

Jude - The Wolves Are In The Flock

Ezekiel 3

17 Son of man, I have made you a watchman to the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at My mouth and give them warning from Me.

18 If I say to the wicked, You shall surely die, and you do not give him warning or speak to warn the wicked to turn from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand.

• SOUNDING THE ALARM

Jude

1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ (the Messiah), and brother of James, [writes this letter] to those who are called (chosen), dearly loved by God the Father and separated (set apart) and kept for Jesus Christ:

"to those who are called (chosen), dearly loved by God the Father and separated (set apart) and kept for Jesus Christ"

- This letter is written to a very specific group of people.
- It is not written to those who call/label themselves "Christian". It is not written to church members or church attenders.
- To those who are circumcised in heart; who reject the world and its ways. Those who have died with Christ and live in His newness of life!
- Note that he has not written to "the church of..." Sadly, it was already too late for that.

Jude

3 Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you in regard to our common salvation. [But] I found it necessary and was impelled to write you and urgently appeal to and exhort [you] to contend for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

"[But] I found it necessary and was impelled to write you and urgently appeal to and exhort [you] to contend for the faith"

- Jude found, that rather than a letter of rejoicing and praising, he had to write to tell them to contend, to fight, to protect the precious gospel that had been given to them.
- They had received the Gospel in truth and clarity. There was nothing wrong with what they had received... but what they were teaching and living now was not the Gospel they had originally been taught!
- He was now writing a warning to these beloved believers to wake up, to be vigilant, wary and focused, to be discerning between flesh and Spirit. To recognise what was truly of God and what was a wicked fleshly work.
- Jude saw the danger. The enemy is in the camp! He could see the wolves in sheep's clothing as the sheep were more and more accepting and blind to the imminent danger.

Jude

4 For certain men have crept in stealthily/unawares....

"certain men have crept in"

- These men have crept in. Stealthy, deceitful and crafty. They came with intention for selfish, ungodly gain. They have crept into leadership, they have crept into fellowship, they have crept into places of influence and power.

"crept in stealthily/unawares"

- This is the greater concern. This is why Jude is writing!
- These men have crept in, and God's people are unaware! This is a poor and desperate condition of God's people that they can no longer discern or differentiate between the flesh and The Spirit/Word of God.

Matthew 7

15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed as sheep, but inside they are devouring wolves.

- Consider the urgency of Jude and how His heart must have dreaded what he saw. Picture the scene... The wolves are in with the sheep!!

Unless we understand the urgency of these first few verses we will miss the real meaning of this short book. Jude is sounding an alarm! He sees church that has become far too comfortable, and they are becoming polluted from lack of discernment and love for Christ.

• EXPOSING THE DANGER

Jude

4 ...ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into fleshly desire, and deny our sole Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

"ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into lawlessness"

- They twist the scriptures of Grace to allow for the flesh. They use "Grace" to excuse sin and make room for its fruit.
- They preach the freedom of Grace but rarely the response of Love. They will hardly teach that love is a willing response to being loved.
- They will talk much of what God has done but talk little of what is required.
- *Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*
- They pervert grace! They make it something that it isn't. Grace alone will not produce a response in a man! Today is a day of Grace for all men but not all men will be saved! Grace alone is a gift unreceived! Jesus did not say if you understand my Grace...

John 14

15 If you love me, keep my commandments.

John 14

21 He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Romans 5

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

- God's grace is truly a beautiful, undeserved gift but we must be so careful to understand that Grace is a gift of Love! It is Love that caused Grace to be given. Love is the greater attribute. Any time you hear Grace emphasised over Love then I, like Jude, will warn you to be wary and discerning.

"deny our sole Master and Lord, Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One)."

- They do not deny Jesus exists, but they deny Him the opportunity to minister and work as supreme authority and Lord in lives.
- By perverting His Grace they deny Jesus the opportunity to pour His love into and through His people for a witness unto the world. They deny Jesus the power and glory of His testimony in a person's life. It is the revelation and acceptance of His love that transforms a life. It is His love flowing through us that will demonstrate His testimony and power to change lives.

John 13

34 I give you a new commandment: that you love one another. As I have loved you, so you too should love one another.

35 By this shall all [men] know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.

- These corrupt men deny Jesus the reward of His suffering. These ungodly men do not yield and submit to the Word of God and so deny the power of it. They want men to serve them before they serve Christ.

John 7

16 Jesus answered them by saying, My teaching is not My own, but His Who sent Me.

17 If any man desires to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking from Myself and of My own accord and on My own authority

18 He who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory. But He Who seeks the glory and is eager for the honour of Him Who sent Him, He is true; and there is no unrighteousness or falsehood or deception in Him.

