



**SOLID
BREAD**

JUDE: “The Acts of the Apostates”
Week 7: “Past Examples of Apostasy, Part 1”
June 23, 2024
Instructor: Steve Schmutzer

Review:

- A. Last week, we essentially wrapped up the introduction to Jude. (the first four verses.)
- B. Many of your Bibles will show the first four verses of Jude as some sort of prequel to the rest of the book. My Bible outlines the first four verses as “The Salutation and Purpose,” and this is the section we have studied.
- C. We’ve learned so far that Jude is deeply concerned about false teachers, and he informs his readers of this, encouraging them to ‘contend for the faith.’
- D. To better understand the nature of false teachers, we have explored four elements of their character: their source, their subtlety, their strategy, and their sin
- E. One of the greatest takeaways from what we have learned, is that the most devastating attacks to truth and faith have always come from within the ranks of the church.
- F. By changing truth and denying the sovereign Lordship of Christ in their lives, false teachers have always succeeded at drawing away disciples after themselves.

NOTE: There is a clear transition between **vs. 4** and **vs. 5**. We move on from Jude’s introduction, and we began to dive into the granular details of his letter.

In **vss 5-7**, Jude speaks about the past which his readers already know well. He gives three examples from history that reinforce the certainty that severe judgment will come upon false teachers.

He eventually mentions three more past examples (**in vs 11, He lists them**). The order here is therefore “three groups” followed by “three individuals,” making a total of six. In this first section gives the first “three groups” special priority and emphasis to.

I. Israel as an example.

- A. Jude reminds his readers that they already know all this information about the origins of the Nation of Israel (Question: How can we better understand this point he is making here?)
 1. First, we’ve already learned Jude is writing to a group of believers.
 - a. Now, we see a clue that he is writing to a group of Jewish believers who know their own history very well.
 - b. Recall too, Jude is the brother of James (**Cf. vs. 1**), who is shown in the Books of Acts to have been a leader of the Jerusalem Church.
 2. Jude reminds his readers here in **vs. 5** that past events should provide future guidance.
 - a. Paul takes the same position, and Paul is also very clear that the past is a source we should learn from (**Cf. Romans 15:4**).

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide, we might have hope.”

3. There are a few important takeaways here for all of us...

- a. BIBLICALLY-SPEAKING: The entire body of the Word of God is essential for proper instruction. Consequently, it ALL needs to be taught.
- b. BIBLICALLY-SPEAKING: An emphasis on one portion of the scripture, or on one theme of doctrine, leads to spiritual weakness, much as an inadequate diet leads to physical weakness.
- c. BIBLICALLY-SPEAKING: The Old Testament is every bit as important as the New Testament! Both Paul and Jude remind their readers (the New Testament Church) of the lessons to be learned from the Old Testament which is giving encouragement, endurance, and hope.

4. Now, we need to shift gears to some basic and pragmatic applications...

- a. God gives us our past to equip us for our future (Have you ever seen anyone who learns all their lessons the hard way? This is someone who does not learn from the past.
- b. Trends should not overtake traditions. We should not diminish the heritage, the foundation, and the wisdom from the past.
- c. Those who constantly seek to emulate current culture tend to be shallow, fleeting, and prone to Scriptural error.
- d. A Wise Saying: “If you don’t stand for something, you will fall for anything!” (If we don’t understand the past and learn the proper lessons from it, we will become vulnerable to the deceptions of the present.)
- e. And lastly....those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it.
Cf. Ecclesiastes 1:9– “*What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.*”
- f. Things like technology and civilization can advance dramatically. This does not change the routines and predictability of human nature. It just gives these things more ability to do great harm.

B. Jude’s emphasis in this example with Israel (as with other examples he will provide) is **‘apostasy’** (Meaning: to depart from a previously-held position, to move away from).

1. (Recall from our previous study in ABVOTET:), this ‘apostasy’ term is used by Paul in conjunction with the arrival of the antichrist (***Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:3***): **translations says: ‘apostasy,’ rebellion, falling away, revolt.**

- a. In context, the ‘departure’ of the church from the earth leads to a total apostasy. This is the full departure from true faith, and this aids in opening the door for the subsequent arrival of the antichrist.
- b. Recall that we have learned a good deal about the worldwide false religion that will dominate the world in the wake of the Rapture.

- c. Remember too, Jesus mused in **Luke 18:8**, “...when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”
- C. Back to **Jude 5**: Israel is now portrayed as one of the groups that departed from the faith, who moved from a position of truth to a position of disgrace.
1. As a result, they were judged and destroyed by God (**Cf. Numbers 13 and 14**).
 - a. When Israel came to Kadesh-Barnea, and they were prepared to enter the Promised Land that God had provided for them, and they sent out spies to assess the situation.
 - b. The spies came back saying that everything God had told them about the land was accurate (**Cf. Num. 13:27**):

“They gave Moses this account: ‘We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit.’”

- c. In other words, the spies affirmed that God’s word was correct! His truth was validated! **NOTE: This is an important point!**
2. But, in the larger picture, they still gave a mixed report (good and bad). While they acknowledged that God’s Word was true, they STILL let their human inclinations get the better of them.
3. This showcases one of the patterns of apostasy: man’s reason overrides God’s truth. This is the one by which Israel fell away from faith and into judgment.
4. This is also the pattern of many churches and of many of us as believers today:
 - a. **Israel doubted the habitual truthfulness of God’s Word:** (Despite God’s faithfulness in the past, they questioned His provisions for the future.)
 - b. **Israel let ‘human perspective’ over-ride ‘Godly prescription:’** (They conformed to human strategy (spies). While this was not bad by itself, it led to permitting the ‘measures of man’ take precedence over the ‘methods of God.’
 - c. **Israel conformed to earthly persuasions rather than conforming to heavenly promises (Cf. Numbers 13:28-33 [skip vs. 30 & 31, we’ll come back to those]).** (The voices, the fears, and the words of human leaders became more important to them than the instructions and reassurances of God.)

“However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan. So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, “The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.”

- d. Again – remember from our previous study in ABVOTET, Satan had a strategy with the Nephilim, the giants (and we'll review some of this more when we get to the next verse as well as in **Jude 14**).
 - e. His first strategy was to corrupt the human genome to prevent the prophetic arrival of Jesus Christ (**Cf. Genesis 6:1-4**).
 - f. God sent the Great Flood not to destroy the earth, but to purify or purge it from its widespread genetic corruption.
 - g. Satan's next strategy, once he had identified that the lineage of Jesus Christ was to come through Abraham (BTW, we are learning about that now in Dan's lessons on: The Biblical Covenants) was to prevent God's plan from being fulfilled through the covenants given to the Jewish nation.
 - h. Here we see that Satan had positioned the Nephilim in the Promised Land. It was an effective strategy to keep the Israelites from following God's plan.
 - i. It all fits together, every last detail, if we continue to interpret and accept God's Word literally.
- D. Getting back to **Jude 5** and to the various ways the patterns of Israel are like the patterns of many churches and individual believers today:

1. **Israel preferred convenience rather than preparing for conflict.** (They wanted an easier solution rather than a hard struggle. They didn't want a battle. They did not want to endure spiritual dependence, and slow gains.)
2. **Israel ignored righteous reason and instead invited rebellious rhetoric (now, Cf. Numbers 13:30 & 31).**

"Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it. But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are."

NOTE: I want to point out that the call to 'return to Christlikeness' is almost always the minority opinion. The majority view is generally wrong.)

3. **Lastly, Israel forgot the past and feared the future (Cf. Numbers 14:1-2).**

"That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness!"

4. They neglected to celebrate the heritage of how God had blessed them – and why. Because they did not stand on the provisions of the past, they fell for the pressures of the present.

NOTE: As a result of all these patterns and behaviors, the unbelief of Israel earned them the judgment that their belief would have protected them from (*Cf. Numbers 14:28-34*)

5. There is a sobering lesson we need to learn from this passage: God does not overlook **faithlessness**, just as He does not overlook **faithfulness**. He keeps track of all the details.
6. Only two of the total spies gave a good report and a good plan: Caleb and Joshua. As a result, they were told they would enter the Promised Land.
7. It was not the same for the rest of them. The generation that had apostatized, the one that had departed from the faith, were destroyed in the wilderness - - ALL of them!
8. The majority forgot what God had done for them. They forgot God's promises. They turned away from His truth and His blessing, and they embraced their own fears and reasoning instead.
9. As you can see - there are many similarities between the patterns of the Israelites and the patterns of churches and believers today. This is why Israel's apostasy is the first example Jude provides to us.

