



A Systematic Expository Study on the General Epistle of JUDE

STUDY 4: THE DESCRIPTION AND FATE OF MODERN APOSTATES Jude 8-16

In the preceding verses, Jude highlighted the past apostates and enumerated the divine judgement that came upon them. He now turns to the present jeopardy in the church beset by false teachers and modern apostates. He links the present apostates with the past apostates by the words "Likewise also". In as much as the present apostates are similar in character, conduct and actions to the past apostates, it is certain that they too will be judged. The historic judgement of past apostates is a precedent and a reminder of the certainty of divine judgement on all forms of disobedience, apostasy and heresy. Christianity is the strength and security of morality. Morality is the outcome and flower of christianity. There is a link between doctrine and life, truth and practice. A life of license is the natural result of denial of God and Christ. Morals are imperiled and impaired as spiritual truth is scorned and depraved. The abuse of grace is the most fatal canker in the church. The angel that falls becomes a demon. The grace of God, corrupted, is turned into lasciviousness. The liberty of the gospel, when perverted, becomes an occasion to the flesh. The latest developments of error and unbelief are no novelty. The corruptions of Jude's time were but the corruptions of ancient days. The evils which crept into the early church were but the renewals of the "**way of Cain**", the "**error of Balaam**", the "**gainsaying of Korah**".

THEIR CORRUPT PRACTICES

Jude 8-11; 2 Peter 2:10-22; Genesis 4:1-16; Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Numbers 22-24; 31:1-16; Joshua 13:22; Micah 6:5; 2 Peter 2:15; Numbers 16:1-40; 26:1-9; 27:3; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 Peter 2:6-8; 1 Timothy 5:24-25; 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; Romans 1:28-32; Galatians 6:8.

The daring nature of their corrupt conduct and practices is staggering. They rush in where even angels fear to tread! (Jude 9-10). The apostates are filthy dreamers whose corrupt practices are essentially : (1) Gross immorality and licentiousness (2) hostility to the divine Lordship (3) reviling of the angelic hierarchy. The angelic example of Michael is held up for us for human imitation, a noble example to follow (4) deplorable perversion of knowledge and ignorant depreciation. May God help us to keep quiet when we don't know and also to communicate with love and humility when we know!

Their corrupt practices were parallels to those of Cain, Balaam and Korah. **The way of Cain** was the way of hypocrisy and envy, of bloodless sacrifice offered in a faithless spirit, of selfishness, violence and cruelty, no contrition of spirit and no prayer for mercy. **The error of Balaam** was that man can make God to change his eternal purpose. He deviated from God's will and commandment because of covetousness and greed for personal reward. **The gainsaying of Korah** was his contempt for divine order and appointment, discontent with existing position and privileges, envy at the leaders of God's people and ingratitude to God for his privileges.

Under many new forms we recognize only the old sins of envy, avarice and pride.

THEIR CHARACTER PATTERNS

Jude 12-13; 2 Peter 2:13,17; James 1:6; Matthew 15:13; Isaiah 57:20; Philippians 3:19; Matthew 15:7; 22:18; 23:13; 24:51; Proverbs 21:16; Matthew 7:15-20; 13:37-43; 1 Timothy 1:19,20; Deuteronomy 32:2; John 12:6; Romans 16:18; Luke 6:46; Titus 1:16.

The character patterns of these libertines are figuratively portrayed and described. They are described as clouds that promise rain, and yet distill no moisture on the thirsty soil; trees which bear no fruit; raging waves that are destructive; wandering stars which guide no traveller; unfit guests in christian fellowship who mingle freely with God's children without fear of divine displeasure.

The figurative description essentially highlights that these apostates are profitless and disappointing to the hopes of the believers. The vivid picture of their moral corruption point to the selfish and sinful perversion of the church's fellowship wrought by apostates who are wolves in sheep clothing.

It is not possible in this world to completely separate the godly from the ungodly! It is impossible for ministers of the gospel to read the hearts of men so surely as to keep a sharp line of distinction between believers and unbelievers. The sheep will be separated from the goats on that great day!

THEIR CONCEITED PRIDE

Jude 15,16; 2 Peter 2:18,19; 3:3,4; 1 Samuel 17:44; 1 Kings 20:10; 2 Kings 18:33-35; Daniel 3:15; Acts 8:9; Luke 12:16-20; Romans 1:30; Exodus 20:7; 21:17; Leviticus 19:12; 20:9; Proverbs 20:20; 30:11; Matthew 5:34; Mark 7:10; Luke 6:28; Romans 12:14; James 3:10; 5:12; John 6:43; 1 Corinthians 10:10; Philippians 2:14; Matthew 12:36.

The apostates were murmurers and complainers who were loud in the expression of their discontent. The habit of murmuring is an indication of unbelief and distrust in the Lord. No fulness of earthly blessings can eradicate the complaints of an unbelieving heart. The nation of Israel is a case study in this respect.

These apostates were sinfully self-indulgent, given to vain and boastful exaggerations. Their torrent of unedifying words, position-seeking speeches are indications of their graceless hearts. It is foolish to boast of ourselves and those who generally do usually possess the least merit.

Much of modern philosophy written in polished language, exquisite logic and high-sounding rhetoric are essentially **“hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against God”**. Believers should not allow swelling words to seduce and sway them from the truth as it is in Christ. We should stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free and earnestly contend for the glorious faith once delivered to the saints.

THEIR COMING PUNISHMENT

Jude 11,13-15; 2 Peter 2:12,14,17; Psalm 37:1,2,10,22,38; 55:23; 73:17; 75:8; 92:7; 112:10; 139:19; Proverbs 5:22; 14:12; 10:27; Ecclesiastes 7:17; Isaiah 40:24; Romans 6:21; 2 Corinthians 11:15; Philippians 3:19; Hebrews 6:8; 1 Peter 4:17; Revelation 21:8.

The coming punishment of modern apostates is certain. The blackness of darkness is reserved for them and prophetic pronouncements as to the certainty of divine judgement have gone before. **ALL** sinners will be judged by God. Whether a man believes or does not believe in coming judgement does not change the reality of it.

Every sin and wickedness has its end in woe. Past apostates like Cain, Balaam and Korah perished. Modern apostates will not escape the indignation of an offended God. Proud and boastful speakers like Pharaoh, Absalom, Goliath, Nebuchadnezzar and Herod perished in their conceited pride. Modern equivalents will not go unpunished. Words will be judged as well as deed. Knowing this, what manner of men ought we to be!

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