In essence Jude is saying... This is what you have allowed into your fellowships. These are the people and teachings that you have allowed into your lives. They are polluting your worship, your service and your relationship with God.

• THE HORRIFIC CONSEQUENCE OF INACTION

Jude

5 Now I want to remind you, though you were fully informed once for all, that though the Lord [at one time] delivered a people out of the land of Egypt, He subsequently destroyed those [of them] who did not believe [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely upon Him].

6 And angels who did not keep their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place, these He has reserved in custody in eternal chains under the thick gloom of utter darkness until the judgment and doom of the great day.

7 [The wicked are sentenced to suffer] just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the adjacent towns-which likewise gave themselves over to impurity and indulged in unnatural vice and sensual perversity-are laid out [in plain sight] as an exhibit of perpetual punishment [to warn] of everlasting fire.

"He subsequently destroyed"

- He "destroyed" them! In these verses we have it stated with certainty and simplicity that there is serious and eternal consequence to those who sin against The Lord.
- Circumcision is not Salvation. Being "of Israel" was not enough to enter in God's rest. Being an Angel is no exception to the demands of obedience and holiness. This life is not about labels or titles we claim for ourselves.

Philippians 2

12 ...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

- God never did and never will excuse or overlook sin. His hatred and wrath towards it pure, terrible and eternal. We ought to give much thought and consideration to this. Especially in these times when we give so much sympathy and excuse to sin... God HATES sin and sin DOES have consequences! The rebellious will not go unpunished! The unbeliever will be destroyed!
- We ought to be so very, very aware and fearful of the consequence of sin; of anything that would break our communion with The Lord; of anything that would take us out of abiding in Him, in His secret place... May we be so in love with Jesus that we hate even the thought of anything that would lessen His presence in our lives.

We really do need to be so careful and so aware of what we allow to influence us. How much has culture shaped our thinking and understanding of God. How much of what we have been taught does God need to uproot and unteach so that we can truly learn of Him? Are we allowing The Lord to expose the flesh and the false in our lives?

• THESE (v8-19)

"these dreamers also corrupt the body, scorn and reject authority and government, and revile and libel and scoff"

- They are a long way from reality in their thinking, having no true understanding or revelation of God or His word.
- Chasing dreams of power and authority. Men who believe they are right and wise and good but cannot be governed or subjected to leadership.
- They corrupt the body; the temple of The Holy Ghost and they corrupt the body of Christ. Infecting believers with their subtle focus on flesh and sensuality. Increasing themselves and decreasing Christ.
- They are proud, arrogant and scorners of those who disagree with them. There is a noticeable lack of love, compassion, understanding and desire for others. They are not selfless servants but those who will serve so long as they are seen to serve, so long as they are praised.

"these men (scoff and sneer at) anything they do not happen to be acquainted with and do not understand; and whatever they do understand physically [that which they know by mere instinct], like irrational beasts-by these they corrupt themselves and are destroyed (perish)."

- Such conversation is divisive and offensive. It is not speech that is "gracious (pleasant and winsome), seasoned [as it were] with salt" (Colossians 4:6). It is not conversation that seeks to "as much as is within you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18). It is not conversation that honours God or is witness to His love/life that flows through every true believer !!

"These are hidden reefs (elements of danger)" / "clouds without water, swept along by the winds; trees, without fruit"

"Wild waves of the sea, flinging up the foam of their own shame and disgrace; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of eternal darkness has been reserved"

"These are (grumblers) who complain [of their lot in life], going after their own desires [controlled by their passions]; their talk is boastful and arrogant, [and they claim to] admire men's persons and pay people flattering compliments to gain advantage."

"scoffers [who seek to gratify their own unholy desires], following after their own ungodly passions."

"agitators setting up distinctions and causing divisions-merely sensual [creatures, carnal, worldly-minded people], devoid of the [Holy] Spirit and destitute of any higher spiritual life."

- These are damning descriptions. We should note here that Jude speaks plain and clear against these men. He is not speaking niceties and pleasantries in order to keep the peace. He is outing these men and speaking vehemently against them.
- We are not simply meant to speak nicely to such people and hold the Truth quietly to ourselves. With a heart that is breaking for God's testimony in His people we are to speak out against these "certain men" and reprove them!

Jude writes these things with such clarity and plainness. He writes with a clear vision and understanding of the situation. But understand that these wolves are already in the flock! These certain men are already in the fellowship, and God's people didn't know! Oh, we must be so careful who we allow to teach and influence us. May we not be caught sleeping, undiscerning and deceived.

• BUT YOU, BELOVED

Yourselves:

"But you, beloved, build yourselves up [founded] on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit;"

"Guard and keep yourselves in the love of God; expect and patiently wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah)-[which will bring you] unto life eternal."

