

JUDE

Lesson 2



CLEAR FAITH IN A BLURRY WORLD

INTRODUCTION

Scripture clearly affirms that God is truth, that God speaks truth, and that God cannot lie. Scripture also affirms that Satan is a liar and the father of lies and goes around deceiving people. God reveals Himself as truth, and Satan therefore is revealed as the antithesis to God – lies. That particular dichotomy descends from the conflict of God and Satan to pervade every area in the universe. There is conflict between the holy angels and the unholy demons, and there is conflict on the earth between the truth and the lies of Satan.

The people of God have always been plagued with false doctrine. The invasion of false prophets, false teachers, false apostles, false christs has been something which the people of God have endured through all the ages of time.

Satan attempts to oversow the truth with lies. He attempts to confuse the world so that they cannot perceive the truth of God by drowning them in a sea of deceit. It was Satan's evil intended and clever misrepresentation of truth to Eve that plunged the whole of the human race into sin. We have existed in the morass and the muck of sin ever since, drowning in an ever-deepening morass of deceit.

The steady stream of false teaching has been cumulative so that it is wider and deeper now than it has ever been in human history. False teaching about God, about Christ, about the Bible, about spiritual reality is pandemic, and the father of lies is working to destroy the saving, sanctifying truth that God has given to us in His Word and in His Son.

The effects of false teaching have been devastating and damning. That is why the Bible calls them damnable or destructive heresies which lead men to destruction. And I believe that as we get closer to the coming of Christ, these deceptions, lies, and falsehoods, misrepresentations will increase.⁷

In the passage before us, Jude exposes the false teachers that are attacking the church. He compares their rebellion to rebellion against God that had occurred in the past and warns the church not to go along with it.

OPEN IT

1. **When was the first time you ever rebelled against authority? Who was that authority and what did you do? Did anyone pressure you into doing it?**

⁷ Excerpt from sermon by John MacArthur. Found at: <https://tinyurl.com/4uxfkvvk>

READ IT

Jude 5-16

EXPLORE IT

2. Who saved the nation of Israel out of Egypt?

3. What happened to those who did not believe?

4. Which angel contended with the devil?

5. What did he say to the devil?

6. Who did Enoch say was going to come to execute judgment?

APPLY IT

7. What three Old Testament examples does Jude use in verses 5 through 7 to compare to the false teachers addressed in verse 8? What sins were committed in each of these situations?

8. Numbers chapters 13 and 14 recount the disobedience and rebellion of the nation of Israel against God's command to enter into the promised land. Read through those two chapters and answer these two questions:
- a. Why did the people not do as God commanded?
 - b. When has fear negatively affected your decision to live and do what God was leading you to do, and when has that fear actually helped you to do the right thing and live for the Lord?

In verse 6, Jude recalls a situation originally described and recorded in Genesis 6:1-4. It has proven to be a problematic passage to interpret, specifically regarding angels, and has generated various interpretations and views among scholars and theologians. Here are the main views:

1. **The Traditional View** - Angelic Interbreeding: One traditional interpretation suggests that in Genesis 6, the "sons of God" are fallen angels who cohabited with human women, producing offspring known as the Nephilim. This view is based on the term "sons of God" often being used in the Old Testament to refer to angelic beings. According to this interpretation, these angels sinned by leaving their proper heavenly abode and engaging in illicit relationships with humans. (For further study please see: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/who-are-sons-of-god-genesis-6/>)
2. **The Sethite View** - Descendants of Seth: An alternative view proposes that the "sons of God" in Genesis 6 were not angels but rather the descendants of Seth (righteous lineage), and the "daughters of men" were the descendants of Cain (unrighteous lineage). According to this view, the problem was not angelic cohabitation but the intermarriage between two distinct human lineages, resulting in moral decline. (For further study please see: <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/who-are-sons-god-genesis-6>)
3. **The Divine Council View** - Heavenly Council: Some scholars suggest that the "sons of God" were heavenly beings. They argue that this passage reflects a divine council or assembly where heavenly beings, not necessarily angels, were involved in a discussion or decision regarding humanity. This view sees the sin as related to the rebellion of divine beings rather than physical relationships. (For further study please see: <https://tinyurl.com/Divinecounsel>)

4. **Symbolic or Mythological View:** A more symbolic interpretation posits that the passage is not meant to be taken literally but has a symbolic or mythological meaning, conveying moral and theological lessons rather than historical events. In this view, the "sons of God" may represent arrogance and rebellion.

