

The Judgment of False Teachers – Part 5

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 **content** of this pericope
 - a. **vv. 5-16** is an **apocalyptic** passage and the **main argument** supporting the thesis of the letter
 1. **v. 4**: that “*certain people*” (**i.e.** false teachers) have “*crept in unnoticed*” ...
 2. **vv. 5-7**: Jude describes what he means by the phrase “*this condemnation*” in **v. 4**
 3. **v. 8**: his *Thesis: Part 2* – a return to the *descriptor* introduced in **v. 4**: specifically, that these “*ungodly*” teachers “*pervert the grace of God into sensuality*”
 4. **vv. 8-13**: Jude will explain what he means by this *perversion*
 - a. he first describes the nature of these people and what **drives them (v. 8)**
 - b. he then gives some examples of what these people are **really doing (vv. 9-11)**
 - c. he then outlines some of the ways these people are **dangerous (vv. 12-13)**
2. the **difficulty (handicap)** of this passage
 - a. Jude uses language that is both 1) difficult to interpret into English, and 2) obsolete within the modern church – **i.e. v. 8** uses words that are *uncommon*, to both the N.T. and the modern ear
 - b. (**again**) we will need to **carefully exegete v. 8**, defining the terms Jude uses in it, coming out on the backend with an understanding of what he is referring to **and its significance**
3. **thesis: part 2 – those who come to pervert the grace of God in the gospel start from a basis of emotionalism rather than an objective standard of truth, and they ignore (or deny) the grave danger that they put themselves (and others) in by doing so**
 - a. they rely on their dreams = instead of relying on *objective truth*, such men come to rely heavily on **human opinion** as basis of the gospel; they “make it up” as they go
 - b. they defile the flesh = such men make the gospel *primarily about our happiness*; they express the main goal of the gospel as a form of *emotionalism*; they reject *objective truth* for “feelings”
 - c. they reject authority = such men reject the *authority* and *Lordship* of Christ for **their own authority**; they turn people to obey them rather than Christ; they exalt *themselves* over him
 - d. (**now**) they blaspheme the glorious ones = **they fail to see the danger of their ways ...**

II. The Judgments Upon Blasphemers (Jude 8-13)

Content

a. the nature of the blasphemers (v. 8)

4. they “*blaspheme the glorious ones*” = they fail to see the *danger of their ways*
 - a. “*blaspheme*” (*blasphēmeō*) = revile; curse; deride; rail against; speak against; slander; denounce
 1. a broad term used to denote the various ways that people *speak against* something or someone; specifically, to show contempt or lack of reverence to God, to sacred objects, or to someone or something considered sacred (**i.e.** an office in the church, an official, etc.)
 - a. **e.g. Acts 13:45** – the Jews *reviled* Paul for gathering a crowd
 - b. **e.g. Revelation 16:11** – the people *curse* God for the judgment of the fifth angel
 - c. **e.g. Matthew 27:39** – the people who passed by the cross *derided* Jesus for his inaction
 - d. **e.g. 1 Peter 4:4** – the people *malign* you because you will not indulge in their sin
 - e. **e.g. Luke 12:10** – those who “*speak against the Holy Spirit*”
 1. **i.e.** those who persistently resist the message of the Holy Spirit by denying his truth; to “deride” the *authority* of the Spirit of God by *ignoring* (belittling) his message of Christ