NOTE: Permit me a few 'more personal' comments before we move on to *vs. 6*.

- a. What we've just learned should be a sobering reminder to each of us. The patterns and behaviors by which the early nation of Israel 'departed from the faith' hits close to home.
- b. I am concerned that we often view some element of our own earthly welfare as an excuse for not properly serving the Lord.
 - This can be true in our individual lives as we grow too fond of earthly possessions, earthly rationale, and earthly security. These things compete with a full trust and faith in Jesus Christ and His promises to us.
 - It is also true in our corporate faith. It's easy to forget God's blessings and provisions in our fellowship together. It's tempting to lean instead on our fears and uncertainties rather than trusting that God will continue to develop and flourish the good work He has begun.
- c. The great caution to all of us here is this: things that may sound 'reasonable and responsible' to the human perspective may, in fact, show that we are showing first signs of 'straying from our faith.'
- d. We need to **ACTIVELY** guard our hearts to keep this from happening. We need to be in constant prayer that we learn from the past and we exercise trust in the future.

NOTE: The second example Jude gives us that underscores the certainty of judgment of false teachers is found in *vs 6 (READ)*.

II. **So here, Jude mentions the fallen angels as an example.**

NOTE: There are several high-altitude matters I need to make clear as an introduction to this particular example....

- A. Jude opens up a truth here that is not given the same clarity in most other portions of the Bible (though we know fallen angels will be judged – **Cf. Matthew 25:41**).

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”

- B. Now, it’s important to understand that each angel was created with a free will. They could rebel against God if they chose, and some of them did! (In fact, we read in **Isaiah 14:12-14** that Satan did this, and we read in **Revelation 12:4** that a third of the angelic host followed him in his rebellion).
- C. **Jude 6** makes a special point: there is a selected portion of these fallen angels that is now bound and awaiting a final judgment.
- D. This is significant, because not all fallen angels are presently bound, in fact, they are very active (**Cf. Ephesians 6:12**).

‘For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.’

- E. This other group, the active fallen angels and the demons which are on earth today – greatly fear their eventual and certain judgment (**Cf. Matthew 8:29**).
- F. It is obvious already (from a plain reading and assessment of the Biblical texts) that not all fallen angels are presently bound or unable to do their work! But according to **Jude**, some have been bound already.

The question is ‘WHY?’ It is THIS group of ‘presently bound’ angels that Jude is concerned with here.

Understanding what these fallen angels did helps us to understand the larger point Jude is making concerning ‘moving away or departing’ from something.

Just like Israel ‘moved away or withdrew from their faith,’ so these fallen angels followed a similar pattern.

Jude is NOT concerned with the fact that they are fallen angels. It’s that some of these fallen angels are bound while others are not. The bound group is getting a special distinction here...

NOTE: Let’s look at the clues (What can we see in **Jude 6?**). There are three statements or clues which dovetail together, and we will look at another complementary passage in **2 Peter** to discern this:

1. **First**, they did not keep their position of authority.
 - a. These fallen angels had some sort of higher position or status and they did not honor that position, by personal choice.

- b. They were angels; they were not human. They were supposed to stay in their abode as angels even if they were fallen.
2. **Second**, they abandoned their own home.
- a. This builds on the first clue. These fallen angels had a 'place,' an 'abode,' and they left that 'home,' that 'residence' - - clearly, for something else.
 - c. This is the essence of the point I just made: Yes, they were fallen, but they were still supernatural entities and God required them to stay in that space, in that 'abode.'
 - d. This is why the angels in heaven in **Matt. 22:30** "*....will neither marry or be given in marriage.*" It's not that they cannot do this.
 - e. Instead, it's that the righteous angels in heaven have CHOSEN to stay within the bounds that God created for them to operate in. They also exercise their free will, and they choose to STAY within their 'abode.'
 - f. We can find some further clues related to this in **2 Peter 2:4**:

"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment;"

- b. **So, here's the third clue**, they sinned. This was a past event (*"When they sinned...."*)
- g. Keep in mind, this sin followed their original sin of rebelling against God and becoming 'fallen' in the first place.
- h. If the real issue was these fallen angels' original sin, then ALL fallen angels would be bound today for that reason.
- i. But that's not the case. Whatever this specific sin was, it was limited to some of the fallen angels. It followed their original sin of becoming fallen, and it earned them their current incarceration where they are being 'held for a future judgment.'

