

**Rev. Bob Canode**

### **“Final Proof” Jude 14-16 Sermon**

In these verses Jude once again refers to a book in the collection of Jewish works known as the Pseudepigrapha. We’ve mentioned this collection before, because Jude was probably referring to another book in this collection when in verse 9 he talks about a story concerning a dispute between the archangel Michael and Satan.

Apparently they were disputing about the burial of the body of Moses. This story is not found in Scripture and so Jude probably had taken it from a book within this collection of works, again, known as the Pseudepigrapha.

Pseudepigrapha means “falsely ascribed”, that is to say the authorship of these works are falsely attributed to prominent figures in the OT. For example, the story about the dispute between Michael and Satan is probably taken from a pseudepigraphical book entitled “The Assumption of Moses”.

This work claims to have been written, at least partially, by Moses. Over time the true church did not recognize or receive these works as belonging within our collection of inspired books that make up the old and new testaments.

But, as we have said before, they are helpful in giving us an idea of the way Jewish minds interpreted OT texts and how they understood the teaching of the OT as a whole. Here in these verses Jude explicitly quotes a book from these works when he references Enoch, the 7<sup>th</sup> from Adam.

In verse 14 and 15 he quotes directly from a book called 1 Enoch of the Pseudepigrapha. And in this quote he gives us the main focus of our text, and it is that the Lord Jesus Christ will come to render a final judgment against ungodliness at the end of the age.

This is the final proof section that Jude gives in this letter. In verse 7 he said that Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities served as “proof” or “example” of the kind of judgment that would come upon the false teachers that had infiltrated the church; “...serve as an *‘example/proof’ by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire*” (v.7)

His main concern in this letter is that the church should contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints and why should they do this? Because false teachers had infiltrated the church. He then goes on to list “proofs” and examples of the seriousness of the current threat.

His first set of these proofs and examples included Israel in the wilderness, fallen angels, and Sodom and Gomorrah. His second set included highlighting the wickedness of Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Here in this final proof Jude quotes 1 Enoch to show that these people who had intruded were a fulfillment of Enoch’s words and that Jesus would certainly judge them at his second coming.

Jude refers to Enoch as the seventh from Adam. That is to say he is a close descendant of the historical figure Adam. This genealogy is recorded in Genesis 5. Beginning with Adam as number one, Enoch is the seventh recorded. We are told that Enoch walked with God and that he lived 365 years. We’re also told that Enoch did not die during his time on earth, but that he was simply taken up by God.

This is Genesis 5:24: *“Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him”* This statement is a very concise summary of Enoch’s 300+ years on earth. He walked with God, that is to say he obeyed God. He obeyed God and then was translated into Heaven.

The writer of Hebrews describes Enoch’s obedience or walking with God as *“pleasing”* God; *“By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God”*

Elijah is another figure in Scripture who did not experience death but was translated to Heaven by way of chariots of fire. Enoch then is described in the Bible as one who, by faith, was faithful to God’s covenant and by God’s grace received the reward of life in Heaven, without tasting death.

He and Elijah experienced a deathless entrance into glory. Enoch’s circumvention of the death path connects him with the prophet Elijah, who experienced the same thing (2 Kings 2). Both these men were there one minute then gone the next, taken up to glory.

Elijah we know clearly from Scripture to be a prophet, who prophesied against the wickedness of Israel’s leaders. Jude here tells us that Enoch prophesied in a similar fashion. Now Jude quotes a book that is not inspired. Does this mean that Jude thought 1 Enoch in its entirety should be in the Bible?

His use of it does not necessarily mean this. It only means that Jude under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, confirmed the truthfulness of this particular prophecy concerning the Lord’s judgment of ungodliness in all its forms.

Enoch, because of his translation into Heaven, was a prominent and honored figure in redemptive history. The writer of Hebrews confirms this and the presence of Jewish works attributed to him, confirm this. So the inclusion of this prophecy in the NT, the fact that is said to have come from Enoch, who walked with God and then was taken up in a deathless entrance into Heaven, and the fact that Jude here says Enoch *“prophesied”*---all of this means the content of the statement he quotes is unfailingly certain.

As our writer put it, these false teachers have no hope of ultimately triumphing. And so every time you go to the store and you see a book from a certain well known heretic, someone who is known to teach lies and who loves money and is greedy for dishonest gain and through his books, teaches others to do the same, remember the prophetic words of Enoch here.

And what does he prophesy about them? *“It was about these (false teachers) that Enoch prophesied saying, ‘Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him”*

This quote from Enoch is given at the beginning of this book in the context of the author proclaiming the coming forth of the Lord in judgment on the last day. This day is spoken of in the same way that Scripture speaks of it. It is a day that the Lord comes in an immediate and unexpected display of infinite power and glory.

Enoch says this just a few lines before this quote; *“The Holy Great One will come forth from his dwelling and the eternal God will tread upon the earth even on Mt. Sinai, and appear from His camp and appear in the strength of His might from the heaven of heavens...and the Watchers shall quake and great fear and trembling shall seize them unto the ends of the earth”* (1 Enoch 1:3-5)

While it might seem that false teachers get away with their sins, and that God does not notice, Jude reminds us that their judgment will come upon them suddenly and unexpectedly, like it did in Noah's day and like it came upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

Jesus used similar language about His second coming when He said in Matt. 24: *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"* (Matt. 24:29-31)

In this prophecy from Christ here we see Him mentioning not only the sudden judgment that will be seen with His coming but also the accompanying salvation. He said then He will *"gather His elect from one end of heaven to another"* Not only will Christ's return be a glorious display of judgment against the ungodly but it will also be a glorious display of salvation as He gathers His resurrection harvest of believers all over the world.

