

The Apostates' Blasphemy

Jude 8-10

65-8

We return tonight to our study of the epistle of Jude. We are unable to move through this book as rapidly as we did 2 John and 3 John, if for no other reason than the fact that it's about twice as long as both of those. But more than that, this is one of those books that is condensed. And when you look into it, it expands by its own nature. And so we are digging in deeply and finding ourselves broadened in our understanding of the truths which are here mentioned rather briefly, but open to us all kinds of vistas of understanding.

Jude wrote this little epistle on the subject of apostasy. Apostasy is to defect from the faith, to know the faith, that is the gospel of Jesus Christ, to affirm it to one degree or another, to understand it and to abandon it, to reject it. More than that, Jude is not dealing necessarily with apostasy in general but with one particular form of apostasy, and that is that kind of apostasy that rejects the faith and then stays inside the church and deceives and propagates lies. There are those who having heard the faith and understood the faith and even made profession of the faith, abandoned the faith and disappear, never to darken the door of the church again, making no pretense of religion, no pretense of Christianity. They, of course, have brought upon themselves eternal condemnation but they are not a threat to the life of the church.

There are, however, other apostates who having rejected the faith become the agents of Satan inside the church who profess some adherence to Christianity, to Christian truth, and even some adherence to Scripture. But they are perverse and perverted and they exist inside the church in order to do the deadly work of undermining the truth from the inside. Jude is addressing those particularly, those who are described in verse 4 as certain persons who have crept in unnoticed. Or in verse 12, "Those men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts." They're still in the church, they still call themselves Christians, they still talk about the Lord Jesus, but they are dangerous. And they are set to destroy the truth. And so in verse 3 you have the major issue of this book, "I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith." This is a call to war, a call to battle, to fight for the truth against the error that is basically disseminated inside the church to pervert and corrupt.

Two weeks ago as we approached verses 8 through 11 in our study of this epistle, I told you about spiritual terrorists who are hidden in the church, who do battle against the truth and the souls of men and women. And we are all very aware of terrorism in our world, if we're aware of anything, we're aware of that. It is to some degree a new phenomenon in the world. There are rabid killers who are especially dangerous for two reasons. One, they're unknown, secrecy is critical to them. They operate hidden. And secondly, they are willing to kill themselves for their cause. Their extreme devotion makes it impossible for us to threaten them with anything that will stop their enterprise

because they're actually willing to blow themselves up in the process of blowing up others. For those two reasons that they are hidden and that they are extremely devoted to the degree of suicide, they are a new threat to the world's society. And the only way to stop them is to find out who they are and stop them before they can do their damage. It is essential to discern who they are and disarm them and the whole world is aware of that now. And this is a very frightened world in which we live, a world trying to unmask the terrorists before they strike, unmask them and disarm them before they do their destructive work.

And while the world is very aware of this and the world has ratcheted up its defenses and its pursuit in order to protect against these terrorists, the church seems very indifferent to spiritual terrorists, to Satan's Al Qaeda. And they basically operate in great danger because of the same two things. They are hidden inside, quote/unquote, Christianity, and they don't mind blowing themselves into hell. So they have no compunctions about the horrors of what they teach. They are subtle. And obviously the primary responsibility of those who lead the church is to proclaim the truth and to defend it. In Titus chapter 1, if someone is to be a pastor or an elder, chapter 1 verse 9, "They must hold fast the faithful Word in accordance with the teaching and be able to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict." This is standard, basic bottom line qualification for leadership in the church. You have to be able to explain the truth and to defend the truth and to unmask those who counterfeit it. This is an essential function of shepherding because not only do we feed the flock, but we protect the flock from the wolves who would destroy them.

We are then and have always been in a relentless war against spiritual terrorists. False teachers and those particularly who are in the church who pose a far greater threat than those outside. And this is exactly what Jude addresses.

Now we find ourselves in the main body of the letter, which starts in verse 5 and runs down to verse 16. That is really the main substance of the letter. Everything before that flows into it. Everything after that flows out of it. And in this main section, if we're going to be able to battle for the truth, if we're going to be able to defend the truth, unmask the traitors and disarm them before they do their damage, we have to have an unmistakable photo of them. We have to know what they look like so we can see them and discover them. And so, in verses 5 through 16 you have essentially a spiritual photo of apostates, a description, a description that basically unmasks them which is, as I said, absolutely critical. We are equally granted the task of protecting the truth as proclaiming the truth.