- "But you" You who can still discern; you who die daily to yourself; you who desire Christ above all else; you who have not yet been fully deceived; you who hear/read this word with The Spirit and perception... They are the beloved.
- There is an exhortation/a command/a heart cry from Jude for these precious believers. We are to protect and nurture the life that is in us. We are to be wary of these "certain men". We are to be Spiritual and not fleshly. We are to be discerning and watching in prayer. Waiting for the eternal Salvation of Jesus Christ.
- We have the responsibility to "build yourselves", "keep yourselves" and "patiently wait"

Proverbs 4

23 Guard your heart with all diligence and vigilance, above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.

- We are to strive to abide in the vine; to dwell in the secret place; to protect a precious intimacy with The Lord...

Others:

"refute [so as to] convict some who dispute with you, and on some have mercy who waver and doubt."

"[Strive to] save others, snatching [them] out of [the] fire; on others take pity [but] with fear, loathing even the garment"

- These verses are beautiful and highlight the long suffering and compassion of God. These "certain men" and those caught up in their deceit are not merely cast aside. There is a longing to see them convicted of sin, restored, saved and snatched out of the fire!
- We are to refute those who argue with us. We are to defend the Gospel of Jesus Christ, expose their darkness and flesh with a heart that longs to see them spiritually convicted, coming to a knowledge of the truth and repentance. And to those who are wavering and not yet fully convinced we are to have mercy and patience. Reason with them and intercede for them... but without compromise!
- Some we are to strive to save! With desperation, to do all we can to bring them to the light, to truth, to Salvation! Are our hearts so constrained for anyone? Do we have a desperate cry that fasts, intercedes, confesses and pleads with God for their souls?
- We are to have hearts longing to see the saving of sinners and the restoration of wayward Saints. Do we have such a heart of Christ in us?
- But in desperate, mercy, patience and reasoning... loathe the pollution that they have walked in! Do not be defiled by it. Don't let it so much as touch you! Hate the sin but love the sinner!

Galatians 2

11 But when Peter came to Antioch, I protested and opposed him to his face, for he was blameable...

We truly have to be careful, aware and attentive to our walk with The Lord. Are we walking close to The Shepherd? Are we so intimately acquainted with God that we can quickly recognise what isn't of Him? Are we abiding in Him? Are we living in that secret place of communion? It's always those sheep who wander off who get picked out by the cats and wolves. Stay ever so close to Jesus.

• NOW, TO HIM

"Now to Him Who is able to keep you without stumbling or slipping or falling, and to present [you] unblemished (blameless and faultless) before the presence of His glory in triumphant joy and exultation [with unspeakable, ecstatic delight]"

- There is only one who is able to keep us. There is only one with whom we have to do. There is only one that we can look to for life, peace, hope, strength and Salvation. There is only one! Jesus Christ!
- How incredible this wonderful gospel is!! Hallelujah!! That Jude can write these words!! It is too easy to read them!

Revelation 4

8 And the four living creatures, individually having six wings, were full of eyes all over and within [underneath their wings]; and day and night they never stop saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty (Omnipotent), Who was and Who is and Who is to come.

9 And whenever the living creatures offer glory and honour and thanksgiving to Him Who sits on the throne, Who lives forever and ever (through the eternities of the eternities),

10 The twenty-four elders (the members of the heavenly Sanhedrin) fall prostrate before Him Who is sitting on the throne, and they worship Him Who lives forever and ever; and they throw down their crowns before the throne, crying out,

11 Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honour and dominion, for You created all things; by Your will they were [brought into being] and were created.

- Only Jesus is worthy of such praise and glory in Heaven! There is no other! Not Mary, no "saint", no being... Christ only and always!!!
- Oh Jesus, teach us to love you, praise you and glorify you as we ought. May you truly be Lord of our lives and the sole love of our being!
- That we could be brought into His presence in Heaven and be presented faultless and blameless... A wonderful hope to be reminded of.
- We will only recognise the false as we learn and grow in what is real. Only as we stay close to the Shepherd and abide in His presence will we recognise incoming dangers. That which has come from outside of His blessing.

"To the one only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory (splendour), majesty, might and dominion, and power and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."

- Not through anything or anyone else!
- Why would we give glory to man? Why would we give His glory to another?
- He is truly worthy of it all! Oh, Heavenly Father, please open my eyes and my heart to see more of your glory, to lead me to Godly sorrow for sin, to lead to a closer walk and more complete dependence upon yourself. Truly you are worthy of every part of me, every part of my life, all of my affection, all of my attention, all of my service, love and devotion! You are worthy, worthy, worthy!!
- Keep your heart and your eyes ever on Him. In awe, in fear, in gratitude, in love, in praise and thanksgiving... Remembering Him! Remember His word. Remember His Gospel. Remember His love.