JUDE BOOK

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[BJ FOREWORD](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php" \l "BJ%20FOREWORD)

Ch. 1 [The Great Apostasy](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#The%20Great%20Apostasy)

Ch. 2 [Contending For The Faith](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Contending%20For%20The%20Faith)

Ch. 3 [Falling Away From The Faith](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Falling%20Away%20From%20The%20Faith)

Ch. 4 [Saved, But Afterward Destroyed](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Saved,%20But%20Afterward%20Destroyed)

Ch. 5 [In Those Days . . .Also After That](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#In%20Those%20Days%20.%20.%20.Also%20After%20That)

Ch. 6 [In Like Manner](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#In%20Like%20Manner)

Ch. 7 [Defiling One’s High Calling](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Defiling%20One%E2%80%99s%20High%20Calling)

Ch. 8 [Woe Unto Them](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Woe%20Unto%20Them)

Ch. 9 [Behold, The Lord Cometh](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Behold,%20The%20Lord%20Cometh)

Ch. 10 [Mockers In The Last Time](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#Mockers%20In%20The%20Last%20Time)

Ch. 11 [“But Ye, Beloved . . . .”](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#%E2%80%9CBut%20Ye,%20Beloved%20.%20.%20.%20.%E2%80%9D)

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**FOREWORD**

*Apostasy* is a major subject of Scripture, not only among Christians in the New Testament, but also among the Israelites in the Old Testament as well. There were *false prophets* among the Israelites during and following Moses’ day, “even as” there are *false teachers* in Christendom during the present dispensation. And the message of *the false teachers* in Christendom is described by the words, “*destructive heresies*,” which had its counterpart in the message previously proclaimed by *the false prophets* in Israel ([2 Peter 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1&t=NKJV)).

Paul had warned the Christians in Ephesus “*for three years*,” “*night and day with tears*,” concerning individuals who would arise *within the church* and lead many astray. These individuals were described as “*savage* [‘violent’] *wolves*” who would proclaim “*perverse things* [distorting, twisting the truth],” and “draw away the disciples after themselves” ([Acts 20:29-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+20.29-31&t=NKJV)).

Paul warned Timothy concerning apostasy “*in the latter times*.” Many at that time would “*depart* [‘apostatize’] *from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons*.” That is, Christians would cease to listen to those proclaiming the truth, *the doctrine of God*; and, instead, they would listen to those proclaiming that which was false — truth that had been twisted, perverted — called, *the doctrines of demons* ([1 Timothy 4:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1-2&t=NKJV)).

The Spirit of God led two individuals to write complete books dealing with apostasy — 2 Peter and Jude. Of the twenty-one New Testament epistles, all center on one subject: *the salvation of the SOUL*. And two of these epistles center specifically on one particular aspect of the salvation of the soul: *apostasy, as it relates to the salvation of the SOUL.*

Then, two accounts showing the complete history of the Church throughout the dispensation are given in the New Testament. The first was given during Christ’s earthly ministry before the Church was ever brought into existence ([Matthew 13:3-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.3-33&t=NKJV)). And the second was given through John following Christ’s ascension ([Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV)).

Both accounts, written from two different perspectives, show *exactly the same thing*. They both show the Church *becoming progressively removed throughout the dispensation* from all sound teachings concerning the Word of the Kingdom. And both accounts show *exactly the same outcome* for the Church in days immediately preceding the end of the dispensation, days during which Christendom presently finds itself.

Both accounts show the Church ultimately *so far removed* from any sound teaching pertaining to the Word of the Kingdom that, at the time of Christ’s return, He will not find “*faith* [lit., ‘the faith,’ an expression peculiarly related to the Word of the Kingdom in the New Testament] *on the earth*.” That is, at the time of Christ’s return, He will not find the Word of the Kingdom being proclaimed in the churches of the land ([Luke 18:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.8&t=NKJV)).

The Church, throughout 2,000 years of history, will have moved 180 degrees out of phase. At the beginning of the dispensation, the Word of the Kingdom was *the central message known and taught* throughout Christendom ([Colossians 1:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.5-6&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.23&t=NKJV)). However, at the end of the dispensation, conditions will have become *exactly the opposite*. The Word of the Kingdom — having to do with the salvation of the soul — will be *a message unknown and resultantly untaught* in Christendom (*cf*. [Matthew 13:31-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.31-33&t=NKJV); [Luke 18:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.8&t=NKJV); [Revelation 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17&t=NKJV)).

The books of 2 Peter and Jude deal with different facets of the apostasy that has been occurring over almost two millennia of time, resulting in conditions as they exist today. And this book on Jude, which draws from 2 Peter as well, deals with this overall apostasy from the only correct biblical perspective — *an ever-increasing departure from “the faith” as the dispensation progresses, with this departure being brought to completion at the end of the dispensation* ([Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV)).

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Chapter One

**The Great Apostasy**

Jude is an epistle dealing specifically with “apostasy” in the latter days and with “judgment” that follows this apostasy. The present dispensation had its beginning in the book of Acts with the *Acts of the Apostles*; and the dispensation will end, as described in the epistle of Jude, with the *Acts of the Apostates*. The book of Acts introduces *the beginning* and progression of the history of the early Church (from the inception of the Church [in 33 A.D.], during the time of the reoffer of the kingdom to Israel [from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.]); and the epistle of Jude reveals how this history will end (almost 2,000 years later, as the dispensation draws to a close).

The exact positions that the book of Acts and the epistle of Jude occupy in the canon of Scripture are in perfect keeping with their respective contents. The book of Acts immediately precedes twenty-one epistles directed to Christians, providing a smooth, transitional flow from the gospels into the epistles; and the epistle of Jude appears as the last of these twenty-one epistles, introducing the book of Revelation by *the great apostasy* that precedes the removal of the Church into the Lord’s Day at the end of the present dispensation ([Revelation. 1:10ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation.+1.10ff&t=NKJV); *cf*. [1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.16-5.10&t=NKJV)).

Apostasy

The word “apostasy” is itself not used in the epistle of Jude. Rather, this word is taken from the Greek text of several corresponding Scriptures appearing elsewhere in the New Testament, referring to “the apostasy,” seen as *a departure from the faith.*

*This apostasy*, *this departure from the faith*, actually began very early in the history of the Church, foretold by the Lord Himself in [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV). According to this verse, set within Scriptures having to do with the course of the present dispensation, a woman placed *leaven* in three measures of meal (a substance used in the symbolism of Scripture to depict “sin,” “deterioration,” “corruption”). And this leaven has not only been working throughout the dispensation but will continue to work until the whole has been leavened, corrupted.

This leavening process provides the reason for the existing conditions in Christendom today, very near the end of the dispensation — the absence of the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom in the churches of the land. And this leavening process also provides the reason why, when the Son of Man returns, He will not find “*the faith on the earth* [‘faith’ is articular in the Greek text, showing a specific faith, peculiarly related to the Word of the Kingdom]” ([Luke 18:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.8&t=NKJV)).

Relative to *apostasy*, Paul states in [2 Thessalonians 2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.3&t=NKJV):

*Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day* [the Day of the Lord] *will not come unless the falling away* [the apostasy] *comes first . . . .*

Paul, again in [1 Timothy 4:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1&t=NKJV) states:

*Now* [But] *the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart* [apostatize] *from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demon.*

The writer of Hebrews calls attention to this same thing in [Hebrews 3:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3.12&t=NKJV):

*Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing* [apostatizing] *from the living God.*

In the preceding verses, the words “falling away,” “depart,” and “departing” are translations of either the Greek noun *apostasia* or the verb *aphistemi* (the verb form of *apostasia*), meaning “apostasy.”

The English word “apostasy” is actually a transliterated form of the Greek word *apostasia*, a compound word formed from *apo* and *stasis*. *Apo* means “from,” and *stasis* means “to stand,” or “standing.” When used together, forming the word *apostasia*, the meaning is “standing away from.” This “standing away from” pertains to a position previously occupied and refers more specifically (drawing from contexts where the word is used) to *a standing away from “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”* (*cf*. [1 Timothy 4:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV)).

In the true sense of the word, no one can stand away from something with which he has never been affiliated. This can be illustrated by the use of the Greek word *apostasion* (neuter form of *apostasia*) in [Matthew 5:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.31&t=NKJV); [19:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+19.7&t=NKJV); [Mark 10:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+10.4&t=NKJV). In each instance the word is translated “divorcement.” It is one person “standing away from” another person. There could be no “divorcement,” “standing away from,” unless a marriage had previously occurred.

In like manner, no one could “stand away from” *the faith* (apostatize) unless he had previously been associated with *the faith*. Believers alone occupy a position of this nature from which they can “stand away.” Unbelievers have never come into such a position, and, in the true sense of the word, are not associated with the *latter-day apostasy* in Scripture.

Reason for Apostasy

Christians familiar with that which Scripture teaches will have no difficulty understanding why the present dispensation will end in apostasy. As previously stated, the entire matter stems from an incident occurring very early in the history of the Church. In [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV), in the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, a woman took leaven and hid this leaven “*in three measures of meal till it was all leavened*.”

(Note also *the parable of the Sower, the parable of the wheat and tares* and *the parable of the mustard seed* which immediately precede *the parable of the leaven*. The first three parables show different facets of the results of the working of the leaven in the fourth parable [[Matthew 13:3-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.3-8&t=NKJV), [18-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.18-32&t=NKJV)].)

All seven parables in this chapter have to do with the course of Christianity throughout the present dispensation and/or with events at the conclusion of the dispensation after the Church has been removed from the sphere of activity, with the last three parables having to do with events immediately preceding and leading into the Messianic Kingdom itself. Once this woman had placed leaven in the three measures of meal, *the course of Christianity was set.* The leaven would work in the meal throughout the dispensation, climaxing its work at the end of the dispensation with the entire three measures of meal being completely saturated with leaven.

“Leaven” in Scripture, as previously noted, always refers to that which is *false* or *corrupt*. The “*leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees*” was *false doctrine* ([Matthew 16:6-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.6-12&t=NKJV)); and “leaven” associated with Christians, in like manner, can only refer to that which is false or corrupt in their lives (*cf*. [Exodus 12:14-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.14-20&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 5:1-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+5.1-8&t=NKJV)).

Leaven in [Exodus 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12&t=NKJV), because of that which it symbolized, could occupy no place in the house of an Israelite following the issues surrounding the death of the firstborn in Egypt; and that which leaven symbolizes must, in like manner, never be allowed to occupy a place in the life of a Christian today.

“Three [the ‘three’ measures of meal into which the leaven was placed]” is the number of *Divine perfection*. The number “three,” for example, is used of the Godhead — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is used concerning the time of Christ’s resurrection. Christ was raised from the dead on the third day, which points to the coming third day (the third one-thousand-year period dating from Calvary) when all of God’s firstborn Sons (“Jesus,” “Israel,” and “the Church” following the adoption [another triad]) will be raised up, *i.e., elevated to their proper positions on and over the earth*. In that day, *Divine perfection* in God’s plan for the ages will be worked out to perfection in its fullness.

God has forbidden the placing of leaven in meal ([Leviticus 6:14-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+6.14-17&t=NKJV)), as this woman did in [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV). Meal is made from crushed wheat. “Wheat” is sown by *the Sower* in [Matthew 13:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.3&t=NKJV) (the Lord Jesus Christ [[Matthew 13:37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.37&t=NKJV); [John 12:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+12.24&t=NKJV)]) and has to do with *that which is sown in the field* in [Matthew 13:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.24&t=NKJV) (the sons of the kingdom [[Matthew 13:38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.38&t=NKJV)]). The three measures of meal, in the light of related Scripture, could only point to doctrine emanating from the triune God. This doctrine, in the light of the context, must pertain particularly to “*the Sower*,” “*the sons of the kingdom*,” and “*the word of the kingdom*.”

Result of Apostasy

The woman in [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV), a propagator of that which is false or corrupt, can only be associated with Satan and his false system of doctrine. This woman inserted leaven into the three measures of meal very early in the history of the Church, as evidenced by the rampant apostasy which began to exist in the early Church even during the first century.

The leaven has been working for over nineteen centuries, it is presently working, and it will continue to work until “*all* [KJV: the whole]” *has been leavened*. Scripture places the completion of the leavening process at the end of the present dispensation, exactly where we are living today. The latter days in Christendom, prophesied in Scripture, will be marked, not by great revivals or a widespread teaching of the Word of God, but by the completion of a leavening process, resulting in *apostasy*.

Conditions in Christendom throughout the dispensation are set forth in the seven letters to the seven Churches in [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV). These are seven epistles to seven churches existing in the first century during John’s day, which portray the history of the Church throughout the dispensation. The leaven placed in the three measures of meal was already at work in these churches; and one church, the Laodicean Church ([Revelation 3:14-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.14-21&t=NKJV)), had, even before the end of the first century, become *completely corrupted* by the leaven. This church, the seventh and last of the named churches, depicts the final form of Christendom at the end of the dispensation after the leaven has permeated all of the meal into which it had previously been placed.

In this respect, the epistle to the Laodiceans corresponds to the epistle of Jude. As in 2 Timothy and 2 Peter, the apostasy had already set in during the opening several decades of the dispensation; but conditions in both epistles portray Christianity more particularly at the end of the dispensation (when the leaven will be doing its most damaging, end-time work), immediately before the removal of the Church and the beginning of the Tribulation ([Revelation 4:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4.1ff&t=NKJV); [6:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+6.1ff&t=NKJV)).

Several things distinguish the Laodicean church from the others:

a) Nothing good was recorded about this church.

b) Only a form of godliness remained within this church ([Revelation 3:15-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.15-16&t=NKJV); *cf*. [2 Timothy 3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.5&t=NKJV)).

c) Materialism had permeated this church to such an extent that it was spiritually destitute ([Revelation 3:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17-18&t=NKJV)).

d) Christ stood on the outside, not within ([Revelation 3:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.20&t=NKJV)).

To some individuals it is inconceivable that Christians can apostatize from the faith to the extent that they become as the Laodiceans — “*wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*.” But this is exactly the biblical picture of the Church in the latter days, after the leaven has been at work for almost two millennia.

The “lukewarmness” of the Laodicean church in John’s day fostered the working of the leaven ([Revelation 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.16&t=NKJV)), for leaven works more rapidly in a place where the temperature is not too hot or too cold. And the “lukewarmness” of the Laodicean church of today (where the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom is all but absent) is allowing the leaven to do its most rapid and damaging work of the entire dispensation.

Because of this, apostasy is not only presently abounding but it will increasingly continue to abound on every hand as the Church moves even closer to the end of the present dispensation; and conditions wrought by the leaven within these lukewarm confines, will continue to rapidly deteriorate the mass until “fire” stops the working of the leaven after the dispensation has run its course (*cf*. [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.11-15&t=NKJV)).

The message to each church throughout [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV) concerns conditions existing among Christians in these churches. Then, at the conclusion of each message is an overcomer’s promise to Christians within these churches, even to Christians in the most corrupt church of all, the Laodicean church: “*To him who overcomes* . . . .” ([Revelation 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.7&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV), [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.17&t=NKJV), [26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-28&t=NKJV); [3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.5&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.12&t=NKJV), [21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.21&t=NKJV)).

Overcomers’ promises of this nature can only be for Christians alone, for only Christians are in a position to overcome and be recipients of the things promised in these two chapters — things which, in their entirety, are *millennial in their scope of fulfillment.*

(For additional information on the seven parables in [Matthew 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13&t=NKJV) and the epistles to the seven churches in [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV), refer to the author’s books, in this site, [Judgment Seat of Christ BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-one.php#Judgment%20Seat%20of%20Christ%20BOOK) and [Mysteries of the Kingdom BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-five.php#Mysteries%20of%20the%20Kingdom%20BOOK).)

Apostasy and the Mysteries

*Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience . . .*

*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness . . .*

*Now* [But] *the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart* [apostatize] *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*. ([1 Timothy 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.9&t=NKJV), [16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.16&t=NKJV); [4:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1-2&t=NKJV) [16a])

1) “*the mysteries of God*” ([1 Corinthians 4:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+4.1&t=NKJV))

Two mysteries are mentioned in [1 Timothy 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.9&t=NKJV), [16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.16&t=NKJV), and both appear immediately before the reference to apostasy in the latter days ([1 Timothy 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.4&t=NKJV):1-2). A “mystery” refers to *a truth previously seen in the Old Testament but not fully opened up and revealed*, and teachings within all mysteries in the New Testament move toward the same end (an end, in reality, toward which all Scripture moves) — the termination of this dispensation and the ushering in of a new dispensation. The “*mystery of God*” will be brought to completion immediately prior to the Messianic Era ([Revelation 10:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+10.7&t=NKJV)); and all revealed mysteries, within their framework of completion, move toward this same point in time.

Mysteries in the New Testament begin with the “*mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens*” in [Matthew 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13&t=NKJV). These mysteries (seen in seven connected parables) provide a chronological sequence of events during and following the present dispensation, which will be culminated at the beginning of the Messianic Era.

Teachings within these mysteries have to do centrally with the present work of the Spirit among Christians (present dispensation) and the Son’s future work on behalf of Christians (during the Tribulation, during the last seven years of the preceding dispensation). And the counter-work of Satan has to do with the “*doctrines of demons*,” associated with the “*mystery of iniquity*,” as he seeks to subvert the work of God.

The mystery dealt with more than any other in the New Testament was revealed to the apostle Paul by Christ Himself *via* “*revelation* [personal appearance]” and is called in Scripture simply “*the mystery*” or “*the mystery of Christ*” ([Romans 16:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+16.25&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 3:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.3-4&t=NKJV), [9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.9&t=NKJV); [Colossians 1:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.26-27&t=NKJV); [4:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+4.3&t=NKJV)). This mystery is defined by Paul as “*Christ in you* [*lit*., ‘Christ (the One who will rule and reign) being proclaimed among you’], *the hope of glory*” ([Colossians 1:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.27&t=NKJV)), pointing to that future day when “*Christ who is our life appears*,” and Christians will “*appear with Him in glory*” ([Colossians 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.4&t=NKJV)).

This mystery has to do with the fact that believing Jews and believing Gentiles, forming the “one new man” *in Christ*, will, after being approved at the judgment seat of Christ, be the recipients of heavenly promises and blessings as joint-heirs with Christ in His kingdom ([Ephesians 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.6&t=NKJV); *cf*. [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.24-27&t=NKJV); [James 1:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.12&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:7-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.7-9&t=NKJV)). This mystery has for its end *the realization of the Christians’ present hope*.

Another mystery is that of *Israel’s present blindness*, awaiting “*the fullness of the Gentiles*” ([Romans 11:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.25&t=NKJV)). This mystery, as the others, has to do with events during the present time that will be completed immediately preceding the coming kingdom. The purpose for Israel’s blindness is to allow for “*the fullness of the Gentiles*,” and the purpose for “*the fullness of the Gentiles*” is that God may, in the coming dispensation, have “*a people for His name* [a people separate from Israel — namely, the Son’s wife, who will rule as consort queen with Him].”

After “*the fullness of the Gentiles has come in*,” Israel’s blindness will be lifted ([Romans 11:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.26&t=NKJV)). God will then have a people for His name here on earth (*Israel*, following the nation’s repentance, conversion, and restoration) and a people for His name in the heavens (the *Church*, following this new nation’s removal from the earth, adoption, and establishment in heavenly places).

Another mystery concerns the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living “*in Christ*” ([1 Corinthians 15:51-58](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.51-58&t=NKJV); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.13-18&t=NKJV)). This mystery has to do with the removal of the saints (body, soul, and spirit) from the earthly sphere to a heavenly sphere, with a view to the coming reign of Christ from the heavens.

Certain things concerning the resurrection of the dead, the translation of the living, and saints occupying heavenly places were revealed during Old Testament days ([Genesis 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5.24&t=NKJV); [2 Kings 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Kings+2.11&t=NKJV); [Job 19:25-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+19.25-27&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 37:12-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+37.12-14&t=NKJV), [23-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+37.23-25&t=NKJV); [Daniel 7:25-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+7.25-27&t=NKJV)). But that which was not fully opened up to saints of preceding generations, “*the mystery*,” focuses on a people separate from Israel, comprised of those “*in Christ*,” who are to be associated with a separate resurrection, experience translation, and occupy heavenly places.

Other mysteries, such as those in [1 Timothy 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.9&t=NKJV), [16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.16&t=NKJV), have to do with the present activities of the saints, with a view particularly to events during the coming millennial day. The “*mystery of the faith*” ([1 Timothy 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.9&t=NKJV)) and the” *mystery of godliness*” ([1 Timothy 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.16&t=NKJV)) have to do with the present faithfulness on the part of Christians, with a view to their receiving the “*end* [‘goal’]” *of faith, the salvation of their souls* ([1 Peter 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Hebrews 10:38-39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.38-39&t=NKJV); [11:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.1ff&t=NKJV)).

The word translated “*godliness* [‘mystery of godliness’]” in the Greek text is *eusebeia*, which is a term used of men alone, not of God. This word refers to Christians exercising “*piety*,” “*godliness*,” “*reverence*” in their lives.

Both the “*mystery of the faith*” and the “*mystery of godliness*,” as they relate to the salvation of the souls of those “*in Christ*,” were seen in the types dealing with the subject, though not fully opened up and revealed in the Old Testament.

In this respect, these types could not be properly understood apart from the antitypes. The antitypes would unlock the types, and the types would then shed a world of light on the antitypes. (*cf*. [1 Peter 1:10-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.10-12&t=NKJV)). And, because later revelation was required to open up and explain this material in the Old Testament, these are termed “*mysteries*” in the New Testament.

2) “*the mystery of lawlessness* [KJV: iniquity]” ([2 Thessalonians 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.7&t=NKJV))

To counter the work of God within His revealed mysteries, Satan, in connection with his activities among Christians, has what Scripture calls, “*the mystery of lawlessness*” ([2 Thessalonians 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.7&t=NKJV), [9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.9-10&t=NKJV)). In [Revelation 2:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.24&t=NKJV), “*the depths of Satan*,” as opposed to “*the deep things of God*” in [1 Corinthians 2:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.10&t=NKJV), is mentioned as well. And the construction of the Greek text in both Scriptures is identical.

These opposing doctrines are literally called, “*the deep things of God*,” and “the deep things of Satan.”

*The deep things of God* reveal the things that God would have His people know; and we’re told that “*the doctrines of demons*” emanate from *the deep things of Satan*, as Satan seeks to mislead God’s people ([1 Timothy 4:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1ff&t=NKJV)).

Thus, God has His “*deep things*,” associated with His “mysteries” (*cf*. [1 Corinthians 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.7&t=NKJV)); and Satan, the great counterfeiter, has his “deep things,” associated with “*the mystery of lawlessness*.”

Satan’s great objective today, within the scope of “*the mystery of lawlessness*,” is to counter teachings (through false doctrine) within “*the mysteries of God*.” Note how teachings concerning “*the mystery of the faith*” in [1 Timothy 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.9&t=NKJV) are countered through “*the doctrines of demons*” in [1 Timothy 4:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.2&t=NKJV). The “*mystery of the faith*” is to be held with “*a pure conscience*”; and in [1 Timothy 4:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.2&t=NKJV), out of “lies in hypocrisies and lying words,” demons, through their doctrines, “sear one’s conscience” (literal thought from the Greek text).

Conscience has to do with “spiritual awareness.” The word was used earlier in first Timothy concerning the spiritual warfare and faithfulness as they relate to “*the faith*” ([1 Timothy 1:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+1.19-20&t=NKJV) [the second use of “*faith*” in [1 Timothy 1:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+1.19&t=NKJV) is articular in the Greek text]). *The doctrine of demons* is designed *to scar one’s spiritual awareness*, adversely affecting one’s faithful, godly walk in the present world.

Satan, above everything else, does not want “*the mysteries*” proclaimed. These “*mysteries*” all pertain to some facet of the “*word of the kingdom*,” which speaks of that future day when Satan and His angels will be put down, with Christ and His co-heirs then moving in and taking the kingdom, *i.e.*, moving in and taking over the government of the earth.

Christ has already shown Himself fully qualified to replace Satan as the Ruler over this earth, and Satan can do nothing about Christ and His present status. However, Christians are presently in the process of qualifying (or being disqualified) to replace the fallen angels ruling under Satan; and if Satan could prevent this from happening, he could prevent Christ from taking the kingdom, for Christ would have insufficient, qualified personnel to occupy the necessary positions of power and authority in the kingdom. Thus, in one respect, Satan’s present activity is directed against Christians toward this end.

The entire present dispensation is an interval during which God is taking out of the Gentiles “*a people for His name*.” And those whom God is removing from the Gentiles are the ones who are being offered positions with Christ in the coming kingdom. These are the ones who will replace the incumbent rulers. That’s what “*the mysteries of God*” are about; and that is also what “*the mystery of lawlessness*,” in a counter respect, is about.

The great *apostasy in the Church* during the latter days, brought into existence through the “*leaven*” placed in the three measures of meal and associated with the “*doctrines of demons*,” is being accomplished through one central means: *taking the truth of the Word of God and twisting, perverting, this truth* ([1 Timothy 4:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1-2&t=NKJV)). And this is being done with one central goal in view: *the destruction* (the leavening) *of all sound doctrine pertaining to the coming kingdom of Christ.*

Introducing Apostasy in Jude

*Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified* [loved] *by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:*

*Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.* ([Jude 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.1-2&t=NKJV))

1) “*Jude*”

Jude begins his epistle with his own name, which is literally “Judas” in the Greek text. The name “Judas” is derived from the Greek form of the Hebrew name for “Judah” (*cf*. [Matthew 1:2 KJV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+1.2&t=KJV)). This was a common name in Israel during the days when our Lord was upon the earth, but this name, understandably, is seldom used today. Through the actions of another person named “*Judas*” (Judas Iscariot), the name has become a synonym for *traitor* or *apostate*.

