jude is giving an example of those who were originally good but were destroyed when they turned to evil.
- 4) Wicked Plains Cities: The Plains Cities in Gen.19 were already evil but were destroyed when they became even more so. Their sins were “gross immorality,” “going after strange/different flesh.” These 3 accounts are put forward as an example to show that whether you are a covenant member, originally good or already evil, if you remain in your sin you will undergo the punishment of eternal fire (v.7). The NT uses these 3 accounts as a warning quite often: see, for example, 1 Cor.10, Mt.10:15 and 25:41.

Second Point: One Current Warning

- 1) To the False Teachers: “These men” in v.8 refers to the false teachers in Jude’s time. They were guilty of essentially the same sins as we see in the 3 accounts above.
- 2) Their Description: The false teachers “defile the flesh” like Israel at Baal-Peor and like the people of the Plains Cities – perhaps by using God’s grace as an excuse to sin. They “despise authority (“lordship”), of God, His Christ, His Word and His apostles – like the wicked in all of these examples. They also “blaspheme glories” – of God, of Christ and of His Word; or, as some argue, of His angels. That they are “dreamers” may refer to being out of touch with reality or to some claim of revelatory dreams.
- 3) The Current Application: In applying this, we should note that if we do not warn those caught in sin and error of what awaits them if they do not repent, we are not helping them. We should also note that even covenant-members will be destroyed if they harden their hearts against the Lord. We are reminded, too, that evil may appear to triumph for a time, but in the end the Lord will destroy it.

Conclusion: