

Jude has opened his short letter by telling us he has an urgent appeal for us to contend for the faith. In the few verses we will look at today, he is emphasizing the need to persevere in our faith along with a warning of the destiny of those who do not do so.

⁵ Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. This is another phrase that seems to match 2nd Peter. Peter wrote, ¹² *Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.* 2 Peter 1:12 (ESV) We need to be reminded of essential truths. Jude says they once fully knew it. That would imply that they don't now know it as fully as they previously did. We fully know something when it is clear in our mind and heart and the application is at hand.

Let me give you an example. I fully know that I am to love others with the love of Christ because they are made in the image of God, and because Christ gave Himself up for them. Then I should take time to meet their need at the leading of the Holy Spirit. I no longer fully know that truth that I am to love others if I easily make an excuse for not meeting their need when it is in my power to help. (1John 4:21) If I see someone that is obviously hurting and I don't take time to share God's love and comfort with them because (fill in the blank with your excuse), then I don't fully remember Jesus died for them. Oh, I know He did, but I don't fully know He did, and so I don't act from that knowledge that resides in my head *and* my heart. My head can quote the command. My heart doesn't fully remember it as Jesus gave it. (1John 3:17-18)

Now when I put it that way, is there anyone here that, like those to whom Jude wrote, needs to be reminded of truth that we once fully knew? If you didn't raise your hand, maybe a few more illustrations will ring a bell. We all need to be reminded, because our struggle against the old nature is not over until we see Jesus. (Galatians 5:17) We can remember when the Holy Spirit impressed upon our hearts the need to allow the life of Christ to flow through us in different situations, and for a time that lesson is so strong and the Scripture so alive, but over time, we tend to forget. (Deuteronomy 4:9) We are learning other lessons, but old ones are fading. That is why we need Biblical preaching. That is why we often go back to the same lessons we have learned before.

A ministerial student friend of mine noticed that the Biblical lessons tend to be repeated in book after book of the Bible. He asked how we were going to preach the same truth again and again? I can't remember how I responded, but today I would say that even if you preached the same sermon, most people wouldn't remember when you preached it before, and besides, the Holy Spirit makes it new each time. As we grow we gain new

Commented [notes1]: 1 John 4:21 (ESV)

²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Commented [notes2]: 1 John 3:17-18 (ESV)

¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?
¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Commented [notes3]: Galatians 5:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

Commented [notes4]: Deuteronomy 4:9 (ESV)

⁹ "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children

insights and have new illustrations to help us grasp the truth. We all need to be reminded of the truth we once knew. (Hebrews 2:1) We need to receive the fresh breath of the Spirit that reminds our hearts of the necessity to let Christ express that truth through us.

The lesson that Jude wanted to remind the readers was one of **the need to persevere**. The very people that saw the wonders in Egypt and walked through the Red Sea on dry land never entered the Promised Land. We can have a tendency to read the accounts of the wilderness wandering and ask how they could be so pathetic. Jude is telling us that we better realize that we can end up exactly the same. (1Corinthians 10:11) We may not make a golden calf (Exodus 32:8), but we might grow tired of waiting for the Lord to lead us and look to something else to lead us. Persevere!

Just as God had chosen the seed of Abraham, set them apart and delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, so the Lord has chosen you and set you apart from the bondage of sin. (1Peter 2:9-10) He called you and me out and delivered us in an even more precious way, through the sacrifice of His own Son. As the writer of Hebrews warned, *3a how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?* Hebrews 2:3a (ESV) The same Lord that delivered them had them die in the wilderness. The same Lord that once delivered us from the bondage of sin can see that our body is destroyed so that our spirit might be saved on the Day of Christ. (1Corinthians 5:5) **God delivered us so that we might go on unto sanctification**, ready to serve Him daily as we die daily. That should be the normal Christian life. (1Thessalonians 4:3)

Did you notice that in the ESV version Jude said it was Jesus that saved them out of the land of Egypt? Some commentators complain that this must be an error. NIV uses "Lord" instead of Jesus. Metzger argues for the use of Jesus from several principles of textual criticism. (A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament)

A study of the Aramaic translations (the Targums) of the Old Testament shows that the Jews saw the Word of the Lord as the savior and deliverer from the Egyptians. (Tg. Neof. Exodus 14:30 See The Jewish Targums and John's Logos Theology by John Ronning, p. 250) John the Beloved tells us that the Jesus is the Word made flesh. (John 1:14) As for the destruction of the older Jews in the wilderness by Jesus, Deuteronomy 2:15 tells us it was by the "hand of the Lord". Isaiah refers to the Messiah as the "arm of the Lord". (Isaiah 53:1) The Apostle Paul even tells us that Jesus was the rock that poured forth the water so that huge multitude could survive in the desert. (1Corinthians 10:4-5) *Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!* Hebrews 13:8(ESV) He was their deliver and judge, and He is ours as well.

