

## **From Jude to Judases**

(Jude 1:1-25)

1/18/17; Wed PM Pine Grove

### **Introduction**

Many of you have heard of Paul Revere.

He was the American patriot who left at midnight on April 18 and rode 25 miles on horseback from Boston to Lexington to warn the colonists that the British army was planning to attack...

And though he made it, he was captured along with his friend Samuel Dawes...

However, his capture and courage led him to become an American hero for that 25 mile ride at midnight..

And though that is impressive, Paul Revere's ride to warn the colonists was nothing compared to another American patriot named Israel Bissell..

Bissell was also sent on the same night to warn other colonists of the British army's plans...

Bissell was not captured and he was able to make the same trip of 25 miles, which normally took 2 days in just over 2 hours...

Running his horse at break neck speeds, he completed his trip and according to eyewitnesses, his horse collapsed in Lexington and died from sheer exhaustion...

However, Bissell was not done.

He grabbed another horse and took off south from Lexington, warning colonists all along the way...

Bissell rode from Lexington to Connecticut to New York, New Jersey and ended up in Philadelphia...

IT was a 345 mile trip that would last 3 weeks for a normal person on horseback..

But Bissell did it in 5 days, riding 70 miles a day with multiple horses at top speed...

And though he didn't make the history books, many historians give more credit to Bissell than Revere in assuring an American victory in the Revolutionary War...

Bissell thought nothing of it...

After he left Philadelphia, he headed back to Massachusetts to fight on the front lines of the war...

When asked what drove him to ride 5 days with barely any food or sleep, he simply replied...

The people needed to be warned and ready...

The easiest target is an unprepared fellow...

So, I made sure as many people could be prepared as possible...

Anybody else would have done the same thing...

Now, that may be debatable but Bissell sounded the alarm the best way he knew how and many American lives were probably saved...

Tonight, we come to the book of Jude...

And Jude is someone who sounds the alarm much like Israel Bissell..

Jude is a man concerned for his fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord..

Jude sees trouble coming and he does what he can to warn as many people as possible of what he sees...

And that trouble is the rise of apostates in the church...

Now, an apostate is defined as someone who departs the faith...

To be clear, these aren't people that were saved and lost their salvation...

These are people who were never saved, yet they hung around the church and they often held teaching positions..

They teach false doctrine, but they eventually fall away from Christianity all together and take others with them...

Jude had witnessed the evil work of these men and the behavior of these evil men, and he wrote the book of Jude to sound the alarm..

So, we are going to look at this book in two parts over two weeks...

The first part of Jude's letter is going to concentrate on identifying the apostates and false teachers...

That is what we will look at tonight...

And then next week, we will look at what it takes to battle these false teachers as we live in the world and in the church...

So, let's start by reading verses 1-4 in Jude...

I simply entitled this section...

## **I. Contend for the Truth (1-4)**

*1 [a]Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of [b]James,  
 To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ: 2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.  
 3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the [c]saints. 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand [d]marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

Let's begin this letter by identifying Jude...

In the first verse, he simply identifies himself as a bond-servant, or better translated, a slave of Jesus Christ...

And a brother of James..

It has generally been accepted that James is the James who wrote the letter that bears his name...

And if you remember when we went through that letter on Wednesday nights a while back, James was the leader of the church in Jerusalem...

Which was a very important church in these early days of Christianity...

And if you remember, was the half brother of Jesus..

They shared the same mother in Mary, but separate fathers...

God was the Father of Jesus, while Joseph was the father of James...

Now, Jude identifies himself as James brother, which would mean that Jude was also the half-brother of Jesus...

In Mark 6, Jesus goes into his hometown of Nazareth to preach...

And here is what Mark writes about that experience...

***1 Jesus went out from there and \*came into [a]His hometown; and His disciples \*followed Him.  
2 When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these***

*things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such [b]miracles as these performed by His hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of [c]James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. 4 Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in [d]his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household." 5 And He could do no [e]miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And He wondered at their unbelief.*

So, we see that Jesus had other brothers and sisters and one of them was named Judas, which would likely be shortened to Jude after Jesus' crucifixion so as not to be confused with Judas Iscariot...

So, it seems to be this Judas, who was the brother of James and the half-brother of Jesus who wrote this letter to the church in or around 68-69 AD...

And he wrote out of concern for these apostate teachers who were sneaking in to the church even in these very early days...

Now, Jude didn't set out to write a letter about these false teachers..

According to verse 3, he wanted to write the church a letter of praise about their common salvation in Jesus Christ..