Judas Iscariot, numbered among the twelve, betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Judas was appointed to the apostolate by the Lord ([Matthew 10:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+10.1-4&t=NKJV)), and from this position he “*by transgression fell* [‘turned aside,’ ‘fell away’]” ([Acts 1:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+1.25&t=NKJV)). Judas “*stood away from*” the other eleven. Insofar as the apostolate and the message being proclaimed were concerned, Judas became an *apostate*.

The fact that the epistle of Jude was written by an individual whose name has become associated with traitorous actions (apostasy) is no mere coincidence. Nor is it coincidental that his name is the very first word that appears in the epistle. The epistle of Jude, by the very name of the writer itself, begins with the mark of *apostasy*.

Jude was the brother of James ([Jude 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.1&t=NKJV)), apparently the same as the writer of the epistle of James and a half-brother of the Lord ([Galatians 1:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+1.19&t=NKJV)). In this respect, the writer of the epistle of Jude would be the same Jude (“Judas,” “Juda”) mentioned in [Matthew 13:55](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.55&t=NKJV) and [Mark 6:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+6.3&t=NKJV), one of four half-brothers of Jesus (*cf*. [Psalm 69:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+69.7-8&t=NKJV)). None of the half-brothers of Jesus were numbered among the twelve apostles, but two (if this is the same Jude from [Matthew 13:55](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.55&t=NKJV) and [Mark 6:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+6.3&t=NKJV)) were later singled out by the Lord to write New Testament epistles.

James, in his epistle, deals specifically with the great doctrine of *the salvation of the SOUL*; and Jude, in his epistle, also deals with this same doctrine, but from a different perspective — from the perspective of apostasy that will engulf the Church in the latter days (the same as Peter presented in his second epistle), producing a dark-age effect upon all correct Scriptural teaching pertaining to *the salvation of the SOUL.*

The fact that the writer of the epistle of Jude was apparently a family member of the Lord is itself, as the name “Judas,” not without significance. The latter-day apostasy, of which Jude writes, will be entered into by family members of the Lord — those within the family of God, the children of God, the saved. Thus, the name “Jude [‘Judas’]” and the apparent relationship of Jude to the Lord set the tone, at the very beginning, for the entire epistle.

2) “*Sanctified…Preserved…Called*”

Jude directs his epistle to “*to those who are called, sanctified* [loved] *by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus*” ([Jude 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.1&t=NKJV)). Most of the better Greek manuscripts have the word for “love” rather than the word for “sanctify” in this verse, and this is the translation which one will find in versions such as the ASV, NASB, NIV, *et al.*

The word for “love” is in the perfect tense in the Greek text, indicating action completed in past time, with present, continuing results (results based on the past, completed action). By and through a completed act, *the love of God* has been manifested (past). God manifested His love at Calvary; and the perfect tense shows that the manifestation of this love, based on the Son’s past, completed work, continues uninterrupted. God is the One who loves, and man is the object of His love. God’s love is an active, continuing, ever-abiding love that exists during *all present time* and will continue to exist during *all future time*.

The recipients of God’s love will never be estranged from this love. Paul asks the question in [Romans 8:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.35&t=NKJV):

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

The question is then answered in [Romans 8:38-39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.38-39&t=NKJV):

*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,*

*nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Nothing in God’s material universe, present or future, can separate Christians from His love. A Christian may appear in the presence of Christ *naked* and *ashamed* at the end of this dispensation (*cf*. [Romans 8:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.35&t=NKJV); [Revelation 3:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17-18&t=NKJV)), but this, although resulting in dire consequences, will not separate him from the love of God. Man’s unfaithfulness can have no bearing on God’s faithfulness ([2 Timothy 2:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.13&t=NKJV)). A Christian can pass through any experience of life and pass out of life into death without effecting a change in the nature of God’s love toward that individual personally. God does not change, and His love toward His creature does not change. Based on a past, completed work, this love is *a present reality that will endure forever.*

The word “*preserved*,” also in the perfect tense, could be better translated, “kept.” Christians are “kept in Christ Jesus.” This is in association with our past salvation experience and its present, continuing results. The word “kept” is *unique* insofar as introductory remarks in New Testament epistles are concerned. Paul used words such as “faithful,” “beloved,” and “called,” but Jude alone used the word “kept.”

A similar word appears in [1 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.5&t=NKJV) (also translated “kept” in the English text, but from a Greek word having a slightly different meaning):

*who are kept* [*i.e.*, guarded; *lit*., “who are being kept under guard” (passive participle)] *by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Studying Jude in the light of this verse, it is not difficult to understand why *the guarding, keeping* power of God will be sorely needed by Christians in the latter days. Confronted with *apostasy* on every hand, Christians must be *guarded, kept by the power of God*, as they, “*through faith*,” keep their goal set on the “*salvation* [salvation of the SOUL] *ready to be revealed in the last time*.”

Not only were the Christians to whom Jude wrote “*loved*” and “*kept*,” but they were also “*called*.” The “*called*” were *the saved*. They had been saved for a purpose, and their calling had to do with that purpose.

. . . *God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,*

*to which He called you by our gospel* [not the good news concerning the grace of God but the good news concerning the coming glory of Christ], *for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” ([2 Thessalonians 2:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.13-14&t=NKJV) [13b])

Other Scriptures show that an individual must be “*called out*” of the “*called*” (*cf*. [Matthew 22:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.14&t=NKJV)) in order to be a partaker of “*the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” The message in Jude is to the “*called*,” with a view to their being “*called out*” and realizing *the hope of their calling*, which is associated with *the glory to be revealed*.

3) “*Mercy . . . Peace . . . Love*”

Jude concludes his introductory remarks with, “*Mercy, peace, and love, be multiplied to you*.” A similar Divine order beginning every Pauline epistle, with the exception of three, is “*Grace to you, and peace* . . . .” “Grace” must always stand *first*, for, apart from God’s grace, all is *meaningless and vain*. When God deals with man in *grace* He considers neither man’s merits nor demerits. Grace is that which God is able to do completely apart from human intervention; and such dealings must always precede the manifestation of His *mercy, peace, and love*.

The fact that “mercy” is used in the salutations of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus possibly provides the reason for its usage in [Jude 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.2&t=NKJV). First and Second Timothy are epistles which also, to some extent, deal with apostasy (*e.g.*, [1 Timothy 4:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1ff&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 3:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.1ff&t=NKJV)); and Titus deals specifically with the “*blessed hope*” set before Christians ([Titus 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+1.2&t=NKJV); [2:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+2.13&t=NKJV); [3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+3.7&t=NKJV)), which has to do with life (salvation of the SOUL) in the coming age (*cf*. [Jude 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.21&t=NKJV)). *Mercy* is “Divine compassion,” “Divine pity,” which presupposes helplessness and need. God is “*rich in mercy*” ([Ephesians 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.4&t=NKJV)), and Christians are to “*come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*” ([Hebrews 4:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.16&t=NKJV)).

*Helplessness* and *need* in the lives of Christians will be manifested as never before as Christians move deeper into the present, ever-increasing apostasy. And *mercy* (Divine help), *peace* (peace of God), and *love* (love of God) must be multiplied to see Christians safely through the dark days produced by this apostasy.

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Chapter Two

**Contending for the Faith**

*Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.* ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV))

Following introductory remarks in [Jude 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.1-2&t=NKJV), Jude calls attention to the original intent of his epistle. Jude had originally set about to write an epistle dealing with the “*common salvation* [salvation by grace through faith, possessed commonly by all believers]”; but the Holy Spirit prevented him from writing upon this subject and, instead, moved him to write upon something entirely different. The Holy Spirit moved Jude to write upon *contending for the faith during a day of apostasy.*

There are two indispensable keys that one must possess when studying the epistle of Jude:

1) A correct understanding of “*apostasy from the faith*” as it relates to both individual Christians and to the Church as a whole.

2) A correct understanding of exactly what is meant by the expression “*contend earnestly for the faith*.”

These things must be grasped at the very outset; else the main message in this epistle will either be distorted or lost to the reader.

“Apostasy from the faith,” the first indispensable key, was the main subject under discussion throughout the introduction to this book; and this introductory material should prove sufficient to provide a base upon which one can build as he moves on into the epistle of Jude and views the various forms which apostasy can take.

Those who apostatize from the faith are *Christians*, not those of the world. It is not possible for an unsaved person to “stand away from” *the faith*, for he has never come into a position relative to the faith from which he can stand away. Only individuals from among the saved can possibly come into this position, and only these same individuals can enter into this latter-day apostasy in the true sense of the word.

The second indispensable key that one must possess to correctly understand the epistle of Jude is the subject matter at hand in our present study — “*contend earnestly for the faith*,” which, in one sense of the word, is the opposite of “apostasy from the faith.” However, contrary to popular interpretation, this opposite meaning has nothing to do with being a protector or guardian of the great Christian doctrines (*e.g.*, divinity and virgin birth of Christ, salvation through a vicarious death and the shedding of blood, etc.). Rather, something entirely different is in view, and this will constitute the subject matter of this chapter.

Striving in the Contest

The words translated “*contend earnestly*” in [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV) are from the Greek word *epagonizomai*. This is an intensified form of the word *agonizomai*, from which we derive the English word “agonize.” The word *agonizomai* is found in such passages as [1 Corinthians 9:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.25&t=NKJV) (“*competes*,” KJV: “striveth”), [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV) (“*fight*”), and [2 Timothy 4:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7&t=NKJV) (“*fought*”). This word refers particularly to “a struggle in a contest.”

In [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.24-27&t=NKJV), Paul pictured himself as a contestant in a race, with a victor’s crown to be won through a successful completion of the race. And he pictured himself running the race in *the most intense manner possible*, using the word *agonizomai* to describe his actions as he ran. Paul *strained every muscle of his being* as he sought to finish the race in a satisfactory manner and be awarded the proffered crown.

And Paul sought to encourage others to run after the same fashion, keeping the same goal in view.

[1 Timothy 6:12a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12a&t=NKJV) states:

*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called . . . .*

This verse could be better translated:

“Strive [Greek: *Agonizomai*, the word from which the English word ‘agonize’ is derived] in the good contest [*agon*] of the faith; lay hold on life for the age, whereunto you are also called . . . .”

*Agon*, translated “contest,” is the noun form of the verb agonizomai, translated “competes” (KJV: “striveth”). A contest/race is in view (same as [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.24-27&t=NKJV)), and it is a “contest [race] of the faith.” It is “competing” or “striving” *relative to the faith*.

The same thing is similarly stated in [2 Timothy 4:7a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7a&t=NKJV):

*I have fought the good fight* [*i.e.*, ‘I have strived (*agonizomai*) in the good contest (agon)] . . . .

The “contest” here, as in [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV) and as seen in the latter part of this verse, has to do with *the faith*. And the goal set forth in both sections of Scripture is the same:

. . . *I have finished the race [the contest], I have kept the faith.*

*Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that day* . . . . ([2 Timothy 4:7-8a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7-8a&t=NKJV) [7b]; *cf*. [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV), [15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.15&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.18&t=NKJV)).

The contest or race here is the same race set forth in [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.24-27&t=NKJV), with one or more crowns in view at the end of the race. And successful completion of the race will result in the runner being crowned, anticipating the coming rule from the heavens over the earth as a joint-heir with Christ (called “life for the age” in [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV)).

With these things in mind concerning the use of the word *agonizomai* in connection with “*the faith*,” note the expression “*contend earnestly for the faith*” in [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV). In keeping with the other translations, the exact thought brought out by the word *epagonizomai* in Jude (an intensified form of *agonizomai*, the word used in [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 4:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7&t=NKJV)), could perhaps be better understood by using the translation “earnestly strive.” Once again a contest/race is in view, and the thought is really *earnestly striving* “with respect to the faith” rather than *earnestly striving* “for the faith.”

The wording in the Greek text will allow either translation, but related Scriptures are concerned with the basic thought from the former translation rather than the latter. *Earnestly striving* “with respect to the faith” in Jude carries the identical thought as *striving* “in the good contest of the faith” in 1 Timothy. The intensified form of *agonizomai* (used only this one place in the New Testament) undoubtedly appears in Jude because of the subject of the epistle (apostasy) and the immediate danger of the recipients of this message being caught up in the apostasy at hand.

Jude and 2 Peter

Understanding exactly what is involved in *earnestly striving* “with respect to the faith” in Jude is possibly best brought out in 2 Peter. Second Peter is the companion epistle to Jude. Both epistles deal with the same subject matter throughout — “faith,” and “apostasy.” “Faith” appears first in both epistles ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1&t=NKJV)), followed by “apostasy” *from the faith* ([Jude 1:4ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4ff&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3&t=NKJV)).

Second Peter also occupies the same unique relationship to 1 Peter that Jude occupies relative to all the preceding epistles — Pauline and General. First Peter deals specifically with the salvation of the soul, and 2 Peter deals with “faith” ([2 Peter 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1&t=NKJV)) and “apostasy” ([2 Peter 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3&t=NKJV)) in relation to this salvation. The same order is set forth in Jude and the epistles that precede. The epistles preceding Jude, Pauline and General, also deal specifically with the salvation of the SOUL. Jude then forms a capstone for the entire subject, presenting, as 2 Peter, “faith” in relation to the salvation of the soul first ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV)), and then “apostasy” in relation to the salvation of the soul ([Jude 1:4ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4ff&t=NKJV)).

Parallels in the sections on *apostasy from the faith* in both epistles ([2 Peter 2:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1ff&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:4ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4ff&t=NKJV)) clearly illustrate the oneness of Peter’s and Jude’s messages. Numerous identical subjects, events, and places are recorded in the same order (*cf*. [2 Peter 2:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1-3&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:4-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-9&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6-7&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:10-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.10-14&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:8-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8-10&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:15-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.15-16&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.11&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.17-18&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.12-13&t=NKJV), [16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.16&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 3:1-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.1-13&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.17-19&t=NKJV)).

“Apostasy” in both instances is *from the same* “faith”; and since Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of Scripture, a proper study on either “faith” or “apostasy” in one epistle would necessitate a study of the same subject matter in the other epistle. The best available commentary on Jude is Second Peter, along with other related Scripture; and the best available commentary on 2 Peter is Jude, along with other related Scripture.

Our main interest at hand is the parallel sections on “faith” in the two epistles. Where Jude devotes one verse to *contesting earnestly with respect to the faith* ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV)), Peter devotes the greater part of an entire chapter to *maturity in the faith* ([2 Peter 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1&t=NKJV)). And this chapter, in the light of Jude and other related Scripture, is actually a dissertation on *contesting earnestly* “with respect to the faith,” which will result in the one engaged in this “contest of the faith” (if he runs according to the rules) “*receiving the end* [‘goal’]” of his *faith*, even *the salvation of his SOUL* ([1 Peter 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9&t=NKJV)). Thus, in order to properly understand [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV), the remainder of this chapter will be drawn from [2 Peter 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1&t=NKJV).

(Note that [2 Peter 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1&t=NKJV) is Scripture’s own commentary on [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV). And this commentary is perfectly in line with that which is stated about “the faith” at any other point in Scripture.)

Maturity in the Faith

Peter directs his second epistle to “*those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ*” ([2 Peter 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.1&t=NKJV)). This is a “faith” possessed by *all* Christians. We were all accorded the same measure of “faith” at the time we “*passed from death to life*” ([John 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+5.24&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV), [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.5&t=NKJV)). Every Christian begins at the same point with the same “*like precious faith*.” Then, in [2 Peter 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-7&t=NKJV), Christians are told:

*But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to* [lit., ‘abundantly supply in’] *your faith virtue, to* [‘in’] *virtue knowledge,*

*to* [in] *knowledge self-control, to* [in] *self-control perseverance; to* [in] *perseverance godliness,*

*to* [in] *godliness brotherly kindness; and to* [in] *brotherly kindness love.*

Peter then states in [2 Peter 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV):

*For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge* [Greek: *epignosis*, mature knowledge] *of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

The Greek word *epignosis*, referring to a “mature knowledge,” occurs three times in 2 Peter, chapter one ([2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV)). In verse two, “*grace and peace*” are multiplied through *a mature knowledge* “*of God and of Jesus our Lord* [*lit*., “of God, even Jesus our Lord” (*cf*. [2 Peter 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.1&t=NKJV))].” In verse three, Christians are given “*all things that pertain to life and godliness” through the mature knowledge “of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue”* (KJV); and in [2 Peter 1:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV), abundantly supplying the things listed (with “faith” as the foundation) will result in “fruit-bearing” (if these things “abound” *in the person*) *within one’s mature knowledge “of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

[Colossians 2:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2-3&t=NKJV) is a corresponding passage concerning *a mature knowledge* “of Jesus our Lord” which deals with the same basic truths as [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV). In the Colossians passage, the “*mystery of God*” is revealed to be *Christ*, and *in Him* “*are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.” The words appearing between “God” and “Christ” [2 Peter 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2&t=NKJV)) in the Authorized Version are not found in the best Greek manuscripts, and the latter part of this verse should literally read: “. . . to a mature knowledge [*epignosis*] of the mystery of God, Christ.”

The name “*Christ*” is placed in apposition to the word “*mystery*” in the Greek text, making Christ to be “*the mystery of God*.” The things in this mystery were not fully opened up in the prior dispensation; but now, through additional revelation, the Holy Spirit is making these things known to the saints. Man today has the complete revelation of God, and as this revelation is received into man’s saved human spirit, the indwelling Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and reveals things concerning the Son (things previously made known but not fully opened up and revealed until dealt with in later revelation [[John 16:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+16.13-15&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 2:6-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.6-13&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Genesis 24:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.4&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.10&t=NKJV), [36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.36&t=NKJV), [53](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.53&t=NKJV)]).

In [Colossians 2:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2-3&t=NKJV), it is only the person coming into a mature knowledge of the “*mystery of God*” who will see the great storehouse of “*treasures of wisdom and knowledge*” *in Christ*. In like manner, only the person coming into *a mature knowledge* of “*Jesus Christ our Lord*” in [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV), contained in the “*mystery of God*” in [Colossians 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2&t=NKJV), will realize an increase of “*grace*” and “*peace*” (*cf*. “*Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you*” [[Jude 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.2&t=NKJV)]), or come into possession of the numerous other things mentioned in this chapter.

In [2 Peter 1:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.3-4&t=NKJV), *a mature knowledge* of God’s Son will result in the realization of two things:

a) *Possessing* “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*”: “*Life*” (Greek: *Zoe*) is used referring to life in its absolute fullness, which a Christian is to exhibit during his present pilgrim walk; and “*godliness*” refers to *piety* or *reverence*, which is to be exhibited at the same time. A godly walk in the fullness of life is appropriating that which God has for man (revealed in His Word) and, at the same time, walking in a Godlike manner.

b) *Possessing “great and precious promises”*: Through these “*great and precious promises*” (revealed in God’s Word) individuals become “*partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world* [by means of *epignosis*]…” (*cf*. [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV); [2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV)). The “divine nature” has been planted within the inner being of every Christian; but it, as *faith*, can be either dormant or very active. To assure that the “*divine nature*,” along with *faith*, does not lie dormant, a Christian must lay aside the things having to do with corruption in the world and receive the Word of God into his saved human spirit ([James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 2:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.1-2&t=NKJV)). It is the reception of this Word and the corresponding work of the Holy Spirit *alone* that bring individuals into that position where spiritual growth is wrought, partaking of the “*divine nature*” is effected, and victory over the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil come to pass.

The great problem among Christians today is *spiritual immaturity*, which often results in fleshly or worldly living and resultant defeat in one’s spiritual life. There is no increase of “*grace*,” “*mercy*,” “*peace*,” and “*love*.” Such Christians, not in possession of a mature knowledge of the Word (*epignosis*), cannot be in possession of the things pertaining to “*life and godliness*”; and they can know very little to nothing of the “*great and precious promises*,” or being “*partakers of the divine nature*.” They, thus, can be easily “*carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting*” ([Ephesians 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.14&t=NKJV)).

Fruit-Bearing for the Kingdom

In [2 Peter 1:5-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-11&t=NKJV), *fruit-bearing is in view*; and *fruit-bearing* is associated with *things abundantly supplied in faith* ([2 Peter 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-7&t=NKJV)), *a mature knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ* ([2 Peter 1:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8-9&t=NKJV)), *one’s “calling and election”* ([2 Peter 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.10&t=NKJV)), and *“entrance” into the coming “kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* ([2 Peter 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.11&t=NKJV)).

1) *Things Abundantly Supplied in Faith* ([2 Peter 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-7&t=NKJV))

Every Christian is in possession of *faith*, obtained “*through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ*.” This faith can be very active, or it can be weak, anemic, or even dead ([James 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.17&t=NKJV), [20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.20&t=NKJV), [26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.26&t=NKJV)). But faith, even though looked upon as anemic or dead, is still present with the believer; and it can never pass away ([1 Corinthians 13:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+13.13&t=NKJV)).

The word “*dead*” appearing in [James 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.17&t=NKJV), [20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.20&t=NKJV), [26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.26&t=NKJV) KJV, in connection with *faith*, can only refer to a “barren” or “fruitless” *faith*. This type of faith is void of works, and works are necessary to bring forth fruit and bring faith to its goal.

In a number of the older Greek manuscripts the word for “barren” appears in the text of [James 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.20&t=NKJV)rather than the word for “dead,” equating “barren” in this verse with “dead” in [James 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.17&t=NKJV), [26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.26&t=NKJV). However, one need not belabor whether or not the word for “barren” in these older manuscripts is the correct rendering of the text, for [2 Peter 1:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV) teaches the same thing concerning a “barren” faith.

[2 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5&t=NKJV) should literally read: “But also for this cause, giving all diligence, abundantly supply in your faith…” Because of that which has preceded (outlined in [2 Peter 1:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.1-4&t=NKJV)) — things resulting from a mature knowledge (*epignosis*) “*of God and of Jesus our Lord*” — the Christian is commanded to follow a certain stepped course of action. And this course of action will result in “fruit-bearing,” within one’s mature knowledge (*epignosis*) “*of our Lord Jesus Christ*” ([2 Peter 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV)). And this will, in turn, ultimately result in *an abundant entrance “into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* ([2 Peter 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.11&t=NKJV)).

a) “*Add to* [‘Abundantly supply in’] *your faith virtue*” ([2 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5&t=NKJV)): The words “Add to” should literally be understood as “Abundantly supply in” throughout [2 Peter 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-7&t=NKJV). The Greek word translated “*virtue*” is *arete* (same as [2 Peter 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.3&t=NKJV)), which could be understood as either “virtue” or “moral excellence.” And when used relative to God, the word has to do with *His power*. The thought contextually would have to do with Christians exercising “moral excellence” under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Thus, with Christians conducting their lives in this manner, divine power through the Spirit’s leadership would be in view through the use of the word.

b) “*And to* [‘in’] *virtue knowledge*” ([2 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5&t=NKJV)): “*Knowledge*” is the translation of *gnosis* (the regular Greek word for “knowledge”) rather than epignosis (“mature knowledge”) as used in [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV)

*Gnosis* refers to the accumulation of facts, which may result in *epignosis*, but not necessarily. *Epignosis* is more restricted in its usage, having to do with knowledge pertaining more particularly to things relating to the coming kingdom (*ref*. Part 2, “A Mature Knowledge” that follows).

c) “*And to* [‘in’] *knowledge self-control* [KJV: ‘temperance’]” ([2 Peter 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.6&t=NKJV)): The Greek word translated “*temperance*” in the KJV of the Bible is *egkrateia*, which means “*self-control,*” “mastery over oneself.” This is a compound word from *en* and *kratos* (*en* means “in,” and *kratos* means “power”). The reference is to passions and desires emanating from the man of flesh being held in check. And this is accomplished through allowing the Spirit to govern and control one’s life, which goes back to the divine power previously seen through the word *arete* in [2 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5&t=NKJV).

d) “*And to* [‘in’] *self-control patience*” ([2 Peter 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.6&t=NKJV)): The Greek word translated “*patience*” is *hupomone*, which has to do with “patient endurance” under trials and testing during the pilgrim walk. This is a compound word from *hupo* and *mone* (*hupo* means “under,” and *mone* means “stay,” or “remain”). Thus, the word literally means, “remain under”; and the compound word is possibly best understood by the translation, “patient endurance.”

Note how the verb form of this word (*hupomeno*) is used in [James 1:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.12&t=NKJV):

*Blessed is the man who endures* [patiently endures] *temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him*.

