

13. Learning About the Judgment of Sinful People

The books of James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John and Jude are called the General Epistles. Our next three topics will be focused on helping our physical and spiritual children learn some key lessons that Jude taught to warn younger Christians about false teachers. Since we still have many false teachers in our time, it is important for us to also help our children understand these lessons in order to help provide them with protection from false teachers that may try to deceive them.

Jude 1:1-2 begins, “Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.” In this first verse, we see that Jude is the brother of James, the writer of the book of James. These two men were both half-brothers of Christ. Matthew 13:55 says, “Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?” These brothers did not recognize Christ as the Son of God during the earlier part of his ministry. John 7:3-5 says, “His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." For even His brothers did not believe in Him.” However, as they saw Christ minister these brothers came to recognize that Christ is God.

By the time Christ returned to heaven, the brothers of Christ all recognized Him as God. Acts 1:14 says, “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” Here, we see that the brothers of Christ are included with those who gathered in the upper room after Christ returned to heaven. Both James and Jude recognized themselves as the bondservants of Christ as a result. James 1:1 says, “James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.” Since they knew that Christ was (and is) God, and also the One who saved them from their sin, that is why they referred to themselves as the bondservants of Christ.

This book is written to those who are set apart by the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ. The word translated “preserved” means *to keep, to guard or to carefully take care of*. 1 Peter 1:3-4 says, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.” In these verses, we see that the word is translated “reserved”. We are preserved in Jesus Christ because He has reserved a place in heaven for us. Jude wanted all believers to fully experience the mercy, peace and love that Christ has shown to each one of us.

Jude 1:3-4 goes on to say, “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Three times in this short book, Jude refers to the beloved. The word translated “beloved” means *those who are dearly loved*

or worthy of love. Here, we see that Jude had a great love and concern for other Christians. That was why he wanted to write to them about the common salvation that we all enjoy in Christ.

However, it had become necessary for him to write about the danger of ungodly people and false teachers to provide protection for those that he greatly loved. As a result, Jude encourages Christians to contend earnestly for the faith. The word translated “contend earnestly” means *to contend or compete as in a race or a gymnastic event.* However, as Christians we are called to contend earnestly for the faith. Just as a person in a race makes an all-out effort to win the race, we are to put that same kind of effort into protecting the faith that was once for all placed to the saints. 2 Peter 1:19-21 says, “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.” God gave us the Word so that we can know the Word and protect the Word from ungodly men and false teachers.

Jude said that it is necessary for us to contend earnestly for the faith because certain people creep into the church unnoticed to try and destroy that faith. The word “crept in unnoticed” means *to enter secretly or to slip in without being noticed.* Jude said that these certain people that have slipped into the church without being noticed are actually ungodly people that have been marked out for condemnation. Paul said, in Galatians 2:4-5, “And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” Here, we see that this had already begun to happen years earlier since Paul said that these were false brethren and not Christians at all.

False teachers that creep into the church, in any period of time, face eternal judgment because they are ungodly people that have never repented of their sin and placed their faith in Christ. In fact, Jude said that such false teachers turn the grace of God into lewdness. The word translated “lewdness” means *unrestrained lust and immorality* and speaks of those who openly commit immorality. Ephesians 4:19 says, “Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” Here, we see that such false teachers are only claiming to follow God as an excuse to satisfy their own sinful lusts. They are not Christians but instead use religion as a way to deceive weak Christians in an effort to satisfy their own sinful lusts. By their sinful actions they are showing that they deny both the Father and the Son.

Jude 1:5-7 goes on to say, “But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Here, we see that Jude went on to give several illustrations of judgment that came on those who did not believe and have their faith in the Lord.

Under Moses, God brought the nation of Israel out of the land of Egypt in order to fulfill His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. However, most of the people did not really have faith in the Lord. Stephen quoted Amos, in Acts 7:42-43, where we read, “Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, images which you made to worship; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.’” Here, we see that Israel continued to worship the false gods of Egypt throughout the time that they were in the wilderness. As a result, God destroy the people in the wilderness and brought the next generation into the land of Israel.

We also see that God brought judgment on the angels that rebelled against God and followed Satan. In their rebellion, these fallen angels completely left their first home and joined Satan in his rebellion against God. Some of those angels are already experiencing judgment. Here, we see that God has placed those already experiencing judgment in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day when they will be cast into their eternal judgment. In Matthew 25:41, Christ described the judgment that has been prepared for the devil and his angels when Christ said, “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’” This will be their eternal judgment.

The third illustration of those who have been judged is the people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities. The people of these cities had totally given themselves to sexual immorality and going after strange flesh. Genesis 19:4-5 says, “Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.” These men showed their rebellion against God by their own sin and rebellion. As a result, God brought immediate judgment on those cities. Genesis 19:24-25 says, “Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.” These three illustrations of judgment show the judgment that will come on all false teachers and all unbelievers.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that there are false teachers who creep into the churches today just as they did in the days of the New Testament. We want to help them realize that these false teachers are ungodly people that have never trusted in Christ. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn about the judgment of false teachers and sinful people in the past.