



JUDE: “The Acts of the Apostates”
Week 11: “Recognizing False Teachers, Part 1”
September 1, 2024
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Review:

- A. Last time we were in our study in Jude, we began to unpack **vs. 8**. This verse gave us an outline of three important questions:
 1. Who, really, are these false teachers?
 2. What, really, do these false teachers do?
 3. Why, really, do these false teachers do it?
 4. (READ **vs. 8**)
- B. With the first of those questions: “Who, really, are these false teachers?” we saw in **vs. 8** that Jude calls them dreamers.
- C. At first glance, that seems to be an odd description, but we learned several things about dreamers in this context which makes this definition appropriate.
 1. They are out of touch with reality, they are incompetent, confused, and full of misunderstanding.
 2. Next, they are not responsible with the truth. They deny a greater truth, and they are detached from a greater truth. Their consecutive choices lead them to wander and to wonder.
 3. The third problem with false teachers being dreamers is they are the wrong sort of leader. There is a wide gap between WHO they are and WHO they think they are.
 4. They are easily distracted by personal goals, they do not lead wisely, and those who follow them are in danger of becoming like them.
- D. We then started to explore the second question about these false teachers, and that was, “What, really, do these false teachers do?”
- E. We saw that Jude levels three main charges or indictments against such leaders in **vs. 8**. Each of these begins with the letter “I:”
 1. The first is **Immorality** – they pollute their own bodies
 2. The second is **Insubordination** – they reject authority
 3. And the third is **Irreverence** – they slander celestial beings
- F. We only had time to review the first of these charges: “immorality.” Under this point we learned that this means to “defile the flesh.”
- G. This is a charge of sexual misconduct, and we saw how this problem was a common thread that courses through the past examples of apostasy provided in **vss. 5-7**.
- H. We discussed how sexual immorality was a BIG problem for false teachers in Jude’s time, and how it remains a big problem for the same group today.

NOTE: This week, I want to move on in **vs. 8** and look at the remaining two charges Jude levels against false teachers: “insubordination” and “irreverence.” These two charges continue a response to the question, “What – REALLY – do these false teachers do?”

- I. **THE SECOND CHARGE OF THESE THREE IS 'INSUBORDINATION'** - Other translations say: "*despise dominion*") – NOTE: it is always best to let the obvious text speak, and as we do this, we will see this is, quite plainly, a rejection of authority (There are THREE clear ways this is seen...)
- A. **First, there is the rejection of the authority, the person and work, of Jesus Christ:** This goes back to the lessons we extracted from **vs. 4**.
1. Let me make a very clear point. The most obvious acid test of a false teacher is their stance regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ (two visible signs...)
 - a. To deny him as 'Sovereign:' (Greek: "absolute ruler")
 - b. To deny him as Lord (to question His deity).
 - c. NOTE: A number of liberal denominations openly believe that Jesus was a good man, but that He was not God Himself.
 2. To be called 'godless' in **vs. 4** means that, fundamentally: they leave God, and God's commandments and values out of their lives
 - a. This is a matter of personal choice as it conflicts with their personal agenda
- B. **Second, there is the rejection of the authority of Scripture:** It is very likely that the primary way in which false teachers reject authority is they reject the authority of Scripture.
3. #1: They question the inerrancy of Scripture.
 - a. Increasing numbers of Christian leaders and institutions are calling the inerrancy of the Word of God into question.
 - b. The truths of the Bible that appear to be most challenged in our time include: homosexuality, the literal creation of this earth in six days (vs. evolution), the worldwide Noahic flood, the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, the physical return of Christ, and so on...
 4. #2: There is a related problem: They properly teach the Bible when it suits them, and they improperly teach it when it does not. This is a KEY problem with false teachers today.
 - a. I believe this is an endemic crisis within the church today. This problem is widespread and obvious.
 - b. Their teachings are not in line with a consistently correct and responsible interpretation of the Word of God.
 - c. This seems to be particularly true when these false teachers are confronted with 'politically correct values.' These are values which the world embraces, but which the church should not promote.
 - d. These leaders do not accept from the Bible what it is teaching, **which is 'exegesis.'**
 - e. Instead, they formulate their own doctrines and then interpret Scripture as is necessary to support what they want to teach, **and this is called 'eisegesis.'**
 - f. It is this latter approach which characterizes many, if not most, sermons today.

