



JUDE: “The Acts of the Apostates”
Week 8: “Past Examples of Apostasy, Part 2”
July 7, 2024
Instructor: Steve Schmutzer

Review:

- A. We are presently in that section of Jude, starting with **vs 5**. This is where Jude begins giving examples to reinforce his point that judgment will come upon false teachers.
- B. These are illustrations from history that his readers are already familiar with, and there will be a total of six such examples through **vs 11**.
- C. We are on **vs. 6**. We are looking at the second example Jude provides to show an example of apostasy, or a departure from the truth.
- D. The first example was the early nation of Israel as they prepared to enter the Promised Land for the first time. (Dan also mentioned this same point in his Biblical Covenants lesson last week.)
- E. Some of the nation of Israel sinned at that point in their early history.
- F. God could not tolerate this willful departure from a proper faith. So God destroyed that portion of the nation of Israel, for their lack of belief, out in the wilderness.
- G. Also, in our previous study of Jude, we began looking at **vs 6**. It’s here that Jude illustrates some of the same principles or problems with the fallen angels.
- H. As we learned, it’s not their state of being a fallen angel Jude is concerned with, but instead, that some of them further sinned in a way that God could not tolerate. Therefore, God imprisoned that group at that point.
- I. This is where a couple of you had some further questions for me after that lesson, and so a quick reminder is in order:
 - I. **How do we know Jude is not talking about all of the fallen angels?’**
 - A. Remember, as a category, not all fallen angels are presently bound. In fact, they are very active according to ***Ephesians 6:12***.
 - B. The active ones on earth today fear their eventual and certain judgment which Jude refers to. We also see this in ***Matthew 8:29***. Until then, they continue to wreak havoc on earth and among God’s followers according to ***Matthew 8:32***.

C. **Bottom line:** A plain and literal reading of the Biblical texts confirms that not all fallen angels are presently bound or unable to do their work! However, according to Jude, SOME have been bound already. The real question is **WHY?**

1. Jude 6 gives us two clues and 2 Peter 2:4 gives another:

- a. First, these fallen angels, apart from their condition of being fallen, did not keep their God-ordained position of authority.
 - These fallen angels STILL had some sort of higher position or status they were supposed to keep, and, by choice, they did not do this.
- b. Second, they abandoned their own home.
 - These fallen angels had a 'place,' an 'abode,' and they left that 'home,' that 'residence,' those 'boundaries,' for something else.
 - They moved. They departed from one position to another.
- c. Third, they sinned.
 - As we learned last time, this sin was a PAST event. (The text says, "When they sinned..."). That's something that already happened.
 - The Bible makes it clear that this sin FOLLOWED their original sin of rebelling against God (with Satan) and becoming fallen.
 - It's this specific sin that resulted in them being held for a 'future judgment.'

D. We learned that Jude's examples are historical ones that his readers 'already know.'

1. As his readers had the Old Testament to study and know, so do we!
2. We were able to look back into **Numbers 13 & 14** and study the story of Israel that is the backdrop to **Jude 5**.
3. We were also able to look back to **Genesis 6:1-4** and study the story there that is the backdrop to the discussion of fallen angels in **Jude 6**.

E. **I said last time that we would unpack this matter a bit more in this lesson.** Two basic theories seek to explain this 'sons of God' issue that arises in **Genesis 6:1-4**.

1. These 'sons of God' are either: (a.) humans, or (b.) fallen angels.

2. You know already that I support the latter view. This is what I believe the Bible clearly teaches that these 'sons of God' are fallen angels.
3. I dealt with this matter in great detail in our 82-week series "A Biblical View of the End Times," and those audio lessons and notes are on our website.
4. However, it is a sad fact that many pastors today choose to teach the alternate view, the view which is NOT supported in Scripture. This is the notion that these 'sons of God' were ordinary humans.

II. **So, to give ourselves a well-informed foundation, let's briefly look at the 'human theory' which falls short of being the proper backdrop behind Jude**

6: Note: This position is generally divided into one or the other of two ideas:

- A. First, these 'sons of God' were powerful and wicked human rulers, or....
- B. Second, they were 'godly descendants of Seth' who intermarried with wicked descendants of Cain. (It is unfortunate that this latter position is taught in many seminaries today, mostly because it is comfortable and non-controversial).

