

Jude 7-8

Conclusion of first triad of examples

Jude 5-6 Recap

- Jude 5 serves to an extent as a transition point in the letter. Jude's use of the phraseology "Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it" serves a rhetorical purpose of introducing a list of examples of stories with which his readers should be fully aware.
- Throughout the letter, Jude makes use of examples from well known stories from the OT or from Jewish pseudepigraphal writings followed by comments of how the opponents in the letter compare.
- In verse five the example is rather generic of the destruction of those who left Egypt and later did not believe.
- Verse six as discussed last week uses the example of the Nephalim mentioned in the early part of Genesis 6 as told in Jewish pseudepigraphal writing.
- The examples are given to show the punishment of unbelief (destruction) in vs. 5 and of violating the created order/sexual sin (kept in chains until judgment) in vs. 6.

Jude 7

- Jude 7 concludes this grouping of examples by way of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah and their destruction along with the other cities of the plain (Admah, Zeboiim, Zoar) in Genesis 19.
- Notice how verse seven begins by connecting back to verse six ("just as" in the ESV). Sodom and Gomorrah's sin is similar to that of the Nephalim.
- In Genesis 19, two angels visit Lot who lives in Sodom and offers them hospitality. The men (old and young alike) of the entire city surround Lot's house and demand he hand over his angelic guests "that we may know them," a euphemism for sexual intercourse.
- Both the Nephalim and the men of Sodom sought sexual sin outside of the created order. The Nephalim being understood as fallen angelic beings who sought sexual sin with human beings, the men of Sodom being fallen human beings who sought sexual sin with angelic beings.
- This is a convincing understanding of what Jude means by saying that the men of Sodom and Gomorrah pursued "different flesh."
- The punishment highlighted here is of *everlasting* fire.
- These three groups highlighted in vss. 5-7, rebellion of the Exodus generation, the fallen angels or Nephalim, and Sodom and Gomorrah, are all well known and widely used within Judaism of the era as *the* exemplars of sin and punishment.

Jude 8

- Jude 8 then explicitly ties the opponents of the letter to the preceding examples ("yet in like manner" ESV).
- The opponents are said to be dreamers. This should not be interpreted the way we would dismiss someone as being merely fanciful ("they are just a dreamer..."). Rather, the Bible is full of examples of God revealing himself to people in dreams as a means of revelation (Jacob's

dream at Bethel, Joseph's dreams as well as those he interpreted, Peter's vision of the unclean animals, etc.).

- These opponents most likely claimed divine revelation, and therefore authority, from dreams as the basis of their teachings. However, *their actions were in direct conflict with the confirmed revelation of Scripture.*
- There has been much speculation about what Jude means by "glorious ones" in verse 7. Given the context, this seems likely to be a reference to supernatural or angelic beings.
- Just like the examples given, these opponents defile the flesh (vs. 6), reject authority (vs. 5), and blaspheme the glorious ones (vs. 7).
- Jude's point is that "new revelation" must always be compared with the known character and nature of God from the previous revelation of Scripture or the apostolic teaching about Jesus (see also 2 Thess. 2).
- Green states, "All revelation that lays claim to authority must come under the evaluative eye of the community, which shines the light of apostolic tradition on its content. The subapostolic church recognized this necessity, as should the contemporary church" (75).