Jude continues with another example of those who were chosen and appointed by God but who rebelled against their calling. *6 And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains*

Commented [notes5]: Hebrews 2:1 (ESV)
¹ Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

Commented [notes6]: 1 Corinthians 10:11 (ESV)
¹¹ Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

Commented [notes7]: Exodus 32:8 (ESV)
⁸ They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"

Commented [notes8]: 1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)
⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Commented [notes9]: 1 Corinthians 5:5 (ESV)
⁵ you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Commented [notes10]: 1 Thessalonians 4:3 (ESV)
³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality;

Commented [notes11]: John 1:14 (ESV)
¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Commented [notes12]: Deuteronomy 2:15 (ESV)
¹⁵ For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the camp, until they had perished.

Commented [notes13]: Isaiah 53:1 (ESV)
¹ Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

Commented [notes14]: 1 Corinthians 10:4-5 (ESV)
⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.
⁵ Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day – (2Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:2) Some believe these are the fallen angels of Genesis 6 that took the daughters of men and bore children through them. There are other opinions, but one thing is certain, the angelic beings were made to serve God and obey His commands. (Psalm 103:20) Some did not stay within the realm to which they were assigned. They usurped God’s authority. Whether this means they left the spiritual realm and entered the physical without permission, we can’t be certain. Whatever took place, it was rebellion. God had them bound and kept with “eternal chains under gloomy darkness” until the final judgment. The Apostle Paul declared that we will judge angels. (1Corinthians 6:3)

Just as the children of Israel rebelled and were punished, so these angels rebelled and were punished. God is righteous. What He demands is what is good and right. Rebellion against goodness and righteousness must be judged if there is to be justice. The just penalty by God was imposed on each. Jude is helping the readers see God’s pattern of justice as a warning for us to persevere in our faith. He adds one more example.

⁷ *just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.* The connection with the previous verse leads me to believe the angelic rebellion was indeed that of Genesis 6. It was a sexual temptation of the forbidden. The allure of the forbidden is a very real and powerful temptation. God has designed us in such a way as to enjoy His creation. Certain responses in our physical body, endorphins in the brain, the sense of touch, are all gifts from God to be enjoyed within God’s boundaries. Temptation is to enjoy those experiences outside of God’s boundaries or to create the same feelings in an unnatural way. That is the power of drug addiction. (Ephesians 4:19)

The problem with these forbidden paths to physical pleasure is that they damage the body or make us dependent on them. God’s wholesome boundaries never do damage to the body or soul. The forbidden paths always damage both in the long run. Surveys have shown that those who are the most physically satisfied over time are those that live within God’s boundaries. Is it not as we would expect from a God who loves us? The lie of Satan is that the forbidden pleasure will somehow be more fulfilling or meet your need without consequences. (Genesis 3:4) **There are always consequences to forbidden pleasure.**

Lot was an example of a righteous life, but he was vexed every day with what he saw and heard. (2Peter 2:8) The men of Sodom were so enslaved by sin that even after they were blinded they groped around trying to find the door to where the angel was staying to try to molest him. (Genesis 19:11) The judgment they experienced was not just a fire that destroyed the cities, but “eternal fire”.

Commented [notes15]: 2 Peter 2:4 (ESV)
⁴ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

Commented [notes16]: Revelation 20:2 (ESV)
² And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

Commented [notes17]: Genesis 6:1-2 (ESV)
¹ When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them,
² the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.

Commented [notes18]: Psalm 103:20 (ESV)
²⁰ Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!

Commented [notes19]: 1 Corinthians 6:3 (ESV)
³ Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!

Commented [notes20]: Ephesians 4:19 (ESV)
¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

Commented [notes21]: Genesis 3:4 (ESV)
⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

Commented [notes22]: 2 Peter 2:8 (ESV)
⁸ (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);

Commented [notes23]: Genesis 19:11 (ESV)
¹¹ And they struck with blindness the men who were at the entrance of the house, both small and great, so that they wore themselves out groping for the door.

With these three examples, Jude is warning his readers of the necessity to stay strong in our faith and not falter. They could not say that because they were children of God by faith in Jesus that they need never fear falling. (1Corinthians 10:12) Those in the wilderness were children of God, but they never entered into the Promised Land. They couldn't say because of their high calling to obey the Word, like that of angels, that they need never fear falling into disobedience. Nor could they say that sexual temptation or temptation of the forbidden would never capture their imagination. They needed to persevere in their faith. (1Timothy 4:16) So do we!

Commented [notes24]: 1 Corinthians 10:12 (ESV)
¹²Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

We could argue whether or not they could lose their salvation through intentional rebellion, but it isn't necessary. Rebellion has severe consequences. That is enough to see the need to discipline our lives to stay obedient and faithful. Had they forgotten the fear of the Lord?

