

When God Judges The Ungodly

Jude 11-16

Introduction: 1) In 1962 a man named Ralph Elliott was dismissed from the faculty of MWBTS over his book *The Message of Genesis* (pub. Broadman, 1961). The book was infected with skeptical conclusions drawn from the historical critical method. Elliott, however, was not dismissed for heresy, but for insubordination, when he refused to not have the book republished. 2) 30 years later, in 1992, Elliott reflected on his dismissal in a book entitled *The Genesis Controversy*. In this book Elliott makes a startling and breathtaking confession of the dishonesty and deception of many professors who at one time taught in our seminaries. Their crime: the sin of “doublespeak.” 3) Elliott wrote: “Doublespeak” has become an insidious disease within Southern Baptist life...Professors and students learn to couch their beliefs in acceptable terminology and in holy jargon so that although thinking one thing, the speaker calculated so as to cause the hearer to affirm something else”(p.33). Elliott would go on to rightly state the issue was “a basic question of integrity” (p. 34). 4) On this latter point he is right, and it on this latter point that false teachers receive a failing grade. Dishonest and duplicitous, they deceive the church of God and, in so doing, invite his swift and sure judgment in their lives. Ungodly in character and ungodly in conduct, God exposes them for their hypocrisy and condemns them for their actions.

Transition: Note the 4 reasons God judges the ungodly.

I. God judges the ungodly because of their decisions. v. 11

Those who forget the past are certain to repeat it. Jude recalls from the Old Testament 3 examples of “bad decision makers” in the Old Testament who characterize false teachers any day/any time.

1) They are hateful.

- “Woe to them” recalls the words of Jesus in Matthew 23 and his condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees. He also uses a “prophetic aorist” which affirms the certainty of the future judgment and destruction of these spiritual terrorist.
- The way of Cain is the way of murder and hate, jealousy and anger, rebellious and disobedience (Gen. 4). Self-centered in character and consumed by self-love, he chose his way over God’s and in the process killed his brother. Guilty of fostering a man-made religion, he turned from God and turned on others.

2) They are greedy.

- The prophet Balaam appears in Numbers 22-24. Through duplicitous means (Numbers 24:1; 31:16) he lead Israel into sexual sin because of the financial package (Numbers 22:7, 17, 37; 24:11) offered by Balak, King of Moab (Numbers 22:4). He was a prophet for pay, a hireling, a profiteering preacher. Gold was his god and money was his master. Ministry was for making money, not caring for God’s people. People were a means to an end, and God killed him for it (Numbers 31:8).

3) They are rebellious.

- Numbers 16 is the record of a Levite who rejected the God ordained spiritual authority of Moses and Aaron. As a result God destroyed him, his household and his followers. Like Korah, these men were a law unto themselves, rebellious in heart and non-submissive in attitude. Like Korah they would perish. Arrogance and pride is always on the radar screen for God's certain judgment.

Transition: God judges the ungodly because of their decisions.

II. God judges the ungodly because of their deception. v. 12-13

Jude now provides 5 illustrations from the realm of nature to expose the vacuous and empty promises of false teachers. Because of their deception they disappoint. They do not deliver what they promise.

1) They are destructive. v. 12

- These men "are spots," better "hidden reefs" in your love feast (agape feast), without fear, serving (shepherding) only themselves. They are hypocrites, dishonest. Pretending to be full of love and concern for others, they are egocentric and selfish. Stepping into positions of leadership, they are like destructive reefs hidden just below the surface. They are slow to reveal their true colors and commitments, and when they do, the body of Christ can be damaged or destroyed. A church, college, seminary, even a denomination is vulnerable if she is not vigilant in keeping her eyes open and her guard up.

2) They disappoint. v. 12

- "Clouds without rain, blown about by the wind." They promised much but delivered little. Appearing to bring the refreshing water of the word, they blow on past once they have taken what they want, preying on others as they move on. Proverbs 25:14 reminds us, "Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of gifts he does not give." (NIV)
 - They promise liberty but enslave
 - They promise prosperity but impoverish
 - They promise refreshment and leave their followers parched
 - They promise life but bring death

3) They are destitute. v. 12

- Late into harvest season, when fruit should be present, these false teachers are barren, destitute, fruitless. Indeed they are dead on the surface and death at the source, twice dead. Death runs throughout what they teach and the way they live. They project a false understanding of godliness and the spiritual life, and those who buy into their deception eventually discover they produce no good thing. Fruitless and rootless, dead top to bottom, they are pulled up (plucked and uprooted) and destroyed. No fruit of conversion, no fruit of character, no fruit for Christ.

4) They defile. v. 13

- Immorality is a close companion of virtually all false teaching. Our creed and conduct are inseparable. These teachers are raging (wild) waves of the sea, foaming up the filth and shame of their false teachings and immoral living. Ligon Duncan says, "they crash like waves and all they do is stir up moral filth." They make a lot of noise with great swelling words, but they do not have a life to back it up. They may tour and fill arenas, get on television and

write books, blog and gain a following. Jude says, watch their lives. Time will tell. They are filthy. They defile.

