



**JUDE: “The Acts of the Apostates”**  
**Week 23: “Scoffers and Mockers, Part 1”**  
**March 16, 2025**  
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**Review:**

- A. Last time in *Jude*, we studied **vs. 17**. We saw that this began a ‘transition’ between the urgent and direct portion of *Jude vs. 1-16*, and the remainder of Jude’s letter.
- B. In **vs. 17**, Jude reminds his readers of several things:
  1. That he himself is not one of the apostles. He refers to ‘the apostles’ as being people other than himself,
  2. That they are ‘*dear*’ or ‘*beloved*,’ - not by Jude (although that is also true), but by the Lord Jesus Christ,
  3. Also, they are to ‘remember’ what was previously declared to them.
- C. **We looked at the question last time of “What is an apostle?”**
  - a. This is an important question because there are many people today fraudulently claiming to be an ‘apostle.’ They are deceiving lots of people.
  - b. This affirms Jesus Christ’s own warning in ***Matt. 24:4-5*** where He says the graduating dynamics of the ‘last days’ will be deception.
  - c. He said, ‘*Many will come in my name.*’ The Biblical fact is these folks are charlatans.
  - d. We learned that the Biblical qualifications of an apostle are:
    - a. to have been an eye and ear-witness of the resurrected Christ  
***(Cf. 1 Corinthians 9:1): (Paul states) “Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?”***
    - b. to have been explicitly chosen by Jesus Christ and/or The Holy Spirit ***(Cf. Acts 9:15): (Again, this concerns Saul who was about to become Paul) “But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.” and...***
    - c. to have the God-given ability and authority to perform signs and wonders  
***(Cf. 2 Corinthians 12:12):(once more it’s Paul writing) “I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles.”***
- D. So, in the life of Paul as just one example, we see all three qualifications of a true apostle spelled out.
- E. As we saw before, these were the same qualifications that the eleven remaining apostles respected when they selected Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot ***(Cf. Acts 1:21-26)***
- F. Now, this specific train of thought from **vs. 17** transitions into **vs. 18** where we find that true **apostles** warned us against false **apostates!**
  1. These are two similar-sounding words, but two very different meanings.
  2. Here in **vs. 18**, the legitimate servants of God call out the illegitimate pretenders.
  3. We can recognize these frauds by their wrong attitude and message.

- G. Most translations say, 'scoffers' or 'mockers.' Several call them 'deceivers' or 'imposters.' Regardless of the term, the two main points are:  
these people are not 'the real deal,' and these sorts of people will increase in number **and** influence as 'the last time' gets nearer.

**I. I want to tackle vs. 18 by asking a couple of questions:**

**A. The first and most basic question is, "What are they mocking and scoffing at?"**

1. The simplest answer is, "God's Word."
  - a. They are mocking the standards of Scripture, they are doubting the claims of the Bible, and they are diluting the importance of the full counsel of God's Word.
  - b. This should be easy to understand. A mocker, a scoffer is one who has departed from the truth (that's what an apostate is).
  - c. So, the things that scoffers say, the things that mockers do - - these things are based in an irreverent - an improper - view of God and His Word.
  - d. Look at the principles of **2 Corinthians 11:4-6** for a high-altitude review of what I'm saying. It reads as follows:

***"For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough. I do not think I am in the least inferior to those "super-apostles." I may indeed be untrained as a speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way."***

2. Here, we see an apostate is one that supports teachings, situations, and conditions that are contrary to Scripture (for example, just from this passage in **2 Cor. Ch. 11**, we see apostates claiming):
  - a. That Jesus is not everything He stated Himself to be...
  - b. That 'another spirit' (from a different source) is legitimate when, in fact, it is not...
  - c. That the God's Word is not fully true, or more than just the Bible is necessary for our lives - or less of it should be emphasized - or perhaps just certain themes should be our focus...or certain books and not others....and so on.
  - d. That a 'gift of oratory' (or any other human qualification, like perhaps a particular education) is somehow an indication of true calling.

**B. Now, let's drill down a bit deeper and ask the next question, "What are these apostates scoffing at?"** Maybe a better question is **"Are there any identifying elements we should note as these people do what they do - - AS they scoff and mock?"**

1. To best answer this question, we need to compare **Jude vs. 18** against other Scriptures that discuss these same issues.
  - a. Remember, the Bible always interprets itself. Things that are stated in one place are always affirmed elsewhere.
  - b. We're going to find there are some points that each of these other passages make clear in unison.

- c. We've already looked at one such passage in **2 Corinthians 11:4-6**, but I want to look at three more. There are many more than three, but I'll just look at these three.
- d. I want you to understand that each of these passages support the intentions of **Jude 18**. They all affirm what the context of **Jude 18** says.