1. Just to cut to the chase, there is absolutely nothing in the Bible to support the first notion that these 'sons of God' were powerful and wicked rulers. I mention this notion, but I don't want to waste any more time on it.
2. Because the second notion is the one most often taught, we'll look at that theory more closely as I said last time we would do.

C. The 'godly descendants of Seth' theory:

1. Summary of Theory - This theory states that the "sons of God" are the sons of Seth, and the "daughters of men" are the daughters of Cain. The first group is presumed to be righteous, and the second group is presumed to be sinful and depraved.
2. As this theory attempts to explain it, the giants formed by this union (**Cf. Genesis 6:4**) were the result of mixing of these two human groups. Consequently, because of their disobedience, God had an

uncharacteristic spasm of anger, and He destroyed the world with a flood.

3. There are **so many problems** with this theory, despite its popularity in churches and seminaries today.
 - a. **Origen:** In the 3rd century A.D., a man by the name of Sextus Julius Africanus (200 – 275 A.D.) started teaching this sons of Seth view.
 - However, Augustine was the one to take it mainstream in the 4th Century. He was a popular church leader of his time.
 - Because Augustine was such a strong influence on early reformers, this errant view has persisted down through the centuries.
 - b. **Problems with this view:** (There are several)
 - There is no indication in the Bible that the descendants of Seth are called the ‘sons of God’ or that they are chosen, in any fashion, over the lineage of Cain.
 - In fact, **Genesis 6** makes no references to Cain or Seth. In order for this theory to fit, one would need to change the word for God (Elohim) that is used in **Genesis 6:1-4** into the word ‘Seth.’
 - Now, Cain DID kill Abel (**Cf. Genesis Ch. 4**), and while this may lead some to the assumption that Cain’s line is cursed and ungodly, it is important to remember that God showed care for Cain by placing a mark of protection on him (**Cf. Genesis 4:13-15**).
 - Contrary to popular opinion, this mark wasn’t the result of a curse, but a sign of God’s grace. Cain moved forward in life under the care of God!
 - Only two ‘humans’ (note the quotes) are ever called ‘son of God’ in the Scriptures (Adam and Jesus).
 - For background, look at **Luke 3:38** where it reads, “...*the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*”
 - In **Luke Ch. 3**, Jesus’ bloodline is traced all the way back to God. A similar bloodline is provided in **Matthew Ch. 1**.
 - Adam did not have earthy parents like everyone else did in that genealogy. That is why Adam is called a ‘son of God.’

- Notice that Luke refers to Seth as “the son of Adam,” and then he refers to Adam as the son of God.
 - In Hebrew, Adam means “man”, so Luke is calling Seth the son of a man.
- c. Seth may have been the replacement for Abel’s death according to **Gen. 4:25**, but NOWHERE do the scriptures state that his lineage was unusually Godly or his descendants unusually righteous.
4. **If one chooses to believe that Seth’s lineage was somehow more ‘special’ or ‘Godly’ than anyone else, then several problematic questions arise:**
- a. First, why did all of Seth’s lineage except for Noah’s family die in the flood?
 - b. Second, if Seth’s line was so Godly, then why was it hanging out with Satan in **Job 1 and 2** when God called the ‘sons of God’ to assemble before Him in heaven? (Besides, how could that even happen that humans got up there?)
 - c. Third, if Seth’s line was so Godly in the first place, then why did they sin by marrying into Cain’s so-called corrupt line.
 - d. And fourth, why would the marriage of two normal humans result in offspring of supersized non-human giants known as the Nephilim?
5. These questions make some obvious points.
- a. The fact remains, that one must properly explain God’s reaction to the account of **Genesis 6:1-4**, and the global cleansing of The Great Flood cannot be explained by simple human sin.
 - b. Any efforts to do so invariably compromise an essential view of God.
 - c. There was a much bigger issue at play here....
6. The truth is God’s decision to send judgment in **Genesis 6:5-7** is directly linked to what the fallen angels were described as doing in the few verses before - - when they had sexual relations with human women and produced the Nephilim.
- a. They did not keep their position of authority.
 - b. They left their ‘abode’ or their ‘home.’