Commented [notes25]: 1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV)
¹⁶Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Whom the Lord loves, He chastens. (Hebrews 12:6) Those who never accept His love and forgiveness, He will have to judge. The fear of the Lord is one of those aspects of our relationship to God that many no longer fully know. Some of us have had such discipline that we were shaken to the core and promised to follow hard after God. **Do you remember such a time?** It may have been a near death experience or that of someone you love, and all the compromises in your life came flooding into your mind. The world calls that unnecessary guilt. I call it a wakeup call from the God Almighty who loves us enough to get our attention. We need to relive those experiences in our mind so that we keep the lesson fresh in our hearts. (Hebrews 12:5)

Commented [notes26]: Hebrews 12:6 (ESV)
⁶For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.⁷

Jude is teaching from the examples in the Word. That should be the source of our learning. How much better to learn from the bad examples of others and the judgment they received than to have to experience it for ourselves! How much wiser to say, "Look what happened to them. I'm not going down that road."

Commented [notes27]: Hebrews 12:5 (ESV)
⁵And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.

The Proverbs tell us ⁷ *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.* Proverbs 1:7 (NIV) This is where the truly wise began to obtain their knowledge. They realized that God disciplines to train us for our good. (Hebrews 12:10) They look for the lesson in the discipline and how they should change. The fool just gets mad at God and asks how a loving God could allow this thing in their life. For the fool, justice is always a good thing as long as it is applied to someone else.

Commented [notes28]: Hebrews 12:10 (ESV)
¹⁰For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

²⁷ *The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death.* Proverbs 14:27 (NIV) If we know God will deal with our rebellion, we are much less likely to go there. Rebellion is the snares of death. The wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) What a contrast, a fountain of life and the snares of death. I'll take the fountain of life which is the fear of the Lord! It is what Jesus called the abundant life. (John 10:10) When we avoid evil and live in Christ, we are all we were created to be. We are filled with joy as we surrender our lives in loving service. (Psalm 16:11)

Commented [notes29]: Romans 6:23 (ESV)
²³For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Commented [notes30]: John 10:10 (ESV)
¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Commented [notes31]: John 10:10 (ESV)
¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Let me give you one more proverb on the fear of the Lord.¹⁷ *Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD.* Proverbs 23:17 (NIV) Sin often looks fun, that is unless you wait a few days and look at the results. We are tempted to envy the seeming joy of the sinner. But that isn't real joy. It is fleeting happiness. (Hebrews 11:25) It won't last long, and then the consequences begin. **Always be zealous for the fear of the Lord!**

Commented [notes32]: Hebrews 11:25 (ESV)

²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

The world certainly does not understand this. It is evident in the way discipline is being taken out of society. Children are no longer spanked. Fear of a good spanking caused me to avoid evil. Of course you shouldn't abuse a child, but we have gone to the other extreme of not loving them enough to discipline them in a way that will turn them from evil. Because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and keeps us from evil, we should always be zealous for it.

The world asks us why we would want to serve a God we fear. My answer is that my Father loves me enough to discipline me. (Hebrews 12:5-6) If you weren't disciplined in some manner, if you had no reverential fear of your father, I question how much you were loved. God loves us! That is why we fear Him.

Commented [notes33]: Hebrews 12:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."⁵

Jude was warning his readers of the consequences of backsliding and the necessity to remember the lessons we've learned in our head *and* in our heart. We need the reminders. Never come to the Word with the attitude, "Oh, I've heard this before!" Always approach it with respect and an attitude of asking what God is speaking to you through it today. (Hebrews 4:12) Maybe you've heard the passage a thousand times. Hear it as if the writer was speaking it to you for the first time. Listen for the voice of God. **The Word of God speaks. Hearing and taking it to heart is always the best thing you can do for yourself.**

Commented [notes34]: Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

¹² For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Jude is going to go on with descriptions of the false teachers. He is encouraging his readers to contend for the faith and be sure they do not turn back and end up like the examples he has given. He is giving them a reason to be careful about what they receive from those who deliver a message to them. We do not want to end up like these of whom Paul has described. Be zealous for a reverential fear of our loving heavenly Father. Persevere! (John 13:17)

Commented [notes35]: John 13:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Questions

- 1 What does Jude mean by "fully know"?
- 2 Why do we need reminders?
- 3 What is Jude emphasizing?
- 4 Who delivered the Jews from Egypt?
- 5 What is Jude's second example?
- 6 And the third?
- 7 Why does God give prohibitions?

- 8 Have you had a wakeup call? What did you promise God?
- 9 What is the contrast in Proverbs 14:27?
- 10 How can we be zealous for the fear of the Lord?
- 11 How should we approach the Word of God?