Now particularly we are looking at verses 5 through 11. And in verses 5 through 11 over the last couple of sessions, I told you there are three threes here. Jude is very structured. There are three threes in those verses which describe apostates who claim to represent the truth but actually represent the lie. There are three cases of apostate judgment in verses 5 through 7. There are three characteristics of apostate nature in verses 8 through 10. And there are three comparisons of apostate influence in verse 11. Three threes. And this becomes the composite photo to look at to see who the terrorists really are.

Now just by way of reminder. In verses 5 through 7 we saw three cases of apostate activity and judgment. I'll just read it to you. "I desire to remind you though you know all things once for all, that the Lord after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not

believe." And there's the first case of apostate judgment, the first apostates that he mentions that were revealed and judged and it's referring to Israel. God delivered them out of Egypt. They became apostate and unbelieving, defecting from their faith in God and they were all destroyed in the wilderness.

The second case of apostates who were judged is in verse 6, "They are angels who didn't keep their own domain but abandoned their proper abode. He has kept them in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of that great day." He here is referring to angels, not only angels that fell from heaven, but angels that sinned in Genesis chapter 6 in a horrific act of demon-possession involving the quote/unquote sons of God with the daughters of men. And they who came from those unions were, of course, drowned in the Flood. Angels who had all the glories of heaven at their disposal, who apostatized and defected and turned against God and were judged.

The third illustration is Sodom and Gomorrah. Israel, angels and Gentiles, in particular verse 7 says Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, in the same way as the angels, indulged in gross immorality, went after strange flesh, as we know from Genesis 19, it is homosexuality they were involved in, and they are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

Each of those illustrations features judgment. Israel, destroyed in the wilderness. Angels kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Sodom and Gomorrah, undergoing the punishment of hell, eternal fire. Three cases of apostate judgment. Just to give you a picture of what apostasy looks like, it is a defection from God and whether Israel or angels or even Sodom and Gomorrah, they were exposed to the truth of God, exposed to the true God, and turned against Him.

Secondly, we saw three characteristics of apostate nature. Looking a little bit closer, moving in a little bit, magnifying the picture, we zero in not to the cases of apostasy that were judged, but to the characteristic that marks these apostates. And that's in verses 8 through 10. And there it says, yet in the same manner, just like Israel who apostatized, just like angels who apostatized, just like Sodom and Gomorrah who defected from the knowledge of God given to them, in the same manner, in the same way, these men, that is to say current apostates, these men also by dreaming, and here are the three characteristics, defile the flesh, reject authority and revile angelic majesties. Here are the three characteristics of apostate nature. They are motivated in these three ways, to defile the flesh, reject authority and revile angelic majesties. And we looked at this particularly last time that they basically do what they do by dreaming, literally it says, "These men, these dreamers...dreamers." It identifies them as dreamers because they basically reject the Word of God and they base their teachings on their own experiences, on their own intuition, on their own deluded minds, on their own esoteric insights. They come up with their own truth. They come up with their own concoctions based upon their imaginary visions and their imaginary revelations and even their dreams, and we talked about that at length. They have to have some substantial base upon which to convince people the things they say are true, when, of course, they're not. And so they claim some transcendental experience, some mystical insight, some dream, revelation or some vision. But they are, whatever they may parade themselves to be, in truth immoral, insubordinate and irreverent...immoral, insubordinate and irreverent. That is, they defile the flesh, reject authority and revile angelic majesty.

So when you look a little closer at the picture of these who have defected from the true faith, you're

going to see their character revealed. They are not driven by superior insight. They are not driven by superior intellect. They are not driven by superior intuition. They do not have the secret knowledge of God. The Mormons don't have it. The Mary Baker Eddy didn't have it. Annie Besant didn't have it. Judge Rutherford didn't have it. The people who authored Jehovah's Witnesses didn't have it. The mystics in the Catholic system didn't have it. It's false, their dreams are nothing but the musings of their own distorted minds. They do not have elevated intuition. The Gnostics didn't have it, don't have it. They do not know the secrets of the ages. They are driven rather by the basest kind of things, love for sin, disdain for authority and irreverence toward angelic majesties. The last time we actually pointed out that they defile the flesh and reject lordship.