People don't often think about this kind of thing Jude speaks of here. But this text, and certainly the times that we are in, force us to think about the end of all things. None of us, as far as I know at least, have ever seen an angel. They are described in Scripture as mighty and glorious. We see in the Bible that even the arrival of one or two angels on earth causes men who see them to be terrified.

Some even fall down to worship them because they think they are in the presence of the Divine. If then, this is what happens when a couple of them come imagine for a moment what it will be like when ten thousands of them suddenly appear following the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Jude brought this image to bear upon the minds of his hearers to give them peace about the ungodliness coming from the false teachers in his day. As Peter says in 2 Peter: *"God knows how to rescue the godly from trials"* And it is ungodliness that Christ and His angels will judge.

The word "ungodliness" in different forms is mentioned four times in verse 15 as the object of Christ's judgment; *"...to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way and all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him"*

The judgment consists then in the punishment of both the wicked deeds of the ungodly and the wicked words of the ungodly. The indictment that Jude brought against the intruders in verse 4 was that they perverted the grace of God into sensuality or ungodliness.

They distorted the message of the gospel into license to live how they pleased, without any self-control. This is what ungodliness is. It is living and speaking in a way that gives no regard to the one true God, to whom all people owe obedience and worship.

We could go back to the way in which ungodliness was revealed in the example Jude gave of Sodom and Gomorrah. He says they indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire. These are acts done from a heart that is set only on satisfying the lusts of the flesh. Ungodly deeds are those done by people who do not fear God. Jude says even the manner in which they do them is ungodly; *"...to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way"*

In other words there is no restraint to their ungodliness. They are committed to it. Jude shows us here from this quotation from Enoch that the ungodly will not only be judged and convicted for the ungodly things they do but they will also be held accountable for the ungodly things that they say.

He speaks of “*all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him, (i.e. against the Lord)*”

The book Jude cites elaborates on this when it says that the wicked speak proud and hard words and with impure mouths they speak against God’s greatness. Jude here speaks of harsh things spoken against Christ. Ungodly people speak directly against Christ but they also speak harshly against others.

The Bible teaches that the harsh words we speak to others made in our image, leave us accountable to judgment of God, especially the words spoken against God’s chosen servants. When Korah rebelled against Moses, he spoke harshly against him and Aaron and in doing so we are told that they despised the LORD Himself. In other words, to speak against harshly against God’s people is to speak against God Himself.

Our tongues were created to bless the LORD and to build one another up. The ungodly use their tongues to curse God and others. Jude says here that the emergence of these ungodly people within their midst was a fulfillment of Enoch’s prophecy. He says in verse 14, “*it was about these that Enoch prophesied*”

The presence of false teachers using and abusing the name of Christ will be a constant reality in the Kingdom of God until Christ returns.

In the next verse Jude justifies the verdict they receive from Christ with more charges against them. He says they are grumblers and malcontents. Like Israel in the wilderness they complain about their lot, never content, and always laying blame for their situation at the feet of someone or something else, namely God or “fate”.

Godly people on the other hand, by the grace of God, mourn over their own sins, and are always thankful, recognizing that because of our sins we deserve nothing good from God. And so we confess our sins, and give Him praise and thanks for any good gift He gives, even when we suffer. This is what Job did after having lost all of his property and all his children.

He said, “*naked I came from my mother’s womb and naked shall I return. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away, blessed be the name of the LORD*” (Job 1:21)

Jude says they follow their sinful desires. They are ungodly through and through, slaves to sin. He says they are loud-mouthed boasters. They are bombastic, again lacking self-control, and speaking blasphemies against God and his people.

And they show favoritism to gain advantage. The Bible speaks strongly against showing partiality, especially in court; “*You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor*” (Lev. 19:15)

Ungodly people will say whatever needs to be said to advance their own cause. They have no concern for the truth in their dealings with men. When Jesus comes with ten thousands of angels He will execute perfect justice. He will not show impartiality. In the end the ungodly will get what they deserve. Their attempts to please men will end in frustration because they did not seek to please God nor give thanks to Him.

Beloved the ungodliness Jesus will judge and the kind Jude speaks of here is coming from those who are seared in their conscience. They have abandoned themselves to ungodliness and this way of life, perverting the grace of God into sensuality.

God knows who they are. We don't have this kind of knowledge which is why we continually call men and women to repentance through the gospel. Repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. This is the hope we offer to all. But we might here be thinking of our own ungodliness even as Christians.

Are we not at times discontented? Do we do not grumble against God? Do we not sometimes say harsh things against others? By the grace of God this should not be the case with believers. Of course when we do these things, we have comfort knowing that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins for the sake of Christ, and He cleanses us of all unrighteousness.

But the Bible tells us that before Christ saved us we were slaves to our ungodliness. But now through faith in Christ, we find comfort and hope knowing that what Paul says in Romans is true about us; *"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly"* It was because of our ungodliness that the Son of Man was lifted up on the cross.

But because of that death, Paul later goes on to say that we are justified by His blood. And by Christ's Spirit our slavery to sin has been severed and we now renounce ungodliness. What this means friends is that when the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones we will have nothing to fear.

The great and awesome power that will be revealed when our resurrected Lord and myriads upon myriads of holy and mighty angels come upon the earth to judge the ungodly will be a sure sign of our salvation. Or as Paul says, *"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. Since therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God"* (Rom. 5:6;8)