

## **Firing a Warning Shot**

Jude 1:5-7

(preached Pine Grove 2/18/18; Sunday AM)

### **Introduction**

The Persian Gulf is a dangerous place.

This body of water which lies south of Iraq, east of Saudi Arabia and west of Iran is place where ships from all over the world gather...

The oil business is what draws many nations to the area as oil leaves the Middle East all hours of the day...

For that reason, the Persian Gulf has seen its share of tense situations..

Last July, a US navy ship was on patrol in the area protecting other American tankers when an Iranian military boat approached them at full speed.

The US ship named the USS Thunerbolt first tried to establish radio contact with the boat to warn of a collision.

When that failed, the US ship sounded their whistle 5 times..

When the boat continued its course, the Navy shot flares into the air...

However, the Iranian boat kept its course and speed..

When it was no more than a couple hundred yards away, the US ship had no choice.

It loaded one of its numerous guns, and begin firing live ammunition into the air..

Then and only then did the Iranian boat stop...

Warning shots are nothing new on the ocean.

In fact, the concept of firing a warning shot was developed at sea in order for approaching boats to declare either good or evil intentions.

Often times, a cannon was fired across the bow of an unidentified ship.

The shot was not meant to cause damage but to alert the ship to hoist its flag and declare its course.

If a ship did not respond to the warning shot, it was assumed that a battle was imminent..

Warning shots eventually spread to the air and even to folks on land who would often fire a gun into the air to warn others of the possibility of worse violence if the warning shot is not heeded.

Today in Jude 1:5-7, the Lord is going to fire 3 warning shots at false teachers to warn them of impending judgment if they don't abandon their present course.

And these warnings would also extend to false Christians in the church who sneak in quietly but also lead ungodly lives and refuse to live under the Lordship of Christ.

Now the idea of a warning shot fits perfectly with the theme of Jude, which is a letter calling the church to eat in a battle for the truth..

In Jude 1-4, we heard Jude's call to the church to contend for the faith...

And we also saw the reality that all believers are in the battle if they claim to be saved..

Then last week, we began to identify the enemy in this battle..

And that enemy is the false teacher...

The one who sneaks in the church and makes friends of those in the church, but privately is ungodly and uninterested in the Lordship of Jesus Christ...

But that was only the beginning of Jude's help in identifying the enemy...

There is more to come in the rest of the letter..

However in between giving us a full description of the false teacher, Jude uses verses 5-7 as a warning shot across the bow of the false teacher...

You see, the false teacher is doomed if he does not repent and believe the true gospel of Christ..

And his doom is going to come in the form of the judgment of God...

Last week, we kinda peeked in verses 5-7, which serve as analogies or comparisons of the judgment that will come to false teachers if they don't repent...

Today, we are going to dig a little deeper into these warning shots that Jude fires, and my prayer is that they would serve as warnings to us as well.

If you are a false teacher, be warned of coming judgment.

If you are a false Christian, be warned of coming judgment..

Let's read these verses to remind us of what is coming...

***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.***

This morning, let us look at 3 ways to earn the judgment of God...

The first way is found in verse 5..

## **V. The Analogies of Jude (5-7)**

### **A. God's Judgment Comes If You Do Not Believe (5)**

Look at what Jude writes in the beginning of verse 5..

*5 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all,...*

What Jude is about to write was nothing new for his audience...

And the reason for that is that the early church had the OT..

They knew the truth of God in the books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation...

And what Jude is going to say in these next 3 verses is simply a reminder of some things that had already been recorded in OT..

Now, reminders are a good thing..

In fact, I have the worst time trying to remember things...

Even if I write it down, I will forget to look at it, so I often send myself email reminders since I check my email multiple times a day...

Well, the people of God are no different even when it comes to the things that God does in the world..

Though we read about what God has done in the world, we often quickly forget..

Well, Jude is simply going to stir up the memories of his readers by pointing them to 3 accounts of God's judgment coming in the OT....

Two things to take note of here..