- C. **There is the rejection of correction and accountability from others in the Church.** False teachers are those who refuse to change their wayward ways and to repent of their sins.
1. They are overly quick to see themselves as OK, and to see the greater problem as being someone else's issue.
 2. **NOTE:** In my own experience over the years, I have seen **three ways** this is done...
 - a. These false teachers engage in labeling: They disparage those people who they feel amount to being "heresy hunters."
 - Because such individuals are preoccupied with their own agendas, they label anyone who would hold them accountable as 'problem people.'
 - And these false teachers encourage their own inner circles to see these people the same way.
 - b. Next, these false teachers avoid relationships which would hold them accountable:
 - They distance themselves from those that correct them.
 - They keep themselves close with those that compliment them.
 - c. Lastly, these false teachers adopt a heavy-handed style of leadership: When confronted with correction and accountability, they are quick to claim that those who are confronting them are instead the ones that are 'out of line.'
 - They may use passages like **Hebrews 13:17** to intimidate and manipulate their congregations, to keep them under their control, and to deflect from their own personal problems.
 - Such tactics puts the lives of many in the body of Christ into the hands of an irresponsible few.
 - The catch of **Hebrews 13:17** is, "*They keep watch over you as men who must give an account.*" However, the greater purpose of this passage lies in its critical truth.
 - Godly leaders 'speak the Word of God' – not their own agenda
 - Godly leaders lead by example, particularly concerning the outcomes of their choices and their personal walk.
 - In fact, **Hebrews 13:9**, just a few verses earlier implores us to "*...not be carried away by strange teachings.*"
 - So again, if proper Biblical interpretation is made clear, the very passages these false teachers use to manipulate others are, in fact, a divine accountability to THEM!
- 3. Here's the bottom line: lets return to *Jude 8*.**
- a. There is no blanket mandate in Scripture to blindly accept what is taught by false teachers who themselves, choose to 'reject authority.'
 - b. We need to prayerfully consider what God would have us do, then do that with grace, with prayer, and with humility.

NOTE: Let's now look at the third charge Jude levels against false teachers. This is the charge of **irreverence**. To properly understand this indictment, we need to read Jude's clarification of this problem as the text moves from the end of **vs. 8** and into **vs. 9**.

II. IRREVERENCE / (THIS IS 'SLANDERING CELESTIAL BEINGS')

NOTE: **Verse 9** is a remarkable, a curious, and an obscure verse which is not the easiest I've tackled. Several questions need to be asked here to help us understand what is going on?

A. **What is the background?** NOTE: Jude is filled with historical perspectives, and this unusual event is one of those.

NOTE: The literal nature of each historical event argues for a literal interpretation of Jude's words. Background: (**Cf. Deuteronomy. 34:1-7**; this details the death of Moses) Here are the main takeaways:

1. Moses died, not because he was old in age, but because of his sin (**Cf. Numbers 20:1-13 for the story of that**). Remember:
 - a. Moses made water pour from a rock to satisfy the needs of the complaining Israelites.
 - b. But instead of giving the credit to God, and instead of doing exactly as God had commanded, Moses (and Aaron) got angry at the people and therefore inadvertently took the credit for themselves.
 - c. For this sin, God refused Moses' entry into the Promised Land (**this gets back to the details of Numbers 20:12**)
 - d. Moses had been given a huge responsibility as a leader. His role was to magnify God's name, to build the Israelites faith and trust in GOD, not in himself.
 - e. He did not do that when it most mattered. In effect, he endangered or compromised the faith of the people by not having enough reverence for God.
 - f. So, **Deuteronomy 34:1-7** now shows the consequences for Moses: his premature death (Again, physically, it was not yet his time to die).

B. **Who are the players?** NOTE: There are 3 players seen in **Jude 9**: Michael, Satan, and Moses. NOTE: My assumption here is I do not need to explain Satan and Moses.