Now tonight we come to the third one of those three elements of the nature of these apostates. Very interesting statement. They revile angelic majesties. And different translators translate that differently, it is a very unique indictment. It seems to us strange because it's such an unusual thing to say, that they revile angelic majesties. What in the world does that mean? Well the word revile means to blaspheme, it's *blasphemeo*, present tense, to speak evil of. They are not only immoral, they are not only insubordinate, they are irreverent. They are blasphemers, these apostates. When you look more closely at them, no matter what they claim, they claim to have the secret knowledge of God, the elevated knowledge of God whether...whatever kind of apostate you're talking about, whether they're in priestly garb, or whether they're painted as the prophets of the Mormon church, or whether they're theological liberals who believe they have some more educated insight, or whether they are Gnostics who think that they have the secret knowledge. Whatever they are, the fact of the matter is they do not have the secret knowledge of God, they rather are blasphemers. And in particular, he says, they blaspheme *doxas*...*doxas*, that's the word translated by the NAS "angelic majesties." And it seems a rather bizarre way to translate the word *doxas* from which we get the word doxology. *Doxa* means glories. And it could refer to the glories of God and the glory of Christ. We could interpret it, they revile or they blaspheme glories, namely the glory of God and the glory of Christ. Why then are angels introduced into this? Well certainly angels are glorious, Scripture indicates that. Why does the translator here take the liberty to insert angelic majesties? The answer is, turn back to 2 Peter chapter 2. I told you at the beginning and we will reiterate it as we go along, that Jude and 2 Peter are very, very closely related. Some of the language is almost identical, some of it is identical. Second Peter, Peter was writing about false teachers to come. Jude writes they're here. But in 2 Peter chapter 2 verse 10, as Peter describes apostates, he says they indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires. And they despise authority. Daring, self-willed they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. Peter clearly here refers to angels, clearly he refers to angels. They will blaspheme angels when even angels who are greater in might and power than men do not blaspheme other angels. That's what Peter is saying. They take the liberty to blaspheme angels.

Well, that's certainly what Sodom and Gomorrah did, didn't they? Sodom and Gomorrah did that. Blasphemed holy angels. Evil angels do that. They blaspheme holy angels, fight against holy angels, as we see in Daniel 10 when demons fight against the purposes of God, the work of His holy angels. They try to stop that work. But if we ask the question here, "How...how do false teachers, how do false teachers blaspheme angels?" It might not come immediately into mind what the answer is, but actually, it's pretty simple, pretty clear because there is a very particular ministry that angels have had for a long time that is outlined in Scripture. It's really unmistakable.

Go back to Deuteronomy chapter 33 and let me see if I can't help you to see this. In Deuteronomy 33, Moses is reiterating something of the history of Israel. He, of course, is about ready to die and he calls the sons of Israel together before his death and he says to them in verse 2 of Deuteronomy 33, he reminds them of history, he reminds them of God coming down at Sinai. "The Lord came from Sinai and dawned on them from Seir; He shown forth from Mount Paran...notice this...and He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; at His right hand there was flashing lightning for them. Indeed He loves the people, all Thy holy ones are in Thy hand." Here God is pictured coming down at Sinai with literally ten thousand angels, myriads of angels.

Now what do we remember that happened at Mount Sinai? What was given at Mount Sinai? The Law. And here for the first time, the angels are associated with the giving of the Law. Psalm 68 and verse 17, following a little bit further in this, Psalm 68 verse 17 says this, "The chariots of God are myriads," that's ten thousand times ten thousand, "The chariots of God," referring to the angels, "are ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands upon thousands." Where else do you read that in the Bible? The book of Revelation, all the angels around the throne. The Lord is among them as at Sinai in holiness. When God came down at Sinai to give the Law, the angels were there and they were t here in massive force, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. It is if the whole of heaven's holy angels came down at Sinai in this monumental event of giving the Law. The numbers are the same as the numbers used to describe how many angels surround the throne of God in heaven.

Now in the New Testament in the seventh chapter of Acts, we are given even greater insight into this in the sermon preached by Stephen. And if you drop down to verse 53, Stephen says, "You who received the Law as ordained by angels and yet did not keep it." Now what we learn from all these passages is that in some fashion, in some way, the angels played a very special role in the dispensing of the Law of God at Sinai.

