

The Judgment of False Teachers – Part 2

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Jude applies the apocalyptic judgments of the past to the false teachers of the present
2. aim – to cause us to seek the purity of the gospel of grace and warn those who attempt to pervert it
3. passage – Jude 5-16

b. outline

1. The Judgments Upon Rebels (Jude 5-7)
2. The Judgments Upon Blasphemers (Jude 8-13)
3. The Judgments Upon Malcontents (Jude 14-16)

c. opening

1. the **reality** of this text
 - a. my statement from *The Subtlety of Satan: I begin with a handicap* – the vast majority of Bible-believing Christians embrace the reality of the “supernatural” with a certain amount of *skepticism*
 1. according to Barna research (2009), upwards of 60% of *American Christians* do not believe in the *biblical, literal, and personal* nature of a malevolent being named Satan, but see him primarily as a *symbol* of evil (*i.e.* the *personification* of the totality of “wrong” in the human race)
 - a. this flows (of course) from the *secularism* of W civilization, trending from the Enlightenment
 - b. *i.e.* unless it can be proven by the “scientific method,” it doesn’t exist
 2. most Christians treat the *spiritual world* in a somewhat *esoteric* fashion = we find it a great *paradox* that the Bible speaks of spiritual beings, yet we cannot see them or “prove” them
 3. thus, we “relegate” this area of theology into the background (*i.e.* we “allow” for some belief in this area of biblical revelation, but we don’t insist on it as a *significant part* of the faith)
 - b. **ironically**: the appearance of angels *throughout* the Christmas story is simply taken for granted
 - c. however, the *immediate* reality is clear: the discussion of angels in **Jude 6 & 9** forces us to deal with this subject *within the faith once delivered to the saints* (*i.e.* a part of **orthodoxy**)
2. the **content** of this pericope
 - a. **vv. 5-16** is an **apocalyptic** passage and the **main argument** supporting the thesis of the letter
 1. it is Jude *relating* the various judgments that God has brought forth in the past against those who rebel against what he has “*delivered*” (to the saints)
 2. it is Jude *implying* that these judgments *will also* be applied to false teachers of the gospel
 - b. **vv. 5-16** begins with the reality that these judgments *are from Jesus* – he is the one who brought the judgments of the past, *and it will be he that brings them again* (*i.e.* don’t presume upon Jesus)
 - c. **vv. 5-16** speaks *initially* of judgments brought by Jesus **against direct rebels to his authority**
 1. first, those who rebelled against him after the Exodus; (**now**) those who rebelled against him in the spiritual realm; third, those rebelled against him in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah

I. The Judgments Upon Rebels (Jude 5-7)

Content

b. the judgments upon fallen angels (v. 6)

1. (**as above**) to truly grasp the *significance* of what Jude is referring to here, an overview of *angelology* will be necessary – since the topic is “rare” in churches today, an overview is in order
 - a. **note**: we will discuss the topic of Satan when we get to **v. 9** (**for references, see Theology**)
2. **angelology** = the study of personal beings formed by God to exist in the spiritual (or super-natural) plain of existence as a part of his decree of creation and redemption; the study of angels
 - a. angel (*mal’akh* or *angelos*) = a messenger, an envoy, or an ambassador; a non-human, supernatural, created being designed by God to act as his *messengers* into the physical realm, to participate in the created world as beings *designed* to do his will, and to be the *audience* of his glory as the purpose of creation is carried out (**note Ephesians 3:10**)
 - b. “*angel*” appears 213 times in the O.T. (24/39 books); 176 times in the N.T. (18/27 books)
 1. x55 in the Gospels (31%), particularly in Matthew (x20) and Luke (x26); x67 in Revelation
 2. **note**: like the existence of God, the Bible *never* argues “for” the existence of angelic beings; it simply assumes their existence without question – **humanity does have an apologetic**