First, since our memories often fail, stay in the Bible so that you are reminded of the character of God everyday..

Second, there is nothing wrong with reminding people of God's coming judgment on them..

Listen to me...

You don't have to breathe fire and brimstone judgment on folks, but you can kindly and graciously remind people of coming judgment as motivation for salvation...

That is exactly what Jude is doing here, and we would be wise to do the same at times when we speak to others...

So Jude is going to offer 3 friendly reminders of unfriendly judgment from the OT..

The first is found in the second half of verse 5...

***the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, [f]subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.***

Most of you are probably familiar with the story of Israel in the OT...

How God called Abraham to be the father to the nation Israel, and how God grew Abraham's descendants into a large nation while in slavery in Egypt...

And then how God freed Israel from slavery in 1445 BC under the leadership of Moses by sending supernatural plague after supernatural plague on the land of Egypt until Pharaoh told Israel to get out...

Only to change his mind and chase after escaping Israel but eventually watch his army be destroyed by God as the parted Red Sea collapsed back on top of them..

However, God's delivery of them was not enough for the people of Israel who began to complain bitterly about God not long after they got out of Egypt..

In fact, here is what Israel said after being delivered in Numbers 14:1-4..

***1 Then all the congregation [a]lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept [b]that night. 2 All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” 4 So they said to one another, “Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt.”***

Listen to how God responds to Israel’s complaining..

Verse 11...

***11 The Lord said to Moses, “How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?***

Take note of what God says here...

Israel’s grumbling was not just an annoyance to Him.

It was a sign of their unbelief in Him...

This is why we shouldn't yawn or laugh about complaining and grumbling...

Complaining says that you are not happy where God has put you or you are not happy with your circumstances...

That was certainly the case with Israel.

But what they forget and we forget is this..

God has us where He wants us and he lets things come into our life for a reason..

So a complaint about our situation or circumstances is a sign of unbelief in God since belief in God is acknowledgment of Gods' sovereignty over my life, which simply says this...

I am where I am because this is where God has put me..

I got what I got because this is what God wants for me..

My response is simply to find contentment and refuse the temptation to complain...

Israel complained in the wilderness because they didn't believe that God knew what he was doing..

And when God saw that unbelief, he judged them...

In fact, no one over 20 years of age in Israel made it out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land because of their unbelief...

Let me skip down to verse 26...

***26 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 27 “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are [n]making against Me. 28 Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; 29 your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your [o]numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me. 30 Surely you shall not come into the land in which I [p]swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.***

This is the high price of unbelief...

God’s judgment...

People ask about the unforgivable sin...

There is only one unforgivable sin.

It is the sin of unbelief.

You cannot be forgiven if you don't believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And if you remain in unbelief, you only have one future..

And that is the raging fire of God's judgment..

Israel was destroyed due to their unbelief..

False teachers will be destroyed due to their unbelief..

False Christians will be destroyed due their unbelief..

There is also a very disturbing warning in this first example as well in considering who God destroyed in verse 5...

He destroyed His own people due to their unbelief...

Often times, when we think about unbelief, our mind goes to Muslim or the Buddhist or the atheist...

But we rarely think about the unbelief in the people of God...

You see, Israel as a nation had a front row seat to witness the glory of God..

They saw God strike the Egyptians in the plagues..

They saw God divide the Red Sea before them..

They saw God in the cloud and fire the led them out of Egypt..

But despite all their eyes told them, they were still unconvinced and refused to believe...

And it is so tragic when people who are exposed to truth refuse to believe it..

I want to be clear.

No one goes to heaven without repentance and faith in Christ, but there is a hotter part of hell for those who hear the gospel but turn away from it..

And it is much hotter for those who hang around the people of God yet never believe..

You see, false teachers will experience a greater judgment because of their prolonged exposure to the truth..

One preacher puts it this way,

“This is a terrifying warning, folks, to false teachers, to false Christians today, those of you who come all the way to the edge of the truth, who see it and understand it, who experience it in the lives of the people around you, and you do not believe. People will go to hell from a church pew or pulpit, and it will be a much worse hell.”

