

Jude 8-26

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[0 : 00] Angels, biblically speaking, are mediators of God's law.! Acts 7 verse 53 refers to the received law,! That was given through angels.

So anybody can tell you that there cannot be two captains of the same ship. There cannot be two supreme commanders of the same army. Jesus himself says in Matthew 6, 24, No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God in money. So these false teachers are teaching against the law given by the angels from God because they want their authority to reign, their dreams to dictate the will of their followers.

Essentially, they want to dethrone God and rule in his stead. And their followers are people from within the church who have been duped by these dreamers.

And that should serve as a warning to all of us. When you have anyone approach you saying, I have had a prophetic dream or God told me something, you should immediately be cautious and on guard, regardless of whether they're a cessationist or a continuationist, right?

[1 : 23] And the way to test them is to see what they are saying is in accordance with Scripture. We know that from texts like Deuteronomy 18, 20 through 22, or Acts 17, 11.

So, for example, if they dream a dream and they say to you that in that dream, someone told me, God is love. And then you search the Scriptures and you find 1 John 4, 8, which says, God is love. Well, you can be okay with that dream. But for me, you know, as a cautious cessationist, I would tell that person, you know, congrats. You just had an unnecessary dream.

And if you spent less time sleeping and got up in the morning to read your Bible, you could have figured that out a long time ago. But that's just my opinion. But all joking aside, whether you are a cessationist or a continuationist, you should always go to Scripture as the sole authority, regardless of what some dreamer says.

Authority is never innate to any individual, but is exclusively the claim of God and His Word. And that serves any Christian's authority.

[2 : 31] That is the guidestone. That is the plumb line. That and that alone. And to illustrate this understanding of God being the sole authority, Jude gives us another interesting reference in verse 9.

This reference does not come from the Old Testament or the New Testament. Rather, it comes from a document known as the Testament of Moses or the Assumption of Moses. Although they may have been the same document, scholars aren't sure, and for a load of reasons, we won't get into this today.

But essentially, this is a story in which the devil comes to claim the body of Moses on account of the fact that Moses murdered an Egyptian, which we know Moses actually did murder.

We know that from the book of Exodus. But in this extra-biblical story, Moses is about to be honorably buried by the archangel Michael.

But the devil comes along accusing him, saying, no, he doesn't deserve an honorable burial. He's a murderer. And so that's the background to this story.

[3 : 36] They're arguing over where he deserves to be buried. But here, the point Jude wants to make isn't about this debate necessarily, but we see in the second half of verse 9 that the archangel Michael says, or he says of Michael, that he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment in response to the devil.

But what did he say? He said, quote, the Lord rebuke you. So contrary to the rebellious angels from last week who left their proper dwelling in verse 6 and made judgments for themselves, the

archangel Michael knows his place and he knows it is under the authority of God. Michael knows that God is, as James 4.12 says, the one lawgiver and one judge of the universe. Who is Michael that he could condemn the devil or any sinner? That is God's role alone and God will execute his judgment in the end of days. So Michael says, the Lord rebuke you. It's the Lord who has this authority, who has this position, and he will do it. So we should be like Michael. We should know our place and stay there when it comes to the kingdom of God. We have no other authority and we have no power of our own. [5 : 01] So the authority of these false teachers is inherently self-serving. It is an attempt to justify their lifestyles and to teach it to others, to have influential control over others.

In short, their authority is one of their own making and it's not real. And in verse 10, we see their understanding and Jude is contrasting it with Michael. So this is the second part of our outline. Number two, the false teacher's understanding. He goes on to say in comparison to Michael, but these people, these people blaspheme all that they do not understand and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

So Michael does not blaspheme the devil because he knows his place, but these people blaspheme. Blaspheme meaning to speak evil against or to accuse. And what do these false teachers blaspheme?

Well, Jude says everything they do not understand. So we can guess with good authority that they don't understand God. They don't understand God's word.

[6 : 14] Romans 3, 10 through 11, Paul says, no one is righteous, no not one, no one understands, no one seeks for God.

He puts it more pointedly in 1 Corinthians 2, 14. He says, but a natural man does not accept the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised.

And we see this kind of language all throughout the Bible. These teachers, these false teachers, they blaspheme everything that is good, honorable, and praiseworthy, chiefly God himself. But Jude goes on to say what they do understand, what they do understand, and he says it will destroy them. What is it that they understand? Everything that unreasoning animals would understand instinctively.

Recognize that Jude is employing typical Greco-Roman trash talk. He is mocking them. Every animal does three things essentially, sleeps, eats, and reproduces.

[7 : 23] They do not think, nor do they weigh issues. They just do, and do for themselves. What a fitting comparison to the false teacher.

