

**RECAP OF SESSION 1: A FAITH WORTH FIGHTING FOR (JUDE 1-4)**

In our previous session, we explored the introductory verses of Jude, understanding the author's identity as Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, and the urgent call to "contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" [1]. We learned that this urgent appeal was necessitated by the stealthy infiltration of "ungodly people" into the church, who were perverting God's grace into a license for immorality and practically denying Jesus Christ as Lord through their actions [1]. Jude emphasized that the integrity of our faith is reflected not just in what we believe, but in how we live, setting the stage for his subsequent warnings.

EXEGESIS OF JUDE 5-7: LEARNING FROM GOD'S WARNINGS

Having established the urgent need to contend for the faith, Jude now grounds his warning in historical precedents of divine judgment. He reminds his readers of three distinct instances where rebellion against God led to severe consequences, demonstrating God's impartial justice against unbelief and disobedience [2].

JUDE 1:5 - THE UNBELIEVING ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. [3]

Jude begins by reminding his audience of a well-known event from Israel's history: the Exodus. He states that "Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt," later "destroyed those who did not believe" [2]. The reference to "Jesus" as the one who saved Israel out of Egypt is significant, highlighting Christ's pre-existence and active role in Old Testament events, equating Him with the God of the Exodus [2].

The Israelites were miraculously delivered from Egyptian bondage, yet the generation that experienced this salvation largely perished in the wilderness due to their unbelief and rebellion against God's leadership [2]. This serves as a powerful warning: initial salvation or membership in a covenant community does not guarantee ultimate salvation if faith is not maintained. Even those who witnessed God's mighty acts and were beneficiaries of His grace faced destruction because of their persistent unbelief and disobedience (Numbers 14) [2].

JUDE 1:6 - THE ANGELS WHO DID NOT KEEP THEIR PROPER DOMAIN

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day. [3]

Jude's second example shifts to the angelic realm, referring to "the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling" [2]. This verse alludes to a specific group of angels who rebelled against God by transgressing the boundaries He established for them. While there is scholarly debate, many interpret this as a reference to the events described in Genesis 6:1-4, where "sons of God" (often understood as angels) engaged in illicit relations with human women, leading to their judgment [1] [2]. The core of their rebellion was a rejection of God's appointed station and boundaries [2]. As a consequence, God has "kept [them] in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day" [3]. This imagery emphasizes the certainty and severity of God's judgment for those who defy His authority and order. It also highlights that even powerful spiritual beings are not exempt from divine wrath when they rebel [2].



JUDE



JUDE 1:7 - SODOM AND GOMORRAH AND SURROUNDING CITIES

Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. [3]

Finally, Jude points to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities. These cities are presented as a clear “example” of divine judgment due to their extreme “sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire” [2]. The phrase “unnatural desire” (or “strange flesh” in some translations) refers to their perverse sexual practices, particularly homosexual acts, which were a blatant defiance of God’s created order [1] [2]. The punishment they received—“eternal fire”—serves as a vivid illustration of the fiery judgment awaiting those who persist in such ungodliness [2]. This example directly connects to the false teachers Jude is confronting, who were also characterized by their licentiousness and perversion of grace into an excuse for sexual sin [1]. Jude uses these historical accounts to underscore that God is consistent in His judgment against rebellion, unbelief, and immorality.

LEARNING FROM GOD’S WARNINGS

JUDE 5-7

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Why does Jude choose to remind his readers of things they “once fully knew”? What is the purpose of such a reminder?

2. How does Jude’s reference to “Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt” (v. 5) deepen our understanding of Christ’s role in salvation history?

3. What was the primary reason for the destruction of the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness, despite their initial salvation from Egypt?

4. What lesson can believers today draw from the fate of the Israelites in the wilderness regarding perseverance in faith?

5. Who are the “angels who did not stay within their own position of authority” (v. 6), and what was the nature of their rebellion?

6. What does the phrase “eternal chains under gloomy darkness” (v. 6) convey about the certainty and severity of God’s judgment?

7. How does the example of the fallen angels relate to the false teachers Jude is addressing in his letter?

8. What specific sins led to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, as described in Jude 7?

9. How does the “punishment of eternal fire” (v. 7) for Sodom and Gomorrah serve as a warning for the church?

10. What overarching principle about God’s character and justice do these three historical examples collectively teach us?



PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Jude 5-7 serves as a sober reminder that God is just and will not tolerate rebellion, unbelief, or immorality, even among those who have experienced His grace. For us today, this means taking seriously the warnings in Scripture and examining our own lives. We must not presume upon God's grace as a license to sin, but rather allow it to transform us into greater holiness. These examples call us to a vigilant faith that actively trusts and obeys God, recognizing that genuine faith is demonstrated through a life of submission to His authority and adherence to His moral standards. We are called to learn from the mistakes of the past, ensuring that our lives reflect the truth of the gospel we claim to believe.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Reflect on one area in your life where you might be tempted to compromise God's standards or take His grace for granted. This week, commit to actively seeking God's strength to align your actions and attitudes with His will, remembering the severe consequences of rebellion and unbelief highlighted in Jude 5-7. Consider how you can cultivate a deeper sense of reverence and obedience in your daily walk.

POINTS OF REFLECTION

How do these historical examples of judgment challenge any complacent attitudes toward sin or spiritual compromise?

What is the balance between God's grace and His justice, as illustrated in these verses?

In what ways might modern society, or even parts of the church, be repeating the errors of the Israelites, fallen angels, or Sodom and Gomorrah?

How does the certainty of God's judgment motivate you to live a life that truly contends for the faith?

References

[1] BibleProject. "Jude." BibleProject Guides, <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-jude/>. [2] Enduring Word. "Jude – Contending for the Faith." Enduring Word Bible Commentary, <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/jude-1/>. [3] The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. (Used for direct scripture quotes for accuracy and consistency).