Jude wanted to write to celebrate the person and work of Jesus Christ who gained victory over sin through his life, death and resurrection...

But through the work of the Holy Spirit, Jude's mind was changed and he sat down and wrote a letter of concern and warning...

Because he wanted the saints to contend earnestly for the faith which had been handed down to the church through the writings of the apostles..

We now have the contents of the Christian faith between the front and back covers of our Bibles...

And Jude was wanting his readers to contend earnestly for the faith that was being stolen and led astray by the teaching of apostates...

Most Christians today don't realize that Christianity is always under attack...

There is a battle that goes on everyday for biblical Christianity because there have always been people like these false who want to steer Christianity away from the Scriptures...

However, most Christians bounce through life without any knowledge of this battle...

Most simply say well, "Those battles can be fought by other people."

"I don't know enough to even make a fight."

And when that happens, Christianity slides farther and farther away from its foundation in the Scriptures...

Jude is calling the church in his days and the church in 2017 to earnestly contend for the faith..

If someone walked in your house and wanted to take your kids for a ride, you wouldn't let them go without a proper investigation...

And even then, you still wouldn't let them go even if you had to fight for them..

Yet, many Christians let strange teachers creep into the church and kidnap real Christianity without even lifting a finger...

That was happening in Jude's day...

Look at how he begins to describe these men...

They creep into church unnoticed...

And it is amazing that no one notices them because they had been predicted to arrive long beforehand...

Listen to what Jesus said 40 years before Jude wrote this...

*Matthew 7*

***15 “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will [k]know them by their fruits. [l]Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? 17 So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 So then, you will [m]know them by their fruits.***

And then Jude gives us our first few clues in how to recognize these men at the end of verse 4...

Three characteristics of apostate false teachers are seen here...

#1 - they are ungodly..

In other words, they are in the church of God, but they have no interest in the things of God...

They talk like world people...

Their conversations are about material things...

They rarely speak of spiritual things outside the pulpit...

They are ungodly in their behavior and speech...

#2 - They sin freely.

Notice this trait of false teachers...

They turn the grace of God into a license to sin...

You will hear false teachers say things like, "Well, grace covers that sin in my life."

"Where my sin abounds, grace abounds."

And though those things are true...

The Bible is clear....

We don't sin all the more as believers to get grace all the more...

We put off sin all the more by the grace of God...

Yet, false teachers turn grace into an excuse to sin...

The final trait of a false teacher is they deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ...

Now, this goes right along with their appetite to sin...

They refuse to see Jesus as their authority..

They refuse to see him as their Master and Lord.

For them Jesus is a Savior, but that's as far as it goes...

They retain the authority to do as they please but rejecting the authority that Jesus has over their life...

And that leads to a life of sin for these false teachers...

It may be public, but it will be there in some form as they turn grace into permission to sin...

But Jude doesn't end there with his look at these false teachers...

He goes into a longer description of them beginning in verse 5...

I have entitled this..

## **II. Consider the Enemies of the Truth (5-16)**

As we get to this section of Jude, he begins to compare these false teachers to events and people of the OT...

IT seems that Jude was writing to a group of Christians that had a Jewish background because he assumes that his readers will have knowledge about the comparisons he is about to make..

So, he begins in verse 5 by comparing these false teachers to Israel, fallen angels and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah...

Let's read this...

***5 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that [e]the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, [f]subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, 7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after [g]strange flesh, are exhibited as an [h]example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.***

In verse 5, Jude says that false teachers are like Israel who God delivered out of bondage but even then, some of Israel refused to believe...

In other words false teachers see the power of God, but refuse to believe in the God who holds that power...

They are near the people of God, but they refuse to acknowledge the God of the people...

Some people of Israel experienced the power of God as he brought them out of Egypt, but their hearts were so hard that they still didn't believe..

False teachers also have very hard hearts..

The more they see of God's power and refuse to acknowledge it, the harder their hearts grow...

But not only are they like hard-hearted Israel, these false teachers are also like fallen angels...

Just like angels, these apostate teachers were created by God and knew who God was, but they abandoned God and fell to earth due to their pride led by Satan Himself who wanted to be like God...

False teachers are filled with pride..

They pretend to put the spotlight on God, but only use their teaching as a means to gain the spotlight themselves...

Jude then compares false teachers to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah..

These cities were destroyed in the OT due to the gross immorality that occurred in them...

False teachers are also driven by immoral desires and perversion...

They use their positions to satisfy their passions...