IMPORTANT: The Bible builds on itself. Texts from one portion of scripture build on texts from another portion; themes are reaffirmed. All passages on a particular topic will agree if they are properly handled. This is all part of God's Word being 'divinely-inspired.'

As Jude refers back to the story of the Nation of Israel in **vs. 5**, he states of that specific example - and the others he will discuss, "*....you already know all this.*"

So, just as we can turn back to the Old Testament to see the story of the early nation of Israel, and as we are able to understand some details there as to why they are the example that Jude provided, so we can do the very same thing with the fallen angels in **Jude 6**.

NOTE: This pattern is going to be true for all the examples of apostasy that Jude will provide. Each one is supported with background and further details in the Old Testament.

G. Here is a brief look at the story of the sin of the fallen angels:

NOTE: There is a connection in this story to Jude's use of Israel as an example (**Cf. Numbers 13:31-33**). When Moses sent spies to scout the Promised Land, the spies reported seeing giants. The Bible makes it clear that there were entities at that time who were so large, that regular sized men appeared as "grasshoppers" (**Cf. Deuteronomy 2:10-11, 2:21, and 3:11**).

1. So, what is this all about? What is the connection? The Bible, of course, has the answers.
 - a. Since the day Satan was removed from his position, he has been conspiring to try to thwart God's plan of creation and redemption for humanity.
 - b. We glimpse this when Satan was officially put 'on notice' in **Genesis 3:15**. This verse, as we learned in our last study series, is the 'original prophecy' upon which all Biblical prophecy hinges.
2. It is a bit further on in **Genesis 6:1-4** that Jude's reference to the fallen angels' sin, and some details of the spies' report, comes to light.
 - a. This passage describes how the 'sons of God' physically intermingled – or had sexual relations with, the 'daughters of men.'
 - b. Now many people have debated whether the "sons of God" refers to angels or men. And this is why we have to examine the Bible as a complete book and not just hang our conclusions on one verse.
 - c. First of all, the Hebrew words for the "sons of God" is B'nai Ha Elohim, which would mean these are Heavenly beings, giving credence to them being fallen angels.
 - d. Then we see the offspring of these sons of God and daughters of men were "mighty men" and of "renown." They were also "giants."
 - e. Something in their genetics made them super-sized people, and it was their fallen angelic parentage. They were hybrid entities. They were a violation of God's created order.
 - f. Again, we must keep searching the Bible to make certain of meaning. The Bible is self-confirming, and one passage of Scripture can always be confirmed by another.
 - g. We see the term "sons of God" next used in the Book of Job. **Job 2:1** states:

"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD."

- h. The Hebrew term here once again is B'nai Ha Elohim. As we know these sons of God here are clearly Angelic beings (fallen angels) who are presenting themselves before The Lord (in Heaven).

- i. Satan is among them being one of the 'sons of God' himself (Satan is a fallen cherubim, a type of Heavenly being). So, there should be no mistaking what the Hebrew term now means.

SO, WHAT IS THE BIG DEAL HERE? The implication here is that fallen angels physically blended themselves with human women and produced offspring with them. These offspring were the Nephilim.

This was an effort to corrupt the purity of the human race and to prevent the arrival of the Messiah who was promised to come through the seed of the woman in **Genesis 3:15**. Satan, in effect, was trying to prevent his own future destruction.

Also, this act by the fallen angels, who left their prescribed abode as angelic beings, was so abhorrent to the Lord that He punished them. First with the Great Flood that destroyed all the Nephilim offspring, and then with the imprisonment of these fallen angels that committed this sin.