1. I will focus on Michael – who is this?
 - a. He is an archangel. (**Jude 9**). NOTE: Not 'an' archangel though, but 'the' archangel.
 - b. 'Archangel' means 'chief angel.' So, Michael is probably the most powerful of the angels (Question: Was he always?)
 - c. He is mentioned 5X in the Bible, including here in **Jude 9**. From these five references, we learn:
 - d. Michael has a special relationship to God (NOTE: his name communicates a question. It means 'Who is like God?')
 - e. He is stated to be, "*Michael, one of the chief princes*" (**Cf. Daniel 10:13**) That suggests there are other 'chief princes' (though Michael must be first among them), but we are not told much of them – perhaps Gabriel? (the only other angel named in the Bible)
 - f. Michael's primary responsibility, as **Daniel** explains it, is to be watchful over God's chosen people, the Jews:

- g. For example, in directing instructions to Daniel, he was told, "*Michael your prince....*" (**in Daniel 10:21**)
- h. It was also explained to Daniel, "*Michael... the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people....*" (**Cf. Daniel 12:1**)
- i. The last Biblical reference to Michael refers to him in the context of "*Michael and his angels....*" (**Cf. Revelation 12:7**). NOTE: This is just before the 'great dragon' (Satan) goes off to make war with Israel and her offspring, so here we see the Jewish connection once again.
- j. AND LASTLY: The **Jude 9** and **Deuteronomy 34** passages link Michael with the Jewish nation once more. Moses, their great leader (representing the 'law') dies, and we later learn, Michael was involved in this event.

2. NOTE: This raises the third and last question, "Why was there a dispute over the body of Moses?" (God buried him according to **Deuteronomy 34:6**, but apparently Satan knows where this is.)

NOTE: "Dispute" (some translations say 'argue,' 'debate,' or 'fought') is translated from a Greek word 'dialegomai, which means to say, to dialogue, or to discuss thoroughly, (i.e. in an argument or exhortation) – this recalls the word 'contend' in **Jude 3**. Michael and Satan did not 'fight' here as they later will in **Revelation 12:7**.

- a. Apparently, there was some sort of heated conversation or argument about the body of Moses (and there are further details about this in some of the apocryphal books).
- b. There is a clue given in **Deuteronomy 34:5-6**, where we are told Moses' burial place is 'secret.'

"So, Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day."

- c. A natural question arises, 'What is the connection between this argument and this secret burial location?' (Permit me to give you several related thoughts.....)
 - Perhaps God did this secretly so that the grave site of Moses would not become an object of worship by the Jewish people.
 - In that same vein of thought, Satan perhaps wanted Moses' body to become an object of veneration or worship by the Jews. This would be idolatry!
 - Concerning the possibility of idolatry towards Moses, consider the passage of **Matthew 17:1-4...**
 - When Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the mount of the transfiguration, Peter wanted to build tabernacles for each of them.
 - Had Jesus given Peter his way, these tabernacles could well have become focal points of idolatry for the Jewish people.

- Remember, Satan sponsors all forms of idolatry. He is behind all false religions - He does this so people will worship anyone and anything OTHER than the One True and Living God.
- And so, this discussion or argument between Michael and Satan stands as a reminder to us as to how we ought to behave and respond to the forces of darkness.

NOTE: Here are some comments concerning how false teachers and their congregants today slander celestial beings.

C. The larger context of **Jude 8-10** intends to compare apostate behavior with the conduct of the archangel Michael.

1. In **vs. 8** false teachers "speak contemptuously and slanderously against authority," whether that be against divine, angelic, or human subjects.
2. In this respect, these apostates are showing they too easily take liberties which even Michael the archangel would reject. That's what's being said here.
3. Michael left this important issue in God's hands rather than pronouncing judgment on another angel.
4. Said another way, Michael would not deal with the matter of Moses' death under his own authority. This was very different than what the apostate false teachers were doing in Jude's time - - and as they are doing today!

D. This is a juncture in this lesson where I feel I need to make some comments on the 'here and now.' I want to launch from this verse in **Jude** and educate you a bit on the Third Wave Movement within the greater church.

