

6. The Book of Jude—1:8-9

a message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
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Good evening everyone and thank you for joining our study in the Book of Jude. For those of you who are joining us for the first time in this study—let me try to bring you up to speed.

The Book of Jude breaks down like this:

Opening Salutation—v.1-2

I. A CALL TO ACTION AGAINST APOSTASY—V.3-19

II. A COMMAND TO CHRISTIANS TO LIVE FAITHFULLY—V.20-23

Closing benediction—v.24-25

As we said to start this study—from the very beginning of the Church’s existence, it has always been understood that Christians were soldiers fighting in a battle.

Paul the apostle reminded Timothy, a young pastor, that we “*must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*” (2 Timothy 2:3) Of course, that followed his earlier exhortation to all followers (soldiers) of Jesus to—“*fight the good fight of faith*”—every single day of our Christian life (the Greek is commanding us to—“*keep on continually, constantly fighting the good fight of faith*”—1 Timothy 6:12).

This is the theme of Jude’s epistle—that Christians, “**earnestly contend for the faith**” (v.3)

I. A CALL TO ACTION AGAINST APOSTASY—V.3-19

A. Christians—contend earnestly for the faith against apostates—v.3-4

B. Christians—remember God has judged apostates in the past—v.5-7

1. The example of apostate Israelites—v.5

2. The example of apostate angels—v.6-7

C. Christians—understand the characteristics of apostates—v.8-13, 16-19

Jude 1:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. ⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

1. They’re dreamers—v.8a

By calling apostates ‘**dreamers**’, Jude could be saying that these people are ‘delusional’ and out of touch with reality (they always have an over-inflated view of themselves and dreams of grandeur).

But it's more probable that by calling apostates 'dreamers' Jude was referring to them having *prophetic* dreams they claimed were from God—but in reality, were from the devil or at very least were out of the imaginations of their own perverted hearts.

Jeremiah 23:25-29 (NKJV)

²⁵ "I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in My name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' ²⁶ How long will *this* be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart, ²⁷ who try to make My people forget My name by their dreams which everyone tells his neighbor, as their fathers forgot My name for Baal. ²⁸ "The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; And he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat?" says the LORD. ²⁹ "Is not My word like a fire?" says the LORD, "And like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces?

2. They defile the flesh—v.8a

Jude 1:8 (NKJV)

⁸ **Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh** ['physical body']...(NIV—"pollute their own bodies")

The word translated '**defile**' is from a Greek verb which means to *dye* or *stain* something—such as clothing. In addition, it can mean "to pollute," "to contaminate," "to soil," or "to corrupt."

When linked with the word '**flesh**' (the Greek is 'sarx')—the reference is to *moral* and *physical* defilement, or—sexual sin. This would also fit the context since Jude just mentioned the sexual sin of Sodom and Gomorrah and then began verse 8 with the word, "**Likewise**" comparing the sexual sin of Sodom and Gomorrah with the sexual perversion that characterizes apostates.

The point Jude seems to be making is, once a person rejects God and His Word as the authority by which people are to live their lives—they set themselves up as the authority which means they're declaring themselves God! Now as 'God' over their life (and over the lives of those who follow them if they are leaders in the church)—they make the rules as to what is right and wrong. (Jeremiah 10:10-11)

The result is—they "**defile the flesh**" (not 'their flesh') but all flesh by making new rules and new standards for living (for everyone) that contradict God's laws.

This leads to vile, immoral and debased living—as in the case of David Koresh and Warren Jeffs—both of whom were apostates.

Most of you have heard of David Koresh, who became the leader and prophet of the Branch Davidian cult in Waco, Texas—he died on April 19, 1993.

Besides being an anti-government militant and leading "Bible" studies that went on for 10 or more hours at a time—he had as many as 20 wives consisting of not just adult women but children, one as young as 10.

These women were little more than Koresh's sex slaves that he used to satisfy his perverted sexual desires with—all of which were justified as 'righteous' because he was the new King David and set the rules for sexual behavior (and other things as well).

And then there is Warren Jeffs the leader of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS), an offshoot of the Mormon Church that still practices polygamy over a hundred years after the mainstream Mormon Church abandoned it.

He was charged and convicted (now serving life plus 20 years) of organizing sexual religious rituals with

underage girls and threatening them with damnation if they did not participate.

One report said, *“According to the court documents filed...girls between the ages of eight and 14 were forced to participate in sex acts that were filmed by members of the church. The practice came to the attention of the authorities after one of the girls came forward.*

Author and pastor Warren Wiersbe commented on these apostates—

“Having turned away from God’s truth, they feed their minds on false doctrine that inflates their egos and encourages their rebellion. Jude verse 10 informs us that the apostates are ignorant people who do not know what they are talking about! Jude echoed Peter’s description of these men as ‘brute beasts’ (2 Peter 2:12, 22). Animals live by natural instinct, and so do the apostates. When men rebel against God, they sink to the level of beasts.

