

Jude 1:14-19 - Ungodly Mockers

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I. Jude 1:14-19¹

A. Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling *words*, flattering people to gain advantage. But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

II. God Will Judge The Ungodly.

A. Enoch . . . prophesied

1. God reveals His plans to those who have a close relationship.
 - a) Enoch, like Daniel and John after him, had such a relationship.
 - b) By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. (Heb. 11:5)
2. Prophesied – not a knowledgeable prediction based on wise observation. Inspired revelation by the Holy Spirit, thousands of years in advance, of mankind's ultimate response to God: rejection.

B. The Lord comes . . . to execute judgment.

1. "execute judgment" could be rendered "to cause judgment" or "to bring about" judgment."²
 - a) This speaks of a specific judgment of God which is yet future.
 - b) A judgment which is final and overwhelming.
 - c) A judgment which the world has yet to see and, for the most part, does not believe.
2. Because of its delay, we sometimes labor under the misconception that the ungodly may not get their due: perhaps they might just "get away with it."

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² "execute judgment" is *poiēsai* (aorist, active, infinitive) *krisin* (accusative): "the result of the action is indicated by the accusative and infinitive; . . . bring it about that [BAGD, 681]"

3. This is one of the earliest prophecies recorded within scripture and appears to have the express purpose of preventing the people of God from judging by what they see.
4. What do they see?
 - a) An historic pattern during which injustice has generally prevailed.
 - (1) Those who read Matthew 5 can easily identify with the words of Jesus: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Mtt. 5:6)
 - (2) Why do we hunger and thirst for righteousness? Because *unrighteousness* characterizes this age.
 - b) A world where mockers and the ungodly continue to hold sway.
 - (1) The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw. O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save. Why do You show me iniquity, And cause *me* to see trouble? For plundering and violence *are* before me; There is strife, and contention arises. Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds. (Hab. 1:1-4)
 - c) We are continually subjected to numerous examples where those who violate God's law appear to not only get away with it, but even prosper.
 - (1) Asaph stated:

But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I *was* envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For *there are* no pangs in their death, But their strength *is* firm. They *are* not in trouble *as other* men, Nor are they plagued like *other* men. Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them *like* a garment. Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish. They scoff and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression; They speak loftily. (Ps. 73:2-8)
5. Enoch's prophecy tells us that the injustice which has characterized man's rule on the earth will be brought to a certain and abrupt end when God's time is right.
 - a) Enoch's prophecy is also related in the pseudepigraphal book of *1 Enoch*
 - (1) Critics and skeptics assert that Jude borrowed from the false writing of 1 Enoch.
 - (2) In vv. 14-15 of Jude, the passage from 1 Enoch from which Jude supposedly quotes has one sentence which is similar, but then differs significantly from what Jude relates.
 - (a) "he [God] will march upon Mount Sinai . . . Behold, he will arrive with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all. He will destroy the wicked ones and censure all flesh on account of everything that they have done, that which the sinners and wicked ones committed against him." (1 Enoch 5-9) [TOTP,1:13-14]

(3) Whether we are considering *The Assumption of Moses* or *1 Enoch*, there is no problem when both inspired and uninspired writings refer to the same truth. Uninspired writings may in fact refer to true events. However, this does not make them canonical or suggest that they are “missing Scriptures.” Unreliable writings almost always contain some truth. Just because God’s Holy Word refers to an event or truth, a fragment of which is also recorded in a forged document, is no reason to cast aspersion on the authenticity of the inspired Scriptures.

C. The Lord comes . . . with “ten thousands” [myriads] of His “holy ones.”

1. An innumerable company.

a) Greek word from which we get “myriads.”

b) In this context, corresponds to the English notion of “zillions” – an essentially countless number.

c) An overwhelming response—the ultimate “shock and awe!” The last “war with God” will be shown to be a futile delusion: as if it were ever feasible in the most deranged insanity for creatures to overthrow their Creator!

2. Holy ones = angels (e.g., Dan. 8:13) and men (e.g., Ps. 16:3; 34:9; Acts 9:13) – those who are set apart and dedicated to God.

3. Two instances in Scripture where God comes with innumerable “holy ones.”

a) #1: The giving of the law at Mt. Sinai—the standard by which the works of the unrepentant will be judged.

(1) Moses . . . said: “The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands [MT=*meribbot* – an indefinitely large number, LXX = *uriasin* – myriads] of saints; From His right hand *came* a fiery law for them. (Deu. 33:2 cf. Jdg. 5:4-5; Ps. 68:7-10,17; Hab. 3:3-4; Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2)

(a) The Tabernacle, within which was the ark containing the tablets of the law is referred to as “the tabernacle of the witness” (Num. 18:2 cf. Ex. 38:21).

(b) It contained “the ark of the Testimony” (Ex. 30:26; 21:7)

(c) And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you. (Ex 25:16)

(2) It is the written law which is to be the basis against which these ungodly teachers, operating within Christendom and professing to be Christians but not being found *in Christ*, will be judged (Ps. 149:5-9; Rom. 2:12; 3:19-20; Rev. 11:19; 15:5-6).

b) #2: The Second Coming of Christ—to dramatically intervene in a world which has irretrievably rejected God.