**(PASSAGE ONE: I Timothy 4:1-2)**

***"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron."***

- 2. The first point that hits ME from this passage is the one about 'later times' (**this is the same as 'last times' in Jude 18**)
  - a. Here's what we need to understand. More and more, as the Second Coming of Christ draws nearer, we are told the activity and presence of apostates will increase.
  - b. This FACT is supported multiple places in the Bible, and it means things are not going to get better, they are going to get worse!
  - c. Jesus mused aloud in **Luke 18:8**, "*when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?*"
  - d. That's not a positive statement; it's a negative one. The prognosis for genuine faith is not good as we move forward in time.
  - e. Things are going to trend down. Faith – and all its proper expressions - will become weaker, not stronger.
  - f. We also know this from the church of Laodecia in **Revelation 3:14-22**.
    - It was a real church, but it is also positioned in **Revelation** to represent the condition of the greater church just prior to the Rapture, and it's not a pretty picture:
    - In contrast to the six prior churches which represent earlier phases of church history, the Laodicean church is in last place in all respects; it has nothing to commend it for.
    - It's a delusional church. It doesn't see itself accurately. It thinks it's well and OK, but Jesus calls it "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked."
    - This is a church that THINKS it's 'on fire for God,' but Jesus says it's "*lukewarm*" and He will spit it out. He will reject it.
    - Perhaps most disturbing about this church is its claim in today's language that it's 'all about Jesus.'
    - We hear that said in a lot of churches today, but according to **Revelation 3:20**, Jesus is knocking and trying to get IN!
  - g. The bottom line is the church today is in very bad shape. It's full of apostates and false teachers, and I believe many people in the church today are not truly saved -- though they THINK they are! **Matthew 7:21-23** make this very clear.

- h. It's therefore delusional to sing about 'generations rising up with selfless faith' and 'near revivals,' and that sort of thing. These sorts of Praise & Worship songs are shallow; they are not based on truth.
  - i. The only pockets of the world where the church is strong and growing right now are those areas where the church is persecuted.
3. Here in America, this specific situation is grave (according to a Barna Research Study reported in Feb. 2023). It's the first such study post-COVID, and it shows how trends changed for the worse after that globalist event.
- a. Those that hold to a biblical worldview has fallen to a mere 4%. This is a drop of one third from the 6% recorded just three years earlier.
  - b. (Conversely) The bulk of the American adult population—82%—falls into the "World Citizen" category, described as people "who may embrace a few biblical principles but generally believe and behave in ways that are distinct from biblical teaching." According to the report, this group has grown substantially from the 69% registered in 2020.
  - c. That last group includes a lot of so-called 'Christians.'
  - j. So, on issues of faith, the situation in America and in most Western cultures is eroding badly.
  - k. It underscores what Paul bluntly says in **1 Timothy Ch. 4** that "*some will abandon the faith.*"
  - l. The bottom line is we have anything BUT a revival for our present-day prospects. **(Why is this happening?)**
4. To answer this question, we need to look at a second point from **1 Timothy 4:1-2**.
- This point concerns the increased element of demonic influence in churches (NOTE: We need to be careful how we 'see' and 'define' demonic influence – it's not all about abnormal seizures and frothing in the aisles).
  - One mark of demonic influence is heretical / deceptive teaching – that is any teaching that is contrary to Biblical accuracy (here are a few quick examples)
    - THERE ARE OBVIOUS DECEPTIVE TEACHINGS:
      - The church has replaced Israel. God is done with the Jews. When Israel is mentioned in the NT, it means 'the church.'
      - Jesus Christ was a good man, He was a great prophet, but He was not God incarnate, and He was not sinless.
      - I can choose to promote and live a lifestyle of homosexuality because 'all means all' and 'Jesus accepts us just as we are.'
    - THERE ARE SOME NOT-SO-OBVIOUS DECEPTIVE TEACHINGS (using things often said)
      - 'Every passage in the Bible is all about Jesus.'
      - 'We are a Gospel-centered church.' (Perhaps. But it's a problem if no bad news is taught to give weight to the good news; there's no judgment or hell presented; there's no calling to truly repent; there is no appeal to trust Jesus Christ as Lord AND Savior – **Cf. Romans 10:9**).

- (here's the last not-so-obvious one I'll mention): Abandoning a diet of sound doctrine and replacing that with socially acceptable themes.
- Paul said in **2 Tim. 4:3**, that in the last days, a large proportion of 'Christians' would not only lose their appetite for sound doctrine, but they would develop a keen distaste for it.
- Rather, they will crave an unwholesome and deficient approach. They will prefer a self-help style of teaching over the teaching of sound / deep doctrine.
- The bottom line is demonic deceptions are alive and well in the modern church. They are not always easy to see, but they ARE pervasive and ubiquitous, AND they have fooled many.
- **1 Tim. 4:1-2** adds two more points that reinforce the thrust of **Jude 18**, and I'll just mention them briefly:
- All these errant teachings, these deceptive things - - they are taught by 'hypocritical liars.'
  - Paul is direct here; it takes a flawed person to present flawed teaching. This is the true condition of many pastors and teachers today.
- And lastly, their consciences are 'seared as with a hot iron.'
  - These leaders are no longer receptive to the truth or capable of responding to it as they ought to.
  - They see others as a problem, but they do not see themselves as having any problem.

