



Tweets from Heaven

#11 Jude: Part 1

I. Introduction

A. Who is Jude? What do we know about him?

1. The brother of James, the leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17, 15:13, 21:18, Galatians 1:19).
2. Thus, Jude is also the half brother of Jesus of Nazareth (Matt. 13:55, Mark 6:3).
3. His name is the English form of Judas (the Greek form of Judah)
4. According to John 7:5 and Acts 1:14, Jude did not believe in the Messiahship of Jesus until after the Resurrection. That probably explains why he introduces himself with such humility...a "bond servant" or slave.

B. Some special issues associated with this little book

1. This Jewish carpenter's son wrote in such excellent Greek, exhibited a superior vocabulary (using ornate and rare words, i.e. there are 13 words in Jude not found anywhere else in the New Testament) and was very familiar with Jewish apocalyptic writings.

Apocalyptic: a type of Jewish and Christian writings that develop between the Old and New Testaments that focused on the secret purpose of God and the End Times. The authors wrote under pseudonyms as if they were in the distant past. These works imitated Old Testament books of prophecy. They conveyed a great deal of first century Jewish ideas. Examples: 1 Enoch, Moses, Second Esdras, etc. (some of which are found in Latin Vulgate Bible).

2. Probably written between 60 and 65 A.D. (Paul wrote most of his letters between 48 and 67 A.D., James was written before 60 A.D., Peter wrote between 60 and 68 A.D. and John wrote in the 80's – 90's A.D.)
3. Jude is remarkably related to 2 Peter (compare and contrast with 2 Peter 2:1-22).

C. A brief outline of Jude

1. Salutation – verses 1-2
2. Reason for the letter – verses 3-4
3. Warning against the false teachers – verses 5-16
4. Some exhortation for the believers – verses 17-23
5. The doxology – verses 24-25

II. The Deceivers

A. The Issue – verses 3-4

Jude had planned to write another kind of letter (perhaps encouraging or instructional regarding a special, practical topic facing the church leadership or just loving for the people), but instead he feels compelled to address a very specific issue.

Ungodly men who have twisted the grace of God into license and slipped in (who “entered alongside” – slipped in by a side door) among the church, spreading their false teaching.

B. The Ungodly Men – verses 5-19

Jude illustrates his conclusion (verse 19 – they are men who (1) separate themselves, (2) are sensual and (3) who are not filled with the Spirit). These are ungodly men, “Asebes” meaning “*destitute of reverential awe toward God – impious.*” To prove his point, he puts his readers in remembrance of:

1. Those who left Egypt with Moses and the people of God, but refused to take God at His word (verse 5). See Numbers 14:11, 22-24. Sinning with their eyes wide open, they all died a physical death in the wilderness.
2. The Fallen Angels – verse 6. See Isaiah 14:12-15, Matthew 25:41 and 2 Peter 2:4.
3. Sodom and Gomorrah – verse 7. See Genesis 19:1-28. “Sodom and Gomorrah are time and time again used in scripture as the examples *par excellence* of the sin of man and of the judgment of God. See Deut. 29:23-32, Amos 4:11, Isaiah 1:9, 3:9, 13:19, Jeremiah 23:14, 49:18, 50:40, Zephaniah 2:9, Lamentations 4:6, Ezekiel 16:46-55, Matt. 10:15-24, Luke 10:12-29, Romans 9:29, 2 Peter 2:6 and Rev. 11:8. The glare of Sodom and Gomorrah is flung down the whole length of scripture history.” (Barclay, p.218)
4. “Dreamers” – False Prophets (verses 8-10) who seduce people away from their loyalty to God (see Deut. 13:1-3). The “dreamers of false dreams” also despised the angels.
5. This illustration is drawn from one of the books of the Apocrypha – “The Assumption of Moses.” Jude’s point was “if the greatest of the good angels (Michael) refused to speak evil of the greatest evil angels...then surely no human being may speak evil of any angel.” (Barclay, page 221)
6. “Cain” (verse 11) – See Genesis 4:1-15. A murderer who was a cynical, materialistic unbeliever who did exactly as he wanted.
7. Balaam (verse 11) – See Numbers 22, 23, 24 and 31:8, 16. A covetous man willing to do just about anything if the price is right. And worse, an evil man who taught others how to sin.

8. Korah (verse 11) – See Numbers 16:1-35. Here's a man who refuses to accept authority and who grabs for things he has no right to have. He hates Moses (Num. 16:1-4).
9. A description of these apostates (verse 12-19), "clouds without water", "trees without fruit", "waves foaming in their own shame", "murmerers", "complainers", "mockers", those with mouths "who speak great swelling words"
 - a) "They are separate" – they set up division within the church. These are people in cliques that destroy the fellowship within the church.
 - b) They are "sensual" – they focus on the natural...the unrenewed...a focus on our fleshy appetites.
 - c) They are "spiritless" – unfocused on the Spirit of God and the spiritual life He calls us to lead.
 - d) "But as for you, divinely-loved ones, remember the words which were spoken previously by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you. In the last time there shall be mocker ordering their course of conduct in accordance with their own passionate cravings which are destitute of reverential awe towards God. These are those who cause divisions, egocentric, not holding the spirit." (Wuest's Word Studies, pages 254-255)

III. So What?

We live in a world filled with folks who are "destitute of reverential awe towards God." To avoid becoming one ourselves, we need to avoid living on the "edge" of sin...accept authority...and serve God on His terms!

Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about Jesus' earthly family? Brothers? Sisters? Can you speak to their spiritual life?
2. Consider that list of characteristics of apostates...anything you should be avoiding?