Turn over to Galatians chapter 3 and verse 19. In Galatians chapter 3 and verse 19, "Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels." I don't know if you ever thought about the Law that way, but the angels played a very, very particular role in the giving and ordaining of the Law of God and again. And finally in Hebrews chapter 2 verse 1, here's a warning against apostasy. "Play close attention to what we've heard, lest we drift away from it," Hebrews 2:1. Then verse 2, "For if the Word spoken through angels proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" And he's referring there to the Law. And again he says the Law was spoken through angels. Angels then have a very special role in the moral order in the world. And we see in Isaiah 6 the angels saying, "Holy, holy, holy." Immoral people then who rebel against divine lordship, immoral people who defile the flesh by their corruption also then blaspheme the holy angels who had a special guardianship over the Law of God. And so whether they recognize it or not, apostates in their immorality and in their insubordination blaspheme not only God, blaspheme not only Christ, blaspheme not only the Holy Spirit, but they blaspheme holy angels as well as the one the angels serve.

Now go back to Jude chapter 1. When the Lord comes to judge these apostates, the end of verse 14, Jude 1, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones." When He comes back to judge, the prophecy, when He comes back to judge with many thousands of His holy ones, verse 15,

to execute judgment upon all and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

The point is, when the Lord comes back to judge all the ungodly of the world, He is going to come with the holy angels who have also been blasphemed by the violations of the Law which they have been given a guardianship of. It is an amazing irony then, really an amazing irony that many apostate false teachers claim special insight and special association and special relationship with angels. You study the cults and the isms and chisms and spasms of false religion and you will find that they inevitably claim some connection with angels. You go down by the Mormon tabernacle down in the Santa Monica area and you will see one massive golden angel on the top of that temple, his name is Moroni. It is purported that Joseph Smith had a special relationship with that angle. The truth is, he blasphemed angelic majesties, just as he blasphemed God by denying that He is a Trinity, just as he blasphemed Christ by denying that He is God, so he blasphemes angels, the true guardians of God's holy Law and His holy Word. They really do deal with demons and blaspheme holy angels because demons are all...are always the supernatural authors of false doctrine, right? First Timothy 4, "doctrines of demons." All error is demonic as to its source, satanic as to its source. And so, it is a rather amazing irony that these false religions very often and these mystics and these Gnostics and these who have the elevated knowledge and these who get the visions and the revelations and the dreams are talking about the fact that this stuff is coming from angels when in fact they are blaspheming the holy angels who are the guardians of the sacred Word of God and they are really in connection with demons.

Because the point is so unusual, Jude gives a further consideration by way of contrast into the seriousness of this sin. Look at verse 9. And as I said, it's a very unusual point to make, but Jude is helping us to get a sort of a consummate perspective on the horror of apostasy. It defiles the flesh. It is corrupt morally. It denies authority. It therefore denies lordship and it even blasphemes not just God and Christ, but the holy angels who are the guardians of God's holy Law. And to make the point, you come to verse 9. And this is a common sort of style to make a point, severe contrast in order to seal the idea. Verse 9, "But Michael the archangel when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment but said, 'The Lord rebuke you...The Lord rebuke you.' But these men revile the things which they do not understand and the things they know by instinct like unreasoning animals. By these things they are destroyed."

False teachers do not hesitate to indulge their flesh, reject lordship and revile holy angels. Reviling holy angels is something you better be careful about. Blaspheming holy angels by rejecting the Law of which they are the guardians is serious. It is a serious thing to revile holy angels. And the point that Jude makes here is very powerful because he says Michael who is himself a holy angel would not even revile Satan who was a fallen angel. That's an amazing contrast, isn't it? Michael who is himself a holy angel would not himself blaspheme a fallen angel and yet these false teachers will blaspheme holy angels. But...is the first word, it opens the contrast...Michael the archangel...his name means who is like God, of course the answer is no one, his very name is a reminder that no one is like God...as an archangel, he is a chief leader among the angelic spirits. So now we're coming to the highest level of angelic order. He is mentioned in Daniel 10 and again in Daniel 12. And Michael was God's particularly powerful angel for the purpose of protecting Israel and defeating Satan's purposes against Israel, against the people of God. That's why he's called Michael, your

prince, the prince of Israel, the protector of Israel.