The people in Sodom and Gomorrah engaged in some of the worst sins imaginable, and God destroyed them with fire...

False teachers are guilty of the worst sins imaginable and they will therefore be subject to the worst judgments imaginable...

And then in verse 8, Jude pulls it all together for another summary statement of the characteristics of the false teachers...

***8 Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile [i]angelic majesties.***

Two of the characteristics are simply repeats from what we already saw..

These false teachers are immoral and defile the flesh like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah..

These false teachers also reject authority by denying the Lordship of Jesus Christ, but the Jude adds on a new one in that false teachers revile angelic or glorious majesties...

What is Jude talking about here?

Well, it seems that false teachers were so arrogant and prideful that they were rebuking angelic creatures..

Maybe verses 9-10 will help us understand what Jude is talking about...

***9 But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"***  
***10 But these men revile the things which they do not understand;***

In verses 9-10, we find a truth that isnt mentioned anywhere else in the Bible...

But we know we happened because we see it right here...

And that truth is that the two angels of God, one fallen and one holy, argued over the body of Moses after his death...

We know from the Bible that Moses died on Mt. Nebo in the land of Moab and he was never able to enter into the Promised Land...

Here is what we know about the death of Moses from *Deut 34:5-8*...

***5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the [d]word of the Lord. 6 And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day. 7 Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated. 8 So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end.***

Moses died at the age of 120 and he was still in very good shape...

And his body was buried in Moab, but no one knows where...

And the reason that no one knows here his body was buried is because the angel Michael came and buried it...

No why did Michael have to argue with Satan over the body?

I don't know.

The devil must have wanted Moses body for some evil reason...

Regardless of why this happened, Jude puts this example in here to demonstrate that Michael wouldn't even insult the devil or rebuke him in this scene..

Even though Satan is an evil angel, Michael would not revile even the devil...

Now, why is that?

Well, I could only give you my two cents, but it seems that Michael wouldn't revile even a fallen angel...

There seems to be a level of respect for the creatures of God, even though they are fallen, that a good angel won't even rebuke or disrespect one...

Michael left it up to God to rebuke Satan...

Yet, these false teachers are so arrogant and prideful that revile angelic creatures....

Jude says that they dont even understand the spirit world, yet they rebuke those of it...

In other words, they want to appear so powerful and important and spiritual that they will insult angelic beings that they know very little about...

If you have ever watched some of the TV evange- lists, you will see them at times rebuke the devil and his demons....

But Jude tells us that is a dangerous practice, for not even Michael would do such a thing...

So they are bold enough to take on what they don't know...

But look at the end of verse 10...

***and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are [j]destroyed***

In other words, Jude that they will revile unseen things so people will see them as so holy and in touch with God...

But they will fall into sins that everyone knows are against the law of God...

Case in point...

Benny Hinn....

He has this special power from the hand of God to heal people...

It makes him appear so in touch with the things of God and makes him appear so special and above all his people...

Yet he goes and has an affair with another false teacher...

A man so close to God falls into a sin that is clearly prohibited by the law of God...

That is the irony of these false teachers...

They want to look so spiritual and close to God but they commit the sins of those who are very far away from God.

Then Jude continues to compare these false teachers to some more OT characters...

Verse 11..

***11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay [k]they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.***

When God rejected his food sacrifice, Cain killed his brother Abel because God accepted Abel's animal sacrifice...

Cain is an example of disobedience to God and jealousy and anger toward his brother...

Cain is pride to the max..

So prideful that he killed someone who stole the spotlight from him...

Balaam is an OT example of being driven by greed.

Balaam was a prophet who was driven by money..

If you paid him enough money, which the king of Moab did, Balaam would betray his own people and their God...

Balaam had two masters, money and God, but he chose money when he was forced to pick one.

False teachers claim to have one Master, but they only claim to have Him so they can get more money and power...

For false teachers, God is simply a way to line their pockets with riches...

Jude then compares false teachers to Korah, who led a rebellion against God's chosen leadership team of Moses and Aaron...

Simply put, false teachers have problems submitting to the authority of anyone...

They not only quietly rebel against God, they rebel against anyone who is put over them...

False teachers are lone wolves who like to make and play by their own rules...

They aren't teachable and they don't like any sort of authority over them...

And they will rebel anything or anyone thing that tries to instruct them..

Jude then moves to describe these false teachers in figurative language in verses 12-13..