Note also the use of *hupomeno* in [2 Timothy 2:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.10&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.12&t=NKJV) (translated “endure” and “suffer” [KJV] respectively). Both should properly be translated “patiently endure.”

e) “*And to* [‘in’] *patience godliness*” ([2 Peter 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.6&t=NKJV)): The Greek word translated “*godliness*” is *eusebeia*. This is a compound word derived from *eu* and *sebomai* (*eu* means “good,” and *sebomai* means “to worship” or “to reverence”). Thus, *eusebeia* has to do with Christians exercising “piety,” or “godliness” as they patiently endure the trials and testing of life during their pilgrim walk. The thought is simply a continued building upon that which had been previously stated in the book.

f) “*And to* [‘in’] *godliness brotherly kindness*” ([2 Peter 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.7&t=NKJV)): The words “*brotherly kindness*” are a translation of the compound Greek word *philadelphia*, comprised of *phileo* (“love,” “affection”) and *adelphos* (“brother”). The word should be translated “brotherly love” or “brotherly affection.”

g) “*And to* [‘in’] *brotherly kindness love* [KJV: ‘charity’]” ([2 Peter 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.7&t=NKJV)): The Greek word translated “charity” in the KJV of the Bible is *agape*, which, as *phileo*, means “love.” However, *agape* moves beyond mere affection, or the type of love between Christians set forth by the word *phileo*. *Agape* has to do with “divine love,” which God is in *His character and nature*. “*God is love*,” *i.e.*, “God is *agape*” ([1 John 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+4.8&t=NKJV)).

(The word “love,” as the word “spirit” in [John 4:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+4.24&t=NKJV) [“*God is spirit*”; *ref*., NKJV, NASB, NIV] is *anarthrous* in the Greek text [no article before the word], pointing to *God’s character and nature*.

An article before a word calls attention to *identity*, even the use of an indefinite article before “*spirit*” in [John 4:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+4.24&t=NKJV) of the KJV text [the Greek text does not use indefinite articles, only definite]. And the insertion of even an indefinite article before “*spirit*” in the translation of this verse changes the meaning intended by the Greek text entirely.)

*Agape* is also the same word used relative to man in the context of this verse in 1 John. “Love” set forth by the word agape is the highest type love attainable. This is love produced by the Holy Spirit in the life of a faithful believer. *Agape* appears after all the other things mentioned in [2 Peter 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-7&t=NKJV). It must be supplied last, for it is placed at the height of Christian experience, and nothing can be added therein (*cf*. [1 Corinthians 13:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+13.1ff&t=NKJV); *agape* is used throughout this chapter).

2) *A Mature Knowledge* ([2 Peter 1:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8-9&t=NKJV))

*Epignosis* in Scripture has a peculiar relationship to the salvation to be revealed, the salvation of the soul. This word appears in passages that have to do with the saints possessing a mature knowledge in things related to the coming kingdom. The list is by no means complete, but throughout the New Testament *epignosis* is associated with a mature knowledge of “*God*,” of God’s “*Son* [‘the mystery of God, Christ’],” God’s “*will*,” truths pertaining to “*faith*,” “*life*,” and “*godliness*,” the coming “*judgment*” of the saints, “*the blessed hope*,” and the coming “*inheritance*” of the saints ([Romans 1:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.28&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.17-18&t=NKJV); [4:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.13&t=NKJV); [Colossians 1:9-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.9-12&t=NKJV); [2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2&t=NKJV); [3:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.10&t=NKJV); [1 Timothy 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+2.4&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.25&t=NKJV); [3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.7&t=NKJV); [Titus 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+1.1-2&t=NKJV); [2:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+2.13&t=NKJV); [3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+3.7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 10:25-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.25-31&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 1:1-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.1-8&t=NKJV); [2:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20-21&t=NKJV)).

*Epignosis*, having to do with an impartation of things pertaining to “*life and godliness*,” allows Christians to escape the “*pollutions of the world*” ([2 Peter 1:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.3-4&t=NKJV); [2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV)). Rejection of *epignosis*, on the other hand, places Christians in the dangerous position of being easily entangled in the things that *epignosis* allows them to escape ([Romans 1:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.28&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:20-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20-22&t=NKJV)).

“*All filthiness and overflow of wickedness*” must be set aside prior to receiving the “*implanted* [KJV: ‘engrafted’] *Word, which is able to save your SOULS*” ([James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV)); and the reception of this Word progressively produces the renewing of your mind “*in knowledge* [*epignosis*] *according to the image of Him who created him*,” working the *metamorphosis* in one’s life ([Romans 12:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.1-2&t=NKJV); [Colossians 3:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.10&t=NKJV)), allowing that person to escape the entanglements of the world.

*Epignosis* has to do with the “strong meat” of the Word, which is associated in [Hebrews 5:6-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.6-14&t=NKJV) with Christ and His Melchizedek priesthood. Those who have been enlightened in these truths — have been allowed by God to move from *gnosis* to *epignosis* — and then “*fall away*” are the ones who become entangled again in the affairs of the world ([Hebrews 6:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1-6&t=NKJV)). The fact that such persons cannot be renewed again unto repentance ([Hebrews 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4&t=NKJV), [6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.6&t=NKJV)) will answer the question concerning why it would have been better for such individuals not to have known “*the way of righteousness*” ([2 Peter 2:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.21&t=NKJV)) through coming into possession of *epignosis* ([2 Peter 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV)).

[Hebrews 5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5&t=NKJV); [6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6&t=NKJV) must be understood in the light of [Hebrews 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3&t=NKJV); [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4&t=NKJV), which contain the record of the Israelites being allowed to go on into things beyond the death of the firstborn in Egypt. They first passed through the Red Sea. Going down into the Sea points to *death* (as it pertains to the old man, to Egypt), coming up out of the Sea points to *resurrection* (as it pertains to the new man, to the land ahead). The events of Sinai then soon followed.

A “mount” in Scripture signifies *a kingdom*. This is where the Israelites received the Law (the rules and regulations governing the people within the theocracy that lay ahead), and this is where they both received the instructions for and built the tabernacle (the dwelling place of God among His people within the theocracy).

They were then allowed to go up to the very border of the Promised Land itself, hear the report about the land from the twelve spies, and taste the actual fruits of the land that the spies had carried back with them.

In this respect, the Israelites were allowed to move from *gnosis* to *epignosis*; but they turned away (fell away), and it was then impossible to renew them again unto repentance ([Numbers 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13&t=NKJV); [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14&t=NKJV)). They were overthrown in the wilderness.

It would have been better for the ones who were overthrown (the entire accountable generation, twenty years old and above, save Caleb and Joshua) not to have known these things about the land (equivalent in the antitype to, “*it had been better . . . not to have known the way of righteousness*” for Christians in [2 Peter 2:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.21&t=NKJV)), than after they knew these things, “*to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them*” ([Numbers 13:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.30&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 1:21ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+1.21ff&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Joshua 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+1.1-2&t=NKJV)). It was so with the Israelites in the type, and thus will it be for Christians in the antitype.

3) *Call and Election* ([2 Peter 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.10&t=NKJV))

Individuals are to give *diligence* to make their “*call and election sure*.” The word “*election*” could be better translated “called out.” The words translated “*call*” and “*election*” in this verse are from the same root forms as the words translated “*called*” and “*chosen*” in [Matthew 22:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.14&t=NKJV), which should literally be translated, “For many are *called*, but few are *called out*.”

(Both an individual’s *calling* and *out-calling* have to do with the same thing. His *calling* can’t have to do with the Christian’s presently possessed salvation, for he can’t make that anymore “*sure*” than it already exists. Salvation by grace through faith has already been made “*sure*,” based on Christ’s finished work at Calvary.

An individual has been saved for a purpose; and that “purpose” would equate to his *calling*, as “realizing that purpose” would equate to his *out-calling*. Both have to do with a salvation set in the future, the salvation of the soul; and both have to do with Christians one day being *called out of the called and realizing positions as co-heirs with Christ in His kingdom*.)

The word “*diligent*” in [2 Peter 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.10&t=NKJV) is from the same word also translated “*diligence*” in [2 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5&t=NKJV). With the same intensity that a person is to abundantly supply in his *faith virtue* . . ., he is to make his *calling* and *out-calling* “*sure*.” The word “*sure*” is the translation of a word that means “certain,” “firm,” “secure.” And to make his *calling* and *out-calling* “*sure*,” a Christian would have to be *knowledgeable* concerning that which is in view (note *epignosis*, “mature knowledge,” in [2 Peter 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV)).

There can be no such thing as following biblical guidelines surrounding the purpose for one’s salvation and, at the same time, ignoring one’s *calling* and *out-calling*. The entire concept widely promulgated in Christian circles today that states or teaches that the one really important thing is just to be saved has no basis in Scripture whatsoever. Scripture places the emphasis on *the purpose for one’s salvation*. It is man who has turned this around and placed the emphasis back on salvation itself.

The entire purpose for the present dispensation is *to procure a bride for God’s Son*, with a view to the coming age when the Son will reign over the earth with His consort queen (procured during the present dispensation). God has set aside an entire dispensation lasting 2,000 years for this purpose. He sent His Spirit into the world at the beginning of the dispensation with specific instructions (seen in the type in [Genesis 24:3-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.3-9&t=NKJV)).

And the work of the Spirit throughout the dispensation, though it includes breathing life into the one who has no life (salvation of the unsaved), is primarily concerned with procuring a bride for God’s Son.

And the bride is to be taken from the saved, not from the unsaved (seen in the type in [Genesis 24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24&t=NKJV) through the specific instructions that Abraham gave his servant and that which the servant did once he was in Mesopotamia — went to the city where Abraham’s kindred resided, and went to Abraham’s kindred in that city [[Genesis 24:3-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.3-27&t=NKJV)]).

The whole of the matter surrounding the reason for the Spirit being sent into the world at the beginning of this dispensation has to do with one’s *calling* and *out-calling*. And Christians are to be knowledgeable concerning God’s plans and purposes for the present dispensation, making their *calling* and *out-calling* “*sure*.”

4) *Entrance into the Kingdom* ([2 Peter 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.11&t=NKJV))

The word “*entrance*” is the translation of a word which means *a road into*. The route has been properly marked in the preceding verses, and one can not only follow this route, but he is exhorted to do so. The Christian, through this means, can make his *calling* and *out-calling* “*sure*.”

Peter did not follow “*cunningly devised fables*” when he made known “*the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” He was an “*eyewitness of His majesty*.” He saw the *Son’s glory* when he was with Christ “*on the holy mount*,” and he penned the epistles of 1, 2 Peter as he was “*moved* [‘borne along’] *by the Holy Spirit*” [2 Peter 1:16-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.16-21&t=NKJV)). Peter not only saw and recorded things having to do with the coming kingdom, but he also left detailed instructions concerning that which Christians must do to have a part in this kingdom.

*When will Christians learn that they have been saved for a purpose? And when will they learn that this purpose has to do with the coming kingdom?*

Positions as joint-heirs with Christ in the governmental structure of the kingdom are presently being *offered*, and crowns must be won *by conquest.*

The arch-enemy of our souls is at work in the closing days of this dispensation as never before; *but the route for an “abundant entrance” into the kingdom has been properly marked, and the promise of God stands sure*:

“*To him that overcomes* . . . .” ([Revelation 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.7&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV), [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.17&t=NKJV), [26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-28&t=NKJV); [3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.5&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.12&t=NKJV), [21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.21&t=NKJV)).

And the command given through [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV), in order that one might one day realize this promise, is clear:

“. . . *contend earnestly for* [with respect to, in the good contest of] *the faith* . . . .”

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Chapter Three

**Falling Away From the Faith**

*For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness* [licentiousness], *and* [even] *denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*. ([Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV))

The “apostates” in [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV) are *false teachers* who are often erroneously thought of as unsaved individuals. However, understanding these false teachers to be unsaved has no basis whatsoever in Scripture. In fact, such a view would militate against that which Jude has to say about false teachers. The context in Jude (continuing into [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV)) and the corresponding section in [2 Peter 2:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1-3&t=NKJV); *cf*. [2 Peter 2:19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.19-21&t=NKJV)) both demonstrate conclusively that the unsaved are not in view at all.

[Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV) has to do with the Israelites under Moses, who were *saved out of the land of Egypt*, but *afterward were destroyed*. Not only had these Israelites *appropriated* the blood of the paschal lambs but they had also been *delivered* from Egypt (always a type of *the world* in Scripture).

In the antitype, this has to do with individuals who, as well, have both *appropriated* the blood of the Passover Lamb and have been *delivered* from the things of this world. Thus, the antitype can only have to do with Christians under Christ (*ref*. “. . . *having escaped the corruption that is in the world . . . have escaped the pollutions of the world* . . . .” [[2 Peter 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.4&t=NKJV); [2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Hebrews 3:1-4:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3.1-4.16&t=NKJV)]).

Then, continuing with the antitype, [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV) points to *the destruction* awaiting many of these individuals, awaiting numerous Christians (not pertaining to eternal life [an impossibility] but pertaining to the subject matter at hand, as in the type — the inheritance set before them [inheriting as co-heirs with Christ], in another land [a heavenly land], within the theocracy [the coming kingdom of Christ]). The reason for this *destruction* awaiting numerous Christians (a destruction that will be seen in their failure to realize the goal of their calling) is revealed in the context in [Jude 1:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3-4&t=NKJV) and in the Old Testament type ([Numbers 13:21-14:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.21-14.9&t=NKJV), [27-37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.27-37&t=NKJV)). *Destruction* will occur, exactly as in the type, because of “unfaithfulness” (resulting in *a falling away, apostasy*).

The companion epistle to Jude, 2 Peter, clearly states that these false teachers had been allowed to move from *gnosis* into *epignosis*, from “knowledge” into a “mature knowledge” (*cf*. [2 Peter 2:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1-3&t=NKJV), [19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.19-21&t=NKJV); “knowledge” in [2 Peter 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV) is *epignosis* [mature knowledge] in the Greek text). Operating in the spiritual realm is possible *only for the saved*, whether dealing with *gnosis* ([1 Corinthians 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.14&t=NKJV)), or with *epignosis* ([2 Peter 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV)). The unsaved are spiritually dead ([Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV)) and can no more move about in the spiritual realm than can a physically dead person move about in the physical realm.

An unsaved person knows only the soulical nature; he lacks a redeemed spirit into which the Word of God can flow; and he lacks the indwelling Holy Spirit who can take this Word and lead him into all truth — turning the *Water* into *Wine*, moving from *gnosis* to *epignosis*. All things associated with the new nature are *totally alien* to unsaved man, and any acquisition of knowledge relates to his soulical (natural) nature and could never be associated with *epignosis*.

The widespread tendency to read into 2 Peter and Jude what is not there (*unregenerate* false teachers) has served only to cloud the true issue and rob both epistles of their correct message. The unsaved existing in the midst of Christians today can present both an issue and problem, but any issue and problem presented by the unsaved can only be viewed as of little consequence compared with the issue and problem which apostate regenerate teachers existing in the midst of Christians today present, dealt with in both 2 Peter and Jude.

As previously seen, the false teachers in these two epistles can only be viewed as Christians who have *apostatized from the faith*, become *false teachers*, and now *stand in the way* of those who *contend earnestly* (KJV: are striving) “*for* [with respect to, in the good contest of] *the faith*.”

Standing in the Way

The thought of false teachers standing in the way of those who *contend earnestly* (are striving) in “*the good contest of the faith*” is very similar to the actions of the scribes and Pharisees during the time Jesus was on the earth, prior to His crucifixion. The scribes and Pharisees “*shut up the kingdom of the heavens against men* [‘before men,’ ‘in the presence of men’]” ([Matthew 23:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.13&t=NKJV)). They were not going in themselves, and they didn’t want anyone else to go in either. They stood in the way of those who were *striving* to enter.

No other religious group in Israel received a greater condemnation at the hands of Christ than did the scribes and Pharisees. Over and over Christ uttered the condemnatory words:

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!* ([Matthew 23:13-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.13-16&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.23&t=NKJV), [25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.25&t=NKJV), [27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.27&t=NKJV), [29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.29&t=NKJV))

He called them “*fools and blind . . . serpents . . . vipers,*” and likened them to “*whitewashed tombs* (KJV: ‘whited sepulchers’), *which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness*” ([Matthew 23:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.17&t=NKJV), [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.19&t=NKJV), [24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.24&t=NKJV), [26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.26-27&t=NKJV), [33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.33&t=NKJV)).

Even the Sadducees, although spoken against for their unbelief and often placed in the same category with the Pharisees, were never the recipients of such condemnatory words as those recorded in Matthew chapter twenty-three.

What made the difference? Why were *the woe’s* and *the words of condemnation* directed toward the scribes and Pharisees (the keepers and teachers of the Law, the fundamental legalists of that day) instead of the Sadducees (a group not holding to the exact letter of the Law [*e.g.*, [Acts 23:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+23.7-8&t=NKJV)], who could be looked upon as the liberals of that day)? The answer is obvious. The ones who claimed to believe the Scriptures to the very letter (the scribes and Pharisees) not only exhibited an unbelief greater than that of the Sadducees but this was done in an open, hypocritical manner, producing dire consequences.

The scribes and Pharisees, the legalistic keepers and teachers of the Law, were, by far, the largest religious party in Israel. They, by their very numbers, controlled the religious life in Israel. They had not only rejected the message and the Messenger — the kingdom of the heavens being proclaimed by Israel’s Messiah — but they had stood in the way of others heeding the message and receiving the Messenger. They had “*shut up the kingdom of the heavens*” in the presence of those in Israel ([Matthew 23:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.13&t=NKJV)).

This resulted in *a widespread unbelief* in Israel, climaxed by the nation’s *rejection* of the King and the Kingdom, followed by the *crucifixion* of the King Himself. Thus, the Scribes and Pharisees were directly responsible for that which occurred in Israel when Christ came the first time, which accounts for Christ’s condemnatory words directed toward them at the climax of His ministry, immediately preceding the events surrounding Calvary ([Matthew 23:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.1ff&t=NKJV)).

The same basic thing exists in Christendom today relative to what is often termed the clergy and the laity. And the Word of God concerns itself far more with warnings directed toward those who follow in the paths of the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees — the apostates and those who do their bidding — than it does with warnings directed toward those who have never become associated with “*the faith*.”

And the basic issue today is the same as it was over 1,900 years ago — the offer of the kingdom of the heavens on the one hand, and certain individuals seeking to subvert this offer on the other hand. False teachers, as their counterparts in Israel, are *shutting up “the kingdom of the heavens against men* [‘before men,’ ‘in the presence of men’].*”* They themselves are not going to enter into the kingdom; and their basic aim underlying all their pseudo systems of doctrine, whether they realize it or not, is to also prevent others from entering. They stand in the way of others, producing a widespread unbelief concerning the King and the Kingdom.

Sermon on the Mount

The mention of *false teachers* in Jude appears immediately following the exhortation *to contend earnestly* (strive) “with respect to the faith.” The parallel section to this, as we have seen, is in [2 Peter 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1&t=NKJV); [2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2&t=NKJV). Another parallel section that should prove profitable to consider at this time is the section devoted to “*false prophets*” in the latter part of what is commonly called “the Sermon on the Mount” ([Matthew 5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5-7&t=NKJV)). In this discourse, delivered by Jesus to His disciples while in *a mountain* (alluding to “the kingdom” in view — “a mountain” in Scripture always signifies *a kingdom*), “*false prophets*” are mentioned immediately *after* an exhortation *to enter in “at the strait gate”* and immediately before a rejection of certain individuals for *entrance “into the kingdom of the heavens”* ([Matthew 7:13-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13-23&t=NKJV)). The contextual setting provides the reason for the appearance of false prophets at this particular point in Scripture; and a study of this contextual setting in the light of related Scripture will clearly reveal that these false prophets are, as in [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV), *false teachers*, not unregenerate individuals alienated from God.

The Sermon on the Mount is a connected discourse dealing with *entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens*. This discourse is actually an exposition of [Matthew 5:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.20&t=NKJV):

*For I say to you* [Jesus’ disciples; *cf*. [Matthew 5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.2&t=NKJV)], *that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven*.

Two things must ever be kept in mind when studying the Sermon on the Mount:

a) The message is to *the saved*, not the unsaved.

b) The subject matter at hand is *entrance into the kingdom*, not eternal salvation.

The Sermon on the Mount was delivered by Jesus to His disciples during the time when the offer of the kingdom of the heavens was still open to the nation of Israel. This message was delivered during the closing days of God’s past dealings with Israel and applied strictly to a people (Israelites) to whom the offer to occupy positions in the heavenly portion of the kingdom was being extended. However, after Israel’s rejection of this offer and the subsequent removal of *the heavenly part of the kingdom* from Israel ([Matthew 21:18-43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+21.18-43&t=NKJV)), the words of the Sermon on the Mount could no longer be applicable to this nation.

The Sermon on the Mount, dealing with entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens, can be applicable only to those to whom the kingdom of the heavens *is being extended* (not ‘was’ being extended [in relation to Israel in time past], but *‘is’ being extended* [in relation to another entity today]).

With this in mind, the present recipients of the promises and blessings associated with the kingdom of the heavens comprise an entirely *“new creation” in Christ.* This new creation, separate and distinct from Israel, was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel rejected — *the heavenly part of the kingdom.*

And the words of the Sermon on the Mount, remaining applicable to individuals associated with entrance into the kingdom of the heavens, *must, accordingly, now apply to Christians*. The words of the Sermon on the Mount — following a reoffer of the kingdom to Israel and a second rejection by Israel (seen in the book of Acts) — can apply to no other group of individuals during the present dispensation.

Dangers Confronting Christians

[Matthew 7:13-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13-23&t=NKJV) records *two dangers* that confront all Christians during their present pilgrim walk. These dangers are produced by the actions of the false teachers ([Matthew 7:15-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15-20&t=NKJV)) and concern Christians basically in their relationship to the coming kingdom.

a) *The first danger* confronting Christians is “lack of effort” ([Matthew 7:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13-14&t=NKJV)).

b) *The second danger* confronting Christians is “performing works for the Lord, but not doing the will of the Lord [*i.e.,* Christians running out ahead of the Lord, performing works themselves — using their own wisdom, ways, means, methods — rather than faithfully waiting on the Lord to perform works through them, under the power of the Spirit]” ([Matthew 7:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-23&t=NKJV)).

(In the preceding respect, note, in [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.11-15&t=NKJV), the two types of works that will be manifested in that coming day when Christians appear before the judgment seat of Christ — “*gold, silver, precious stones*” on the one hand [works that will endure the fire]; “*wood, hay, straw*” on the other hand [works that will be burned by the fire].)

1) *Lack of Effort* ([Matthew 7:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13-14&t=NKJV))

*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.*

*Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it*

A parallel verse recorded in [Luke 13:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+13.24&t=NKJV) states,

*Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.*

The word “Strive” is the translation of the Greek word *agonizomai*, from which the English word “agonize” is derived (*ref*. Chapter 2 in this book). Effort — straining every muscle of one’s being — is to be expended as Christians strive to enter through this gate. Every weight and hindrance is to be *cast aside*, everything not associated with the race is to be counted for *naught*, as Christians “*press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*” ([Philippians 3:7-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.7-14&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.1-2&t=NKJV)).

*Striving* in passages such as [1 Corinthians 9:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.25&t=NKJV); [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 4:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV) is in “*the good contest of the faith.*” *Entrance into the kingdom* is in view in these passages, as in [Matthew 7:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13-14&t=NKJV) and [Luke 13:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+13.24&t=NKJV). Entering in “*by the narrow gate*” in [Matthew 7:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13&t=NKJV) requires *effort*, and related Scriptures reveal that this effort has to do with *striving in the race* set before Christians.

[2 Peter 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.11&t=NKJV), a verse showing the result of properly striving in the race, refers to *an abundant entrance “into the everlasting* [‘age-lasting’] *kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* The kingdom of the heavens and entrance into this kingdom comprise the subject matter at hand, which is the object of the race in all these verses.

The parable of the Sower in [Matthew 13:3-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.3-9&t=NKJV), [18-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.18-23&t=NKJV) provides one of the best examples in Scripture showing how Christians are caused *to fail* in the race and *fall away* because of the ministry of false teachers. This parable concerns four types of Christians who are sown out in the world by the Lord Jesus Christ (the words, “*he who received seed*” [[Matthew 13:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.19-20&t=NKJV), [22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.22-23&t=NKJV)], should be translated, “*he who was sown*” [*cf*. [Matthew 13:37-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.37-38&t=NKJV)]). These Christians are categorized as the ones sown “*by the wayside*,” the ones sown “*on stony places*,” the ones sown “*among thorns*,” and the ones sown “*on the good ground*.” Only the latter, the ones sown “*on the good ground*,” bring forth fruit. The other three types of Christians, for various revealed reasons, do not produce fruit.

The parable of the Sower in all its four parts concerns experiences in the lives of Christians who have both heard the word of the kingdom and been sown by the Lord Jesus Christ in various places out in the world, with a view to bringing forth fruit for the kingdom.

The second part of this parable concerns Christians sown upon “*stony places*” ([Matthew 13:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.5-6&t=NKJV), [20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.20-21&t=NKJV)); and, because of “*tribulation or persecution*” arising in their lives, these Christians fail to bring forth fruit. The “*tribulation*” and “*persecution*” are seen to be brought about “*because of the word* [‘*the word of the kingdom*’; *cf*. [Matthew 13:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.19&t=NKJV)].”

These represent those who hear and joyfully receive “*the word of the kingdom*,” finding themselves in a position to bring forth fruit when “*tribulation or persecution*” arises in their lives. Individuals responsible for bringing about “*tribulation*” or “*persecution*” in the lives of Christians sown upon “*stony places*” are said to cast a “stumbling block” in their path (the word “offended” [[Matthew 13:21 KJV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.21&t=KJV)] should literally be translated “stumbling block”).