1. The Third Wave Movement is a charismatic development that began in the 1980s.
 - a. It is sometimes referred to as the "Third Wave of the Holy Spirit" or the "Signs and Wonders Movement." Perhaps you've heard these descriptions.
 - b. It is called the "Third Wave Movement" because it is essentially the third of three distinct Pentecostal/Charismatic movements in modern Christianity, and it has become very – VERY! - popular.
 - c. It has – among other errant things - spawned the "Name It and Claim It" false teachings that are widespread today. I have several friends who are heavily invested into this movement's ideas.
2. One of the pivotal teachings of the Third Wave Movement is what is known as "power evangelism."
 - a. The basic premise of power evangelism is that the gospel message MUST be validated with signs and wonders for people to respond to it in faith.
 - b. Proponents of this view have an unhealthy and disproportionate focus on miracles, speaking in tongues, healing, and prophecy.

- c. They basically overlook the fact that it is the gospel message itself that *“...it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes (Cf. Romans 1:16).”*
3. You can see the obvious problem here. Third Wave proponents are essentially denying the sufficiency of Scripture, and they believe instead that God is communicating through modern-day “prophets and apostles.”
 - a. This leads to a HUGE problem that is self-evident in so many social media platforms and wayward churches today: they believe God is giving new revelation today - - but this undermines the Biblical truth of the sufficiency and authority of Scripture.
 - b. The argument is often made that the words of these “new apostles and prophets” are as important – or even more important - than the clear teaching of Scripture.
4. Then there is the issue of how supporters of this Third Wave Movement deal with *“...the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits...” (Cf. Ephesians 6:12).* This is a similar matter as the subject material of **Jude 9**.
 - a. I have personally seen this phenomenon myself in almost every gathering of Third Wave folks I’ve been around (especially MBI days).
 - b. I’ve seen these people try to speak directly to demons. They literally claim they are having shouting matches with them.
 - c. They claim to perceive demons under chairs, behind flower arrangements, in the church’s bathrooms, and within the predictable after-effects of Taco Bell.
 - d. They yell at these ‘demons,’ they ridicule them, and they make fun of them, and they even laugh hysterically and bizarrely at Satan himself. They are known to call this ‘spiritual warfare.’
 - e. They say they are binding demons. They jump up and down, have seizures in the aisles, and they claim that Satan has been crushed and bound.
 - f. NOTE: They overlook that Paul himself said in **Romans 16:20** that Satan is not yet crushed, and they seem to not be aware that Satan is still *“prowling around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour” (Cf. 1 Peter 5:8).*
 - g. I watched one group of these folks in downtown Chicago fill weed sprayers full of “holy water” (they prayed over some large jugs of water) and then go out to spray it all over their neighborhoods and cities during a ‘prayer walk.’ They do all sorts of these strange antics to “bind demons.’
 - h. But all this kind of binding, water spraying, and so-called spiritual warfare is problematic. There is nothing in these kinds of behaviors that smacks of Spiritual integrity or accuracy.
 - i. The Bible teaches we are to pray for protection from Satan. We are to pray for the salvation of people who are trapped in darkness. We can even cast demons out of individuals on those occasions when it is legitimate to do so.
 - j. But nowhere in God’s Word is it stated we should be jumping about, performing any sort of circus act against territorial spirits, binding them,

having conversations with them, or using occultic techniques to exterminate them.

- k. Those who make fun of celestial beings, who display gross irreverence to the spiritual order - which according to **Jude** includes Satan and his minions – are toeing a very dangerous line.
- l. There are boundaries we need to respect. As Michael said to Satan in **Jude 9**, *“The LORD rebuke you.”*
- m. As believers, we are only protected because of our relationship to Jesus Christ who gained the victory on the cross.
- n. We are instructed to put on the armor of God in **Eph. 6:10-18** and to stand against the devil and his schemes.
- o. But those who laugh at, flirt with, sing against, taunt, or try to spray water on Satan and his demons are greatly misled.
- p. According to **Jude**, this is apostate behavior; it leads to destruction as we see at the end of **vs. 10**.

CONCLUSION:

In all ways and in all forms, spiritual rebellion leads to personal ruin. The behaviors of IMMORALITY, INSUBORDINATION, and IRREVERENCE as Jude explains them here in **vss. 8 and 9** are dangerous patterns to fall into.

Next time, we’ll look at **vs. 10** and how false teachers ‘do not understand that they do not understand.’ We’ll dig into the question, “Why – REALLY – do these false teachers do what they do?”