- c. their categories
 1. holy (elect) angels – those who remain in a state of faithful service to God
 2. fallen (evil) angels – those who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and were cast down from his presence; Satan is the “leader” of this category (**note Jude 6**)
- d. their personhood
 1. angels possess the three (3) identifiable traits of personhood: intellect, emotion, and will
 2. they can converse; sing; and worship; they can choose to understand things related to salvation
- e. their nature
 1. they are created beings
 - a. the creation of the angelic host occurred *at the outset of the narrative* of **Genesis 1** – they “sang” during creation (in praise of what God had done; **i.e.** as his audience; **Job 38:4-7**)
 - b. the fall of Satan and his followers probably occurred after the account of the creation of Adam in **Genesis 2**, but (obviously) before the temptation of Eve in **Genesis 3**
 - c. perhaps in response to the fact that God had *intimately* created a man as the *pinnacle* of the created order; Satan’s pride turned to rebellion in the face of his placement “under” man
 2. they are spirit beings (**i.e.** without flesh; as in “*spirit*”)
 3. they were created morally pure and the elect remain so in perpetuity (as holy)
 4. they are not bound by physical space, and can travel between heaven and earth
 5. they can take visible form, or be “perceived” when invisible
 6. they are without gender; *angelophany* is always in a *male* gender
 7. they do not marry nor reproduce (**i.e.** their number is fixed from creation)
 8. they are multilingual, able to speak in the language of any human hearer
 9. they are ageless and immortal – they do not die, since death is a result of a *human* action
- f. their power
 1. they are *stronger* than humans, but not omnipotent
 - a. **e.g.** blindness, rescue, destroy cities; strike down armies; intervene in personal events
 2. they are *greater in knowledge* than humans, but not omniscient
 - a. their intelligence is probably greater than us due to: 1) having a spiritual nature, 2) being unaffected by the Fall, 3) having an immortal ability to learn over great amounts of time
 3. they are *swifter and more mobile* than humans, but not omnipresent
- g. their titles and names
 1. chariots = harbingers of military power; Elohim = the “superior ones”; hosts = an army of soldiers ready to carry out the orders of God; ministering spirits = servants of God’s will in the world; sons of God = his children; watchers = watching God’s divine actions; morning stars = a depiction of angels as “*stars of heaven*” (**i.e. the Bethlehem star?**)
 2. Gabriel = “*mighty one of God*” – delivers messages from God
 3. Michael = “who is like God?” – an archangel (**note Jude 9**)
 4. Satan (**Lucifer by tradition only**) – the *Day Star* (**Isaiah 14:12**)
- h. their classifications
 1. archangel = the “*chief princes*” of the angelic force (**note Jude 9**)
 2. cherubim = guardians; angels established to guard various deposits of God’s work
 - a. **e.g.** Eden – Satan was originally a “*guardian cherub*” (**Ezekiel 28:14, 16**)
 3. seraphim = “*burning ones*” – concerned specifically with God’s holiness
- i. their hierarchies (**Jude 6** = “*their own position of authority*”)
 1. Scripture never elaborates on the specifics of how angels are ordered or function
 2. terms such as “angels”, “authorities”, “dominions”, “powers”, “rulers”, and “thrones” are used to *imply* a certain kind of hierarchy, but it is never described in detail
 3. **i.e.** Satan imitates and falsifies God’s kingdom characteristics – so, there is a functional hierarchy for holy angels, and a parallel *counterfeit* one in those who give allegiance to Satan
 4. the implication of **Jude 6** is that a contingent of angels “*left*” their established position (**i.e.** to follow Satan) and were then *immediately* judged into a place of “*gloomy darkness*”
- j. their ministries
 1. **to God:** they worship God; serve God directly; congregate before God for instruction; deliver messages (**e.g.** law; visions; revelations); communicate future plans (**Revelation**)
 2. **to Christ:** announced his birth; protected him; ministered to him; helped people understand his resurrection and ascension; will accompany him on his return; gather the church at the end; judge unbelievers; imprison Satan in anticipation of Christ’s millennial rule
 3. **to Christians:** provide protection; provide general help; rejoice at a believer’s salvation
 - a. **note:** the Catholic dogma of “guardian angels” has no *specific* biblical support

4. **to unbelievers:** they separate true believers from the false; they assist in the spread of the gospel; they will assist in judgment
5. **to the nations:** they war against pagan nations, particularly as those nations strive against the people of God; they bring judgment upon whole nations
- k. their *destiny*
 - a. there is no judgment of the holy angels; they will participate with Christ in the judgment of men, but they will not be judged for sin, remaining in a state of perpetual holiness
 - b. however, all of the evil angels (including Satan) will be judged **without mercy** and sentenced to an eternity in the lake of fire (**i.e.** a place of everlasting torment; **Revelation 20:10**)
 1. contrary to “popular” myth, Satan will *not* rule over hell throughout eternity, but will be subject to the continual wrath of God as he continues forever in his powerless rebellion
 2. some have already experienced this and are chained away from humanity (**Jude 6**)
 - a. “gloomy darkness” = a place of torment *in anticipation* of judgment (**e.g. Hades**)
3. **principle: the Christian faith recognizes and teaches the existence of a spiritual realm and, specifically, a fallen spiritual realm opposed to the will of God in the church**
 - a. the judgment of a contingent of fallen angels *clearly implies* that the church will be “under attack” by the remaining forces, *including Satan himself*
 - b. the false teachers are an “element” of that attack – **e.g.** convincing the church that there is no “spiritual” realm, and that the church doesn’t need to worry about “evil”
 - c. but, **Jude’s point:** the judgment that Jesus (the Son of God) inflicted upon those who rebelled against his authority *in the past* is “waiting” (in the future) for those who are doing the same *now*
 1. **this is both a warning and an encouragement:**
4. **the Christian faith demands a proper balance in our understanding of the spiritual realm – we must teach that it exists and that there is an “unseen” spiritual battle underway between the church and Satan, but we must also remember that this war has already been won**
 - a. the incarnation of the Son of God, his sinless life, his sacrificial death, and his victorious resurrection from the dead has *ended* Satan’s reign – he is now fighting a *losing battle*
 - b. therefore, the church must *resist him* in the power of Christ – we must seek to grow in the truth of the *revealed gospel that we might resist his subtle ways*