Although these interpretations have many differences, they also have one theme which unites them all. What unites all of these views is quite clear - rebellion against God will result in judgment! Genesis 6:5-7, tells us that this wickedness was met with the judgment of God, and in this case, He chose to execute His judgment with a flood.

9. **The angels' rebellion was at the heart of its rejection of authority. What have you observed about our culture and society in regards to rejecting authority?**

10. **Jude warns about the consequences of pursuing unnatural desires and engaging in sexual immorality (verse 7). How does this warning relate to contemporary discussions and challenges regarding sexuality? If you are comfortable, what have you and your family experienced with people who have struggled or pursued sinful relationships in this area? (Divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, transsexuality, pornography, etc.)**

Jude does not directly quote or cite specific apocryphal books as sources. However, it does contain references to various traditions and stories that were likely circulating in Jude's time, some of which may be associated with apocryphal or non-canonical Jewish texts.

Apocrypha⁸ - The Apocrypha is biblical or related writings not forming part of the accepted canon of Scripture. While some might be of doubtful authorship or authenticity,^[1] in Christianity, the word *apocryphal* (ἀπόκρυφος) was first applied to writings which were to be read privately rather than in the public context of church services. Apocrypha were edifying Christian works that were not considered canonical Scripture.⁹

It's important to understand that Jude's use of these references does not necessarily indicate an endorsement of the apocryphal texts themselves as authoritative Scripture. Rather, he seems to draw upon these traditions to make points or convey messages within the context of his letter.

11. According to verse 8, what characteristics do false teachers possess, and how can we recognize them today?

12. How does the example of Michael the archangel in verse 9 emphasize the importance of humility and respect in spiritual warfare?

⁸ <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-apocrypha>

⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocrypha>

“Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.”

In this verse, Jude is using historical and biblical references to illustrate the behavior and characteristics of certain ungodly individuals or groups who have infiltrated the Christian community and are causing harm:

- a. They have taken the way of Cain": This reference is to the story of Cain and Abel, found in Genesis 4:1-16 in the Old Testament.
- b. "They have rushed for profit into Balaam's error": The story of Balaam and his willingness to curse the Israelites for profit is found in Numbers 22-24 in the Old Testament, with additional references in Numbers 31:8 and Joshua 24:9-10.
- c. "They have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion": The rebellion of Korah and its consequences are described in Numbers 16 in the Old Testament.

In summary, Jude verse 11 serves as a warning about the destructive behavior and attitudes of certain individuals within the Christian community. They are characterized by jealousy, greed, and rebellion, and their actions and attitudes are likened to those of Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Jude is cautioning believers to be aware of such individuals and their negative influence.

13. In verses 10-11, Jude mentions three Old Testament figures: Cain, Balaam, and Korah. What lessons can we draw from their stories regarding false teaching and rebellion?

14. Jude uses vivid imagery in verses 12-13 to describe false teachers. What does this imagery reveal about their nature and influence?

15. Verse 14 references a prophecy from Enoch. How does this reference contribute to our understanding of Jude's message, and what might it signify?

16. According to verse 16, how do false teachers engage in grumbling and faultfinding? Why is this behavior detrimental to the unity of the faith community?

17. What practical steps can we take to discern and confront false teaching within the Church, as encouraged by Jude? How can we apply the exhortation in verse 20 to "build yourselves up in your most holy faith" in our daily lives as believers?