

Judgment

Jude 5–16 • June 14, 2015

Jude was hoping to write an epistle extolling the glory of the gospel, but a more pressing need diverted his attention: false believers had infiltrated the church, identifying themselves as Christians. Jude calls on his readers to fight constantly to conform to God's revealed truth. The danger of such unbelief and hypocrisy is serious because God will judge all sinners.

Three Examples of God's Judgment of Immorality (vv. 5–7)

First, although God delivered the nation of Israel out of Egypt, rescuing them from Pharaoh's slavery, those who did not believe and engaged in immorality were judged by God (v. 5; cf. 1 Cor 10:8; Num 25:1–9). Second, even the angels who were created by God to serve him were judged by God when they rebelled and "left their proper dwelling" (v. 6; cf. Gen 6:1–4). Third, God judged the sinfulness of Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities for their immoral perversion (v. 7; cf. Gen 18:20–21).

The Hypocrisy of the False Believers (vv. 8–13)

In an ominously similar way, Jude is observing professing believers within the church acting in similar ways (v. 8). They live in immorality, excusing themselves with an appeal to God's grace (cf. v. 4). They accept no authority except their own (cf. v. 4). They rail against angelic authority, while even angels would defer to God's judgment (v. 9). This kind of abusive speech characterizes their lack of spiritual sensitivity and humility (v. 10).

These false believers are the spiritual progeny of Cain, Balaam, and Korah, who rebelled against God and were judged for their sin (v. 11; cf. Gen 4:1–16; Num 31:16; 16:1–40). They appear pious and believing, but they are dangerous, helping themselves to whatever they desire, using people for their own ends, without a moral compass, and destined for God's eternal judgment (vv. 12–13).

The Warning of Enoch (vv. 14–16)

Jude reminds his readers of Enoch's warning, who proclaimed God's judgment on a wicked world as he walked with God (v. 14; cf. Gen 5:24; Heb 11:5). In an increasingly wicked world, he preached God's coming judgment on an ungodly world (v. 15). This same warning rings out from Jude's pen against false believers: God will judge them for their grumbling, faultfinding, living according to their sinful desires, boasting, and flattering (v. 16).

Jesus' church must never forget the sobering truth that God must judge sin.

Questions to Think About:

Why does Jude not instruct believers to judge and punish the false believers?

What would a false believer that "crept in unnoticed" to our fellowship look like?