- c. And they sinned....
- d. These are the three points ***Jude 6*** and ***2 Peter 2:4*** underscore.
- e. **Considering the consistency of the arguments, it is completely irresponsible to force the term ‘sons of God’ (*Hebrew: B’nai Elohim*) of *Genesis 6:1-4* into a human classification.**
 - The protocols of proper Biblical interpretation do not support this choice. Remember, we must always...
 - ✓ Interpret each passage of Scripture in its original language
 - ✓ Adopt an interpretation that agrees with all other passages in Scripture on the same subject
 - ✓ Approach each passage in Scripture in its proper context
- f. **It’s noteworthy that the apostles interpreted *Genesis 6:1-4* literally as I am instructing you here (see texts in *2 Peter 2:4-7; Jude 1:6-7*).**
 - Also, Christian leaders from the very start of church history believed that fallen angels engaged in illicit sexual relations with human women who then gave birth to hybrid “Nephilim” giants.
 - Early church fathers such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Rome, Lactantius, and Ambrose were proponents of these specific views in their own writings.
 - Again, it wasn’t until Augustine made allegorical interpretation of Scripture popular, that the ‘sons of Seth’ theory gained traction.
 - In other words, it wasn’t until people began mishandling God’s Word, that this idea gained traction.
 - Unfortunately, this errant view was reinforced by some of the greats in church history like John Calvin, and today, Catholicism and most of the Reformed denominations still hold to this problematic interpretation.

NOTE: There are a lot of moving parts here, there’s a lot to consider in these things. But let’s try to pull it all together...

- III. **HOW DOES ALL THIS TIE BACK TO JUDE?** The implication here is that fallen angels married human women and produced children (giants) with them.

This act was so abhorrent to the Lord that He punished these fallen angels by binding them for future judgment.

A. He then cleansed the earth with the flood, and He preserved the pure human genetics needed for the arrival of Jesus Christ (**Cf. Genesis 3:15**).

1. But in terms of 'apostasy,' the backdrop behind **Jude 6** tells us that just as Israel LEFT a state of trust and faith and chose to SIN, so these fallen angels LEFT their proper domain, they LEFT their position of authority, and they CHOSE to sin.

2. And just as God judged Israel, so He also judged these fallen angels. And Jude reminds us that false teachers who CHOOSE to sin, who CHOOSE to depart from faith, and who CHOOSE to sin and to lead others astray, will also face God's judgment.

B. That's a lot of interesting history and hermeneutics, but what are the lessons you and I can learn here? What does it mean for our lives and for our time? I WANT TO CLOSE WITH THREE APPLICATIONS:

1. First, no position we may have, regardless of its prominence or lofty nature, is a secure position, except for the position of grace we have in Jesus Christ.

2. It is easy to feel security and importance in our past and in our positions. Consider this list:

Relationships, Knowledge, Experience, Heritage, Power, Circumstances, Prestige, Personal holiness. Personal provision and blessing.

a. This subset of fallen angels once had all these elements and they still fell into God's judgment!

b. They were in the very presence of Christ and still chose to rebel against him and follow Satan.

c. Then, despite their angelic nature, they chose to sin again. They left their abode, their place of authority. They went further down the spiral of depravity.

d. **Our takeaway:** No earthly position ensures our security or makes us that important.

e. No earthly position should encourage us to feel security beyond that grace which is provided to us in Jesus Christ.

3. The only position of security we have for our souls is the position of grace in Christ (***Cf. Romans 4:25-5:2; READ!***)
 - a. Paul writes “we have” three times in ***vss. 1 and 2 of Ch. 5:***
 - WE HAVE justification – we have been moved from a state of sin to a state of righteousness
 - WE HAVE peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are no longer in an adversarial relationship with God because of our sin
 - WE HAVE gained access by faith into grace. We now stand blameless before God as a result of what Jesus Christ has done for us
 - b. Again, WE HAVE received these blessings not in who we are, where we have been, or what we have done...)
4. Second, no position, regardless of prominence or lofty nature, is secure against the invasion of personal pride and lust.
 - a. It is vital that we protect our hearts against any grain of personal pride, especially in our positions and our accomplishments.
 - b. It is vital that we guard our human inclinations against any form of lust, wanting what we should not have.
5. And third, there are few things God deals with more harshly than perversion of His truth.
 - a. Perversion of God’s truth demands God's judgment.
 - b. It makes little difference whether it occurs in the field of art, literature, morals, education, or government. God hates the policy of calling right what is wrong, or wrong what is right.
 - c. All forms of relativism wash out God's standards.
 - d. Perversion of the truth of God’s Word is especially heinous. This is why God will call false teachers into judgment.