All they know is what their flesh desires, and they chase it. They are, as Paul says in Romans 6, slaves to sin. And I want to make a quick aside here that I think is pertinent to Jude's comments here.

I think it's okay, or even biblical, to mock false teachers if done rightly. Okay, last week we talked about how we ought not to be like the Pharisee who mocks the tax collector praying aloud, God, I thank you that I'm not like this tax collector in Luke 18.11.

The Pharisee in that story is in the wrong on multiple fronts. He is depending on his own self-righteousness for salvation. That's problem number one. Problem number two, he's denying the grace of God and the life of that tax collector who is literally in the midst in verse 13 of praying for mercy.

And most importantly for what we're discussing, or I don't want to qualify that, for what we're discussing, this Pharisee did not mock the tax collector out of a pleading for this tax collector to repent.

[8 : 43] I want to repeat that. This Pharisee didn't mock the tax collector out of a pleading for this tax collector to repent. His motive and his mindset were wrong. So in other words, when and if we mock false teachers, it should be motivated by a desire to have them see the crazy and utter foolishness of their way.

This mocking should be a zealous pleading for them to repent and believe. Not a put-down, but a pleading, like listen to reason. And it can also come from a motive to protect the flock, right? You might say to yourself, I'm going to mock this absurd teaching and this teacher so as to sober up the sheep whom God has entrusted to me to keep them from the error of that way.

And frankly, you see this type of mocking all throughout the Bible. Jude does it here, calling his false teachers unreasoning animals to make a point that sticks.

Likewise, Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, he addresses heretics who taught that we are saved by Christ and circumcision, right? Works. And he mocks them over and over again in his letter and he says, rather wittingly, he says in Galatians 5.12, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves.

[10:04] That's a clever way of saying circumcision is worthless for salvation and I hope that in your teaching you never reproduce disciples who follow your heresy. And if this idea of mocking is new to you or concerning, I would encourage you to spend time in the prophets who do this a lot.

I would especially point you to Matthew 23 where Jesus gives his seven woes discourse to the Pharisees and in there Jesus says some really hard things in witty and mocking ways.

But when you read the whole discourse it ends with Jesus saying these words. He says in Matthew 23 37, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who sent it.

How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings and you were not willing. So Jesus desired to save Israel, to gather them all under his wings and protect them but they were not willing.

So even in the mockery, even in calling out foolishness what it is, foolishness, Jesus is working to protect the flock, the elect, to secure them in the way that they should go and to call sinners to repentance in faith.

[11:33] So feel the freedom to employ this kind of rhetoric but do so carefully. If you are unsure where the lines are with this then you're better off avoiding it altogether.

It takes a great deal of sobriety, wisdom, and love to use this rhetoric in a way that is God honoring. But Jude goes on in verse 11.

He wants to show us three more Old Testament types that characterize false teachers. So this is part three of our outline. Three Old Testament types that characterize false teachers.

He says, Woe to them for they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.

So Jude expresses divine judgment on these false teachers. He says, Woe to them. A phrase which literally carries the idea of damn them to hell but it also carries a connotation of grief or sorrow for the guilty.

[12:38] Jude is saying they will go to hell and I tremble for them. He's concerned for them. And then he charges them with having quote, walked in the way of Cain and let me remind you from last week you need to know your Old Testaments well.

In Genesis 4, Adam and Eve have two sons after the fall, Cain and Abel. After they both make offerings to God, God lets it be known that he accepts Abel's offering and rejects Cain's offering. Genesis never explains why but the main thrust of the story is about Cain's response to the situation. After being angry and being confronted by God, Cain murders Abel in a rage of some kind.

Now think about that. Two brothers who are supposedly worshipping God together, making sacrifices and all of a sudden Cain is murdering Abel.

And so this is a story about persecution within the faith from professing believers. And in Jewish literature that writes about Cain which we know Jude is very familiar with, Cain becomes an archetype, a character of sin.

[13:53] He's the great teacher, the great sinner in Jewish thought. No one is worse than Cain to the Jew. And so Jude's accusation is that these false teachers are hurting the true believers with their disobedience and teaching.

His accusation is that they are not only guilty of this once but are walking in this way. A well-known expression in the Bible. It carries the idea of one who is constantly doing something and seeking to practice it or improve it.

They want to get better at it. So like Cain they are harmful to the true church and they share the motivation of Balaam. They are who they are and do what they do verse 11 for the sake of gain.

So in Numbers chapter 22 through 24 we read about the pagan king Balak who wanted his pagan prophet Balaam to curse Israel.

So Balaam promised Balaam by saying quote I will reward you richly in Numbers 24 11. So Jude's accusation of the false teachers in the church is that they are seeking financial gain.