5) They disappear. v. 13

- False teachers are shooting stars, here today and gone tomorrow. They burn bright for a night and then vanish into the midnight darkness never to be seen or heard from again. Their history is short lived, their legacy of no significance.
- Wandering stars, meteors, there is no consistency or reliability. Promising spiritual light, they are aimless, erratic, destined for God's judgment, described here as "the blackness of darkness forever." They may fool men, but not God.

Application: Why would anyone attack themselves to teachers like this? Why would anyone follow such deceivers, such master's of deception? They may sound good, but they show little. Remember: life reveals a heart. False prophets have a heart for themselves, not our Savior. They care for themselves, not others.

III. God judges the ungodly because it is their destiny. v. 14-15

In v. 4 Jude says the condemnation of "these men" was marked out, written about long ago. Indeed it goes back to Enoch, the seventh from Adam (counting inclusively), who walked with God and then was not, for God took him away (Gen. 5:24). Hebrews 11:5 informs us "he did not see death... for he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

Some Bible teachers have tried to tie Enoch's prophecy to the birth of his son Methuselah and the timing of the flood. However, it seems clear that Jude quotes the non-biblical book *1 Enoch* 1:9, affirming the truth of this statement without endorsing the whole of the book as divine or special revelation. Whether the quotation came from the historical Enoch is unclear, though the possibility of the oral transmission of such a prediction is certainly possible. What does Enoch say concerning "these men," false and deceiving teachers?

1) Their judgment is predicted. v. 14

- Prior even to the flood God made known His condemnation of false teachers as well as the certainty of His coming at the end of time. "Behold, see, take notice," the Lord (Jesus Christ) comes. It is as if judgment has already commenced so sure is its coming. Schreiner calls the verb a "prophetic perfect" in function (p. 472).
- 10,000 of His saints is better translated "holy ones" (*NIV*), a reference to the angels. Numerous times in both the Old Testament and New Testament God is pictured as coming with his angels (Zech. 14:5; Matt. 16:27; 25:31; 1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 1:7).
- At this coming things will be radically different from His first visit to earth.
 - Comes to a crown not a cross.
 - Comes to a throne not a cradle.
 - Comes to reign not to die.
 - Comes to judge not to be judged.
- The next time He comes will be the last time He comes! Angels will be both His escort and His executioners (v. 15). Grace will come to an end on planet earth.

2) Their judgment is proper. v. 15

- Jude is fond of the word “ungodly” (6 times in the book), using it 4 times in this verse. God will judge and convict (expose, rebuke, find guilty) all who are “ungodly” (without reverence and respect for God).
- Note they walk ungodly (deeds).
Note they think ungodly (way).
Note they talk ungodly (harsh things spoken).
- In works, wisdom (cf Jam. 3:14-16) and words they condemn themselves. No evil action, thought or word will go unpunished, be erased from the divine memory. These men and those like them will have no defense, no retrial, no appeal.
- As Romans 3:19 says, “every mouth will be silenced.”

IV. God judges the ungodly because of their deeds. v. 16

The lifestyle and dispositions of those Enoch prophesied God would judge is further explored in v. 16. Emphasis falls on their mouth, and the evil desires that direct what flows from their tongue. Again we are reminded: the tongue is that organ of the body intimately connected to the heart and its desires.

1) They complain without shame. (cf. v. 15)

- Speaking harshly against God, His will and ways, they grumble and complain. Like the Hebrew children in the wilderness, they find fault with God, griping and complaining, accusing God of withholding his best and what they believe they deserve.
- They are critical and negative, possessing a cloudy disposition with thunderstorms on the horizon. This disposition is like a cancer and deadly to an effective ministry. Always judgmental, never any joy.

2) They cater to the sensual.

- The source of this negative disposition and attitude was their lust (*NIV*, “own evil desires”). Living by the “personal pleasure principle” (PPP), they were consumed with what they wanted. Their desires trumped all others, including God’s.

Illustration: How different are these men from a simple woman named Emma Lou, my mother. As my brother-in-law said at her funeral, I never heard Emma say, “I want...” Like the Lord she loves and now sees, she was always putting others ahead of herself, her wants and desires (Though it may be her desire was to always put others first!).

3) They charm the simple.

- False teachers mouth great swelling words, arrogant words. “They boast about themselves” (*NIV*). They are big talkers who talk more about themselves than they do expounding the Word of God. They are the hero of every story, giving the appearance of a spiritual superiority.
- Such teachers find an easy target in the biblical illiterate and theologically immature. They are experts in flattery in order to take financial advantage of the gullible and unsuspecting. In other words they are good at locating itching ears (2 Tim. 4:3-4), and telling people what they want to hear and makes them feel good. Master’s of manipulation, they empty the pockets of others and fill their own.
- Some do it, on TBN. Some do it on radio. Some do it in a local church. Some do it in a college or seminary. Anywhere and everywhere, any place they can gain a

hearing and get an audience, you can be sure these “smooth operators” will show up.

Conclusion: Some moderate theologians and spiritual advisors talk of a “softer” view of God whose vengeance and judgment has slowly evaporated and disappeared. Such theologians obviously have not read Jude. Let us not follow in their footsteps. To do so is to walk the path of deception and destruction. It is to come face to face with the God who judges the ungodly, every single one of them.