The course of their rebellion was clearly described by Jude. As a result of their rebellion and pride, they “defile the flesh,” living to satisfy their animal lusts. When a person despises God’s authority, he feels free to disobey God’s Laws and live as he pleases. What he forgets is that those laws have penalties attached to them so that he cannot disobey and escape the consequences.”

3. They reject authority—v.8b

Now ultimately Jude has in mind God’s authority—but it would also include governmental authority since all authority has been delegated by God—

Romans 13:1 (NKJV)

¹ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Since apostates’ are rebels who love immorality—it stands to reason that they would **reject authority**. The Greek word for **‘reject’** refers to *“destroying something established, such as existing authority.”*

The word rendered **‘authority’** (*kuriotēs*) is related to the more familiar term *kurios* (“lord”)—*kurios* being the word used for the Lord Jesus Christ.

One pastor said—

“Because they demand to rule their own lives, apostates refuse to submit to Christ’s lordship over them (cf. v. 4). The reality, however, is that they are much like the scribes and Pharisees whom Jesus confronted in Matthew 23:27–28: “You are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

Since apostates often see themselves as superior to everyone else even to the point of elevating themselves to the place of God—they reject any authority whether it is in Heaven or on earth that isn’t theirs. So not only are they rebels against God, they are often *anarchists*—lawless people who are dedicated to the overthrow of human government.

We are seeing this more and more in our own country with the rise of anti-government, anarchist groups—as it was in Israel during the time of the Judges, one of the darkest periods in their history. It was a time of rebellion characterized by the statement, *“There was no king in Israel, therefore every man did what seemed right in his own eyes.”* (Judges 21:25)

We see this lawlessness in the Church among professing ‘Christians’ (apostates) that reject the authority of God’s Word against homosexuality, the killing of babies in the womb (murder) and monogamy.

I recently saw an article that said ‘polyamory’ is the next sexual frontier that pastors are going to have to deal with.

The author of the article (Preston) wrote:

“A pastor recently told me about Tyler and Amanda (names changed), high-school sweethearts raised in Christian homes, living in the Bible belt. After getting married, they seemed to be living the American dream with a house, good jobs, and two kids. Then Jon, a friend of Tyler’s, began living with their family. Amanda developed a close relationship with him, but their flirtation soon developed into something more, and Jon and Amanda proposed to Tyler that they begin exploring polyamory, with Amanda adding Jon as a significant other. They also encouraged Tyler to develop a relationship with another woman he’d met at the gym. He agreed.

When Tyler and Amanda came out as polyamorous, their parents were shocked. What seemed like a fringe practice of the sexual revolution had settled into the heartland of Middle America.

Making the situation even more complex, Tyler and Amanda sought counseling from a Christian counselor who advocated polyamory. Tyler’s parents were disturbed by what their son and daughter-in-law heard there: ‘It’s only adultery or cheating if someone is kept in the dark. If you are open and honest, this is a God-honoring relationship. And this is good for the kids! It takes a village to raise a child, so a polyamorous relationship actually brings more support and ‘family’ into your kids’ lives, much like the extended families in the past.’

For many Christians, polyamory seems so extreme and rare that there’s no need to talk about it. But it is much more common than some people think, and it’s growing in popularity. According to one estimate, ‘as many as 5 percent of Americans are currently in relationships involving consensual nonmonogamy,’ which is about the same percentage as those who identify as LGBTQ.

A recent study, published in a peer-reviewed journal, found that 20 percent of Americans have been in a consensual non-monogamous relationship at least once in their life. Another survey showed that nearly 70 percent of non-religious Americans between the ages of 24 and 35 believe that polyamory is okay, even if it’s not their cup of tea. And perhaps most shocking of all, according to sociologist Mark Regnerus in ‘Cheap Sex’, roughly 24 percent of church-going people believe that consensual polyamorous relationships are morally permissible.

*Polyamory—from the Greek poly, meaning “many,” and the Latin amor, meaning “love”—refers to ‘the practice of, or desire for, intimate relationships with more than one partner, with the consent of all partners involved.’ While these intimate relationships between three or more people are typically sexual, they don’t need to be. And they can take many different forms. For instance, **vees** (Vs) are poly relationships where one person is sexually engaged with two other people (as in the case of Tyler, Amanda, and Jon), while **triads** are relationships where all three are sexually involved with each other. Another defining element of polyamorous relationships is that they are honest and consensual—cheating and lying are frowned upon in the poly community.”*

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NLT2)

¹ You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. ² For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. ³ They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. ⁴ They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. ⁵ They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

4. They speak evil of dignitaries—v.8c

The word for ‘evil’ is a Greek word we get the word “blasphemy” from.

Since all authority comes from God, when a person speaks evil against any authority God has placed in human government—they are speaking evil against God Himself or in other words they are blaspheming Him!

One author said—

"Blasphemy involves much more than taking God's name in vain, though that is at the heart of it. A person blasphemes God when he takes His Word lightly and even jests about it, or when he deliberately defies God to judge him.

Again, respect for God ordained authority is a characteristic of godliness (as opposed to the disrespect toward authority displayed by apostates).