In the parallel passage in [Luke 8:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+8.13&t=NKJV), this “stumbling block” cast before Christians is said to cause them to “*fall away*.” The Greek word translated “*fall away*” in this passage is *aphistemi*, the verb form of the word *apostasia*, from which the English word “apostasy” is derived. This is *a falling away, an apostasy, “from the faith.”*

Christians who have heard “*the word of the kingdom*” and have been placed out in the world, with a view of bringing forth fruit for the kingdom, are the ones engaged in *striving “in the good contest of the faith.”* These are the ones who are striving to enter in at the narrow gate. Those who cast a “stumbling block” in their pathway are none other than the false prophets/teachers of [Matthew 7:15-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15-20&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1-3&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV). And the ministry of those proclaiming a false message concerning the kingdom centers on seeking to prevent other Christians from bringing forth fruit by causing them to *turn away* from the “*word of the kingdom*,” *to fall away*. Such an act then results in fruit-bearing in an entirely different realm — the apostate teacher himself producing fruit (which could only be associated with “*wood, hay, straw*”), diametrically opposed to “*the word of the kingdom*.”

The apostates, by and through their ministry among Christians, produce other apostates (those caused to fall away through standing away from the faith). This is what is meant by the statement in [Matthew 7:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.20&t=NKJV): “*Therefore by their fruits you will know them*.” This verse has to do with identifying apostate Christians alone, not with the common, false concept of testing a person who claims to be saved (seeking to ascertain the reality or non-reality of his/her conversion) by watching for fruit.

Such a concept, as the preceding, is completely alien to Scripture. A person is placed in a position to bring forth fruit only *after he is saved*, and Scripture clearly teaches that he *may* or *may not* bring forth fruit, likened to “*gold, silver, and precious stones*.”

Whether a Christian bears such fruit or not is *never* set forth as a test for salvation, a criterion to show whether or not he has been saved. Those who promote such teachings are seeking to bring works over into an area where works *cannot* exist ([Romans 11:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.6&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Ephesians 2:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.8-9&t=NKJV)).

Contrary to this entire false system of thought, Scripture teaches that there will be many Christians appearing at the judgment seat of Christ without one single good work to their credit ([1 Corinthians 3:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.12-15&t=NKJV)). *Fruit-bearing* in [Matthew 7:15-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15-20&t=NKJV) pertains to “*a falling away*,” to “apostasy” — *i.e.*, an apostate Christian producing fruit. The apostate Christian has *fallen away “from the faith,”* and he bears fruit, mainly, by causing other Christians (who are in a position to bring forth fruit for the kingdom) to follow his false teachings and also *fall away “from the faith.”* This is the warning set forth in [Matthew 7:15-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15-20&t=NKJV).

2) *Performing Works, But* . . . ([Matthew 7:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-23&t=NKJV))

*Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

*Many will say to Me in that day, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?”*

*And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”*

“Many” individuals to whom the offer to occupy positions of power and authority with Christ in His kingdom is presently being extended will, in that coming day, be rejected. [Matthew 7:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21&t=NKJV) is one of seven such statements in Scripture, teaching exclusion from the kingdom. The other six can be found in [Matthew 5:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.20&t=NKJV); [18:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+18.3&t=NKJV); [19:23-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+19.23-24&t=NKJV); [Luke 18:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.17&t=NKJV); [John 3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.5&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+6.9-10&t=NKJV). Teachings relative to the Christian’s calling, his present responsibility, and his future accountability must be understood in the light of these statements.

A travesty in Scriptural interpretation today is the use of [Matthew 7:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-23&t=NKJV) (or, for that matter, also [Matthew 7:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.13-14&t=NKJV), [24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.24-27&t=NKJV)) as a message directed to the unsaved, for this serves only to obscure the correct interpretation. These verses have to do, not with the message of salvation by grace, but with the Word of the Kingdom. These verses have to do *only* with the saved relative to their future entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens. Such should be clear to anyone who has not already decided contrariwise and is willing to accept that which *Scripture alone* teaches.

a) The words “*Lord, Lord*” ([Matthew 7:21-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-22&t=NKJV)), uttered by individuals who are denied entrance into the kingdom, constitute an expression peculiarly characteristic of disciples. According to [1 Corinthians 12:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+12.3&t=NKJV), “*no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*” An unsaved person, not in possession of the Holy Spirit, does not understand the things of the Spirit. These things are alien to his soulical nature (the only nature that he possesses). Jesus is not his Lord; and, apart from the Spirit of God, he does not, he cannot, so acknowledge Christ.

(An unsaved person can, in a meaningless way, utter these words [Jesus is Lord]; but he cannot acknowledge Jesus as His Lord, as seen in [Matthew 7:21-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-22&t=NKJV). He cannot do this apart from *his actions emanating from above, apart from being brought forth from above*. And actions of this nature would be possible *only for the saved* [*cf*. [Matthew 16:15-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.15-17&t=NKJV)].)

b) *A three-part question* is asked by those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord in verse twenty-two, and the construction of this question in the Greek text (using the negative “*ou*,” governing all three parts) designates that a positive, rather than a negative, response was expected from the Lord. That is, the manner in which the question was asked reveals that these individuals expected to hear the Lord say: “Yes, you have prophesied in My name; Yes, you have cast out demons in My name; and Yes, you have performed many wonderful works in My name.”

These individuals had been proclaiming a message and performing works — even miraculous works — believing that these things were being done in the name of the Lord. However, the Lord’s response revealed that such was not the case at all. These individuals had, unknowingly, been deceived by the false teachers, with miraculous works emanating from the only source possible — *the demonic world*. As a result, Christ’s answer to their question ([Matthew 7:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.23&t=NKJV)) was not at all in keeping with the response which they expected.

1) *Prophesying in the name of the Lord* in this passage is simply proclaiming the truth concerning the Word of God. The meaning of the word for “prophesy” in the Greek text (*propheteuo*) is “to speak forth.” The meaning could go beyond this and refer to prophetic (futuristic) utterance itself, but that is not what the text and context are dealing with.

This is the same word (in its noun form [*prophetes*]) translated “*prophets*” in [Matthew 7:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15&t=NKJV), as well as in [2 Peter 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1&t=NKJV). Note that in [2 Peter 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1&t=NKJV) the “*false prophets*” are identified as “*false teachers*,” synonymous with the false teachers in Jude. This entire thought surrounds a servant of the Lord (who himself is an apostate, or has been misled by the apostates) teaching things that are not in accord with the Word of God and, thus, could not be taught in the Lord’s name.

2) *Casting out demons and doing many wonderful works*, supposedly in the name of the Lord, is perhaps best exemplified during the present time by the actions of those Christians involved in the Charismatic Movement, for this is exactly what these individuals are doing. The Charismatic Movement can be properly understood only in the light of Scripture. Seemingly it is a movement that exists because of the simple failure of Christians to understand the proper place that signs, wonders, and miracles occupy in the Word of God. However, the crux of the matter goes far beyond this. [Matthew 7:15-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15-23&t=NKJV) reveals an apostate element resulting from the ministry of false teachers associated with a movement of this nature.

Signs, wonders, and miracles, such as were in evidence during the earthly ministry of Christ and for the first several decades of the existence of the Church, are peculiarly related to two things:

a) Israel.

b) The Kingdom.

That would be to say, God *must* be dealing with *Israel* in relation to *the Kingdom* for signs, wonders, and miracles to be manifested.

Israel was dealt with in relation to the kingdom in the past (relative to the Old Testament theocracy and Christ’s offer of the kingdom of the heavens at His first coming), is not being dealt with in this manner today (during the present dispensation in which God is calling out a bride for His Son, with Israel set aside), but will be dealt with after this fashion in the future (the Tribulation period and the Messianic Era). Accordingly, signs, wonders, and miracles (associated with Israel and the kingdom) were in evidence in the past, cannot be in evidence today, but will be in evidence once again in the future.

Thus, there can be no current manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles, as seen in the gospel accounts and the book of Acts. Those in the Charismatic Movement, claiming to be manifesting these signs during the present time, cannot possibly be doing so. That which is being seen in the movement today can be neither a continuation of, nor a restoration of the signs, wonders, and miracles evident during apostolic days.

The Charismatic Movement has been singled out because of the movement’s widespread influence in what is viewed as Christendom in the world today (crossing all denominational lines, Protestant and Catholic alike). But, to broaden the matter, suffice it to say, any manifestation of supernatural powers in the world today — in any movement, Christian or non-Christian — can have no association whatsoever with supernatural powers exhibited during apostolic times. Such powers, from a biblical standpoint, *cannot exist today*.

These powers were for *a time past*, and are reserved for *a time future* (during the Millennium, if not also during the Tribulation as well when God once again begins to deal with Israel immediately preceding the Messianic Kingdom [[Isaiah 35:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+35.1-6&t=NKJV)]). Consequently, any movement in the world today purporting to exercise these powers is *not at all what it claims to be.*

Manifestations of supernatural powers in the world today are no indication that these powers emanate from God. One thing that is almost completely overlooked is the fact that Satan possesses supernatural powers that can be exhibited through man. Scripture associates *the working of Satan* with “*all power, signs, and lying wonders*” ([2 Thessalonians 2:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.9-10&t=NKJV)). His efforts through the manifestations of his powers are always directed toward one goal — *to deceive*. He is introduced into affairs of the human race in this fashion, comprising *a first-mention principle* that remains constant throughout Scripture ([Genesis 3:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.1-7&t=NKJV); [Exodus 7:11-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+7.11-12&t=NKJV), [22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+7.22&t=NKJV); [8:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+8.7&t=NKJV); [Matthew 24:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.24&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.14&t=NKJV); [1 Timothy 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+2.14&t=NKJV); [Revelation 13:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.13-14&t=NKJV)). And the deception of individuals in Matthew chapter seven ([Matthew 7:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-23&t=NKJV)) by the false teachers ([Matthew 7:15-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.15-20&t=NKJV)) constitutes a warning to everyone involved in comparable activity today.

Signs, wonders, and miracles were in evidence during apostolic days as signs for Israel, calling the nation to repentance ([Matthew 10:1-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+10.1-8&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Matthew 4:23-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+4.23-25&t=NKJV); [8:1-9:38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+8.1-9.38&t=NKJV)). This was during a time when God was dealing with Israel in relation to the kingdom. The kingdom of the heavens was “*at hand*,” something that is not true at all today. Israel has been set aside, and the kingdom of the heavens is being offered to an entirely new entity, though the kingdom is not presently “*at hand*.”

Since that condition no longer exists, and the only kingdom now in existence on the earth is Satan’s kingdom, any present manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles would, of necessity, have to do with this kingdom. In this respect, individuals involved in any movement associated with signs, wonders, and miracles today are, in reality, producing works relating to a kingdom diametrically opposed to the kingdom of Christ; and any manifestation of supernatural power would have to emanate from that kingdom. Thus, it is no wonder that they are called *workers of iniquity* and will, in the coming day of reckoning, be denied entrance into the kingdom of Christ.

(For additional information concerning signs, wonders, and miracles, refer to the author’s book, in this site, [From Acts to the Epistles BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-seven.php#From%20Acts%20to%20the%20Epistles%20BOOK), Chapter 1.)

The words, “*I never knew you*” ([Matthew 7:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.23&t=NKJV)), referring to the supernatural works previously performed, have been misunderstood by many individuals over the years. In reality, God in His omniscience *knows everyone and everything*. Thus, all expressions of this nature in Scripture must be understood as *relative expressions*, pertaining to the subject matter at hand.

An expression of this nature used relative to eternal life, for example, would limit those whom God *knows* to the ones in possession of eternal life. God *knows* all the others (the unsaved), but not relative to eternal life.

However, the subject under discussion in [Matthew 7:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-23&t=NKJV) is not eternal life at all. This subject has to do with “doing the will of the Lord” — resulting in *fruit-bearing* — with a view to *entrance into the kingdom*. The words, “*I never knew you*,” constitute a relative expression pertaining to the fact that the Lord did not know them concerning the works that they had performed; and, consequently, because of their lack of fruit, He also did not know them concerning entrance into the kingdom. These individuals did perform works, but these works were performed completely outside the will and purpose of the Lord, and He had nothing to do with these works.

Concluding Thoughts

The future judgment of Christians will be based solely on works (*cf*. [Matthew 16:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.27&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 3:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.13-15&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:10-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.10-11&t=NKJV)). Being approved for a crown before the judgment seat of Christ involves accomplishing the will of the Lord. This concerns faithfulness to the task/tasks that God has called each individual to perform, resulting in fruit-bearing.

Being rejected for a crown before the judgment seat of Christ involves the exact opposite — not accomplishing the will of the Lord. This concerns unfaithfulness to the task/tasks that God has called each individual to perform, resulting in a fruitless condition.

The reckoning in [Matthew 7:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+7.21-23&t=NKJV) illustrates the latter — *a negative side* to the coming judgment of Christians, showing their rejection in that coming day because of *fruitlessness* during the present day.

The end of the present dispensation is to be marked by a rise in demonic activity, an increase in false teachers, and Christians being “*carried about with every wind of doctrine*,” being misdirected in every way possible. The tremendous growth of such activity ushers in the great apostasy of the end-time, which can only be expected to increase as the dispensation draws to a close.

The only recourse that Christians have during this day of apostasy is *the Word of God* and *the indwelling Holy Spirit* who can take the Word received into man’s saved human spirit and guide him “*into all truth*,” providing Christians with “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*.”

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Chapter Four

**Saved, but Afterward Destroyed**

*But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.* ([Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV))

(For additional information on the latter part of this chapter — the type-antitype structure of [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) — refer to [If They Shall Fall Away](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-seven.php#If%20They%20Shall%20Fall%20Away) in this site.)

The beginning of spiritual lessons concerning apostasy in Jude is drawn from the experiences of the Israelites under Moses. The Israelites were *saved out of the land of Egypt*. Not only had they *appropriated* the blood of the paschal lambs but they had also been *delivered* from Egypt itself. As a redeemed people under Moses, they had been called into existence and saved out of the land of Egypt for *a purpose* — a purpose to be realized in the land of Canaan.

God’s Firstborn Son

Israel’s standing among the nations was that of *firstborn*. Israel was God’s *firstborn son* (remaining *God’s firstborn son* today). An announcement to this effect was to be proclaimed to the Pharaoh of Egypt before the Exodus, along with the command, “*Let My son go, that he may serve Me*” ([Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)).

This referred to the fact that the purpose surrounding Israel’s removal from Egypt was associated with the nation’s birthright. Israel was called out of Egypt to go into another land, the land of Canaan, and exercise the rights of the firstborn in that land.

The rights of the firstborn, the birthright possessed by Israel, consisted of three things:

1) *Ruler of the household, under and for the Father.*

2) *Priest in the family.*

2) *Receiving a double portion of all the Father’s goods.*

*The first segment of the birthright* placed the firstborn in the position of “heir” with respect to *a rule of the Father’s house*, under and for the Father. “Sonship” implies *rulership* and carries the thought of *supremacy*. In this respect, Israel was to be *the supreme nation and exercise rule, as a national power, over all the other nations of the earth.*

This earth, a province in the kingdom of God, constitutes the Father’s house when the birthright with respect to nations is in view (*cf*. [Revelation 2:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-27&t=NKJV)); and Israel was to bear rule over all the nations in this house, under and for the Father.

Israel occupied this standing as *firstborn* among all nations while still in Egypt, but Israel would not actually realize these rights until after the nation had been removed from Egypt and established in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, within a theocracy.

*The second segment of the birthright* would place Israel in *a priestly position with respect to both God and the nations*. Israel was to be “*a kingdom of priests*” in the midst of the nations ([Exodus 19:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+19.6&t=NKJV)), resulting in the nations being blessed through Israel in accord with [Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV).

*A first-mention principle* relating to these blessings had previously been established in [Genesis 9:25-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.25-27&t=NKJV). “*The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*” ([Exodus 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+3.6&t=NKJV)) was *first “the God of Shem”* ([Genesis 9:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.26&t=NKJV)). Neither Ham nor Japheth had a God, and the only way they could realize spiritual blessings was through Shem and his God.

Or, to state the matter another way, the descendants of Ham and Japheth (the Gentile nations) are “*without God in the world”* ([Ephesians 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.12&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Psalm 96:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+96.5&t=NKJV)) and can realize spiritual blessings *only through the descendants of Shem* (the nation of Israel) and their God ([Psalm 33:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+33.12&t=NKJV); [72:18-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+72.18-19&t=NKJV)). Although the lineage of Shem also includes, among others, the descendants of Ishmael, the sons of Keturah, and Esau, spiritual blessings for nations emanating from these lineages are derived through the same means as those for the Gentile nations ([Genesis 17:18-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+17.18-21&t=NKJV); [21:5-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+21.5-12&t=NKJV); [22:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.2&t=NKJV); [25:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+25.1-6&t=NKJV)).

*The third segment of the birthright* placed Israel in a position to receive *a double portion of all the Father’s goods*. This segment of the birthright, as the first two segments, also had to do with Israel’s position among the nations. There are two spheres of governmental power and authority in a rule over the Gentile nations — *earthly*, and *heavenly* — and the double portion of the birthright pertained to Israel ultimately coming into possession of both (*cf*. [Genesis 22:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.17-18&t=NKJV)).

The way was opened at Kadesh-Barnea for Israel to go into the land and realize *the earthly portion* of this inheritance, but *the heavenly portion* of the inheritance was not to be opened to the nation until about fifteen hundred years later.

It was necessary that both be extended to Israel at some point in time, for Israel, as the firstborn, was *the appointed heir*. At Kadesh-Barnea, when the earthly portion of the inheritance was in the offing, God Himself dwelt in the midst of the nation; fifteen hundred years later, when the heavenly portion of the inheritance was in the offing, God Himself once again (in the person of His Son) dwelt in the midst of the nation.

From Egypt to Canaan

When Israel left Egypt, the march was not directly to the land of Canaan. Before entering the land and assuming the rights of the firstborn, certain preparatory steps had to be taken first. Thus, the march of the Israelites under Moses, beyond the Red Sea passage, was to a previously designated place in the wilderness — *a Mount in “the wilderness of Sinai”* ([Exodus 3:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+3.1&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+3.12&t=NKJV); [19:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+19.1-2&t=NKJV)) — where God would meet and commune with His people through Moses.

Here, before the Mount in the wilderness of Sinai, the people were to be prepared and equipped for the position that they were to occupy in the land of Canaan. During this time the Law was given to Moses, the priestly ministry and tabernacle worship were established, and orderly arrangements of the tribes and families were set forth ([Exodus 19:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+19.3&t=NKJV)-[Numbers 10:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+10.10&t=NKJV)).

The Law given to Moses at Mt. Sinai, with all its rules and regulations, was to be Israel’s constitution, given to govern the nation’s affairs in the kingdom. And the tabernacle, with God dwelling in the Holy of Holies in the midst of His people, was to be the central place of worship for “*the kingdom of priests*,” through whom God would bless all the Gentile nations. Israel, God’s firstborn son, was to bear rule after this fashion in a worldwide theocracy with pre-established laws, rules, and regulations.

The tabernacle was “*set up*” in the wilderness of Sinai on the first day of the first month of the second year following the Exodus — a few days short of one year. On that day “*the glory of the Lord*” — the visible presence of God among His people — filled the tabernacle. And at that point in time a theocratic kingdom came into existence on this earth ([Exodus 40:1-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+40.1-38&t=NKJV)).

*The kingdom* with its constitution was actually established in the wilderness of Sinai, at Mt. Sinai (“a mountain” in Scripture signifies *a kingdom*). But the actual rule within this kingdom could not begin until God’s firstborn son had been removed from the wilderness and established in the land of Canaan. Thus, the march from the wilderness of Sinai was then to Kadesh-Barnea. In essence, at that juncture in history, everything was ready for God to begin fulfilling His purpose for having saved His people out of the land of Egypt.

Israel at Kadesh-Barnea

*Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”*

*But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.”* ([Numbers 13:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.30-31&t=NKJV))

All things dating back to Abraham and his removal from Ur of the Chaldees came to pass with an end in view, and that end involved the nation springing from the loins of Abraham by Isaac and Jacob realizing the very purpose for their national existence. All the nations of the earth were to be blessed through Abraham and his seed, and this was to be realized by and through the seed of Abraham becoming a “*great nation*” and occupying *a predetermined position and place on the earth with respect to the surrounding nations* ([Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV)).

National blessings for the nations of the earth were to be realized *through Israel*. God was to bless Israel and, in turn, bless the nations of the earth *through Israel*. The surrounding nations, alienated from God ([Ephesians 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.12&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Psalm 147:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+147.19-20&t=NKJV)), were to be brought into a proper relationship with God through the “*kingdom of priests*” — the nation in possession of the tabernacle, the dwelling place of God and the only way of approach to God.

Herein lies the reason that the people of God since time immemorial have been commanded, “*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem* . . . .” ([Psalm 122:6a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+122.6a&t=NKJV)). When Jerusalem is at peace, the nations will be at peace; when Israel is at rest, the nations will be at rest; when Israel has been established in the land as a blessing, the nations will be blessed in their respective lands through Israel ([Isaiah 2:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+2.1-5&t=NKJV); [14:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.1-2&t=NKJV); [40:3-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+40.3-5&t=NKJV); [52:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+52.9-10&t=NKJV); [62:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+62.1-7&t=NKJV); [Jeremiah 3:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jeremiah+3.17-18&t=NKJV); [Zechariah 2:4-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+2.4-11&t=NKJV); [8:20-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+8.20-23&t=NKJV); [9:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+9.10&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Deuteronomy 32:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+32.8&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+5.5&t=NKJV); [Acts 17:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+17.26-27&t=NKJV)).

Spiritual blessings are derived through God’s firstborn Sons. This was the pattern established in history, this pattern remains true today, and this pattern will remain true throughout time and eternity. [Genesis 12:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.3&t=NKJV) remains in force today, as does [Galatians 3:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.14&t=NKJV).

However, during the present dispensation, God’s firstborn Sons (Israel, and Jesus) are not occupying their God-ordained places with respect to their *Firstborn* status; and *the fullness of blessings* awaiting mankind must be deferred to that future time, to the coming age, when present conditions will be changed.

The prospect lying before the people of Israel upon their departure from the wilderness of Sinai was to enter into the land of Canaan and to ultimately be established in that land, not only as *ruler* over the nations of the earth, but also as *a kingdom of priests* through whom God would bless the nations. The prospect lying before the Gentile nations at this point was, accordingly, that of entering into *a position of subjection to Israel*, which would ultimately result in their being recipients of *the blessings of God.*

1) The Twelve Spies and Their Report

Several months beyond Israel’s departure from the wilderness of Sinai, about one and one-half years beyond the nation’s departure from Egypt, the newly established nation, God’s firstborn son, arrived at the borders of the land of Canaan. The end of an era was at hand. Heretofore the descendants of Abraham had been considered “*strangers*” in relation to the land of Canaan ([Genesis 15:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+15.13&t=NKJV); [37:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+37.1&t=NKJV); [47:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+47.9&t=NKJV); [Exodus 6:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+6.3-4&t=NKJV)). But the sojourn of the seed of Abraham had ended ([Exodus 12:40-41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.40-41&t=NKJV)), and the descendants of Abraham were now at the very borders of the land — *an established nation under God* (the only nation that has ever been or will ever be so placed) — ready to enter in and take possession of the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

At Kadesh-Barnea, God instructed Moses to send spies into the land of Canaan, one man from each of the twelve tribes. These spies were to traverse the land, obtaining a complete report concerning the land and its inhabitants prior to the nation’s entrance into and conquest of the land.

The twelve men chosen searched the land “*from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob*” for forty days. They observed the cities and inhabitants of the land, and obtained samples of the fruits of the land to carry back with them (“*grapes*,” “*pomegranates*,” and “*figs*”). And among the inhabitants of the land were “*the giants* [‘*the nephilim*’], the sons of Anak, which came from the giants [‘*the nephilim*’].”

(The word *nephilim*, a transliterated Hebrew word meaning “fallen ones,” refers to the offspring resulting from a cohabitation of the “*sons of God* [angels]” with the “*daughters of men* [female descendants of Adam].” This subject is covered in Chapters 5 and 6 in this book.)

Upon their return, the spies possessed a complete report concerning the land and its inhabitants. Their findings were then presented before Moses, Aaron, and all the congregation of Israel ([Numbers 13:1-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.1-33&t=NKJV)).

Ten of the twelve spies presented a “*bad report*” concerning the land and its inhabitants. They stated that the land was truly a land flowing with “*milk and honey*,” but *the people* that dwelt in the land were “*strong*,” *the cities were* “*fortified and very large,*” and it was *a land* that “*devours its inhabitants*.” According to their report, the Israelites would not be “*able to go up against the people*,” for these people dwelling in the land were “*stronger*” than the Israelites.

In essence, the ten spies bringing this report were saying that *God would be unable to complete His dealings with Israel by and through bringing the people of this nation into the realization of their calling* ([Numbers 13:26-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.26-29&t=NKJV), [31-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.31-33&t=NKJV)), resulting in [Genesis 12:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.2-3&t=NKJV) remaining unfulfilled.

However, two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua, believed God could and would do exactly what He had promised. Caleb “*quieted the people before Moses*, *and said, ‘Let us go up at once, and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it’”* ([Numbers 13:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.30&t=NKJV)). Caleb and Joshua recognized that the battle belonged to the Lord ([2 Chronicles 20:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Chronicles+20.15&t=NKJV)), and circumstances were not to be looked upon from a naturalistic standpoint, but from a divine viewpoint. They knew that the Israelites within their own strength could not overcome the inhabitants of the land (*cf*. [Numbers 14:42-45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.42-45&t=NKJV)); but they also knew that with *God dwelling in their midst, no one, inside or outside the land, could overcome them.*

In essence, their report stated that *God was well able to complete His dealings with Israel by and through bringing the people of this nation into a realization of their calling* (*cf*. [Numbers 14:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.8&t=NKJV)), ultimately effecting the fulfillment of [Genesis 12:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.2-3&t=NKJV).