***12 These are the men who are [l]hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, [m]doubly dead, uprooted; 13 wild waves of***

*the sea, casting up their own [n]shame like foam;  
wandering stars, for whom the [o]black darkness  
has been reserved forever.*

False teachers are like hidden reefs...

A ship's worst enemy is a rock that is barely covered by the water...

If you look out across the water, you won't notice it until it's too late to avoid it....

False teachers look the part of calm water in the church, but they will wreck a church...

They will ruin a ministry if you aren't constantly on guard for them...

Jude then writes that false teachers are like clouds without rain and trees without fruit...

There is nothing worse than looking at a cloudy sky during a drought and watching it pass right over without letting loose of a single drop of water..

The same is true of walking up to an apple tree in the fall and not finding a single apple on it...

False teachers promise a lot and look like they can deliver but they will leave you disappointed and hungry..

They are full of words and flash but no substance...

Jude end this section by comparing false teachers to wild waves and wandering stars...

In other words, they are out of control personally...

They have no guide for their life...

They wander from place to place looking to satisfy their own desires...

And like wild waves, they can even look dangerous with their wild foam and spray, but people don't even seem to take notice...

Jude then issues a stern warning for these false teachers....

Just like wandering stars, God will send false prophets, teachers and apostates into the outer darkness...

They will be judged....

Verse 14...

***14 It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with [p]many thou-***

***sands of His holy ones, 15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”***

Jude pulls out one more OT reference in regards to the coming judgment of these false teachers...

He refers to man named Enoch in verse 14..

Enoch was one of two men in the Bible who never died...

He and Elijah simply went to heaven to be with the Lord...

Enoch lived only 7 generations removed from Adam, yet Enoch predicted way back then that Jesus would one day come to judge the ungodly...

He didn't know the name of Christ, but he did know that God would judge the ungodly once for all..

And Jude is reminding the false teachers that a judgment is coming due to their unrepentant sin...

All ungodly people will one day be judged by Christ...

First in the tribulation and then at the Great White Throne Judgment...

Evil men will not escape judgment but be right in the middle of it...

And then Jude ends this section of his letter by offering a few final qualities of false teachers...

Verse 16...

***16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; [q]they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.***

They are grumblers...

Now, they aren't outward grumblers...

They are too smart for that, but get them in a small group of people and they will be grumblers..

They will grumble about anyone over them...

They will grumble about church leadership..

They all grumble about the preaching and teaching of true men of God...

They will grumble about anyone who steals the spotlight from them...

And they will use their grumbles to find fault with others...

They are constantly seeking ways to attack anyone but them...

In their world, everyone is at fault but them...

But then Jude gives us a couple more characteristics of these men that we have seen already...

They follow their own lusts...

They speak arrogantly...

And he ends with a new one...

They flatter others trying to gain favor with them...

The false teacher will often be one the nicest guys around...

He or she will be full of compliments...

However, the sweet words are insincere and only offered to win a follower and supporter...

And with that, Jude completes his look at the apostate false teacher...

### **Conclusion**

Now, to end our night...

Remember, the opening part of Jude's letter is a call to contend for the faith once delivered to the church through the word of God...

But the question is who are we to contend with as we fight for the truth...

And Jude makes it clear that we are to fight with those false teachers that he is going to describe for us...

And then he tears off to identify these men for us with a number of descriptions from verses 4-16...

So here is a summary list of what these false teachers look like...

- 1 - Unnoticeable when they arrive (4a)
- 2 - Ungodly (4b)
- 3 - Use grace as excuse to sin (4c)
- 4 - Unsubmissive to Lordship of Christ (4d)
- 5 - Unbelief fills their heart (5)
- 6 - Uncontrolled passions (6-8)

- 7 - Unfairly attack angelic beings (8)
- 8 - Unreasonable animals fall into obvious sins (10)
- 9 - Unruly (11a)
- 10 - Unashamedly Greedy (11b)
- 11 - Unsatisfied with godly leadership (11c)
- 12 - Unable to deliver on promises (12)
- 13 - Uncontrollable (13)
- 14 - Unsaved (14-15)
- 15 - Unhappy grumblers (16a)
- 16 - Undone by their lusts (16b)
- 17 - Unmatched flatterers (16c)

Now clearly, not every false teacher will have all of these qualities, but any teacher with any of these qualities need to repent of it immediately....

False teachers are often hard to spot because of their flattering outside that draws you in with sweet compliments..

But we must not give in to these people but contend with them for the faith...

Keep these in mind and keep your Bible handy to contend for the faith, which is certainly worth fighting for..

Let us pray.