(1) The emphasis on *executing* judgment favors this instance.

- (2) The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica:
 . . . it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe . . . (2Th. 1:7-10 cf. Zec. 14:5; Mark 8:38)
- (3) Scripture indicates that the angels will have the job of culling out the ungodly at the Second Coming (Mtt. 13:39–41,49,50; 24:29–31; 25:31; 2Th. 1:7–10).
4. The apostasy of the church at the time of the end is a major NT theme.
- a) Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day* [the Day of Christ] *will not come* unless the falling away [apostasi'a] comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, (2Th 2:3)
- b) *apostasi'a* = desertion, defection, abandonment, "to stand away [from]"
- c) It does not refer to the rejection of God by the world—but to the professing church. It is an *internal defection* away from God's truth which was previously held.
- d) Numerous warnings from Paul to the young pastor Timothy
- (1) Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron . . . (1Ti 4:1-2)
- (2) But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; (2Ti 3:1-8)
- (3) Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. (2Ti 4:2-4)
- e) Jesus made a disturbing remark at the end of a parable illustrating that God will respond to the persistent prayers made by His saints:

- (1) I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth? (Lu 18:8)
- f) The Bible asserts that this age will close with apostasy culminated by the direct intervention of God in judgment.
- (1) If Christianity successfully converts the world at large to Christ, then God's Word will have been overthrown.
- (2) A theology of victory which asserts that Christianity will achieve lasting dominion in this age by social reform thereby ushering in God's kingdom is a form of idolatry which places personal desires above the revealed truth of God.
- (3) Christianity *will achieve lasting dominion*, but Scripture reveals the means by which this occurs: by the cataclysmic, direct intervention of God within the scope of human history involving massive bloodshed.

D. Sensual.

1. Sensual is *pseuchikoi*, "soulish ones" denoting that which is "natural" or "worldly" and being characteristic of the earthly body. The source of their ungodly pronouncements and actions is the *natural* rather than the *spiritual*. Thus, Jude describes them as not having the Spirit.
2. Here again we see these who "crept in unnoticed" -- who are within the Christian community -- are not believers. They have not been born again. The Holy Spirit is foreign to them.
3. Paul tells the church at Corinth:
 . . . the natural [*pseuchikos*] man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually [*pneumatikōs*] discerned. (1Cor. 2:14)
4. This is why they can do nothing but misrepresent the Scriptures and therefore are unqualified to be teachers or preachers in the household of God.

III. Mockers Were Predicted To Characterize The Last Time.

A. Mockers [*empaiktai*] – those who make fun or ridicule others.

1. What is it that these mockers ridicule?
2. "Their mockery seems to be directed against the delay in the *parousia*, and consequently against the Church's eschatology in general." [TDNT, 5:636].

B. Apostles (remember the words).

1. The Apostle Peter refers to these mockers as "scoffers" (using the same Greek word):

- a) Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scorners will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation." For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. (2Pe 3:1-7)
- b) Things continue
- (1) Denial of the historicity of literal creation - Christians who promote Darwinism.
 - (2) Denial of the global flood and a previous world-wide judgment – embrace a uniformitarian view that God has not actively intervened in history.
 - (3) Christians who deny aspects of future judgment such as the coming tribulation.
 - (a) Almost all the predictions of the NT concerning a time of coming cataclysmic judgment are written from the perspective of apocalyptic genre and merely using literary devices to refer to times past—such as Nero’s persecution of Christians or the overthrow of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
 - (b) None of the judgment passages are to be taken in any sort of literal sense. They are all simply figurative and represent spiritual truths to be applied in the here and now.
 - (c) McLaren - The kingdom involves holistic, planetary “salvation” without any apocalyptic intervention of God.

IV. Mockers In Our Own Time.

- A. Harsh things . . . spoken against Him . . . mouthing great swelling words . . . flattering people (Jude 1:15-16)
- B. Common themes
 1. The true message, the true interpretation is only *now* being understood.
 2. An appeal to make Christianity more acceptable, more reasonable to the culture (flattering people).
 3. The church has missed the understanding God intended for nearly 2,000 years.
 4. Orthodox understanding can’t be known with any certainty, but the new speculative (heterodox) understanding is preferable.
 5. A rejection of the clear standards for behavior found in Scripture and the endorsement of societal perversion as representing the loving perspective.