He is also mentioned in Revelation chapter 12 verses 7 through 9. He is seen with very important responsibility as a protector. In Revelation 12:7 Michael and his angels are waging war with Satan and his angels. And, of course, Michael and his angels defeat Satan and his angels and throw them out of heaven and throw them down to earth. He is then a powerful heavenly holy angel. He knew Lucifer. He knew him when he was the son of the morning, when he was the anointed cherub, when he was around the throne, when he was the heavenly choir director. He knew the other demons, all of them being created together at once. And when they fell, he knew they fell and he did battle with them and was part of the force that threw them out of heaven. He knows he has power over Satan then, he knows Satan is fallen. And yet he has respect for those angelic enemies of God and even though he is a powerful holy angel, he knows that there are limits to his power and there are limits to his knowledge. He is not omniscient, or is he omnipotent. His power as a holy angel is delegated and his function is to do whatever God tells him to do and not act independently on his own. He will not usurp divine authority. He will not exercise his own will over Satan. He will not on his own blaspheme even Satan. God has His plans for Satan and God knows what they are and Michael will carry them out but he will not act independently. He will not intrude. He will not do things on his own. And one of the things he will not do is he will not bring against the devil a railing judgment but rather he will say to the devil, "The Lord rebuke you." He knows that there even limits to his own power. For Michael on his own to rebuke the devil would just to be engaged in a battle, such as we see in the tenth chapter of Daniel where God sends him to answer Daniel's prayer and the demon spirit holds him up and engages him in battle. Even Michael is not omniscient, nor is he omnipotent.

As I said, with this insight, Jude reverses the reader's expectation to prove the point of verse 8. Apostates blaspheme holy angels by their disregard of God's holy Law which the angels ordained and protect and guard. Apostates have the gall to blaspheme holy angels by their disregard of God's Law. Holy angels don't even blaspheme demons. Michael, in a sense, does what Jesus did. Jesus said He only did what the Father commanded Him to do, right? He only said what the Father told Him to say in His incarnation. Jesus did that only as part of His humiliation for the time He was on earth. But the holy angels only do that and do it eternally. They only do what God tells them to do. Since they are not omniscient and they are not omnipotent, they are under divine authority and the demonstration of their holiness is their utter commitment to do only that which God tells them to do.

Just a footnote here. I am always profoundly disturbed, especially in the Charismatic Movement, when I hear people pronouncing judgment on Satan, when I hear people telling Satan what to do and where to go and binding him and binding demons. This is not for us to do. We don't have the authority to do it. We don't have the insight to do it. They don't respond to us. They will battle Michael, who do you think you are? It's like the demon said to the sons of Sceva, "Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are you?" Why should we do what you tell us to do? God sent Satan to Job, the best guess would have been to chase the devil away, except that God had sent him. God turned Peter over to Satan, the best guess would be to send Satan away. But God sent Satan. God sent a messenger from Satan to put a thorn through Paul's flesh. The best guess would have been to send that messenger away, except that God had sent him. You don't know what God is doing with Satan who is his servant. You don't know what He is doing with demons who do His will and accomplish His purposes.

Apostate false teachers are defiled in the flesh. They reject lordship. And they want to operate on their own. They blaspheme God not only by rejecting His holy Law in their immorality, not only by denying His divine authority, but being so irreverent as to, listen to this, usurp prerogatives that belong only to God, they don't even belong to Michael. People running around telling Satan what to do. Michael doesn't even do that. You have way overstepped your bounds. You have assumed for yourself a knowledge you do not have and a power you do not have. The demonstration of the holiness of Michael is that he knew his place. Yes he was the protector of God's people, but all judgments as to how he protected God's people were made by God.

And so, go back to verse 9, "Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.'" Pretty different than what we hear today, isn't it? All these people running around telling the devil what to do. You can't even blaspheme a fallen angelic majesty, you wouldn't think to tell holy angels what to do, I hope. I would hope you're not in some illusion that you can command the holy angels. I don't hear any of that. I don't hear these people saying, "Michael, go do this." Why would they say, "Satan, stop doing that?" Who do these people think they are? Maybe that's next.

Michael's response in this conflict, a very interesting conflict about the body of Moses, was to say, "The Lord rebuke you." You know, Michael knew the Bible. Go back to Zechariah chapter 3. Michael knew the Bible. Zechariah chapter 3 verse 1, Zechariah's next to Malachi, that's the second to the last book in the Old Testament, in case you're in Numbers or something. All right, Zechariah 3:1, Zechariah is shown Joshua the high priest and this is a vision of Joshua the high priest, he was the son of Jehozadak and along with a man named Zerubbabel led the first group of Jews back from Babylonian captivity. And Joshua was a real man and a real high priest. But he really represents Israel in this vision. He sort of stands there as the representative of the nation. And so Zechariah sees in this vision Joshua the high priest and he's standing before the Angel of the Lord, this is the preincarnate Christ, this is God the Son before His incarnation, often designated the Angel of the Lord.