2) Israel’s Reaction

The nation of Israel at this point stood on the very threshold of entering into the land and ruling within a theocracy in the position for which the people had previously been saved out of the land of Egypt. They were in possession of all things pertaining to the kingdom (constitution, center of worship, presence of God Himself), they had heard the report concerning the land from those who had been there, and they had even tasted the actual fruits of the land. They were at the end of one era and the beginning of another.

Everything was now in readiness for them to move ahead. They had been brought from the brickyards of Egypt to the borders of the land of Canaan. They had been brought from a place of subjection to the most powerful Gentile nation of that day to a position where they could enter into a land that belonged to them alone and ultimately rule over, resulting in a blessing to, the same Gentile nation that had previously held them in bondage. This is the prospect that lay before the people of Israel at Kadesh-Barnea.

If ever a people could be looked upon as having moved from a state of *gnosis* (“knowledge”) to a state of *epignosis* (“mature knowledge” [particularly as it related to things pertaining to the purpose for their calling]) it would be the Israelites under Moses. They moved from *a simple knowledge* (*gnosis*) of the rudimentary things concerning the death of the firstborn in Egypt to *an extensive knowledge* (*epignosis*) concerning the purpose of their calling at Kadesh-Barnea ([Exodus 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12&t=NKJV)-[Numbers 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13&t=NKJV)).

(Comparing *gnosis* and *epignosis*, the preposition *epi* prefixed to *gnosis* [*epignosis*] intensifies the word. Note Paul’s use of the verb form of *gnosis* [*ginosko*] without, and then with, the preposition *epi* in [1 Corinthians 13:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+13.12&t=NKJV): “*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know* [*ginosko*] *in part, but then I shall know* [*epiginosko*] *just as I also am known* [*epiginosko*].”)

And at Kadesh-Barnea the children of Israel, in possession of this knowledge, were in a position to move in one of two directions: they could either *believe the true report* proclaimed by Caleb and Joshua and go into the land, or they could *believe the false report* proclaimed by the other ten spies and refuse to enter the land.

Israel chose the latter; and, by this move, *the nation fell away* ([Numbers 14:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.1ff&t=NKJV)). *The nation of Israel stood away from “the faith.”* They refused to believe that they could go into the land and, under God, be victorious in conquest. Israel, not only to her own detriment but to the detriment of the nations of the earth, committed *national apostasy* at Kadesh-Barnea. Israel turned away from their God-appointed position in the land of Canaan and looked back toward the things in the land of Egypt (*cf*. [Luke 9:62](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+9.62&t=NKJV)).

The people rejected God’s appointed leader, Moses, and sought to appoint a new leader who would lead them back to Egypt. They even sought to stone Caleb and Joshua because of their positive report concerning the land. They refused to believe that God was able to victoriously lead His people into this land, and they wanted no part of it (*cf*. [Hebrews 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3.19&t=NKJV)). This is the point in Scripture where one finds *a national apostasy resulting in a national overthrow*.

Caleb and Joshua alone, of the entire accountable generation, twenty years old and above, would ultimately be allowed to enter into the land and realize the purpose for their salvation. The remaining individuals were to be overthrown in the wilderness and fall short of the goal of their calling ([Numbers 14:29ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.29ff&t=NKJV)).

Christians at Kadesh-Barnea

(The material that follows, to the end of the chapter, has been written in a type-antitype framework, showing parallels between that which occurred in the camp of Israel under Moses [the actions of two types of Israelites] and that which would occur among Christians under Christ [the actions of two types of Christians]. And the matter was/is with a view to entrance into a land [the Israelites entering *an earthly land under Moses*, Christians entering *a heavenly land under Christ*], with both realizing *an inheritance therein and exercising regality in relation to the nations of the earth, within a theocracy.*

However, the leaven that the woman placed in the three measures of meal in [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV), which could only have been very early in the dispensation, has, after almost 2,000 years, resulted in such a corruption of biblical doctrine in relation to the kingdom in Christendom that it is next to impossible today to find Christians who can form *a true antitype of the Israelites under Moses*. That is to say, it is next to impossible today to find Christians in the churches of the land who, in their knowledge of Scripture, have moved from *gnosis* to *epignosis* in things particularly related to the coming kingdom of Christ. The churches are filled with Christians who, in the preceding respect, are wandering aimlessly about, either still back in Egypt or someplace in the wilderness, knowing little to nothing about the goal of their calling — *regality with Christ, within a theocracy, in a land set before them*.

Thus, except in rare instances, a true antitype in keeping with the type *cannot be seen in Christendom today*. This could easily have been seen in first century Christianity; but, because of the working of the leaven since that time, the matter is completely different today.)

*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,*

*and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come,*

*if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance .* . . . ([Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV))

This passage in Hebrews has been an enigma to Bible students over the years, and it is possibly the most misunderstood section of Scripture in the New Testament. But the passage is not nearly as difficult as the multiplicity of interpretations would lead one to believe. The numerous interpretations advanced by various expositors have resulted basically from two exegetical errors:

1) A failure to take into account *the central message of the book of Hebrews*.

2) A failure to take into account *the context of* [*Hebrews 6:4-6*](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV)*.*

*The message of the book of Hebrews* centers on “*the salvation of the SOUL*” (*e.g.*, [Hebrews 6:13-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.13-20&t=NKJV); [10:35-39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.35-39&t=NKJV); [13:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+13.17&t=NKJV)), and *the context leading into* [*Hebrews 6:4-6*](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) has to do with “the experiences of the Israelites under Moses” ([Hebrews 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3&t=NKJV); [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4&t=NKJV)), which is why maturity in the faith — moving from *gnosis* to *epignosis* — is in view immediately preceding [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) ([Hebrews 5:5-6:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.5-6.3&t=NKJV)). The summation of the matter is contained in [Hebrews 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6&t=NKJV); but the thought begins in [Hebrews 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3&t=NKJV), and the entire passage must be so understood.

(Note that the preceding material would explain why [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) is seldom correctly understood today, resulting in the multiplicity of interpretations. *A true type-antitype status of the passage is all but absent in Christendom today, with the whole of the matter, for all practical purposes, not understood*. Thus, there is really no present-day base to work from.)

Israelites under Moses — Christians under Christ

As the Israelites under Moses (in their knowledge of God’s plans and purposes) moved from a state of *gnosis* to a state of *epignosis* in the type, Christians under Christ (in their knowledge of God’s plans and purposes) are moving from a state of *gnosis* to a state of *epignosis* in the antitype; as the Israelites under Moses moved from Egypt toward the land of Canaan with an earthly inheritance in view, Christians under Christ are moving from the things of this world toward a land separate from this world with a heavenly inheritance in view.

As the Israelites under Moses were being prepared during the wilderness journey for entrance into the land, Christians under Christ are being prepared during the wilderness journey for entrance into the land; as the Israelites under Moses were to go in, conquer the inhabitants of the land, and rule as God’s firstborn son here on earth at the head of the nations, Christians under Christ are to go in, be victorious over the inhabitants of the land (*cf*. [Ephesians 6:10-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.10-17&t=NKJV)), and, in that coming day (following the adoption [[Romans 8:14-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14-23&t=NKJV)]), rule as God’s firstborn son from the heavens over the nations.

But, as the Israelites refused to go into the land, conquer the inhabitants, and take possession of the land (with a view to a future rule), so can Christians refuse to go into the land, be victorious over the inhabitants, and take possession of the land (with a view to a future rule); and, just as the Israelites at this point fell away, with no possibility of being renewed again unto repentance, so can Christians at this point fall away, with no possibility of being renewed again unto repentance; and, just as the Israelites who fell away were overthrown in the wilderness and failed to realize the goal of their calling, so will Christians who fall away after this fashion be overthrown in the wilderness and fail to realize the goal of their calling.

The words, “*once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come*” ([Hebrews 6:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-5&t=NKJV)), refer to a progression in growth from milk to meat to strong meat. This is a progression from the rudimentary things concerning the antitype of the death of the paschal lambs in Egypt to the strong meat associated with things surrounding the antitype of Israel’s experiences at Kadesh-Barnea ([Hebrews 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3&t=NKJV); [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4&t=NKJV)).

In the immediate context ([Hebrews 5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5&t=NKJV)), “*strong meat*” is associated with things surrounding the Melchizedek priesthood. This priesthood refers to things beyond Kadesh-Barnea, in the land itself. Melchizedek was a king-priest, setting forth in type the office that Christ will occupy in the coming age when He, as the great King-Priest, with His “*kings and priests*” ([Revelation 5:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+5.10&t=NKJV)), takes the kingdom.

The entire thought in [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) is a progression from *gnosis* to *epignosis*, followed by a “*falling away*” from *the faith.* “Eternal salvation,” which, more often than not, is read into this text, is not in view at all. Viewing eternal salvation as the issue under discussion is completely unnatural and will serve only to obscure the correct interpretation. If the Scriptures alone are allowed to interpret [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV), the entire matter will become clear.

(Note the words, “*enlightened*,” “*partakers*,” and “*have tasted*” [[Hebrews 6:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-5&t=NKJV)]. These words are used elsewhere in the book of Hebrews referring to individuals [Christians] entering into certain experiences [*cf*. [Hebrews 2:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.9&t=NKJV); [3:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3.1&t=NKJV); [10:32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.32&t=NKJV)]. The usage of these words in [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) is within the same framework. The unsaved simply cannot enter into experiences seen by the manner in which these words are used in the text.)

Impossibility of Renewal

The thought that *it is impossible “to renew”* certain apostate Christians “*to repentance*” is one of *the most solemn warnings* to be found in all Scripture. *The finality* of the matter for those who apostatize in this manner is set forth by the word “*impossible*.” This is *a particular apostasy*, and once a Christian *has fallen away from the faith* in the manner set forth in [Hebrews 3-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3-6&t=NKJV), *he can never again* be brought back into the position that he occupied prior to his departure from the faith. (The Greek word translated “*renew*” refers to being *brought back into exactly the same position* *previously occupied*.) In the type, Israel could not be brought back into this position; and in the antitype, neither can Christians.

The entire thought is very similar to the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit in [Matthew 12:22-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+12.22-32&t=NKJV). This was a national sin committed by the religious leaders of Israel — not something that man, saved or unsaved, can commit today. Once the religious leaders had committed this sin, their actions brought the nation into a state from which a restoration to the previously occupied position could never occur.

At Kadesh-Barnea, however, the prohibition applied only to the present generation, twenty years old and above (this would allow the nation of Israel, at a future time, to realize the position for which the generation under Moses had been called — *an earthly calling*). In [Matthew 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+12&t=NKJV), anticipating [Matthew 21:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+21.43&t=NKJV), this prohibition not only applied to the present generation but to future generations as well (this would prevent the nation of Israel from ever realizing the position unto which the generation during the days of Christ and the apostles had been called — *a heavenly calling*).

One thing that must not be overlooked when considering the impossibility of renewing an apostate to repentance, who has fallen away in the manner specified, is the fact that in the type surrounding the experiences of the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea the nation did repent. The word “repentance” (Greek: *metanoia*) means *a change of mind*. This change of mind will lead to other things that are often mistaken for repentance (or part of repentance), but the simple, restrictive meaning of the word itself does not include these things.

(*Metanoia*, translated “repentance” in the New Testament, is a compound word comprised of *meta* [“with”] and *noeo* [“to know,” or “to perceive (with the mind)”], derived from *nous* [“mind”]. *Metanoia* points to doing something with one’s mind, and that which is understood in the Greek language by the use of this word is “a change of mind.”)

Once the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea had fallen away and had realized the consequences of their actions, they changed their minds (repented) concerning the land of Canaan. They sought to occupy their former position, entering into and taking possession of the land, with a view to subsequently ruling over the nations.

Thus, bringing this over into the antitype, it is possible for Christians who have apostatized in this manner to also change their minds about the land set before them and seek to occupy their former position, looking ahead to the coming inheritance of the saints. However, God did not change His mind concerning that which He stated would befall apostate Israelites in the type; nor will God change His mind concerning that which He has stated will befall apostate Christians in the antitype.

After the Israelites had repented (changed their minds) at Kadesh-Barnea, the nation *failed* to regain the position that it had previously occupied. The Lord was no longer among His people to lead them victoriously into the land; and when they tried to enter, the Amalekites and Canaanites “*attacked them, and drove them back*” ([Numbers 14:40-45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.40-45&t=NKJV)).

Nor will the Lord be among like-minded apostate Christians today who repent (change their minds) and seek to occupy their former, forfeited position. They can no longer move victoriously into the land and overcome the inhabitants. If they try, as in the type, they will be overcome. The only thing awaiting Christians who have apostatized in the antitype of Israel’s Kadesh-Barnea experience is the same thing that awaited Israel — *an overthrow in the wilderness, on the right side of the blood but on the wrong side of the goal of their calling.*

The word “repentance” is only used three times in the book of Hebrews ([Hebrews 6:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1&t=NKJV), [6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.6&t=NKJV); [12:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.17&t=NKJV)), and two of these three times the word is used in the heart of major warnings given to Christians. [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) is the heart of the third major warning, and [Hebrews 12:14-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.14-17&t=NKJV) is the heart of the fifth major warning.

Interestingly enough, in the fifth major warning in [Hebrews 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12&t=NKJV), Esau did repent. He changed his mind concerning the birthright after it had been forfeited. His repentance led to a great show of emotion. The words, “*he found no place of repentance*,” refer to the fact that “*he found no place for a change of mind in his father*” ([Hebrews 12:17b ASV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.17b&t=ASV)). Esau sought to effect a change of mind on the part of his father, resulting in a reversal of that which had transpired. However, such did not, it could not, occur. Isaac could not change his mind. The birthright, once forfeited, was beyond Esau’s grasp forever.

The situation in [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV) is identical. The apostates in this passage cannot occupy a previously forfeited position. It is not possible, as in Esau’s case, to renew them again to repentance. In the types — the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea, and Esau in the presence of his father — both the Israelites and Esau repented; but, though they repented, they still found no place of repentance. That would be to say, though the Israelites changed their minds at Kadesh-Barnea, God did not change His mind (God did not repent); and, though Esau changed his mind when he appeared in Isaac’s presence, Isaac did not change his mind (Isaac did not repent).

Repentance in the fifth major warning is not on the part of the one who forfeited his birthright, for he did repent. And repentance in the third major warning, as well, cannot be on the part of the ones who fall away. In the type, the Israelites did repent, necessitating that the antitype be viewed after the same fashion. Also in the type, Israel’s repentance wrought no change in that which God had decreed; nor will a Christian’s repentance in the antitype bring about such a change.

Man turning his back upon that which is associated with the greatest thing God has ever designed for redeemed man — that of ascending the throne with God’s Son during the coming age — is *a serious matter*. In fact, it is *a very serious matter*; and God will deal with this matter in *an equally serious fashion*.

This is what [Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV), drawn from the type as is seen in [Hebrews 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3&t=NKJV); [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4&t=NKJV), is about. *God overthrew the Israelites who fell away in the type, and He will also overthrow Christians who fall away in the antitype.*

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Chapter Five

**In Those Days . . . Also After That**

*And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day*. ([Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV))

There are two periods in the history of the earth where angels in the kingdom of Satan “*did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode*.” *The first period was in days preceding the Flood*, and *the second period was in days following the Flood*. The first of these two periods, alluded to in [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV), is referred to in [Genesis 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV) by the expression, “*in those days* [one hundred twenty years before the Flood ([Genesis 6:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.3&t=NKJV))], *and also afterward* [continuing time during this one-hundred-twenty-year period preceding the Flood].” And the second of these two periods is dealt with in [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV).

(Note that the second part of the expression in [Genesis 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV) [”*and also afterward*”] cannot refer to the days of Lot, for the complete expression [“*in those days, and also afterward*”], textually, has to do with the days of Noah, preceding the Flood. The complete expression has to do with time during that which is referenced in the continuing part of the verse — “*when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men* . . . .”)

[2 Peter 2:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-6&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6-7&t=NKJV) outline events resulting in the judgment of God in both periods. Note the section in 2 Peter: The “*angels who sinned*” ([2 Peter 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4&t=NKJV)) refers to acts by angels involving illicit, sexual perversions, both *preceding the Flood* ([2 Peter 2:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.5&t=NKJV)) and *following the Flood* ([2 Peter 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.6&t=NKJV)):

*For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell* [Greek: *Tartaroo*], *and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;*

*and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;*

*and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.* ([2 Peter 2:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-6&t=NKJV)).

These angels, for this specific purpose, departed from “*their proper domain*,” their dwelling place in the heavens, and came to earth. Once upon the earth, these angels, appearing in the form of man (*cf*. [Genesis 18:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+18.1-2&t=NKJV), [20-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+18.20-22&t=NKJV); [19:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.1-5&t=NKJV)), involved themselves in illicit, sexual relations with members of the human race.

This cohabitation in days before the Flood, insofar as the record is concerned, occurred only with the “*daughters of men*” — a heterosexual relationship. However, Scripture reveals *both* homosexual and heterosexual relationships involving angels and members of the human race in days *following* the Flood ([Genesis 19:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.4-5&t=NKJV); [Numbers 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.33&t=NKJV)).

Attention is called to these two periods of time in sections of Scripture in the New Testament that deal with “apostasy,” revealing the serious nature of “standing away from” the position in which one was originally created — whether in the angelic world, or a new creation in Christ. *In days before the Flood* and again *in days following the Flood*, angelic beings in the kingdom of Satan “stood away from” their original, created state, involving themselves in something not only completely outside their own realm, but unlawful. This resulted in their being confined with chains in a place of darkness, awaiting judgment.

And *time* has wrought no change in God’s attitude toward and action concerning their sin. They have been bound for millennia, they remain bound today, and they will continue to be bound until a designated time of final judgment yet future.

Created to Rule and to Reign

The cohabitation of angels in the kingdom of Satan with members of the human race was *a deceptive, well-planned scheme with a specific purpose in view*; and this purpose can be traced to *the reason man was brought into existence* *in* [*Genesis 1*](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1&t=NKJV).

The original earth, which had become a chaos because of Satan’s aspirations to be “*like the Most High*,” was restored over a six-day period; and man, created on the sixth day, was brought into existence to rule the restored earth in the stead of Satan and his angels ([Genesis 1:2-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2-28&t=NKJV) [2b]; [Isaiah 14:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.13-14&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 28:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+28.15&t=NKJV)). Satan, knowing the reason for man’s creation, immediately began to move against man — something that he has continued to do since that time. Satan’s objective was *to bring about man’s disqualification through sin*, as he himself had previously been disqualified.

Thus, Satan, through deception, caused Adam to sin by first causing Eve (a part of Adam’s very being) to sin. This act not only disqualified the man, preventing him from assuming the role for which he had been created, but Adam’s sin also brought the entire restored creation under the bondage of that which was produced by sin — *corruption, decay* ([Romans 8:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.21&t=NKJV)).

Satan’s move against Adam, through Eve, in [Genesis 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3&t=NKJV), produces at least two first-mention principles in Scripture:

1) Satan’s “method”: *deception* (*ref*. Chapter 3 in this book).

2) Satan’s “reason for this deception”: *to prevent man from assuming the governmental reigns of the earth*.

These two principles surrounding satanic activity remain constant, holding true at any point in Scripture where Satan is seen moving against man. Satan’s methods are always *deceptive*, and the underlying purpose behind Satan’s every move against man *always concerns the governmental reigns of the earth, which he himself holds*.

When Satan sinned, he was disqualified to rule, and his kingdom was brought into a ruined state; when man sinned, he also was disqualified to rule, and the restored domain over which he had been created to rule was brought under a curse (a ruin once again).

But man, created in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God, was a being quite different than angels. With man, his disqualification and resulting ruined domain were by no means the end of the matter. Fallen man, unlike fallen angels, was to be redeemed; and man’s redemption was with a view to his ultimately occupying the position from which he had fallen — *man restored, the domain restored for man, and man ultimately exercising regality.*

[Genesis 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.15&t=NKJV) records God’s promise concerning man’s Redeemer (the Seed of the Woman), and [Genesis 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.21&t=NKJV) records God’s immediate action concerning a provision for man’s sin (the slaying of one or more animals to provide skins to clothe Adam and Eve).

God’s promise and action at this point in Scripture form two other first-mention principles, seen in [Genesis 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3&t=NKJV); [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4&t=NKJV):

1) *The way of salvation* was to be through a “Substitute/Redeemer,” acting in man’s stead.

2) *The means of salvation* was to be *via* “death” and “shed blood.”

Since no redemptive provision was made following Satan’s sin, the principles in [Genesis 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.15&t=NKJV), [21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.21&t=NKJV) form something entirely new in God’s dealings with His creatures. And, with this new turn of events, Satan, knowing that his own reign could continue only as long as man remained in his fallen state, must now prevent man’s redemption by and through whatever means might lie within his power.

Satan against God’s New Creation, Man

At the time of the birth of Cain, the firstborn of the human race, there is every indication that Eve believed he was to be the promised Redeemer. The words of Eve, “*I have acquired a man from the Lord* [referring to Cain]” ([Genesis 4:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.1&t=NKJV)), are recorded literally in the Hebrew text, “*I have acquired a man, Jehovah*” (*cf*. [Genesis 22:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.8&t=NKJV)). Nothing like this was said about Abel, who, from all indication, was the twin brother of Cain, but born last ([Genesis 4:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.1-2&t=NKJV)). Eve apparently took her firstborn to be the promised Redeemer and uttered the recorded words concerning him prior to the birth of Abel. The record is silent concerning anything Eve might have said at the time of Abel’s birth.

As the two sons grew into manhood though, Abel was the one who acted “*by faith*” ([Genesis 4:3-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.3-5&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 11:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.4&t=NKJV)). And Satan, having observed the entire matter, evidently reasoned that if one of these sons was to be the promised Redeemer, or possibly of the line through which the Redeemer was to come, it would have to be Abel, not Cain. Thus, the first murder in human history occurred:

. . . *Cain who was of the wicked one . . . murdered his brother* . . . . ([1 John 3:12a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+3.12a&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Genesis 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.8&t=NKJV)).

The fact that God later appointed “*another seed . . . instead of Abel* [Seth]” reveals that the Redeemer would have come through the lineage of Abel, had he not been slain ([Genesis 4:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.25&t=NKJV)). Following the birth of Seth and the birth of his son, Enos, the Genesis account states that “*men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them*” ([Genesis 6:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.1&t=NKJV)). Satan, at this point, appears to have turned his attention more to mankind in general, for the very next statement in Scripture reveals a cohabitation of the “*sons of God* [angels in the kingdom of Satan]” with the “*daughters of men* [female offspring from the lineage of Adam]” ([Genesis 6:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.2&t=NKJV)).

Through this act, perpetrated by a segment of the angels under Satan’s command, Satan evidently sought to corrupt the entire human race, not only attempting to prevent the ultimate appearance of the Redeemer but attempting to so corrupt the human race that man could never fulfill the reason for his creation in the beginning — replacing Satan and his angels in a regal capacity.

(The expression “*sons of God*,” as in [Genesis 6:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.2&t=NKJV), [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV), refers throughout Scripture *to special creations of God. All angels are “sons of God”* because of creation [*cf*. [Job. 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job.+1.6&t=NKJV); [2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+2.1&t=NKJV); [38:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+38.7&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 28:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+28.15&t=NKJV)]; *Adam* was “*a son of God*” because of creation [[Luke 3:38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.38&t=NKJV)]; *Israel was*/is “God’s son” because of creation [[Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)]; *individual Israelites*, as well, are “God’s sons” because of creation [[Exodus 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.1&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.7&t=NKJV), [9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.9&t=NKJV); [Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.7&t=NKJV)]; and *Christians* are “God’s sons” because of creation [[2 Corinthians 5:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.17&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6-7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV)].

A sonship status should not be confused with that which is referred to by “adoption” in Scripture [[Romans 8:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.23&t=NKJV); [Galatians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.5&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.5&t=NKJV)]. “Adoption” is a translation of the Greek word *huiothesia* [from *huios*, “son,” and *thesis*, “placing,” or “positioning”]. Thus, *huiothesia* literally means “son-placing,” or “son-positioning.” Adoption in Scripture has to do with taking one who is already a son and placing that son in a “firstborn” status.

Israel, a son because of creation, has already been adopted [[Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV)] and is presently *God’s firstborn son* [[Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)]. Christians, sons because of creation, have yet to be adopted. But Christians will one day be adopted [[Romans 8:14-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14-23&t=NKJV)] and occupy the position of *firstborn* as well [[Hebrews 12:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.23&t=NKJV)].

For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author’s book, in this site, [God’s Firstborn Sons BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-six.php#God%E2%80%99s%20Firstborn%20Sons%20BOOK).)

The use of “*sons of God*” in [Genesis 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6&t=NKJV) can only be a reference to angels (cf. [Job 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+1.6&t=NKJV); [2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+2.1&t=NKJV); [38:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+38.7&t=NKJV)). The male descendants of Adam *could not be in view*, for they were begotten, not created.

Everything at this point in the Genesis account was apparently directed toward one goal: *total corruption of all the lineages of the families of the earth*. Had Satan been successful, not only would he have prevented the appearance of man’s Redeemer but the human race would have become corrupted in such a manner that redemption would not have been possible.