**II. OK, NOW, PASSAGE NUMBER TWO. The second passage I want to look at that supports the context of Jude 18 is 2 Peter 3:3-7)**

***“Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”***

- A. The clearest issue that jumps out at me here is that 'scoffers' of the 'last days' have a bone to pick with Bible prophecy. There is much I could say here, but I will focus on three specific points:
1. **First, there is a motive for this behavior.**  
NOTE: There is a reason these 'scoffers' mock the teaching of Bible prophecy, and this passage says it's because they are *“following their own evil desires” – similar to the points of Jude 16 & 18*

- Fundamentally, as we learned a few lessons ago, this means they want their own way over God's way. That's what 'evil desires' is all about.
- In this case, they want to teach what THEY want to teach - - and not what a responsible approach to God's Word would direct them to teach.
- This is that whole 'tickling ears' thing from **2 Timothy 4:3**. It's the wrong sort of people that choose what they will and will not teach or be taught.
- The Bible is very clear that Bible prophecy is to be a key part of the believer's diet.
- It was an emphasis of Paul's when he taught the infant Thessalonian church. It was a key part of the first sermon EVER to the church by Peter.
- Furthermore:
  - Prophecy comprises more than one-quarter of the Bible - - almost a third!
  - For every prophecy in the OT about Jesus' First Coming, there are eight about His Second Coming.
  - Jesus Christ's return also comprises one of every five verses in the NT.
- I need to be direct. Bible prophecy is a major theme of God's Word, and it is supposed to be taught regularly and responsibly.
  - But it's not. And here in **2 Peter 3:3-7**, we see why.
  - Mocking and de-emphasizing Bible prophecy is a hallmark of apostate teachers and apostate churches, and that's mostly what we have today.
  - (NOTE) – The sound teaching of Bible prophecy has been a key attribute of Solid Bread Community - - and it will continue to be. It's not the only thing we focus on, but it will continue to partly define who we are.
- Here is where we need to recall **Acts 20:29**. Remember this passage that speaks of false teachers as savage or ravenous wolves who will not spare the flock(?) – we've studied this passage before.
  - This passage makes a contrast between wolves who desire to feed themselves and shepherds who desire to feed the flock.
  - False teachers will always stick to themes that make them feel good about who they are, the choices they are making, and the things they are doing.
  - And so according to **2 Peter**, one hallmark of the false teacher is the intentional dilution or de-emphasis of any teaching about Jesus Christ's Second Coming (and all the prophetic issues associated with that).
  - Increasingly, I personally believe that part of the problem is Bible prophecy presents a future time of accounting and judgment.
  - Jude has made very clear that false teachers are going to be judged! So why teach on something that confronts you and others for your personal choices(?)

## 2. The second reason why 'scoffers' demerit Bible prophecy is conformity.

NOTE: I think a de-emphasis on Jesus Christ's Second Coming, and an open ridicule of those who study Bible prophecy, is nothing less than conformity to the world's standards. At the very least, this posture is "passive approval and agreement" with the world's views and values. Think about it:

- a. Peter says these mockers say '*...everything goes on as it always has....*'
  - The world does not believe that there is anything new, anything prophetic, or anything imminent, supernatural, and judgmental coming down the pike.
  - The world sees things continuing as they always have. The world does not see Jesus Christ preparing to interrupt man's affairs.
  - In fact, the world mocks the notion of the Rapture. That's not hard to see. So why should the church be doing the very same thing?
  - The world says regarding Jesus Christ's return, "*Where is it?*"
  - Peter emphasizes that scoffers and apostates speak in terms of man's natural affections for measurability – "*Seeing is believing*" for these folk.
  - And just like the world does, Peter says, "*They deliberately forget.*"
  - In other words, the positions of these scoffers are ones of personal choice. It's their choice to ignore truth; it's their choice not to consider the possibility.
  - This is the pattern of the unsaved world. It **CHOOSES** to ignore truth, including the very evidence of God through His Creation according to ***Romans 1:18-20.***
  - And so mocking and diluting and sidestepping Bible prophecy shows a pattern of conforming to the world's views and choices.
  - **IMPORTANT:** When churches and pastors want to be 'attractive to the lost,' they are not going to teach anything that confronts the choices of the lost.