Now listen to this. And Satan is standing at his right hand to accuse him. This is the age old scene that goes on in heaven all the time, it's sort of a repeat of Job, right? Satan goes into heaven, he comes to God, he starts accusing. In this case, Satan is standing at the right hand of Christ, accusing Joshua, or better, accusing the nation he represents, namely Israel, and what's he trying to do? He's trying to get God to break His covenant with Israel. He's trying to get God to deny His promises to sinful Israel. And the Angel of the Lord, who in verse 2 is called the Lord because it is the Lord Himself, listen to what He says. "And the Lord said to Satan...what?...The Lord rebuke you." How interesting is that? Here in almost a preview of how Jesus would act when He was on earth, He defers to His Father and the Lord, the Angel of the Lord, the preincarnate Christ in a picture of what He would be like in His incarnation, instead of rebuking Satan, says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan." And as it were, the Son calls on the Father to rebuke Satan. Indeed, the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you. Is this not a bran plucked from the fire, language which Jude also uses? And then Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, standing before the Angel and he spoke and said to those who were standing before Him saying, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And

He said to him, "See, I've taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes. Put a clean turban on his head." And they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments while the Angel of the Lord was standing by. Instead of God breaking His promise, God gave a picture of justification, a picture of the day when He would clothe Israel with His own righteousness.

Michael was there. Michael knows that story, knows that text, knew that scene. Michael did just what the pre-incarnate Son did. He didn't say, "I rebuke you, Satan." He said, "That's up to the Lord to do."

And that's what he did, back to Jude 9, on a very strange occasion. The occasion was when Michael was disputing with the devil and arguing about the body of Moses, do you ever read anywhere about God arguing about anything with anybody trying to get His point across? No. This is another indication of the powers of Michael being limited. These have an argument with the devil. And they're arguing about the body of Moses. Now if it was just simple for him to say, "I bind you, Satan, I condemn you, I damn you, I curse you, chase him away," he would have done it, I suppose, he wouldn't have stood there and argued with him. But the only way to end an argument was basically to say the Lord rebuke you. Michael struggled with the demon in Daniel for many days to finally overcome him. And here, however, the debate seems to end very quickly with an appeal to the Lord.

Now what is this arguing about the body of Moses? Very quickly, if you're reading with us through Scripture, we just finished Deuteronomy and you remember in the thirty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy Moses died. And nothing in Deuteronomy is said about this, this is the only place this is ever said in the whole Bible. If you read Deuteronomy, you don't know this happened. You don't know there was an argument about his body. But you do know that Moses went away and died and nobody knew where He was buried, remember? Deuteronomy, nobody knew where he was buried. Why? Because he didn't want him digging up the body and making an idol out of him. You know what they do in the Catholic Church these days, you know, with Mary's milk and Peter's bones, supposedly, and all those kinds of things that pass down as some kind of religious artifacts. And so God wanted the body of Moses buried in an unknown place in an unmarked grave and no one would ever know and no one would ever venerate it.

Well Satan wanted that body. What did he want to do with it? I don't know, I have the same Bible you have. I don't know what he wanted to do with it. I can guess. Maybe he wanted to parade it around to somehow desecrate it. Or maybe he wanted to turn it into something to be worshiped. But Michael was given the responsibility to bury that body and the way Michael dealt with Satan was the only way you can deal with him, he said, "The Lord rebuke you." That is the way you deal with him.

This is really an interesting point. Apostates not only rebuke Satan with amazing presumption, but they teach other immature believers to do it as well. And in addition, they also blaspheme holy angels by their sinful lives which show disdain for the holy Law of God which is so precious and so sacred to the angels. They are, in a true sense, the guardians of God's holy Law. And wherever these false teachers are characterized by materialism, wherever they're characterized by pride, wherever they're characterized by insubordination to the Word of God, wherever they're characterized by anger or power-hunger, whatever it is, they are violating the holy Law of God, they are then in the truest sense blaspheming angelic majesties.