Satan had sought to counter God’s purpose for man’s creation by and through the fall of Adam; then, by and through the murder of Abel he had sought to destroy the one who could possibly be the promised Redeemer (or, at least of the lineage through which the Redeemer would come); and now, with the appearance of the Redeemer still future, he continued seeking to counter God’s purpose for man’s creation by and through efforts directed toward a corruption of the human race — as previously noted, evidently not only efforts to prevent the Redeemer from ever being born but efforts to so corrupt the human race that man could never fulfill the purpose for his creation, his very existence.

1) The Time of [Genesis 6:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.1-2&t=NKJV)

A corruption of the families of the earth through the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men was something that had to be accomplished over a period of many generations. The beginning of this cohabitation can be traced to a time hundreds of years before the Flood, and the fact that God only allowed eight individuals from one family to escape the judgment of the Flood might shed some light on just how close Satan possibly may have come to succeeding.

The time framework of [Genesis 6:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.1-2&t=NKJV) is much closer to the creation of Adam than to the Flood. Sixteen hundred and fifty-six years separate these two events, and the time when the sons of God began their cohabitation with female offspring emanating from the loins of Adam and his progeny could not have been too far removed from the creation of Adam.

Note the wording of verse one:

*Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth* . . . . ([Genesis 6:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.1&t=NKJV))

This cohabitation can evidently be traced to a time very near man’s beginning on earth, very near man’s creation.

2) The Result of [Genesis 6:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.1-2&t=NKJV)

Six hundred eighty-seven years following Adam’s creation, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, begat Methuselah. The name “Methuselah” means, “*When he is gone, it* (judgment) *shall be sent*.” The judgment referred to by the name Methuselah was later revealed to be *the judgment of the Flood*. So long as Methuselah remained alive, judgment would be withheld; but once Methuselah had died, judgment would fall.

Methuselah lived nine hundred sixty-nine years. The nine hundred sixty-ninth year of his life was the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, the year of the Flood ([Genesis 5:25-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5.25-29&t=NKJV); [7:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+7.11&t=NKJV)).

How did Enoch know at the time of his son’s birth that he would live to the very year of God’s judgment upon the earth? And how did he know that he was to be given the name “Methuselah,” signifying this fact? The answer is given in [Hebrews 11:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.5&t=NKJV): “*By faith Enoch* . . . .” According to the record, Enoch walked with God for three hundred years after he begat Methuselah. Also, according to the record, at the end of these three hundred years, Enoch, “*by faith*,” was translated.

It is evident that something happened to Enoch at or about the time of Methuselah’s birth. *The name Methuselah, given to Enoch’s son, Enoch walking with God for three hundred years after he begat Methuselah, and Enoch subsequently being translated by faith*, all point to this fact.

In order for Enoch to act “*by faith*” in any realm it was necessary for God to make certain that things were known to him, for no one can act “*by faith*” apart from the Revelation of God. “Faith” is simply *believing that which God has to say about a matter*, and, consequently, faith cannot exist apart from God’s Revelation. In order for Enoch to act as he did, God had to reveal certain things to him about his son, the coming judgment, and the fact that he would be translated before this judgment.

From what we can glean in the record, God apparently revealed these things to Enoch at or about the time Methuselah was born. Methuselah was then given *a name* indicating that so long as he remained alive, God’s judgment would be withheld; but when he was gone, it would be sent. Enoch then *walked with God* for three hundred years in anticipation of *God removing him from the earth alive, before this judgment* — exactly as God had evidently previously revealed.

Scripture clearly implies that at the time of Methuselah’s birth, six hundred eighty-seven years beyond the creation of Adam, the results of the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men had become a thing of such magnitude that it was necessary for God to intervene in the affairs of man. However, this actual intervention would not come until nine hundred and sixty-nine more years had passed.

At the time of Methuselah’s birth the announcement concerning impending judgment was given, and nine hundred sixty-nine years later judgment fell. God sent the waters of the Flood to destroy all the inhabitants of the earth, save Noah and his immediate family.

Thus, following Methuselah’s death, judgment fell. Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives were in the previously prepared ark and passed safely through this judgment, thwarting the ultimate goal of Satan that he had been working toward for centuries. Following the Flood, the human race had to begin anew; and Satan, likewise, had to begin anew at this time.

Reserved for Judgment

The angels who took upon themselves the form of man, left their positions of power in the heavens, and began cohabiting with female members of the human race, have been “*reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day*.” These angels were imprisoned in a particular place following the Flood during Noah’s day, they remain imprisoned today, and they will remain imprisoned until their appearance in judgment before God’s Son at a time yet future. All judgment has been committed into the hands of the Son ([John 5:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+5.22&t=NKJV)), and these angels will one day be judged by the One whose very appearance they sought to prevent.

The angels imprisoned, awaiting judgment, are in a place that Scripture calls *Tartarus*. [2 Peter 2:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-6&t=NKJV) refers to the angels who sinned during the days of Noah and during the days of Lot as being cast “*down to hell* [*Tartarus*].” *Tartarus* is simply a transliterated Greek word, and it appears only this one time in the New Testament (in a verb form, *Tartaroo*; the noun form is *Tartaros*).

All other occurrences of the word “hell” in English translations are from the Greek words *Gehenna* and *Hades*. *Gehenna* appears in [Matthew 5:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.22&t=NKJV), [29-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.29-30&t=NKJV); [10:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+10.28&t=NKJV); [18:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+18.9&t=NKJV); [23:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.15&t=NKJV), [33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.33&t=NKJV); [Mark 9:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+9.43&t=NKJV), [45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+9.45&t=NKJV), [47](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+9.47&t=NKJV); [Luke 12:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+12.5&t=NKJV); [James 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+3.6&t=NKJV). And *Hades* appears in [Matthew 11:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+11.23&t=NKJV); [16:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.18&t=NKJV); [Luke 10:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+10.15&t=NKJV); [16:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+16.23&t=NKJV); [Acts 2:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.27&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.31&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 15:55](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.55&t=NKJV); [Revelation 1:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+1.18&t=NKJV); [6:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+6.8&t=NKJV); [20:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.13-14&t=NKJV).

There is a connection between *Tartarus* and *Hades* in the sense that one is housed within the other. *Hades* is the larger realm, with *Tartarus* comprising a section of *Hades*. The souls of both the saved and the unsaved go into *Hades* at the time of death, though the location in *Hades* into which the saved and unsaved go would not be the same.

*Hades* simply refers to a place in which the dead reside, whether saved or unsaved. It has nothing to do with “hell” *per se*. Rather, it simply has to do with *the place of the dead*, with no distinction made between saved and unsaved within the Word itself.

During Old Testament days, *Hades* (Hebrews, *Sheol*) was located in only one place — somewhere below the surface of the earth ([Genesis 37:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+37.35&t=NKJV); [Numbers 16:32-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.32-33&t=NKJV); [1 Samuel 28:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Samuel+28.15&t=NKJV); [Job 7:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+7.9&t=NKJV)). Today, the place of the dead is located both below the surface of the earth and in the heavens. This change in location would be for only part of the dead — the saved of this present dispensation, “*the dead in Christ*” ([2 Corinthians 5:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.8&t=NKJV); [Philippians 1:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+1.23&t=NKJV)).

The place into which the saved went at the time of death during Old Testament times apparently remains unchanged today. This place during Old Testament times could only be located *down*, and there is nothing in Scripture that would indicate that this place could be looked upon after any other fashion today. Old Testament saints would apparently still be in the same part of Hades that they have always occupied.

Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and the ushering in of a new dispensation could have nothing to do with bringing about a change in the location of the Old Testament saints. Nor can [Ephesians 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.8&t=NKJV) be understood to teach that Old Testament saints were removed into the heavens at the time of Christ’s ascension. This is a quotation from a Messianic Psalm ([Psalm 68:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+68.18&t=NKJV)), which has to do with doing away with the captivity seen in [Luke 4:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+4.18&t=NKJV). The whole of the matter seen in [Ephesians 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.8&t=NKJV) is yet future in the scope of its fulfillment (*cf*. [Acts 2:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.29&t=NKJV), [34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.34&t=NKJV)).

No Old Testament saint is in *Tartarus*, though it is located in a section of *Hades*, as *Hades* (or *Sheol*) existed during Old Testament times. *Tartarus* is located in a section of *Hades* into which man does not enter. This section is reserved for the angels who sinned in accordance with [2 Peter 2:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-6&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6-7&t=NKJV), along with, it would appear, their progeny also (*Tartarus* is discussed further in Chapter 6 in this book).

*Gehenna*, the other word indiscriminately translated “hell” in most English translations of the New Testament, is a word that always, with the exception of [James 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+3.6&t=NKJV), came from the lips of Jesus during His earthly ministry. Every appearance of this word in the gospel accounts is in passages dealing with entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens. Thus, Christ did not use the word at all in connection with the issues of eternal salvation or eternal damnation.

*Gehenna*, the Fiery Valley of Hinnom, was south of Jerusalem; and during the days when Christ was upon the earth this valley was the place of refuse for the city of Jerusalem. *Gehenna* was the receptacle for all kinds of corruption. The sewage of the city flowed into this valley, and it was customary to cast the carcasses of dead animals therein. Even the bodies of executed criminals, by order of the Sanhedrin, were sometimes cast into this valley.

In [Matthew 5:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.22&t=NKJV), [29-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.29-30&t=NKJV) *Gehenna* is used in connection with judgment in the local Jewish courts and the judgment of the Council, which was the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin possessed the power to inflict a sentence of death by stoning, and also, should the Sanhedrin so rule, the punishment could be intensified by ordering the corpse to be cast into the Valley of Hinnom. The decrees and determinations rendered by these earthly courts were used by the Lord to call attention to parallel decrees and determinations that will be rendered by heavenly courts, with the severest penalty being the same as that which is seen in the earthly courts — *death*, followed by the person *being cast into Gehenna*.

In [Matthew 23:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.13&t=NKJV), [25-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.25-28&t=NKJV), [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+23.3&t=NKJV)3 the Scribes and Pharisees were in danger of “*the damnation of hell* [*lit*., ‘the judgment of Gehenna’]” because they had closed the door to the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the nation of Israel. In [Mark 9:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+9.43&t=NKJV), [45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+9.45&t=NKJV), [47](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+9.47&t=NKJV), being “*cast into hell* [‘*Gehenna*’]” is used as an antithesis to entering “*into life*” and entering “*into the kingdom*” (which are the same). And it is so as well with all the other occurrences of this word in the gospel accounts.

*Gehenna* in [James 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+3.6&t=NKJV) is the only exception to the previous usage in the New Testament and the only place where this word is used outside the gospel accounts. In [James 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+3.6&t=NKJV), the word is used in a symbolic sense, dealing with the tongue. But, even here, in a book dealing specifically with the salvation of the soul ([James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV); [5:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV)), the word has an inseparable connection with the way it is used in the gospel accounts.

Thus, being cast into *Gehenna* does not appear in any Scriptural passage as a reference to the unsaved being cast into “*the lake of fire*” ([Revelation 20:14-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.14-15&t=NKJV)), as is often taught; nor can *Gehenna* be even remotely connected with *Hades* or *Tartarus*. *Gehenna* is associated with the judgment of a select group — those to whom the offer of the kingdom of the heavens is extended. The word is thus associated with *the future judgment of Christians in connection with issues pertaining to the millennial kingdom.*

Christ’s Proclamation

*Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit;*

*In which also He went and preached* [delivered a proclamation] *unto the spirits in prison,*

*That aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.* ([1 Peter 3:18-20 ASV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18-20&t=ASV))

The “*spirits*” in this passage are said to have been “*disobedient*” during days preceding the Flood. For this reason not only are they imprisoned but Christ also appeared in their presence at a time following their imprisonment and delivered a proclamation. *The time* and *purpose* of this proclamation center on *the reason* for their previous actions, and the passage must be interpreted with this in mind.

These imprisoned spirits cannot be identified as descendants of Adam. The dead from the lineage of Adam are never referred to as being in prison; nor are individuals from the human race, living or dead, ever called “spirits.” Man has a *spirit*, but he himself is never called “a spirit.” Scripture speaks of “*the spirits of just men*” ([Hebrews 12:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.23&t=NKJV)) and refers to Christ, *following His resurrection*, as “*a life-giving spirit*” (referring to His position as Life-Giver in His resurrection body [*a spiritual body* — [1 Corinthians 15:44-45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.44-45&t=NKJV) — *a body of flesh and bones*, the same body that had been placed in the tomb, but now possessing the Spirit rather than the blood as the life-giving, animating principle of the body]). But the descendants of Adam cannot be referred to by the use of the word “spirit” in this sense, for they have not received such bodies, with the possible exception of Enoch, Moses, and Elijah.

Among God’s created beings, only *angels* are called “spirits” in the Word of God:

. . . *Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.*

*Are they* [angels] *not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?* ([Hebrews 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.7&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.14&t=NKJV) [7b])

The “*spirits*” in [1 Peter 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.19&t=NKJV) can only be identified as *the angels* who had left their positions of power in the heavens, had taken upon themselves the form of man, and had cohabited with women in the human race during days preceding the Flood. The prison in this passage is *Tartarus*; and according to both [2 Peter 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV), these angels are not only confined in this prison but they are chained, awaiting judgment.

The word for “*preached*” in [1 Peter 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.19&t=NKJV) is *kerusso* in the Greek text, which means, “to make an announcement.” The word itself gives no indication concerning either the type of announcement or the content of the message. These things must be determined from the context or other related Scripture.

*Kerusso* appears numerous times throughout the New Testament and is almost always used in connection with proclaiming some facet of the gospel message. In these passages though, either the Greek word *euaggelion* (“gospel,” “good news”) or other related qualifying words appear with *kerusso* to make this connection (*e.g.*, [Matthew 4:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+4.23&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 1:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+1.23&t=NKJV)).

But there is nothing in [1 Peter 3:18-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18-20&t=NKJV) that would even remotely connect *kerusso* with the gospel message. In fact, the word could not refer to the proclamation of the gospel. The message in this passage is directed to “spirits [angels],” and the gospel is for the descendants of Adam, not angels. *Kerusso* is used in [1 Peter 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.19&t=NKJV) in the same sense that it is used in [Revelation 5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+5.2&t=NKJV) — a proclamation concerning *something other than the gospel*.

The *time* of this proclamation did not occur, as many infer, between Christ’s death and resurrection while He was in *Hades*; nor, as others infer, did this proclamation have anything to do with the strange interpretation that is termed “the preaching of Christ [by the Holy Spirit] through Noah” during days preceding the Flood. [1 Peter 3:18-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18-19&t=NKJV) clearly reveals that Christ delivered this proclamation *Himself, following His resurrection*.

In [1 Peter 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18&t=NKJV), Christ was “*put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit*.” At the time of His death, Christ possessed a “soulical [*psuchikos*]” body of flesh, blood, and bones. The life-giving, animating principle of this body was the blood ([Leviticus 17:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+17.11&t=NKJV)). But at the time of His resurrection Christ possessed a “spiritual [*pneumatikos*]” body of flesh and bones, without blood. The life-giving, animating principle of this body was the Spirit of God. The body that Jesus possessed following His resurrection was the same body He had possessed before His death. The words “soulical” and “spiritual,” in the preceding respect, have to do with the life-giving, animating principle of the body, not the body itself (*cf*. [1 Corinthians 15:44-50](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.44-50&t=NKJV)).

The thought in [1 Peter 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18&t=NKJV) is continued in [1 Peter 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.19&t=NKJV) by the statement:

*In which also He went and preached* [delivered a proclamation] *unto the spirits in prison.*

In verse eighteen, Christ was put to death in a soulical body and then raised in a spiritual body. Then, in verse nineteen, Christ went to *Tartarus* and delivered a proclamation to the angels who had been directly responsible for the judgment of the Flood.

The word “*which*” ([1 Peter 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.19&t=NKJV)) is a translation of the Greek relative pronoun “*ho*.” A rule of Greek grammar states that the relative pronoun must agree with its antecedent in both gender and number. “*Ho*” is a singular case form of the word that can be either masculine or neuter (both case forms in this instance are the same in the Greek text, but the feminine is different).

The wording in [1 Peter 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18&t=NKJV), in the English text, would seemingly allow for two possible antecedents to be considered: “flesh,” and “Spirit.” However, in the Greek text, “flesh” is a feminine word and thus cannot be the antecedent. “Spirit,” on the other hand, is a neuter word. Consequently, the antecedent of “which” can only be “Spirit” (a neuter relative pronoun agreeing with its neuter antecedent).

With this in mind, note what is in view insofar as the time and manner of the proclamation are concerned. In [1 Peter 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18&t=NKJV), Christ was “*made alive in the Spirit*.” Jesus possessed a resurrection body animated by the Spirit. Then [1 Peter 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.19&t=NKJV) states, “*In which also He went and preached* [delivered a proclamation] *unto the spirits in prison*.” The relative pronoun “*which*,” with its antecedent “*Spirit*,” can only refer to His resurrection body. Jesus, *in His resurrection body*, went to *Tartarus* for the specific purpose of making an announcement to *a particular group of imprisoned angels*.

These angels imprisoned in Tartarus had sought, under Satan, to completely corrupt the lineages of all the families of the earth. But now, the second Man, the last Adam, stood in their presence. Not only this, but He stood there in *His resurrection body with His work of redemption completed.*

He had met Satan face to face in the wilderness, showing that He was fully qualified to redeem that which the first man, the first Adam, had forfeited in the fall. He then paid redemption’s price at Golgotha, His own shed blood. Man’s redemption was now not only an accomplished fact, but redeemed man (having descended from Adam through Noah and his three sons [an uncorrupted lineage]) could ultimately realize the purpose for his creation in the beginning.

The only proclamation that Christ could have delivered to the imprisoned angels in *Tartarus* would have had to center on the fact that what they had attempted to do preceding the Flood was for naught. An uncorrupted human race existed, and the resurrected Christ stood in their presence; and not only would the resurrected Christ, as the second Man, the last Adam, one day take the kingdom, but a great host of individuals redeemed from the lineage of the First Adam would reign as co-heirs with Him.

The angels in *Tartarus* could now look forward to only one thing: *remaining chained, awaiting consignment to the lake of fire.*

Satan and the angels continuing to reign with him could, likewise, now look forward to only one thing: biding their time, awaiting the day Christ takes the kingdom, followed ultimately by *their consignment to the lake of fire, “prepared for the devil and his angels.”*

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Chapter Six

**In Like Manner**

*As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fir*e. ([Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV)).

(This chapter, as the preceding chapter, deals with texts pertaining to *the sexual nature of angels*. Since many Christians believe that angels are sexless, often committing mayhem when attempting to deal with these texts, something needs to be said by way of clarification.

If it be argued that angels are sexless, preventing that which is clearly stated and dealt with in these two chapters — *i.e*., a cohabitation, in a sexual manner, of angels with members of the human race — a question needs to be answered by those advocating this ideology: *Where in Scripture does it say, teach, or even intimate that angels are sexless?*

[Matthew 22:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.30&t=NKJV) is the text usually cited, but this verse has nothing to do with the sexual nature of angels. All angels are spoken of in a masculine respect in Scripture, and Scripture is filled with information concerning a sexual nature that has been and will be exercised by angels.)

The world during Noah’s day experienced *destruction* as a direct result of angelic intervention, in a sexual manner, in the affairs of the human race ([Genesis 6:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.1-7&t=NKJV)). Then, ten generations later, during Abraham’s day, angelic intervention of the same nature was seen again, though on a more limited scale. Four cities in the Jordan plain, corrupted by angels in Satan’s kingdom, involving themselves sexually with individuals in the human race, were *destroyed* by “*brimstone and fire*” from heaven ([Genesis 19:24-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.24-25&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 29:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29.23&t=NKJV)). Then seven generations later, during Moses’ day, the same thing is seen again. The Israelites under Moses were told to go into the land of Canaan and *utterly destroy* all the nations in the land, nations that had been corrupted through sexual relations with angels ([Deuteronomy 7:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+7.1ff&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Numbers 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.33&t=NKJV)).

Angels in the kingdom of Satan, both preceding and following the Flood, took upon themselves the form of man, left their positions of power in the heavens, came to earth, and cohabited with members of the human race. Before the Flood, insofar as the record is concerned, this cohabitation was only between angels and female members of the human race — a heterosexual union. After the Flood, however, Scripture reveals both heterosexual and homosexual relationships of this nature.

Before the Flood, this union involved the families of the earth. After the Flood, this union appears to have been confined more particularly to the inhabitants of the land in the Abrahamic covenant. The cohabitation of angels in the kingdom of Satan with members of the human race in days before the Flood and again in days following the Flood though occurred with *the same objective in view*.

(Satan must, *at all costs*, continue to hold the governmental reins of the earth; and his multi-faceted attacks were directed against the one whom God had created to ultimately hold the scepter, *against man*.

During the first 2,000 years of human history, Satan’s attack was *against mankind in general*. But then, after 2,000 years, God narrowed the matter of regality *down to one man, to Abraham* [anticipated by the position that Shem had held in [Genesis 9:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.26&t=NKJV), nine generations earlier]. And God revealed, at the outset, His plans and purposes that were to be worked out through Abraham and his lineage [[Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV); [13:14-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+13.14-17&t=NKJV); [22:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.17-18&t=NKJV)].

Thus, Satan could now center his attack against one man and his progeny — seen four centuries later, during Moses’ day, to be *the nation of Israel, God’s firstborn son*. This was the nation whom God, through Abraham, had called into existence to dwell in a particular land, hold the scepter, and rule at the head of the nations within a theocracy. And Satan knowing this well in advance had, over generations of time, marshaled his forces in the land in which Israel was to dwell when they ruled, the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [[Numbers 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.33&t=NKJV)].

And for the same reason, because of Israel’s identity, Satan’s attack against this nation has continued down through the intervening three and one-half millennia, extending into modern times. Satan knows that God is not going to change His mind concerning the reason He called this nation into existence [[Romans 11:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.29&t=NKJV)]. *Israel is to ultimately hold the scepter in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

Then, almost two millennia ago, Satan had to broaden his attack. God brought into existence a third creation in the human race — *a new man, the new creation “in Christ.”* And this new man was brought into existence for the specific purpose of occupying the very realm that Satan and his angels held at that time and continue to hold today — *a heavenly realm*, exercising rule over the nations from this realm, with Israel still destined to hold the scepter in the earthly realm of the kingdom.

Thus, Satan’s broadened attack began [[Ephesians 6:10-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.10-18&t=NKJV)]; and this broadened attack, a warfare, will continue to rage throughout the dispensation, intensifying as the dispensation draws to a close.

Then, once the dispensation has ended and God removes this new man, the Church, He will turn back to His dealings with Israel, working out His plans and purposes for this nation. And Satan in that day, knowing that his time is short [seven years will remain in Man’s Day, which Satan will know], will launch his final and most intense attack against Israel, against God’s firstborn son.

And this final attack by Satan against this nation will be of such a severe nature that “*unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved*” [[Matthew 24:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.22&t=NKJV)].)

Man can rule nothing within the sphere of governmental control “*before the time*” ([1 Corinthians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+4.5&t=NKJV)).

*The nation of Israel* was placed in a position to rule following the Exodus under Moses. This nation consisted of *a special creation in Jacob, a redeemed people, and an adopted people*. Israel was *God’s firstborn son*. Israel had been created in Jacob ([Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV)), allowing the nation to occupy the position of “God’s son”; then God adopted Israel into *a firstborn status*.

*Christians* today have been redeemed and are *new creations “in Christ.”* They are “*sons of God*” in that respect (*e.g.*, [Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6-7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV)). But Christians, unlike Israel, have yet to be adopted into *a firstborn status*. Thus, Christians are presently in no position to rule, for it is not just “Sons” who will rule in the coming age, but *firstborn Sons*.

Nor is Israel presently in a position to rule. Even though the nation retains its status of being a special creation in Jacob and an adopted nation — *God’s firstborn son* — Israel today resides on the earth *in unbelief*. In conjunction with this unbelief, the nation has been set aside while God takes out of the Gentiles “*a people for His name*.” The time when both Israel and the Church will be in positions to rule is yet future.

Before the Flood, Satan’s strategy evidently consisted of an attempt to corrupt the lineages of the families of the earth in order to not only prevent the appearance of the Seed of the Woman, man’s Redeemer, but also an attempt to so corrupt the human race that man could not fulfill the purpose for his creation in the beginning.

After the Flood, knowing God’s plans and purposes regarding Abraham, Satan appears to have somewhat changed his strategy. Satan then began concentrating his efforts on corrupting the nations dwelling in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And Satan’s work in this respect began long before the establishment of Israel as a nation and the subsequent Exodus from Egypt under Moses.

Satan knew that the land from “*the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates*” belonged to Abraham and his seed, he knew that the families of the earth were to be blessed through the nation emanating from Abraham, and he knew that the Redeemer was to come through the lineage of Abraham (*cf*. [Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV); [14:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.19&t=NKJV); [15:18-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+15.18-21&t=NKJV); [17:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+17.7-8&t=NKJV); [22:1-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.1-18&t=NKJV)). Thus, Satan had marshaled his forces in the land ahead of Israel, evidently not only to contest the right of this nation to enter the land in a regal capacity but also to continue his efforts to prevent the appearance of man’s Redeemer.