2. **common (of Jesus):** to usurp the attributes or abilities of God to yourself; any claims of ability or knowledge reserved specifically for God; a claim to “be God” (in essence)
 - a. e.g. **Matthew 19:4** – accused for forgiving the sins of the paralytic
 - b. e.g. **Luke 22:70** – accused for speaking of himself seated “*at the right hand of God*”
 - c. e.g. **John 10:33** – accused for claiming to be the Son of God in his actions (**implied**)
 - d. **note:** this definition of blasphemy would “stick” if Jesus *were not* (in fact) God – such accusations become hollow once Jesus is demonstrated to be God, thus *justified* in making all of the claims he did – **IOW:** the Resurrection “restores” the honor of Christ in these claims because it *proves* his own divine utterances that he *would be* raised!
3. **better (of these men):** to *belittle* those who deserve special honor; to *denigrate* those are in positions of higher and greater honor than oneself (**i.e.** to treat with *contempt*)
 - a. **i.e.** this definition flows naturally from the fact that these men “*reject authority*” – they not only *reject* authority over themselves, but they even go so far as to *belittle* authorities and powers *that they ought to respect and honor* (both spiritual powers and human ones)
 - b. e.g. since the religious leaders did not consider true Jesus’ claims of being God incarnate, they simply assumed that he was *in contempt of God* by making such claims
- b. “*the glorious ones*” (*doxas*) = the accusative form of a noun meaning glory; honor; splendor; might; praise; greatness; lit. the glorious; those possessing glory by virtue of their position and power
 1. **doxology** (“praise God from whom all blessings flow”) = to ascribe praise and glory by all creatures to God due to his inherent nature (and acts) as God
 2. **context (based on v. 9):** angels = a messenger, an envoy, or an ambassador; a non-human, supernatural, created being designed by God to 1) act as his messenger into the physical realm, 2) participate in the created world as beings designed to do the will of God, and 3) be the *audience* of his glory as the purpose of creation is carried out
 - a. Michael (an archangel; a chief prince of the angelic force) and “*the devil*” (**i.e.** Satan; formerly a guardian cherub; **Ezek. 28:14, 16**)
 - b. angels are *glorious* because they are stronger than humans (not omnipotent), greater in knowledge (not omniscient), and more mobile (not omnipresent)
 - c. but, they are **not greater in value** than humans (**i.e.** they do not possess the *Imago Dei*)
 1. although “*a little lower*” than the heavenly beings (**i.e.** angels; **Psalms 8:5f**), man was crowned with the glory of the *Imago Dei* and given *dominion* over all things created
 3. **intention (based on v. 9 cf. v. 4):** *belittling* the power of forces *greater than themselves*
 - a. these men reject the authority of Christ and actually *belittle* the spiritual realm, as well
 - b. they ignore or downplay the *reality* of the spiritual realm (**i.e.** their focus is so heavily on the *material world* that they ignore the spiritual realm and its ramifications)
 - c. or, they fail to consider that their “imagination” are *from* the *evil* spiritual realm (**i.e.** they don’t stop to consider that their teachings are actually coming from Satan)
 - d. or, they are actually putting themselves in grave danger by being *manipulated* (**i.e.** their focus on *feelings* puts them in the position of being easily manipulated)
- b. the contrary example of blasphemers (v. 9)**
 1. **note:** this is taken by Jude out of the *oral tradition* of Judaism (**i.e.** Jews [probably] would know it)
 - a. **i.e.** a set of oral *lore* that would pass down from generation to generation, some of which would be **inscriptured** (e.g. the stories of Jesus’ life; edited down by the Gospel writers; **John 20:30f**)
 1. in the N.T. era, once the canon was closed, the oral tradition would fade away quickly
 - b. this probable arose from “questions” surrounding the epilogue of **Deuteronomy 34** by Joshua “*So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, and he (who?) buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day.*” (vv. 5-6)
 2. **note:** the story is told as *an example to make one point about blasphemy of the glorious ones*
 - a. the event itself is not explained, and there are many questions left unanswered: e.g. 1) why did God purpose this; 2) why would Satan want Moses’ body; 3) how did the fight occur and end?
 1. e.g. *maybe* Satan wanted the body of Moses to tempt the Israelites to “venerate” it
 - b. any speculation to “fill in the blanks” is to move beyond the purpose of its inclusion here
 1. e.g. *maybe* even the story *itself* is fictitious, and Jude does not *assume* it to be a factual – he includes it because it is a useful tool to make his point about *taking angels for granted*
 2. **true:** its inscripturation in an inspired letter argues for its *factualness*, but not *necessarily*
 3. **point:** even Michael, an elect archangel recognized that Satan deserved *respect* for his power, and did not take him for granted
 - a. **i.e.** he understood that only “*the Lord*” could “*rebuke*” Satan – even as a *fallen angel*, Satan still possessed much power, and Michael knew better than to “underestimate” him

- b. **IOW:** Michael's reaction to Satan in this event underscores the *folly* of those who (as humans) fail to grasp the power and significance of those in the spiritual realm **who may manipulate them**
 - 1. the false teachers (and those who follow them) fail to grasp the *very real attempt* by Satan to manipulate them, especially when it comes to their *emotions* ...

c. the reality of the blasphemers (v. 10)

- 1. "these people" = the false teachers (**see above**) and those who follow them
- 2. "all they do not understand" = that which is *beyond* them; that which they do not make the effort to try to grasp, especially as it has been revealed to them (and the church) by God
 - a. **i.e.** the existence of an evil spiritual realm *in conflict with the church* (and the gospel)
 - b. "blaspheme" = they take it for granted, in the sense that they *ignore it*; they "belittle" the evil spiritual realm and its influence over their thinking, *particularly as they pervert the gospel*
 - c. **IOW:** the false teachers pervert the gospel from its true meaning because they 1) are under the direct influence and manipulation of the evil spiritual realm, and 2) they brush off any suggestion that this could be so, arguing that their "interpretations" and "applications" are good and right
- 3. "they are destroyed by all that they ... understand instinctively" = their emotions rule them
 - a. "instinctively" = naturally; reflexively; lit. the base nature, esp. (in humans) the fallen nature
 - 1. **i.e.** "unreasoning animals" operate out of a base nature; their survival depends *entirely* on a set of inborn "understandings" of the world around them and how they are to act
 - a. they do not *think* or *reason* out their existence (**e.g. anthropomorphism**)
 - 2. in humans, the nature of the Fall causing sinful men to respond to their world "instinctively" rather than rationally (**i.e.** emotions over rational thought; **e.g. to be triggered**)
 - b. **IOW:** instead of preaching a gospel that is rational and reasonable (**i.e.** based on objective truth) they pervert the gospel into a message of emotionalism (**i.e.** based on subjective feelings)
- 4. **thesis: part 2 – those who come to pervert the grace of God in the gospel start from a basis of emotionalism rather than an objective standard of truth, and they ignore (or deny) the grave danger that they put themselves (and others) in by doing so**
 - a. to "blaspheme the glorious ones" is to ignore the real danger of an evil spiritual realm that wants to pervert the gospel into something it is not ... to make the gospel a message of *happiness* rather than a message of *holiness*
 - b. a believer that is **primarily focused on how he or she feels is an easy target for apostasy**