You see, it is one thing to be ignorant of the truth, but it is much worse to know the truth but refuse to believe it..

That was Israel in the wilderness.

They had witnessed the goodness and power of God but eventually refused to believe it..

This is the false teacher and the false believer today.

They witness the power of God in the church..

They hear the truth of God in the church.

They fellowship with the people of God in the church.

But in the end, they refuse to believe in the God of the church.

And the only end to a life of unbelief is destruction...

God destroyed unbelieving Israel...

God will destroy unbelieving false teachers.

God will destroy unbelieving false Christians...

Close does not count in salvation..

You cannot come to the edge of Christianity and hope its good enough...

Salvation is only for those who truly believe the gospel of Jesus Christ...

Therefore, false teacher be warned.

False Christian, be warned.

Jude has fired the first warning shot across the bow of the false teacher this morning in verse 5...

But a second warning shot comes in verse 6...

## **V. The Analogies of Jude (5-7)**

### **B. God's Judgment Comes If You Do Not Remain (6)**

In verse 6, Jude moves from the unbelief of Israel to the unwillingness of angels to stay in heaven with God.

Some questions are been raised about what Jude is referring to here in this abandoning of heaven by these angels...

Well for starters, we know that a 1/3 of the angels were cast to earth with Satan when he was booted out of heaven...

It seems that this even happened in the very beginning after day 7 of creation...

Therefore, earth was inhabited by these evil demons from the very beginning..

Now we also know that some of these fallen angels are kept in the pit or abyss from the book of Revelation and 2 Peter and Mark...

Part of the judgments of the tribulation period will be the release of some of these demons from the pit of darkness..

But the question is this...

How did some of the fallen angels get locked up in these, as Jude describes it, eternal bonds?

Well, we know that some were locked up due to the events found in Genesis 6...

Let me read Genesis 6:1-4 to you as a little background on what we see in the 6th verse of Jude..

***1 Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were [a]beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. 3 Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not [b]strive with man forever, [c]because he also is flesh; [d]nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.***

This strange event has been a source of debate in the church for years, but I believe these verses describe the gross immorality of some angels that is mentioned in Jude 1:6...

Now, you may say, well I don't even see the word angel in Genesis 6...

But what you must understand that the "sons of men" is a reference to angels...

Each time, the phrase "sons of men" is used in the OT, it refers to angelic being except one occurrence in the book of Hosea...

You see, what happened in the very beginning is that these demons possessed the bodies of men and through their relationship with women produced an unusual offspring...

Genesis 6:4 calls them the Nephilim, and though they would have been fully human, they were much different due to the Satanic influence that created them...

We will talk about this more on Sunday nights when we get to Genesis 6 in our study of that book..

Now the point of Jude in verse 6 is not to make us chase the various rabbit trails of Genesis 6, but to remind us that angels even abandoned God...

Now, how and why does that happen?

Well, we must assume that even angels are given some freedom by God...

Though they were created by Him and for Him, God did not force their allegiance as evidenced by the fact that at least a 1/3 of them led by Satan rejected Him..

Some wonder if angels still fall from heaven today?

I have no idea, but the Bible never mentions but one episode of rebellion and fall and it is related to the original rebellion of Satan...

The point is simply this...

If you abandon God, you should have but one expectation, and that is the expectation of judgment..

Now the idea of abandoning God brings up many other questions, but the most frequent question is this?

Can you be saved and walked away from God and lose your salvation?

And the Bible answers that question with a very clear and strong,....NO!

No truly saved person ever abandons God.

You won't find one example of that in the Bible..

However, there are people who appeared to be saved who leave the church.

There are people who appear to be truly saved who depart their apparent faith...

Now, the reality is that they never were saved and they prove this because they don't hang around....

The book of Hebrews describes it this way...

Hebrews 6:4-6..