Aside from the fact that Israel was to be the channel through which the Redeemer would come, this nation was called out of Egypt for a more immediate, specific purpose. Israel was to enter the land of Canaan, *smite and utterly destroy* the inhabitants of the land ([Deuteronomy 7:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+7.1-2&t=NKJV)), and exercise supremacy within a theocratic rule over all the nations of the earth. Israel’s position of supremacy at this point was to, in turn, result in the nations of the earth being blessed through the seed of Abraham in accordance with [Genesis 12:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.2-3&t=NKJV). Israel was to rule as a kingdom of priests ([Exodus 19:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+19.5-6&t=NKJV)), and the nations of the earth were to be blessed through Israel’s national kingly-priestly position.

These were the nations over which Satan and his angels ruled; and a rule by Israel within a theocracy of this nature would, in reality, at least to a degree, be a wrestling of governmental control from Satan and his angels.

Not only was Israel to occupy this position of governmental power and control among the nations here on earth, but Israel was also in possession of heavenly promises and blessings. This would necessitate the nation one day controlling, with at least a segment of the nation occupying, the very heavenly places from which Satan exercised power over the nations (continuing to exercise this same power today). The seed of Abraham — both earthly and heavenly — *MUST* ultimately “*possess the gate of* [exercise governmental control over] *their enemies*” ([Genesis 22:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.17-18&t=NKJV)).

Thus, Satan, as the incumbent ruler over the Gentile nations from this heavenly realm, must not only prevent the appearance of man’s Redeemer, but he must also destroy the nation of Israel itself to assure his continuance on the throne in the heavenly realm.

(Note that Israel, the old creation in Jacob, has forfeited the right to occupy the heavenly sphere of the kingdom [*cf*. [Matthew 12:22-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+12.22-32&t=NKJV); [21:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+21.43&t=NKJV)]. This right has been assumed by the Church, the “*one new man*,” the “*new creation*” *in Christ*, called into existence for this purpose [cf. [Matthew 16:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.18&t=NKJV); [21:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+21.43&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.17&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 2:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.9-10&t=NKJV)]. This heavenly realm must be occupied by God’s firstborn son; and Christians, who are “*Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise* [the heavenly portion of the promise in [Genesis 22:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.17&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Genesis 14:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.19&t=NKJV)],” will, following the adoption, “*possess the gate*” of the enemy in the heavenly realm [[Galatians 3:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.29&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 6:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.1ff&t=NKJV)].)

Satan tried to destroy Israel in Egypt before the Exodus by and through the afflictions in the brickyards and the death of the male Hebrew children at birth. He continued trying to accomplish this task at the time of and following the Exodus under Moses by the armies of Pharaoh pursuing Israel to the Red Sea, the Amalekites attacking Israel in the wilderness, and the corrupted nations awaiting Israel in the land of Canaan itself. He has tried to destroy Israel in many instances since (*e.g.*, in modern times, the destruction of six million Jews under Hitler during the years of the Third Reich in Europe [1933-1945]), and he will try in the immediate future by and through the nations of the earth during and immediately following the Tribulation.

His attempts in the past have always been for naught, as will be his attempts in the future. Not only has Israel brought forth the Redeemer, but Israel herself remains, as a nation, yet to occupy her God-ordained position as the one by whom and through whom the nations of the earth will be both ruled and blessed.

Nephilim and Rephaim

Prior to the Flood, the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men resulted in offspring called *Nephilim*. Following the Flood, when this union occurred again, these offspring were known by two names: *Nephilim*, and *Rephaim*.

The translators of the Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament) used the word *Gigantes* in most instances for both of these words. *Gigantes* is the Greek word for “giants,” and this is the thought that is carried over into several verses of the King James Version ([Genesis 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV); [Numbers 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.33&t=NKJV)).

However, this meaning may have been only secondary to that which the translators of the Septuagint Version could have had in mind. *Gigantes* comes from a root form of a word which, in the secular Greek world, signified “earth-born” rather than gigantic stature. If the use of *Gigantes* is understood in this respect, the word would, contextually, refer to “earth-born individuals [individuals born on the earth, having heavenly fathers and earthly mothers],” with a secondary thought having to do with “physical stature.”

*Nephilim* is simply the plural form of a Hebrew word meaning “to fall,” and *Rephaim* is the plural form of another Hebrew word meaning “to heal.” A cognate form for *Rephaim* though would carry the thought of “casting down,” or “falling down.” Understanding the word in this latter sense would appear to be more in keeping with the fact that *Rephaim* is simply another name for the *Nephilim*, referring to this same group of individuals — “fallen ones.”

The word *Nephilim* is used only three times in the Old Testament in passages referring to offspring resulting from the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men ([Genesis 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV); [Numbers 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.33&t=NKJV)). But the word *Rephaim* is used numerous times referring to these individuals ([Genesis 14:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.15&t=NKJV); [15:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+15.20&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+2.11&t=NKJV), [20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+2.20&t=NKJV); [3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+3.11&t=NKJV), [13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+3.13&t=NKJV); [Joshua 12:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+12.4&t=NKJV); [13:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+13.12&t=NKJV); [15:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+15.8&t=NKJV); [17:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+17.15&t=NKJV); [18:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+18.16&t=NKJV); [2 Samuel 5:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+5.18&t=NKJV), [22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+5.22&t=NKJV); [23:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+23.13&t=NKJV); [1 Chronicles 11:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+11.15&t=NKJV); [14:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+14.9&t=NKJV); [20:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+20.4&t=NKJV), [6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+20.6&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+20.8&t=NKJV); [Job 26:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+26.5&t=NKJV); [Psalm 88:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+88.10&t=NKJV); [Proverbs 2:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Proverbs+2.18&t=NKJV); [9:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Proverbs+9.18&t=NKJV); [21:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Proverbs+21.16&t=NKJV); [Isaiah 14:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.9&t=NKJV); [17:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+17.5&t=NKJV); [26:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+26.14&t=NKJV), [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+26.19&t=NKJV)).

English versions of the Old Testament handle the Hebrew words *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* in different ways. The words are many times transliterated rather than translated. Other times translations are attempted (*e.g*., “giants,” “departed spirits,” “spirits of the dead,” “deceased,” “death,” “dead” [*ref*. KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV]). Everything that can be known about the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* must be derived from these passages, in conjunction with related Scripture.

During the days of Abraham, the *Rephaim* could be found among the inhabitants of a number of cities in the land ([Genesis 14:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.1-5&t=NKJV)). Four of these cities in the Jordan plain — Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim — were destroyed by brimstone and fire from heaven ([Genesis 19:23-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.23-29&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 29:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29.23&t=NKJV)). Zoar, a fifth city in the plain, associated with the *Rephaim*, was spared to serve as a refuge for Lot and his two daughters when the Lord destroyed the other cities of the plain.

It is evident from [Genesis 14:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.1-5&t=NKJV) that the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* were in the land of Canaan preceding Abraham’s entrance into the land. Note that the very first statement of Scripture following Abraham’s journey from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan concerned the inhabitants of the land: “*And the Canaanites were then in the land*” ([Genesis 12:6b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.6b&t=NKJV)). Since the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* were associated with the nations of Canaan, this verse could very well be a reference to these individuals. In this respect, the reference would call attention to a fact of primary importance concerning Abraham’s entrance into the land: Satan had already begun to marshal his forces in the land in order to oppose God’s purpose surrounding the call of Abraham.

Under the call of God, there were two entrances of His people into the land of Canaan: Abraham’s entrance, following his departure from Ur, constitutes the first; and Israel’s entrance, following the Exodus from Egypt, constitutes the second. Satan’s forces — the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* — however, were marshaled first in the land each time.

The *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* were individuals of gigantic stature and great strength. Their gigantic stature can be seen in the report of the ten faithless spies at Kadesh-Barnea ([Numbers 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.33&t=NKJV)), the apparent size of Og, king of Bashan ([Deuteronomy 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+3.11&t=NKJV)), and the size of Goliath, who appeared later in Jewish history ([1 Samuel 17:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Samuel+17.4&t=NKJV); *cf*. [2 Samuel 21:18-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+21.18-22&t=NKJV)). Their great strength can be seen in the fact that they were “*mighty men* [the Hebrew word pertains to ‘strength’]” ([Genesis 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV)), the fact that they were the ones who built the sixty “*great cities*” of Bashan ([Deuteronomy 3:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+3.4-5&t=NKJV); [1 Kings 4:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Kings+4.13&t=NKJV)), and the position of Goliath as a “*champion*” in the army of the Philistines ([1 Samuel 17:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Samuel+17.1ff&t=NKJV)).

The first time that the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* appeared (called *Nephilim* only in antediluvian days), God destroyed them by the waters of a Flood. The second time that these individuals appeared, God destroyed a segment of them in the destruction of the cities of the plain; and God later commanded His people, the nation of Israel, to go into the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and *utterly destroy* all that were in the land.

By this time the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* had so infiltrated the nations in the land of Canaan that God commanded *total destruction* of these nations ([Deuteronomy 7:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+7.1-2&t=NKJV)). However, the failure of the Israelites to carry out the command of God completely when the nation entered the land under Joshua resulted in the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* persisting in Jewish history as the bitter enemies of the people of God for hundreds of years beyond that time.

The Cities of the Plain

Scripture, in several places, singles out angelic activity involving sexual perversions in the cities of the plain during the days of Abraham. [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV) specifically states that individuals living in the cities of the Jordan plain committed illicit sexual acts with angels. The words, “*in a similar manner to these*,” refer to the angels in [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV). The inhabitants of “*Sodom and Gomorrah*, *and the cities around them*” had given themselves over to “*sexual immorality*” and had gone after “*strange flesh*” in the same manner as the angels.

The word “*strange*” is *heteros* in the Greek text, referring, textually, to “another kind” of flesh. The angels in the kingdom of Satan who came to earth, took upon themselves the form of man and cohabited with members of the human race, and they did not possess the same type of flesh as man. There was an unrevealed difference, which is set forth by the Greek word *heteros*, as opposed to the word *allos*. Angels went after “*strange flesh* [another kind of flesh]” by cohabiting with the inhabitants in the cities of the plain, and the inhabitants of these cities went after “*strange flesh* [another kind of flesh]” by cohabiting with angels.

(Both *heteros* and *allos* carry the same basic meaning [“other,” “another”]; and the two words, insofar as their basic meaning is concerned, could be thought of as synonyms. The distinction between the two words can be seen when *heteros*, unlike *allos*, can refer to “*another of a different kind*,” as in the text.)

[Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV) is usually taken to refer only to homosexuality, in accord with [Genesis 19:1-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.1-11&t=NKJV). This interpretation, however, is too limited. *Rephaim* were associated with the cities of the plain ([Genesis 14:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.1-5&t=NKJV)), necessitating past sexual relations between angels and female members of the human race as well. [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV) and the parallel section in [2 Peter 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.6&t=NKJV) actually have to do with both homosexual and heterosexual acts, and the Genesis account points to widespread perversions in both realms.

1) Degeneracy of the Sodomites

The account in [Genesis 19:1-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.1-11&t=NKJV), showing the utter degeneracy of the inhabitants in the cities of the plain, has to do with men and homosexuality; but the Scriptures in 2 Peter and Jude, alluding to both homosexual and heterosexual acts between angels and members of the human race, place both types of sexual perversions occurring in these cities on the same basic level. And, in this respect, the apparent utter degeneracy of the entire populace — both male and female — can be seen by what is revealed in the Genesis account.

The night preceding the destruction of the cities of the plain, Lot had given two angels, sent to Sodom by the Lord, lodging inside the safety of his home. After Lot, his family, and the two angels had eaten, the men of Sodom began to gather outside Lot’s house. These men are described as “*both old and young, all the people from every quarter*,” and they had come for one sole purpose: they wanted the two “men,” the two angels, under Lot’s roof to be brought forth in order that they might “*know them carnally*,” *i.e.*, have homosexual relations with them.

Lot came outside, shut the door behind him, and offered his two virgin daughters to these men in order to protect the two angels under his roof. But the men of Sodom showed no interest in his daughters. Their only apparent interest lay in having illicit, carnal relations with the two “*men*,” the two angels. The intensity of their interest is shown in [Genesis 19:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.9&t=NKJV): “*And they said* [to Lot], ‘*Stand back*’. . . *And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door*.” But the two angels intervened. They pulled Lot inside the house and smote the men who were at the door with “*blindness*.” The angels then revealed Sodom’s impending destruction to Lot.

2) Evident Past History of Sodom

There is far more to [Genesis 19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19&t=NKJV) than Lot (within an Eastern mindset) just being very insistent that two unknown strangers spend the night inside the safety of his house, and the men of Sodom just wanting two strangers turned over to them.

Why was Lot so insistent that these two men not remain in the streets during the night? Why, in seeking to protect these two men, did Lot go to the point of even offering his two virgin daughters to the men of Sodom?

Then there is the attitude and actions of the men in Sodom. These men, “*both old and young, all the people from every quarter*,” wanted these two men so badly that they were going to break down the door of Lot’s house. They were not interested in Lot’s daughters; nor were they interested in having illicit, carnal relations with one another. Their interest lay *solely* in obtaining the two strangers inside Lot’s house.

The inference from the record appears to clearly indicate that both Lot and the men of Sodom knew that these two strangers were *angels*. Lot went to great lengths to protect them from the Sodomites, evidently because he knew what had been happening in Sodom ([2 Peter. 2:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter.+2.7-8&t=NKJV)). The men of Sodom, on the other hand, went to great lengths to obtain these two individuals, for they had evidently been brought into this depraved frame of mind through their past ungodly manner of living.

By comparing [Genesis 19:4-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+19.4-11&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 2:4-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-8&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6-7&t=NKJV), it appears clear that the men of Sodom, as well as the men in the other cities of the plain, had been having homosexual relations with angels. It cannot be known how long illicit, carnal relations of this nature had been occurring; but according to the record, immediately before the destruction of the cities of the plain, the men of Sodom had become so sex-crazed that their only apparent real interest lay in having homosexual relations with angels.

Thus, because of the widespread prevalence of this gross sexual perversion, God rained “*brimstone and fire*” from heaven upon these cities following the removal of Lot, his wife, and his two virgin daughters from Sodom.

Angels, Nephilim, and Rephaim in Tartarus

The angels who sinned both before and following the Flood by leaving their positions of power in the heavens, coming to earth, and taking upon themselves the form of man for the specific purpose of cohabiting with members of the human race, are today confined with chains in *Tartarus*. Not only are they confined in this place, but their progeny, the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim*, are probably also there with them. *Tartarus* is located in a particular section of *Sheol* that is reserved specifically for these individuals.

*Sheol* (Greek: *Hades*) is the place into which the souls of individuals from the human race go at the time of death. Scripture has very little to say about this place. Scripture doesn’t concern itself to any extent with man’s existence between death and resurrection, particularly unsaved man. And the account of the rich man and Lazarus in [Luke 16:19-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+16.19-31&t=NKJV) leaves many unanswered questions if one follows the interpretation normally ascribed to the passage.

Suffice it to say, in the Old Testament, *Sheol* was always spoken of as being *down*, below the surface of the earth. And at the time when Christ died, His soul went *down* into *Sheol* and remained in this place until the time of His resurrection ([Acts 2:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.30-31&t=NKJV)).

Today, the matter would be different for Christians. They, as Christ, would go into *Sheol* (or *Hades*) at the time of death; but the location of *Sheol* is different today for the saved. Today, for Christians, the place of the dead (which is what *Sheol* [or *Hades*] refers to) is located in the heavens (*ref*. Chapter 5 in this book).

*Sheol* in the Old Testament was located beneath the surface of the earth, and, as previously stated, directionally, it was always spoken of as being “*down*” (*cf*. [Numbers 16:32-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.32-33&t=NKJV); [Isaiah 14:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.9&t=NKJV); [Jonah 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+2.2&t=NKJV), [6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+2.6&t=NKJV)). This is where the thought from the so-called “Apostles Creed” concerning Christ descending “*into hell* [‘*Sheol*’]” is derived. Christ descended into *Sheol*/*Hades* simply because that place, located beneath the surface of the earth at that time, was where the soul of every person during those days went at the time of death. When Christ died, His “*spirit*” went into the presence of the Father in heaven, His “*soul*” went into *Sheol*, and his “*body*” was later taken down from the Cross and placed in Joseph of Arimathaea’s tomb (*cf*. [Psalm 16:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+16.10&t=NKJV); [Ecclesiastes 12:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ecclesiastes+12.7&t=NKJV); [Luke 23:46-53](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+23.46-53&t=NKJV)).

However, when Christ descended into *Sheol* following the events of Calvary He did not then, as many Bible students believe, go to *Tartarus* and deliver a proclamation to the angels imprisoned in this place. His presence in *Sheol* between His death and resurrection was not in any way connected with this announcement, for the announcement could not be delivered at this time. Although He had paid redemption’s price — His own shed blood — the victory was not yet complete. He must first be victorious over death itself, which awaited His resurrection. It was only following His resurrection, in accord with [1 Peter 3:18-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.18-20&t=NKJV) — when body, soul, and spirit were reunited — that Christ went to *Tartarus* and delivered His proclamation to these imprisoned angels.

Although the angels who had committed these sexual acts both before and after the Flood were in *Tartarus* at this time ([2 Peter 2:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-6&t=NKJV)), only the angels who had done so before the Flood are mentioned in [1 Peter 3:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.20&t=NKJV) as being recipients of Christ’s proclamation. Their actions had to do with two things:

1) An attack against the Seed of the woman.

2) An attempt to so corrupt the human race that man could never realize the purpose for his creation.

And the folly of that which they had attempted could now be demonstrated. Not only did *an uncorrupted human race exist, but the resurrected Christ, the Seed of the woman — the second Man, the last Adam — stood in their presence*. He had paid the price for man’s redemption, He had been victorious over death itself, He was now man’s resurrected Redeemer who held the “*keys of Hades and of Death*” ([Revelation 1:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+1.18&t=NKJV)), and His finished redemptive work would allow a great host of redeemed individuals from the lineage of the first man, the first Adam, to ascend the throne with Him (*ref*. Chapter 5 in this book).

The angels who committed these sexual acts, both preceding and following the Flood, have counterparts in angels who will become engaged in these same acts at the end of the present age, at the end of man’s 6,000-year day:

*And as it was in the days of Noah . . . Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot . . . Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed*. ([Luke 17:26-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+17.26-30&t=NKJV))

The cohabitation of angels with members of the human race will occur once again, both on heterosexual and homosexual levels. This latter-day angelic attack can only be directed mainly against Israel through the Gentile nations, as during the days of Lot, which anticipated events during Moses’ day.

A post-Flood cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men, occurring both preceding and during Moses’ day, had infiltrated and corrupted the nations of Canaan. They were present in the land at the time of the Exodus, evidently in great numbers; and they were contesting Israel’s right to that land, for Satan knew Israel’s identity and exactly what Israel dwelling in that land within a theocracy meant.

Thus, God’s command to His people concerning *the total destruction of the nations in the land* was in complete keeping with His previous actions during pre-Flood times, during Noah’s day. God’s decree, because of that which had occurred, involved *total destruction of those on earth* during Noah’s day on the one hand, and it involved *total destruction of those in the land* during Moses’ day on the other.

And possibly, an announcement similar to the one that Christ delivered to the angels who sinned before the Flood awaits not only the angels who sinned following the Flood but also the angels committing this same sin once again in the latter days. If so, such an announcement would be forthcoming only after the corresponding sin of the angels at the end of this age; and after Israel has subsequently been elevated to her rightful place at the head of the nations.

The man of sin will be of the *Rephaim*. He will be the actual son of Satan. Note the expression, “*your* [Satan’s] *seed*,” in [Genesis 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.15&t=NKJV). He will also have *Rephaim* ruling the earth with him during the Tribulation. Rulers who will possess power directly under the man of sin, mentioned in the book of Revelation (*cf*. [Revelation 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13&t=NKJV); [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+17&t=NKJV)), are revealed in Old Testament Scriptures to be *Rephaim* — “*men*” (*cf*. [Revelation 13:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.18&t=NKJV)), but not men as we know them today. Satan will rule the earth through his son during the Tribulation; and high-ranking angels in Satan’s kingdom will also rule the earth, with Satan, by and through sons begotten by angels — possibly their very own sons.

[Isaiah 26:13-14 KJV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+26.13-14&t=KJV) reveals that during the Tribulation “other lords,” *Rephaim*, will have dominion over Israel:

*O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.*

*They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased* [*lit*., ‘they are *Rephaim*’], *they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.*

These “*other lords*” who will have dominion over Israel during the Tribulation, specifically called *Rephaim*, will be destroyed before the Messianic Era commences. And this destruction will be so complete that the *Rephaim* will not even be remembered by Israel.

[Isaiah 26:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+26.19&t=NKJV) reveals the destruction of the *Rephaim*, and [Job 26:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+26.5&t=NKJV) reveals where they will be consigned following their destruction. The passage in Isaiah states, “. . . *the earth shall cast out the dead* [*lit*., ‘…the *Rephaim* will be caused to fall on the earth’]”; and the passage in Job states, “*The dead tremble, those under the waters and those inhabiting them* [*lit*., ‘Rephaim are put to pain (*i.e.*, writhe like a woman in travail) deep under the waters, and their inhabitants’].”

These *Rephaim* are further seen imprisoned in a section of *Sheol* with Satan in [Isaiah 14:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.9-11&t=NKJV) (the word translated “*dead*” in [Isaiah 14:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.9&t=NKJV) is *Rephaim* in the Hebrew text. Also, note from this text that the “bottomless pit [‘*abyss*’]” in [Revelation 20:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.1-3&t=NKJV) is located in a section of *Sheol*).

The prison where the *Rephaim* from the coming Tribulation are to be confined with Satan appears to be in the section of *Sheol* called *Tartarus*. Other inhabitants are mentioned, which, evidently, could not only be the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* from days before and after the Flood, but also their angelic fathers. This place is located “*deep under the waters*,” at the bottom of the sea, which places it in *Sheol*, the place of the dead (*cf*. [Jonah 2:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+2.5-6&t=NKJV)).

Events that set all of this in motion began very early during Man’s Day; and the whole of the matter will be brought to a conclusion at the end of Man’s Day, with Man — God’s three firstborn Sons — at long last holding the scepter.

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Chapter Seven

**Defiling One’s High Calling**

*Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority* [KJV: despise dominion], *and speak evil of dignitaries.*

*Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”*

*But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves*. ([Jude 1:8-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8-10&t=NKJV))

The message throughout the epistle of Jude is twofold:

1) Christians are exhorted *to contend earnestly “for* [with respect to] *the faith.”*

2) Christians are warned concerning apostasy manifested in the lives of those who, instead, *stand away “from the faith.”*

[Jude 1:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3-4&t=NKJV) introduce this message, [Jude 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5-7&t=NKJV) form examples to illustrate that which has been introduced, and [Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV) continues within the framework of teachings set forth in [Jude 1:3-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3-7&t=NKJV):

*Likewise* [in like manner to the individuals previously mentioned in the examples] *also these dreamers* [those in [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV)] *defile the flesh* [*cf*. [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV)], *reject authority* [KJV: despise dominion, *cf*. [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV)], *and speak evil of dignities* [*cf*. [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV)]. ([Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV))

Proper and improper attitudes toward dignitaries are then given in [Jude 1:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9-10&t=NKJV).

A basic teaching throughout the entire passage, beginning with verse three, has to do with the governmental administration of the earth and with apostasy in relation to this administration. Christians are *to earnestly strive with respect to the faith in view of attaining the goal of their faith, the salvation of their SOULS* ([1 Peter 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9&t=NKJV)).

The realization of this salvation will follow the issues of the judgment seat of Christ and involves the placement of Christians in positions of power and authority as joint-heirs with Christ in His coming kingdom.

Thus, Christians earnestly striving with respect to the faith is with a view to their occupying positions in the coming governmental administration of the earth following that time when “*the kingdom of the world*” has become “*the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ*” ([Revelation 11:15 ASV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+11.15&t=ASV)).

Examples of Apostasy

Apostates depart from the faith through various, revealed forms. In the first ten verses of Jude, lessons concerning apostasy are drawn mainly from the three periods in Old Testament history referred to in [Jude 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5-7&t=NKJV); and within the spiritual lessons drawn from these verses, apostasy in Christendom, wrought through the deception of Satan and in connection with the doctrines of demons, is always directed toward one goal: *to effect failure in the race of the faith.*

1) [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV):

The Israelites under Moses were to enter the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and rule as *God’s firstborn son* over all the nations of the earth. Israel was not only to exercise *national supremacy* in this capacity but Israel was also to be *a kingdom of priests* by and through whom the nations would be blessed ([Exodus 19:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+19.5-6&t=NKJV)). The promise in [Genesis 12:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.2-3&t=NKJV) was to be, and will yet be, fulfilled by and through Israel dwelling in her own land in this position.

Spiritual blessings were/are to flow out to the nations of the earth through *God’s firstborn Sons from the lineage of Abraham*. This is the order established in Genesis, and this order does not, it cannot, change. By and through sovereign grace alone God chose Abraham and decreed, “. . . *in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed*” ([Genesis 12:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.3&t=NKJV)).

Beyond this point in [Genesis 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12&t=NKJV), Scripture up to the time of Calvary could be summarized by two statements:

a) In the Old Testament God so loved the world that He called into existence and sent His son, *Israel, the seed of Abraham.*

b) In the New Testament God so loved the world that He both sent and gave *His Son, Jesus, the Seed of Abraham.*

(In actuality, both Sons were not only *sent* but *given*.