[15:08] They are taking advantage of the church and so they will perish like Korah and those who followed him in his rebellion. Now again in Jewish thought Korah was the classic example of antinomian heresy the idea that God's law has no bearing on us and we can do what we want live how we want.

In Numbers 16 is where we read about Korah's rebellion. Korah was known for contending with Moses and Aaron. We know that from the narrative we know that from a description given in Numbers 26 9.

He embodies a disgruntled person. It says in Numbers 16 11 that he was a grumbler. And upon leading 250 other men and their families against Moses and Aaron God opens up the ground to send them all to Sheol as a punishment for their rebellion divine judgment on the apostate once again.

So you might have noticed these three names are out of chronological order. Chronologically it should have been Cain, Korah, and Balaam. But I think Jude rearranges the order to highlight judgment again as an ending for all such people.

These people are characterized by anger, murder, greed, grumbling in a spirit of rebellion. and that is who they are and they walk in that way.

[16:39] They practice such things. And so they pose a great threat to the true church. This leads us to the next part of our outline, part four, the threat of false teachers.

Jude goes on and he says, these are hidden reefs at your love feasts as they feast with you without fear. So perhaps you've noticed by now in Jude's epistle, that he constantly refers to false teachers as these.

He's creating distance between their way of life as opposed to the way of life for the true believer. And here we see that their way of life poses a great danger to the church.

So the love feast that he speaks of is the Lord's supper. That's what early Christians called it, the taking of the cup and the bread. Now theologically this is significant because this ordinance of the church calls to mind Christ's sacrificial death to pardon the sins of the elect.

The cup is the wrath of God, the wine or the juice is the blood of Christ and the bread is Christ's body. So these false teachers are partaking of the Lord's supper which is blasphemy because they are by definition not in Christ.

[17:57] By partaking in the cup and the bread are signaling to the world and to the church that they believe their sins are forgiven in Christ but that is only true for those who have repented and believes which these false teachers have not done and so they lie when they partake in the Lord's supper.

And significantly too in the Greco-Roman world banqueting with people was a social institution and it was one that signaled to the world at large that you identify with these people.

A way of saying we are one. In other words when these false teachers banquet with the church they are falsely signaling that they are one in the same when nothing could be further from the truth.

And this is why Jude in verse 12 calls them hidden reefs. The metaphor is that the church is the ship in the sea and if that ship comes into contact with a hidden reef then it will be stuck or worse it will sink there will be a hole punctured and people will die.

So Jude's point is that they will destroy the church not eternally but in this life if they are allowed to continue participating in the Lord's Supper and the activities of the church.

[19:17] They will distort the witness of the church the purity of the church and the identity of the church. So what do they do then? What do they produce?

And the short answer is nothing short of wickedness and worthlessness. So this leads us to number five the produce of false teachers.

Looking at the second half of verse 12 Jude tells us the produce of false teachers. He says that these false teachers are shepherds feeding themselves.

Waterless clouds swept along by winds. Fruitless trees in late autumn twice dead uprooted wild waves of the sea casting up the foam of their own shame wandering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

So they take care of no one but themselves. They feed themselves. They cannot give water to anything to make it grow.

[20:18] They are waterless clouds. They themselves are on unstable ground being swept away by wind, a common imagery expressing their instability and lack of security.

They are good for nothing just as a tree that bears no fruit is good for nothing. That sounds like Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. And these trees are twice dead because they died in sin like all of us but also because upon hearing the gospel they rejected it for a gospel of their own making. Jesus might have said it this way as he did to the Pharisees in Matthew 23 he might have said twice a child of hell. And in their lawlessness the only thing that shows up is their own shame because they are shameless in pursuing their ungodly lifestyle.

It foams up like the ocean. You will notice it. And they are wandering stars. Again a common expression that indicates they deviate greatly from the truth.

And for all this because they seek sin in their own flesh and justify it they will perish for eternity in the gloom of utter darkness better known as hell. So they are good for nothing when it comes to the church.

[21 : 42] They can and only will harm the church. And I have to tell you I get so tired when I hear Christians say oh I know this preacher or this song is heretical but I just love the way it makes me feel or I have my own understanding of what they mean and it makes me love God more.

The Bible just speaks so differently from this. Jude would rebuke that person and tell them have nothing to do with some worthless fruitless dangerous teaching and teacher.

That heretical song or preacher does make them love God more but not the God of the Bible rather a God of their own making. These are idolaters who tolerate such teachings and teachers.