***4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, [d]since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.***

People who believe that you can lose your salvation love this verse...

For them, this is the case closed verse...

They say...

“Well, look a there...you can be enlightened, you can taste the heavenly gift, you can partake in the Holy Spirit, you can taste the word of God, you can taste the powers to come...

And then in verse 6, you can fall away...

So they preach this verse often to support their view, but what they fail to realize is that nowhere in this passage does it say the person was ever saved...

You see, you can be enlighten, you can the sweetest of God, you can even participate in what the Holy Spirit is doing, but none of this assures your salvation...

Look, you know people like this..

They came to the church...

They loved the preaching of the word...

They “amened” the preacher..

They even took part in the ministry of the church...

Worked at VBS, feed the hungry, etc..

They were enlightened by the truth..

They may have even had an affection for Christ...

They may have prayed a prayer, walked an aisle and got wet in a baptistry...

But guess what?

They left it all behind..

They abandoned God even though they looked the part for so long...

That is the person that the book of Hebrews is describing...

They taste the goodness of God, but they eventually it all out...

This isn't someone who got saved and lost it...

No, this is the person who was never saved and eventually shows their true colors...

It is very simple...

If you abandon God, you prove you never belonged to Him...

God doesn't save and you give it back...

No one can overcome what God does or else He isn't God...

Therefore, if God changes the heart, no man has the power to unchange it...

That is the security we have as true believers...

Yes, we may sin, but if the Holy Spirit resides in us...

We will leave the sin before we ever leave God..

On the other hand, those who appear saved, will go back to the sin to prove that they never came to God..

And Jude's point in verse 6 is clear...

If you abandon God like these angels, you prove that you never were of God, and all you should expect is coming judgment...

There are angels today locked in a pit waiting on their final judgment which is a casting of them into a lake of fire..

And there will be false teachers who say they love God but will prove by their teaching and lives that they never belonged to Him...

And they will be judged forever as well...

Dear friends, there will also be false Christians who look the part for a while...

They will come to church..

They will enjoy the fellowship...

They may even get baptized and take the Lord's Supper with you...

But they also will abandon the faith and walk away from the Lord...

And unless they come to their senses, they too will face the judgment of God...

This is the second warning shot of Jude in verse 5-7...

And it has been shot across the bow of your ship this morning...

Are you playing church?

Have you played it for some time?

Are we enjoying the fellowship of the church, but have no desire to be a part of the church?

Do you like seeing the work of the Holy Spirit, but refuse to respond to the Spirit calling you to salvation?

Do you enjoy the preaching of the word of God, but lack the desire to obey it?

It may be possible that you are part of the group of Hebrews 6, and it will only be a matter of time before you fall away as well...

Just let the right person upset you and you will be gone..

Just let the wrong message about your sin be preached and you are done with it..

Just let the wrong song be sung and you will head for the hills...

There are 1000s of stories of that in the world...

Don't let your name be added to that list....

Stop enjoying being around the people of God and submit your life to the God of the people through repentance and faith in Christ...

Stop playing church and become a part of the true church.

Stop acting like you have it all together...

Admit that you don't and fall on the mercy of God to change you and save you.

### **Conclusion**

WE will stop at the second warning shot of the Book of Jude today, and look at warning shot #3 next week...

But let me end with this...

I can't imagine the sadness of someone who has been around the church...

Around the truths of the Bible..

Around the love of God's people...

And then walks away from it all and comes to the end of their life all alone..

Yet, that is the reality of the end of the lives of those like the false teacher and the false Christian who fake it for so long but eventually leave Christ.

In a lot of ways, it is better to not know the truth than to know it and walk away from it..

Think of those angels who had seen the glory of God and the glories of heaven but who abandoned it all and were cast to earth..

What a sad, sad reality to be so close but end up so far away in the end..

Don't live your life and die with regret...

Come to the Lord now in a real way by believing the gospel and turning from your sin..

What a shame it would be to gain the whole world but forfeit your soul...

Let us pray.