Exodus 22:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ **"You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.**

Once again, respect for authority is one of the foundational principles of a civil society—and it starts with respect (reverence) for God (and then for parents).

Reviling (blaspheming, cursing) God was a capital offense (Lev.24:10-16). But also, God forbid His people from speaking evil of their rulers—even as Paul inadvertently did when he spoke in a condemning way to the High Priest in Acts 23:1-5.

God has established human government (Rom. 13), and even if we don't respect the *officer*—we must respect the office.

Now listen, there is a difference between challenging those who have *corrupted* their authority by doing evil—and then simply speaking evil of leaders because you don't like them personally, their policies or how they're handling things.

Many of God's prophets in the O.T. challenged and condemned the corrupt kings of Israel and Judah—but it was justified because they had turned against God and led the people into idolatry and other wicked practices. Jude's statement in verse 8 sounds very much like what Peter had to say about these apostates—

2 Peter 2:10b (NKJV)

¹⁰ **...*They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,***

The word '**presumptuous**' means "*very daring and bold*"; '**self-willed**' means they "*live only to please themselves*"—again pride and rebellion characterize these people.

Outwardly they appear to be men or women of God serving His people—but inwardly they are '*ravenous wolves*' who prey upon God's flock to build up their own egos and line their pockets.

Peter, like Jude, says of these false teachers that—"They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries".

The word '**dignitaries**' literally means "*glorious ones*"—a term that could apply to *earthly* leaders in places of authority in human government.

Romans 13:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

However, Jude and Peter could have in mind *spiritual* authorities—I believe this is the correct interpretation since Jude follows "[apostates] speak evil of dignitaries" with—

Jude 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Peter follows the statement that false teachers *"speak evil of dignitaries"* with verse 11—

2 Peter 2:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

What Jude says, almost in passing, in verse 9 has caused a great deal of confusion and controversy!

First of all, the incident he mentions is found nowhere in the Bible—we have no information about the conflict between Satan and Michael over the body of Moses. Michael the archangel is one of the faithful angels that stayed loyal to God when Lucifer led a rebellion in heaven that resulted in a third of the angels following him—they became fallen angels.

Michael is mentioned 4 times in the Bible: Daniel 10, Daniel 12, Revelation 12 and here in Jude.

The word **'archangel'** means *'ruling angel'* or *'leading angel'*—in Daniel 12:1 he is referred to as *"the great prince"*.

Of course, Lucifer (Satan, devil) is the leader of the fallen angels. Michael is the only angel that is called an *'archangel'* in Scripture—there might be others.

As I said, there is nothing in the Old Testament that speaks of how Michael and Lucifer disputed with each other over the body of Moses. Where Jude even got this information about this dispute between Michael and Lucifer we don't know—it was either handed down thru oral tradition or revealed to Jude directly by the Holy Spirit.

We don't even exactly know *why* there was a dispute about the body of Moses. When it comes to the body of Moses we read—

Deuteronomy 34:5-7 (NKJV)

⁵ So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. ⁶ And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day.

⁷ Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.

Because of this, and the cryptic nature of how God buried the body of Moses—as if for *'safe-keeping'*—I personally believe that God still has plans for Moses' body. Furthermore, I believe that Satan anticipated a purpose God had for Moses' body—and the devil tried to steal the body so as to defeat that plan.

We know that after his death, Moses appeared in spirit form at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–3) with Elijah (whose body was caught up to heaven in 2 Kings 2).

I believe that Moses and Elijah are the two witnesses of Revelation 11—and that God hid to safe-guard Moses' body for that future plan. Putting aside the mystery behind this dispute between Michael and Lucifer over Moses' body—the point Jude was making is clear when he said:

Jude 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, **dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"**

Jude's purpose in bringing that incident up was to point out how that godliness respects the authority God has ordained—even if that authority becomes corrupt as was the case with Lucifer (Ezekiel 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12-15).

David demonstrated the same respect for God's anointed when he refused to kill King Saul when he had the chance to do so *twice* (1 Samuel 24 & 26—*"I will not touch (strike) the Lord's anointed"*).

Peter expressed that same respect for authority in his first epistle when he admonished his readers—*"Fear God and respect the king."* (1 Peter 2:17)

That statement becomes all the more powerful when you realize that Caesar Nero was king at that time. This relates to the **"certain men"** (Jude verse 4) by a 'how much more' line of thinking.

If Michael dared not bring a reviling accusation against the devil, how much more should these "certain men" not speak evil of dignitaries.

One final thing—this verse (Jude 9) proves that Michael isn't Jesus, as some heretical groups contend. The point Jude is making is that Lucifer was over Michael in authority (Ez.28:14) which is why Michael didn't rebuke him—but rather said **"the Lord rebuke you."**

Jesus is over all as the Creator of all things! (John 1:3; Col. 1:16)—Jesus is Lord of all! Michael is a very powerful angel—but he is an angel, a created being. **Jesus is the eternal, all-mighty God Who is the Creator—not a created being!**

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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