Now in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says what happens to bad trees that bear bad fruit. He says in Matthew 7 19 every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

So Jude following his master's teachings echoes this. This leads us to the sixth point of our outline! The judgment on false teachers. So looking at verse 14 Jude writes it was also about these that Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied saying behold the Lord comes with ten thousand of his holy ones to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

[23 : 24] So here Jude explicitly quotes 1 Enoch 1 9 if you missed the sermon last week go and listen to a recording for an explanation of how that is so but just to reiterate 1 Enoch is not canonical scripture but notice everything in this quotation can be traced to biblical texts we know that Jesus will return with his angels to judge the wicked and to destroy them revelations 19 15 talking about Jesus return says this from Jesus mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the almighty so that phrase about the wine press being another greco-roman expression that pictures Christ crushing the skulls of his enemies and so I think Jude is quoting first Enoch because this quote captures true doctrine in the

Bible but also because this quote emphasizes the ungodliness of false teachers that term is used four times in this quote ungodly ungodly ungodly ungodly just lost everything here we go sorry so ungodly ungodly ungodly and ungodly and Christ is not coming to convict them in the sense of making them sorrowful over their sin or to lead them to repentance no when Christ returns the time is up the word convict in this context is referring to finding them guilty in a court of law so this whole quote is judgment language Jude is not afraid to repeat this over and over and over again throughout his letter these apostate heretics will go to hell for all eternity apart from repentance and faith in

Christ and that is a sober truth a sober reality that we need to be thinking about and finally part seven of our outline the speech of false teachers verse sixteen he says these are grumblers malcontents following their own sinful desires they are loud mouth boasters showing favoritism to gain advantage so these are grumblers doesn't that sound like Balaam or Korah or the rest of the exodus generation that perished in the wilderness always griping always having a bone to pick busy bodies quarreling types and I pray we never behave in such a way they grumble because they are male content nothing will ever please them in all this they are merely pursuing the desires of the flesh again they are slaves to sin as Paul says in

Romans 6 and you can always hear a false teacher because they are loud mouth boasters because they are so bent on making a god of their own making what always happens inevitably is that their god ends up being made in their image their god looks!

like them and they cannot help but boast loudly about themselves because ultimately in their mind and their theology and their gospel they are god and that is so contrary to the true believer who as

Paul says boasts only in the Lord 1 Corinthians 1 31 and we see the motive behind their speech is to gain advantage so hear this be aware of this they will flatter you they might tell you how wonderful you are they may say things like the cross reveals your worth because they know that's a message that appeals that itches the ear and no question they will show you favoritism they will be really nice but it isn't for you and it certainly isn't for God it is for their advantage so in closing and I know I'm going long today so

[27 : 48] I'm going make this quick but in closing I just want to offer one application next week we're going to think about this text more in relation to next week's text but I think this is fitting for today so just one application know and name false teachers for what they are now when I say that I do not mean spend the rest of your life studying cults and following a bunch of heretics on Twitter or some other thing like that to maybe help illustrate what I am trying to say I to judge how could I know his heart and they will speculate and they'll say something like for all we know Joel Osteen is a believer and just confused or caught up in the money and at first you might think well that sounds humble or wise or kind since that person is assuming the best but

I am telling you it is ignorant it is unloving and it is sinful throughout the bible false teachers are named take your pick the pharisees the sadducees corah king saul hymen a and a and a and first timothy and so many others we do a disservice to our true brothers and sisters in the faith when we acknowledge in a positive way these types of teachers these wolves in sheep's clothing who desire to tear us apart and maybe even more importantly we do a disservice to the false teacher by leaving them in their own blindness so i mentioned joel olstein a minute ago i have a hundred percent certainty that he is a false teacher because jesus tells us we will know them by their fruit matthew 7 20 the fruit of joel olstein only feeds him he exploits the gospel to dupe the ignorant into giving him all kinds of money he is a predator and he teaches heresies like the idea that jesus is not the only way to heaven that's something he will tell you and jesus would be shocked to learn that jesus taught quote that no one comes to the father except through me in john 14 6 and i could go on with a list of heresies that that man alone is responsible for i could go on with a list of others like him but to be clear i'm not being a jerk for saying that or for calling that out what i'm doing is loving because it is a pleading for him as well as anyone like him to repent and believe in the true gospel so i don't know about everybody here but i am so thankful that god addresses false teaching in the bible over and over again such grace and such love that opportunity upon opportunity to repent and to understand are given and furthermore what a testimony to me and all of us as we read scripture to see the consistent message of the cross be reiterated against every false idea and in that exchange whenever there's this confrontation in the bible of what the gospel is and isn't it brings clarity for us to know exactly what we are professing frankly i personally probably would have fallen into the works based mentality of the pharisees a long time ago if it were not for christ himself denouncing their teachings as blasphemy in the gospels and he does so in the clearest and starkest terms it sobers me up it wakes me up so again that christ loves his church and desires more to be saved that he is willing to have hard conversations to name names to correct and rebuke and when he wills it to reconcile praise the lord so to that let's pray that we will be discerning and loving enough to know and name false teachers for the sake of the world the church and chiefly the glory of god let's pray