

Discernment & Judgement Jude 8-10

I think keeping the whole book in mind is the best way to understand it,

- 1 – Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, wrote this letter
- 2 – He wanted to write about the ‘common salvation’ but changed his mind
- 3 – Because certain, ungodly people ‘crept’ into the church who
 - a) pervert grace...and
 - b) deny Jesus as Master and Lord.

- 4 – This has been done before with terrible consequences
 - a) Israel in the wilderness v5
 - b) Angels who left Heaven v6
 - c) Sodom and Gomorrah v7

V 8 – *“in like manner these people also”* = v 4 – *“certain people...”*

The point of these next verses is to show that these certain people deserve the same judgment as Israel, angels, and S&G.

- a) Relying on their dreams – appealing to dreams as a source of revelation as the justification for their lifestyle.

Their dreams sanctioned their behavior

In the OT, it appears that God sometimes spoke to people, like Jacob, in visions when they were awake and in dreams when asleep.

Most often, he spoke to His people or obedient people in visions – think about John on Patmos

He also spoke to disobedient people or people who did not acknowledge him in dreams – think about Nebuchadnezzar

But nothing replaces God’s word. There is no higher authority. Every experience is subject to Scripture.

- b) Defile the flesh = sexual sins

Romans 1:21 - *For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.... 24 – Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves....26-27 - For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.*

Numbers 25:1-3 – *When Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to commit sexual immorality with the daughters of Moab. ² These women invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods; then the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³ When Israel joined themselves to Baal Peor, the anger of the LORD flared up against Israel.*

c) Reject authority –

V4 - *...ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

d) Blaspheme the glorious ones

It would appear these glorious ones are 'fallen angels.'

2 Peter 2:10 - *...then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, ¹¹ whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.*

This is consistent with the next verse in which Michael does not blaspheme a fallen angel.

This interpretation fits best because Jude next mentions the humility of Michael.

V 9 – While ungodly people in the church blasphemed fallen angels, Michael refused to do so.

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

This account is not found anywhere in the Bible. But the occasion of Jude's story is not the point that Jude is trying to make.

a) Archangel = authority

Daniel 10:13 & 21 - *The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.... But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.*

Michael is a prince among angels.

Revelation 12:7 - *Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon.*

Only two angels are named in the Bible.

a) Gabriel = messenger angel

b) Michael = warrior angel

The OT tells us that God buried Moses

Deuteronomy 34:5-6 - *So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, ⁶and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day.*

1 - What does the devil want with Moses's body? Perhaps he could re-animate it and tell the children of Israel to go back into the wilderness or even Egypt.

2 - Or it may be that Satan simply wants to discredit Moses because of his sin so that Moses will never enter Heaven (We'll talk about that in a moment)

But Michael didn't enter a war of words with the devil. Even though he may have had the right to criticize Satan, he didn't. Instead, he simply said,

9 - *"The Lord rebuke you."*

Zechariah 3:1-5 - *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. ²And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is*

not this a brand plucked from the fire?" ³ Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. ⁴ And the angel said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments." ⁵ And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD was standing by.

God's word – "The Lord rebuke you" provides Joshua with forgiveness, illustrated in the new clothes.

Michael does not deny Moses's sin. He killed an Egyptian. Instead, he appeals to the Lord's rebuke of Satan and Moses's sin, which in effect, demonstrates Moses's forgiveness.

This account is not found anywhere in the Bible, but Jude must have thought it was a valid story or he would not have alluded to it as evidence of what not to do.

But the occasion of Jude's story is not the point that Jude is trying to make.

He's trying to point out that even Michael, the archangel, didn't blaspheme Satan. He left the judgment of Satan to God, relying on God's just judgment.

ILL – This Sunday, I'm preaching on Adam, whose sin is very apparent. But God recorded Adam's life for our instruction (1 Cor 10:1), not our incrimination.

But apparently, these 'ungodly people' in this particular church are doing that about angels.

V 10 - *But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.*

These people think they understand heavenly things, perhaps because of their dreams, but they are out of their spiritual depth. So much so that they actually don't know any more than 'unreasoning animals.'

However, what they don't understand will one day, 'destroy' them. Just because they don't understand it, or deny it, doesn't mean it isn't real. There is real discernment. The Lord knows who are his (2 Tim 1:9) and will one day destroy those who are not his.

Conclusion: These are difficult truths. But the Bible is the story of reality, and those who don't know Christ or abuse grace are being warned. Even if we don't like reading these passages, we must still heed them and warn others. It is the loving thing to do.