One further comment is made on this very unusual matter of blaspheming angelic majesties and it's in verse 10 and we'll stop at that point. But these men...what men?...verse 12, these men; verse 14, these also; verse 16, these; verse 19, these. It's these, the same ones, these men. What men? These apostates, these persons, verse 4, who crept in unnoticed who were long beforehand marked out for condemnation. These ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ, these who undermine the faith, these men, verse 8, these dreamers, these are those, verse 10, who revile the things which they do not understand. Boy, it's just a very simple thing, isn't it? They do this stuff because they are spiritually ignorant. Second Peter 2 says they blaspheme where they have no knowledge. They do not understand the Word of God cause their minds are darkened since they're not converted, they're in spiritual death. They blaspheme because they are spiritually ignorant. They can't get it. And that's right back to that very definitive passage in 1 Corinthians chapters 1 and 2 where the Apostle Paul says, "Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? God has made the wisdom of the world into foolishness. In the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom didn't come to know God." It goes on to say they are in a natural condition, cannot understand the things of God. All these apostates, all these liberals, all these cultists, all these false preachers and false teachers operate out of abysmal ignorance. They blaspheme out of ignorance.

And even a more amazing statement in verse 10, "And the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed." They do not listen, they do not function on true knowledge. Again, 2 Peter 2 says they blaspheme where they have no knowledge. They're always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. They function on the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals. They operate out of their own intuition. They operate out of their own musings. They operate out of their own instinct, *phusikos*, is the Greek word, it means without the benefit of reason or without the benefit of revelation. When you see on your television the program on ABC called "Jesus and Paul," and I watched it for three hours, you are watching people who are blaspheming out of absolute ignorance. They have no knowledge of the truth and so they function like irrational unreasoning animals on pure instinct. And where does instinct come from? It comes from inside of them. They are void of the truth. No matter how academic, or how philosophical, or how highly educated they are, no matter how many visions and dreams and insights and intuitions they have claimed, they are not profound, they are not wise, they know nothing and they operate like dumb animals. Romans 1:22 says, "Professing themselves to be wise they have become...what?...fools." That's the word in the Greek, moron.

Now, back in verse 10 again, the things that they know they know by instinct, *alogia*, without the Word, *loga*, *logia*, *logos*, the Word, truth, knowledge. They are *a*, alpha privative, negates it. They are without the Word, without the knowledge. They are driven by sinful interests. They are driven by insubordinate rebellion. They are driven by irreverence toward God's Law and toward God's character. And they are dead in trespasses and sins. They are natural men who cannot understand the things of God. They can no more be educated than an animal can go to a university. They claim to be transcendent. They claim to have reached the divine realm. They claim to have the true knowledge. They claim to have received revelation, visions, dreams. They think they are the highest. In reality, they're as ignorant as a donkey. And their ignorance is so deep, so in their nature that they can only instinctively go for the food in the trap without reason or revelation and the end of verse 10 says, "They will be killed by the very things they follow by instinct." They blow themselves up with their own lying, deceiving bombs.

Perhaps the greatest and most powerful force, new force in this regard is the DaVinci Code Book which is blasphemy upon blasphemy upon blasphemy upon blasphemy. It is a new run at old Gnosticism. It purports to have profound esoteric mystical insights into the real Jesus and it is without reason, without truth, without knowledge, as ignorant as a dumb animal. And by the very things that they do instinctively, they're destroyed. Like a stupid animal caught in a trap because he follows his desire for food, so they follow the lusts of their flesh, the insubordination of their hearts, the irreverence of their minds and ignorance kills them like the suicide bombers, they blow themselves up in representing Satan by following their own instincts. The judgment of God gets them in the end. Verse 3, it says you have to earnestly contend for the faith, once for all delivered to the saints against those people who have crept in unnoticed...here it is...who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation. Verse 5, apostates in Israel were subsequently destroyed. Verse 6, apostates in heaven received the judgment of that great day, until then kept in eternal bonds under darkness. Verse 7, in Sodom and Gomorrah, they undergo punishment of eternal fire. And then in verse 10, the end, they are destroyed.

And so we see the first and the second of the threes. Three cases of apostate action in past history and its judgment and three characteristics of apostate nature. Now verse 11, three comparisons of apostate influence. Woe to them, for they have gone the way of Cain and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam and perished in the rebellion of Korah. There's the third three. Cain, Balaam, and Korah. That's for next time. We'll spend all of next Sunday night in verse 11, I promise you.

Lord, we thank You again for the consistency of Your truth. We just never cease to be astounded at its power, passage after passage. And we thank You for equipping us to battle for the truth and for giving us insight by the Spirit through the Word to be faithful defenders of Your glorious and holy Word. Amen.

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