- C. So if, according to the Bible, we are living in the "last time," where are these mockers? Where can we find them *today*?
1. Look for prominent Christian leaders who primarily concerned with acceptance by the culture and who make pronouncements (swelling words) which deny clear Biblical truths.
- D. Robert Schuller – founder of the Chrystal Cathedral
1. "I don't think anything has been done in the name of Christ and under the banner of Christianity that has proven more destructive to human personality and, hence, counterproductive to the evangelism enterprise than the often crude, uncouth, and unchristian strategy of attempting to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition."³
 2. "The Cross sanctifies the ego trip. That's very significant. In other words, Jesus had an ego. He said, 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me.' Wow! What an ego trip He was on!"⁴
- E. John Shelby Spong - retired (2000) American bishop of the Episcopal Church Diocese of Newark.
- a) Promotes a "reformation" within which many of Christianity's basic doctrines should be reformulated.
 - b) Books are very popular (front view) in the Christianity section of most secular bookstores:
 - (1) *Living in Sin: A Bishop Rethinks Human Sexuality* - promotes gay rights.
 - (2) *Resurrection: Myth or Reality? A Bishop's Search for the Origin of Christianity* - denies the physical resurrection of Christ.
 - (3) *Born of a Woman: A Bishop Rethinks the Birth of Jesus* – denies the virgin birth.
 - (4) *Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism: A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning of Scripture* – denies an orthodox understanding of the Scriptures.
 - c) Constantly "rethinking" and "searching" for what God has already clearly revealed.
 - d) Bishop = epi skopos = one who "watches over" the flock.
 - (1) The Apostle Peter warned:

. . . there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction. (2Pe 2:1b)

2. Quotes

³ Robert Schuller, "Dr. Schuller Comments," (letter to the editor), *Christianity Today*, October 5, 1984, pp. 12-13.

⁴ *The Phil Donahue Show*, transcript 08120, August 12, 1980, p. 10.

- a) On homosexuality:
"Contemporary research has today uncovered new facts that are producing a rising conviction that homosexuality — is a healthy, natural and affirming form of human sexuality." [WRWBS]
- b) On the authority of the Bible:
"Can modern men and women continue to pretend that timeless, eternal, and unchanging truth has been captured in the words of a book that achieved its final written form midway into the second century of the common era? Would not such a claim be dismissed as ludicrous in any other branch of human knowledge?" [WRWBS]
- c) On the Bible's representation of Jesus:
"There are passages in the Gospels that portray Jesus of Nazareth as narrow-minded, vindictive, and even hypocritical."

F. Brian McLaren – Emergent Church Leader

- 1. Injecting doubt about objective truth. The Bible can't be known, so can't be authoritative:
How do "I" know the Bible is always right? And if "I" am sophisticated enough to realize that I know nothing of the Bible without my own involvement via interpretation, I'll also ask how I know which school, method, or technique of biblical interpretation is right. What makes a "good" interpretation good? And if an appeal is made to a written standard (book, doctrinal statement, etc.) or to common sense or to "scholarly principles of interpretation," the same pesky "I" who liberated us from the authority of the church will ask, "Who sets the standard? Whose common sense? Which scholars and why? Don't all these appeals to authorities and principles outside the Bible actually undermine the claim of ultimate biblical authority? Aren't they just the new pope?" [AGO, 133]
- a) Is *this* lack of confidence about Bible certainties compatible with the Bible's own teaching?
 - (1) The psalmist wrote, "You have magnified your Word above all your name" (Ps. 138:2).
 - (2) Jesus said, ". . . Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).
 - (3) Countless faithful saints have died to uphold the testimony of Scripture and to preserve it down to our time.
- b) If Scripture is so vague that we can't understand and declare its propositions, then how would we know whether it has been "broken"? Would God elevate a hodge-podge of uncertain writings above His own Name? Did countless saints die a martyr's death for things that can't really be known? Does the eternal destiny of each individual hang in the balance of writings that can't really be known?

2. Inclusive salvation, even of those who are not Christians:
"The Christian faith, I am proposing, should become (in the name of Jesus Christ) a welcome friend to other religions of the world, not a threat." [AGO, 254]

G. Doug Pagitt – Emergent Church Leader

1. Doug Pagitt denies judgment and hell as a destination for unbelievers and states:
"When a good Muslim dies, his soul interacts with God just as any other human's soul interacts with God. . . . God is going to heal and repair the life of everybody in the same way. There is going to be no difference between the way God is going to interact with [a Christian] when he dies and with a Muslim. God will judge all men the same way *regardless of what they believe.*"⁵

H. Holy Spirit

1. All of the above assert themselves to be "Christians." But are these the words of people who have been born again of God's Holy Spirit?
2. Jude is not warning us about the ungodly *outside* the church. His warning concerns those who "crept in unnoticed."
3. The apostle Paul warned the church at Ephesus about this sobering reality.
 - a) Also *from among yourselves* men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. (Ac 20:30)
4. These are surely among the mockers and scoffers who exhibit disdain and disregard for God's Holy Word and the people who dedicated their lives to uphold it, proclaim it, and live it.

V. Be Encouraged.

- A. Mockers are to be expected.
- B. The plan and predictions of God are right on track.
- C. *Somebody* must be raised up by God for such a difficult time. Aren't we blessed to be considered for service in such a difficult time?
- D. May we prove ourselves worthy of God's service in our age!

VI. Pray

VII. Bibliography

AGO Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, (Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 2004; published by Zondervan).

⁵[<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0isqLRhClo&feature=fvw>] accessed 20100108.

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