## b. And now the third and final point I want to mention from 2 Peter 3:3-7.

NOTE: It is this. Avoiding the accurate teachings of the Second Coming of Christ is a habit that is consistent with avoiding the accurate teachings of creationism.

- I don't want to get off on any rabbit trails here, but here are the main points I want to emphasize that Peter is bringing to light:
  - God started things HIS way and He'll end them HIS way.
  - If we don't have to believe God put the world together as He said He did, then we don't have to believe He will come back to end this world as He said He will.
  - Specifically, this point is about giving proper glory to God. If He made the earth, then He can end the earth. It's about His glory on both sides of the issue.
  - Mankind is not the fulcrum around which everything pivots. God is!

**III. LASTLY, WE HAVE PASSAGE THREE. This is the last passage that I want to glance at which supports the context of Jude 18, and it is Rev. 14:6-7. It builds on the last comments I just made.**

***“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”***

A. This is an unusual passage to mention here, and so I think I need to give a little background to it.

1. This concerns a time inside of the seven-year Tribulation.
2. I believe this is at the midpoint of the Tribulation. It's between the Trumpet Judgments and the Bowl judgements. The context makes that clear.
3. Some Bible scholars would place this point much later in those seven years, but I personally believe this passage is about events that take place at about the midpoint.
4. Things are very bad on earth. The Rapture has happened a few years earlier, the world has been thrown into absolute chaos and destruction, a new supernatural norm has replaced the pre-Rapture natural norm, and God's judgments are coming faster and harder.
5. It's in this challenging and unprecedented situation that this flying angel makes a proclamation to the entire world (**READ Rev. 14: 6-7**).

B. Here are a few points I want to make from this passage that tie back into those elements of **Jude 18** concerning 'scoffers,' 'last times,' and 'following their own ungodly desires.'

1. We noted before that a proper view of God requires a proper view of end times events as well as beginning times events!
  - a. That's why the angel here says the things he says. He proclaims that the same God who made each element of earth is now rightfully destroying each element.
  - b. The world is being notified of who is in absolute control.
  - c. WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? We live in a time where mankind is absolutely delusional about these issues.
  - d. They follow their own ungodly way of thinking because they have rejected Jesus Christ.
  - e. Humanity wants to control the environment, the climate, and the world. Lunatics believe by driving electric vehicles, we can save the planet.
  - f. (BTW, now they are now attacking every Tesla plant because they hate that Elon Musk is exposing their fraud. They are just showing that everything they stand for is all a deceptive act.)
  - g. In any case, a time is coming when God will show that none of that sort of control is possible - - it is even foolish to imagine that it's possible.
  - h. And so, in the very 'last times,' those that 'scoffed' at commonsense and Biblical truth are going to get a supernatural reality check.



- i. They will discover that *'following their own ungodly ways'* is a path of terminal risk with eternal consequences.
- j. They have chosen the passions they have because this gives them permission to display the conduct they want. They WANT to sin, so they reject the truth.
- k. And so, the angel confronts such scoffers and evildoers with the *'eternal Gospel,'* and everyone in the entire world hears it.
  - It includes a reality check about who made the earth in the first place and all that is in it.
  - It includes the truth about God's judgment against sin.
  - It underscores the need to have a proper view of God and to give Him glory.
  - It is – in sum – a short and punchy declaration which decimates the attitudes and postures of those *'scoffers'* which **Jude 18** is referring to.

LET ME CONCLUDE WITH A FEW QUICK TAKEAWAYS FOR YOU AND I FROM ALL THIS (Some of these will be direct, but I believe it's God's tough love for you and I):

**(1.) Cultivating a proper reverence for God produces a check in our carnal character.**

- Just as *'scoffers'* mock themes and doctrines which confront their own apostate choices, so a proper reverence for the FULL counsel of God's Word will aid our right relationship with Jesus Christ.
- In ***Psalms 119:11***, the psalmist writes, *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*
- It is the FULL counsel of the Scriptures which provides an antidote against exercising our carnal character.

**(2.) It is very important to believe the Bible means what it says and says what it means.**

- We need to beware of those who look down on taking the Bible literally.
- The passages we've looked at today affirm the literal interpretation of God's Word and the dangers of becoming a *'scoffer'* and *'pursuing ungodly desires'* instead.
- If we choose to dismiss the divine intentions of God's Word, we're in grave danger of learning too late that we were not in a right relationship with Jesus Christ.

**(3.) We must be exceedingly careful to not let 'cultural church' and 'cultural Christianity' become an acceptable substitute for Biblical standards.**

- It is nothing less than demonic lies to provide just a little bit of the truth in order to keep us from receiving all of it. Partial truth is the same as full deception.
- It's easy to *'play the game,'* to fool ourselves into believing that certain standards are God's standards, when in fact they are man's.
- It takes conscious spiritual discernment to see the difference.