God *sent* His son, Israel. God then *gave* His son, Israel. His son, today, as Jonah, is pictured in Scripture as in the place of death, awaiting resurrection. And resurrection will occur “*after two days . . . in the third day*” [[Genesis 23:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+23.1-2&t=NKJV); [25:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+25.1&t=NKJV); [Hosea 6:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hosea+6.1-2&t=NKJV); [John 11:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+11.6-7&t=NKJV), [25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+11.25&t=NKJV), [43-44](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+11.43-44&t=NKJV)].

God’s son, Israel, in that coming day [after two days, after two thousand years], will be raised up to live in God’s sight. Then this son will carry the message of the one true and living God to the nations of the earth, with the nations being blessed through this son.

God *sent* His Son, Jesus. God then *gave* His Son, Jesus. And His Son was raised from the dead after two days, on the third day — foreshadowing that which is about to occur [[John 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.14&t=NKJV); [2:18-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+2.18-21&t=NKJV); [3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV)].

After two days, after two thousand years, God’s Son, Jesus, will be raised up to ascend David’s throne in Jerusalem [[Psalm 2:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.6-7&t=NKJV); [110:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+110.1-4&t=NKJV); [Luke 1:31-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+1.31-33&t=NKJV)]. And the message that one son [Israel] will carry to the nations of the earth will be about the other Son [Jesus], dwelling in their midst. Then, in that day, the nations of the earth will be blessed through both Sons.

[Note that the account of Jonah forms a type of both *Christ* and *Israel* in the preceding respect].

Then, as the overall thought of death and resurrection pertains to God’s firstborn Sons, note Christians during the present dispensation [presently *sons*, but awaiting adoption into *a firstborn* status]. Christians are to be seen in the place of death throughout the two-day, the two-thousand-year, dispensation [*cf*. [Matthew 16:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24&t=NKJV); [John 12:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+12.24&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 1:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+1.18&t=NKJV); [Colossians 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.20&t=NKJV); [3:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.3&t=NKJV)].

And Christians residing in the place of death throughout the two days is with a view to their being raised up on the third day [the third 1,000 years], following the adoption, with God’s other two firstborn Sons.)

And the purpose for the preceding, which will be worked out in God’s way and in God’s time, involves that which God desires for all mankind: Spiritual blessings, beginning with man’s salvation and continuing with “*every spiritual blessing*” ([Genesis 12:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.2-3&t=NKJV); [22:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.17-18&t=NKJV); [John 8:37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+8.37&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.16&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Ephesians 1:3ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.3ff&t=NKJV)).

In the working out of God’s plans and purposes, the Israelites during Old Testament days apostatized in the matter surrounding their calling. Under Moses they refused to go into the land and occupy the very position for which they had been called out of Egypt. This was done not only to their own detriment but to the detriment of the nations of the earth as well. The generation of Israelites who fell away at Kadesh-Barnea was overthrown in the wilderness; and the nations, consequently, remained alienated from God’s blessings.

A second generation of Israelites later entered the land under Joshua; but through continued disobedience lasting for hundreds of years, the nation never realized the goal of her calling. Because of this continued disobedience, God eventually, in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., allowed Gentile nations to come into the land and uproot His people. The Israelites were then scattered among the nations and became subject to them, exactly as God had warned ([Leviticus 26:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+26.1ff&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 28:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+28.1ff&t=NKJV)). And consequently, just as it was at Kadesh-Barnea centuries before this time, the nations have remained alienated from God’s blessings.

Since that time, conditions have continued relatively unchanged. Israel has remained scattered among the Gentile nations, subject to Gentile power. There have been partial restorations to the land (following the Babylonian captivity, and during modern times); but the Israelites, by large, have remained in the same subjective position for the entire period — over 2,500 years. And there will be no change in Israel’s present status among the nations until Israel’s Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, affects a change following His return.

As Israel was called out of Egypt under Moses for a purpose, the nation will be called out from a worldwide dispersion under her Messiah for the same purpose; as the old covenant was made with Israel following the nation’s removal from among the Gentile nations, a new covenant will one day be made with the nation; and as Israel was to enter into the land under Moses and exercise supremacy over the nations of the earth, and be a blessing to these nations, the restored nation under Jesus will enter into the land and occupy this position. In that day the nation will realize her calling, set forth 4,000 years ago through God’s promises to Abraham.

2) [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV):

The thought of “apostasy” is continued through the acts of angels in the kingdom of Satan. This, of course, is a different type of apostasy than is covered in [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV). It is standing away from the position in which one was created rather than standing away from the faith. Apostasy from the faith, the central theme of the epistle of Jude, is possible only for those in a position to *stand away from “the faith,” i.e.*, for the saved. However, as illustrated in [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV), spiritual lessons can also be drawn from other forms of apostasy.

Angels apostatized in the sense that they stood away from their positions in Satan’s heavenly kingdom. They took upon themselves the form of man; left their positions of power in the heavens, came to earth, and cohabited with members of the human race. God’s immediate judgment upon these angels resulted in their being confined with chains in a place of darkness — in *Tartarus* — awaiting final judgment by God’s Son at a future date.

3) [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV):

The thought concerning angels entering into a form of “apostasy” in [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV) is continued in [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV) by showing the inhabitants in the cities of the plain also entering into a form of “apostasy,” committing the same sin as the angels. Apostasy in relation to angels is easy to understand, for they had something from which they could stand away. But, from what did the inhabitants of the cities of the plain stand away? They were not part of a present existing kingdom in the same sense as were the angels.

Thus, since the underlying thought under consideration throughout these verses has to do with the governmental administration of the earth, the inhabitants of the cities of the plain were seemingly in no position to stand away from anything so related.

However, bear in mind that the very purpose for man’s creation in the beginning had to do with the government of the earth ([Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)); and the inhabitants in the cities of the plain, although fallen creatures and in no position to rule, were still of the creation that had been brought into existence to exercise this power and authority.

Note in [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV) that the sin for which they were judged had to do with “*sexual immorality*,” and going “*after strange flesh* [a different type of flesh — the flesh of angels].” The inhabitants in the cities of the plain entered into this sin “*in a similar manner*” to the angels. Both departed from a certain position for the purpose of going after a different type of flesh.

The angels who apostatized were of the fallen creation presently ruling, and the men who apostatized were of the fallen creation that had originally been brought into existence to assume this power and authority.

Thus, apostasy among angels was associated with a co-habitation among the creation that had been brought on the scene to usurp their positions, and apostasy among the inhabitants of the cities of the plain was associated with a co-habitation among the incumbent rulers that were to be replaced by man.

“Fallen ones” cohabiting with “fallen ones” — angels with men, men with angels — is associated with *standing away* *from* a certain position on the part of both. Standing away from this position had to do with a departure from the position for which both had been created, and this departure is dealt with in the epistle of Jude as a form of apostasy from which spiritual lessons are drawn.

Defiling the Flesh ([Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV))

*Defiling the flesh* refers back to the people in the cities of the plain going after strange flesh in [Jude 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7&t=NKJV). There is a parallel drawn in [Jude 1:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.7-8&t=NKJV) between the inhabitants in the cities of the plain defiling the flesh and redeemed man today defiling the flesh. In both instances there is a departure from a certain position, and this position has to do with the reason for man’s creation in the beginning.

The old creation in Adam and the new creation in Christ were brought into existence for essentially the same purpose — *man ultimately exercising governmental power and authority over the earth*. And lessons are drawn from the former to teach spiritual truths in the latter. These truths concern Christians who defile the flesh by forsaking their high calling, departing from the revealed reason for their creation in Christ.

Warnings in the epistle of Jude, derived mainly from spiritual lessons taught by and through the use of Old Testament historical events, are directed *to Christians alone*. The admonition placed at the beginning of the epistle concerning *contending earnestly with respect to “the faith”* is directed only to Christians, and so are all of *the subsequent warnings* throughout the epistle.

God deals with unregenerate man and with regenerate man on two entirely different planes. Unregenerate man is dealt with, not on the basis of admonitions and warnings, but *on the basis of Christ’s finished work on Calvary*. Regenerate man, on the other hand, has already been dealt with on the basis of Christ’s finished work. He must *now be dealt with in an entirely different manner. Only now do admonitions, promises, warnings, etc. come into view.*

This dual aspect of God dealing with man is seen in Old Testament history by and through two means:

1) God dealing with *ALL* in the land of Egypt the night of the Passover strictly on the basis of the death and proper application of the blood of the paschal lambs.

2) God subsequently dealing, in an entirely different manner, with those who had appropriated the blood.

The vicarious death of the firstborn MUST be dealt with prior to anything else ([Exodus 12:1-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.1-13&t=NKJV)). They had to FIRST appropriate the blood of a slain lamb. *Nothing* could be done until they had moved beyond this point. All warnings concerning sin in the lives of the people, especially relating to things pertaining to the land of Canaan beyond Egypt, would have been pointless prior to observing the Passover.

The putting out of the leaven (typifying that which is associated with sin, corruption) FOLLOWED the Passover ([Exodus 12:14-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.14-20&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Leviticus 23:4-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+23.4-8&t=NKJV)), and it MUST ever be so. There is no such thing as God commanding leaven to be put out prior to the appropriation of the blood. It is always *the blood FIRST, and then the leaven*. This order has forever been established in *the books of Moses, and it can never change*.

The works of the flesh, associated with leaven that is to be put out following the appropriation of the blood, are reiterated in [Galatians 5:19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV); and the warning concluding these words *must be looked upon as directed to Christians alone*. The list of the sins of the flesh in this passage concludes with the statement, “. . . *those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God*.” [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+6.9-10&t=NKJV), a very similar passage, states exactly the same thing:

*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,*

*nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

*Inheritance* is strictly a family matter. One must be a child of the Owner to be in line for the inheritance: “*if children, then heirs* . . . .” ([Romans 8:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.17&t=NKJV)).

The issue at hand in both [Galatians 5:19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV) and [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+6.9-10&t=NKJV) has to do with *an inheritance in the kingdom*, not with eternal life. Thus, only the saved can be in view.

Contrary to what Scriptures such as the preceding teach concerning the sins of Christians, there is a widespread, false teaching in Christendom today that states that all of a Christian’s sins — past, present, and future — were taken care of by the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary; and, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice, a Christian can never come into judgment for any sin that he commits. Therefore, warnings concerning God’s judgment to be visited upon individuals indulging in the sins of the flesh cannot be directed toward Christians.

[Romans 8:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.1&t=NKJV) is one of the verses usually cited to support this line of teaching:

*There is therefore now no condemnation to [a rendering of judgment against] those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

However, this verse, contextually, isn’t even dealing with eternal salvation. It is dealing with the existing warfare between the man of flesh and the man of spirit. That is what lies before the verse in [Romans 7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+7&t=NKJV), and that is what lies after the verse in [Romans 8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8&t=NKJV). The context on both sides of this verse deals with problems that *this body of death* presents.

The latter part of the verse — “. . . *who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit*” — has been questioned by numerous textual critics over the years. This part of the verse is in the Textus Receptus, which would account for it being in the Authorized Version. It is also present in a number of other manuscripts, though it is also absent in a number of different manuscripts as well.

This questioned section of Scripture fits perfectly within the text if one remains within context. However, the opposite of that will be true if one departs from the context and attempts to use this verse relative to eternal salvation.

Erroneously viewing this verse relative to eternal salvation possibly accounts for the absence of these words in many of the Greek manuscripts that we have today (copyists and textual critics over the years misunderstanding the verse and possibly thinking that the words were spurious, with the words gradually being left out of the text over time); and, with translators following later Greek texts (*e.g.*, the Nestle text, a main Greek text used for translation work today, views these words as spurious and has them in the footnotes only), most of the modern-day translations (*e.g.*, NASB, NIV) do not include this part of the verse in the text, though the NKJV does.

A Christian’s positional standing i*n Christ*, which can never be subjected to judgment beyond Calvary, is one thing; but a Christian’s present existence upon this earth *in a body of death*, with a responsibility to expel the leaven, is something entirely different. And [Romans 8:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.1&t=NKJV), contextually, deals with the latter, not the former.

Because of the existence of this *body of death*, housing the old sin nature, Christians can and do sin. In fact, because of this *body of death*, Christians cannot live apart from sin, which necessitates Christ’s present high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Sin is wrought in the lives of believers through the old sin nature:

I*f we say that we have no sin* [old sin nature], *we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* ([1 John 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.8&t=NKJV))

And the abiding presence of this old sin nature places believers in a position where they can and do sin, necessitating the promise seen in [1 John 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.9&t=NKJV):

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Sin manifested in the lives of believers will, without exception, be dealt with by the Lord in one of two ways:

1) By and through the present high priestly ministry of Christ during the present day.

2) By and through the issues of the coming judgment seat of Christ during that coming day.

Christians can either judge their own sins now, confessing them and receiving forgiveness, or they can await issues of the judgment seat of Christ and have their sins judged by the Lord ([1 Corinthians 11:31-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+11.31-32&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:10-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.10-11&t=NKJV); [1 John 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.9&t=NKJV); *cf*. [1 Peter 4:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17&t=NKJV)).

Christ is presently exercising the office of *High Priest* in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly tabernacle for the former, and he will exercise the office of *Judge* at the judgment seat of Christ for the latter. Confession now will result in cleansing, but waiting will result in chastisement.

Christ is exercising the office of High Priest to effect *a present cleansing for the “kings and priests”* *that He is about to bring forth*. These “*kings and priests*” will be manifested as “*the sons of God*” at the end of this dispensation and fill positions of power and authority as joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. The judgment seat will reveal their approval to occupy these positions.

However, there is another side to the judgment seat. Not only will certain individuals be *approved*, but other individuals, because of the sins of the flesh, will be *disapproved*. Christians who, today, refuse or neglect to avail themselves of the high priestly ministry of Christ will have their sins dealt with before the judgment seat; and this will be done, NOT by Christ as *High Priest*, but by Christ as *Judge*. Chastisement will then follow; and numerous Christians in that day, because of the sins of the flesh, will be shown to have forfeited their inheritance, resulting in their disqualification for positions as joint-heirs with Christ.

Rejecting Authority [Despising Dominion] ([Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV))

*Despising dominion* refers back to the sin of the angels in [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV). The word “*despise*” [KJV] is from a Greek word meaning to “set aside,” “disregard.” Angels in the kingdom of Satan “set aside,” “disregarded” their positions of power in the heavens and came to earth in the form of man for the specific purpose of cohabiting with members of the human race. These angels set aside the positions for which they had been created and involved themselves in something completely alien to their very existence.

This account has been recorded in Jude, allowing the Spirit of God to draw spiritual lessons from Jude, showing how Christians can, in like manner, despise dominion; and this dominion is the very same dominion that the angels despised. The Church has been brought into existence to occupy heavenly places, to fill positions of power and authority in the heavens as God’s firstborn son during the coming age; and these positions are the same positions presently being occupied by angels ruling from heavenly places in Satan’s kingdom.

Angels holding positions of power and authority under Satan in the present kingdom of the heavens will continue to rule from this heavenly sphere until that day when they, along with Satan, are cast out of the heavens onto the earth. The Church will then be brought to the goal of its calling, and, as the bride of Christ, be placed in this heavenly realm and occupy these positions.

Christians have been saved with a view to their replacing the incumbent rulers in the heavens, and the warning in this passage concerns the present existing danger of Christians “setting aside” or “disregarding” their calling. Angels apostatized in the past by standing away from the position for which they had been brought into existence; and Christians can, in like manner, apostatize during the present time by standing away from the position for which they have been brought into existence. Corruption, followed by judgment, was the inevitable outcome of this apostasy by angels; and corruption, followed by judgment, will also be the inevitable outcome of the same apostasy by Christians today.

Speaking Evil of Dignitaries ([Jude 1:8-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8-10&t=NKJV))

*Speaking evil of dignitaries* in [Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV) refers back to [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV) and moves forward into [Jude 1:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9-10&t=NKJV). The same word translated “*speak evil*” in the Greek text of [Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV) is also used in [Jude 1:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9-10&t=NKJV) (*blasphemeo*, the verb form, appears in [Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.10&t=NKJV); and *blasphemia*, the noun form, appears in [Jude 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9&t=NKJV)). The word is translated “*reviling* [KJV: railing] *accusation*” in verse nine and rendered, once again, as “*speak evil*” in [Jude 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.10&t=NKJV) This is the Greek word from which the English word “blasphemy” is derived; and the translation, “railing accusation,” in verse nine actually captures the thought expressed by the word somewhat better than the translation, “*speak evi*l,” in verses eight and ten.

Railing accusations, emanating from unbelief on the part of the people of Israel in the historical account covered by [Jude 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5&t=NKJV), were directed against Moses. However, by so doing, the people were actually directing these railing accusations against God Himself. Moses was the one whom God had chosen to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and into the land covenanted to Abraham and his posterity through Isaac and Jacob. His power and authority were of divine origin; and, consequently, accusations leveled against the leadership of Moses were, in actuality, accusations leveled against God Himself.

The people of Israel who questioned Moses’ authority, seeking to appoint a new leader and return to Egypt, were questioning the very authority of God vested in Moses (*cf*. [Numbers 14:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.2&t=NKJV), [27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+14.27&t=NKJV)). Because of this sin, resulting from unbelief concerning their ability to go into the land as God had commanded, judgment fell upon the people of Israel. They could no longer enter the land under Moses and realize the purpose for their salvation from Egypt. They had fallen away, apostatized, in such a manner that it was impossible to renew them again to repentance. As a result, during the next thirty-eight and one-half years, the entire generation — murmuring against Moses, and thus against the Lord — perished in the wilderness.

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and those who followed them constitute another similar example ([Numbers 16:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.1ff&t=NKJV)). They rose up against Moses and Aaron in matters concerning their authority — Moses as leader of the people, and Aaron as high priest in the camp. When this occurred, Moses “*fell on his face*” ([Numbers 16:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.4&t=NKJV)). Moses knew that Korah and those with him were questioning, not just his and Aaron’s authority, but the authority of God.

This rebellion against authority led to unacceptable incense being offered upon the altar at the door of the tabernacle by two hundred fifty prominent men who had sided with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against Moses. This, in turn, led to God’s judgment on the entire group. God exhibited his wrath upon Korah, Dathan, and Abiram by opening a chasm in the earth and causing them, along with “*all those with them* [their wives, children (save Korah’s sons; *cf*. [Numbers 26:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+26.11&t=NKJV), [58](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+26.58&t=NKJV)]),” to go down into *Sheol* alive:

*and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods.*

*So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit* [into *Sheol*]*; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly.* ([Numbers 16:32-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.32-33&t=NKJV)).

A fire then came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred fifty men that had offered the incense upon the altar ([Numbers 16:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.35&t=NKJV)).

Immediately after the destruction of Korah and those following him, the people of Israel again murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, “*You have killed the people of the Lord*.” Again, as before, this was a murmuring not only against Moses and Aaron but against God. God was the One who had performed the execution of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, their families, and the two hundred fifty men offering incense. And because of this same sin of murmuring against divinely established authority, God sent a plague into the camp of Israel. This was done so speedily that before Aaron had time to make “*atonement for the people*,” standing “*between the dead and the living*,” fourteen thousand seven hundred Israelites perished ([Numbers 16:41-50](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.41-50&t=NKJV)).

According to Scripture, it is a serious thing to murmur against, bring railing accusations against, those whom God has placed in positions of power and authority. Any rebellion against divinely established authority is a rebellion against the Lord. It was so during Moses’ day, and it is no different during the present day. The “*authorities that exist*” were during Moses’ day, and are today, “*appointed by God.*” All positions of power and authority are by divine appointment. And whosoever “*resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves*” ([Romans 13:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+13.1-2&t=NKJV)).

*God rules in the kingdom of men and gives it “to whomever He will.”* God is the One who establishes rulers, and He is also the One who removes rulers ([Daniel 4:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+4.17&t=NKJV), [25-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+4.25-32&t=NKJV)). As stated in [Romans 13:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+13.1&t=NKJV), “*there is no authority except from God*,” which today, in view of the coming age, is vested in His Son.

Jesus told His disciples, “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*” ([Matthew 28:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+28.18&t=NKJV)). In view of this, any rebellion against existing ordained powers — whether in the heavens or upon the earth — is a rebellion against the power vested in God’s Son, which is simply a rebellion against Christ Himself.

Note the example given in [Jude 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9&t=NKJV): Michael, the archangel, would not bring a railing accusation against even Satan. He, knowing that Satan held his position by divine appointment and that Satan possessed no power but that which emanated from God, would go no further than to simply say, “*The Lord rebuke you*.” Michael knew that any accusation against Satan would be an accusation against the One who had appointed him to this position, the One in whom all power and authority reside.

(The parallel section in [2 Peter 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.11&t=NKJV) is expanded to include other angels and other dignitaries as well: “*whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them* [dignitaries] *before the Lord*.”)

Now, with all this in mind, the particular apostate element existing in Christendom in the latter days — with its parallel drawn from experiences of individuals during the days of Moses — should be clear. Bringing railing accusations against those whom God has placed in positions of power and authority is a form of *apostasy*. It is that simple. Such reviling or railing against divinely established authority is not only *standing away from* the God-ordained position that a Christian is to occupy, but, as well, it is *moving into* a position wherein the apostate, in actuality, brings these accusations against the Lord Himself. And through such accusations, these apostates, as “*brute beasts . . . corrupt themselves*” ([Jude 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.10&t=NKJV); *cf*. [2 Peter 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.12&t=NKJV)).

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Chapter Eight

**Woe to Them**

*Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.*

*These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots;*

*raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.* ([Jude 1:11-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.11-13&t=NKJV))

The admonition to *earnestly strive with respect to the faith* in [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV) is followed by the introduction of apostates — *those who have stood away from the faith* — in [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV). Three Old Testament examples concerning apostasy are then given; and the Holy Spirit moved Jude to record a triad in [Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV), drawing from these three examples.

The apostates who had been introduced in [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV) reappear in [Jude 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8&t=NKJV), and [Jude 1:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9-10&t=NKJV) continue with the thought of apostate acts committed by these individuals. [Jude 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.11&t=NKJV) then presents another triad concerning these same individuals, continuing with the thought concerning the various forms that apostasy may take.

Jude’s manner of teaching is with constant reference to the Old Testament. In [Jude 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.5-7&t=NKJV) he calls attention to three periods in Old Testament history. These form the object lessons; and, the central teaching in [Jude 1:8-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8-10&t=NKJV) is then taken from these three periods. [Jude 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.11&t=NKJV) presents three Old Testament individuals, along with events surrounding these individuals; and [Jude 1:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.12-13&t=NKJV) describe the folly of those who follow in the paths of these three individuals: “*Woe to them!* . . . .”

The Old Testament is filled with *word pictures, types, and illustrations*. There is nothing redundant or superfluous; nor is *anything* lacking. It is God’s Revelation to man, *perfect in every detail*.

Every historic event occurred under God’s Sovereign control of all things. Then, “*holy men of God*” were guarded from error as they, “*moved* [‘borne along’] *by the Holy Spirit*,” recorded these events ([2 Peter 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.21&t=NKJV)). And this record has been preserved in order that the Holy Spirit might have these things to draw upon as He teaches Christians the deep things of God.

The true nature of the Old Testament is *spiritual*. “*God is spirit*”; this Revelation emanates from Him; it is the “*breath of God*”; and the Holy Spirit takes the breath of God and imparts spiritual truth to man through his saved human spirit.

Thus, the Old Testament is a book written for the spiritually minded to guide them in their spiritual lives to spiritual maturity. And the lessons in Jude, drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures, have been recorded for this purpose (*cf*. [Luke 24:25-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.25-32&t=NKJV)).

The Way of Cain

*The way of Cain* is the “way of the man of flesh.” It is following the old nature. It is doing things after the manner, wisdom, and strength of man. It is doing things *outside the realm of faith*, walking by sight.

The great section in the New Testament on walking by faith is [Hebrews 11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11&t=NKJV). This is a chapter that draws its material entirely from the experiences of individuals in the Old Testament. One central truth pertaining to a walk by faith in relation to the salvation of the soul is presented, and this chapter forms, in this fashion, the capstone to the book of Hebrews (*cf*. [Hebrews 10:35-39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.35-39&t=NKJV)). The key verse in chapter eleven, reflecting on the central message throughout this book, is [Hebrews 11:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.6&t=NKJV):

*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Abel offered to God “*a more excellent sacrifice*” than Cain. Abel offered his sacrifice “*by faith*.” Cain did not ([Hebrews 11:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.4&t=NKJV)). Consequently, Abel’s sacrifice was accepted, but Cain’s was rejected.

Abel brought “*of the firstborn of his flock*,” and Cain brought “*of the fruit of the ground*.” Abel brought that which God required, but Cain brought something other than that which God required.

This was evidently an offering of the first-fruits ([Genesis 4:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.4&t=NKJV)). And in an offering of the first-fruits, Abel, “*a keeper of sheep*,” would be expected to bring of the first-fruits of his flock; and Cain, “*a tiller of the ground*,” would be expected to bring of the first-fruits of the field ([Genesis 4:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.2&t=NKJV)). They both brought the right type offering. In this respect, the acceptance of one offering and the rejection of the other evidently had to do with one person (Abel) bringing the amount which God required and the other person (Cain) not doing so (*ref*. the author’s book, [Bible One - Had You Believed Moses by Arlen Chitwood](http://bibleone.net/HYBM.htm), Chapter 10).

God’s acceptance of Abel’s offering and rejection of Cain’s offering followed the principle set forth in [Hebrews 11:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.6&t=NKJV). God could only have previously revealed to both individuals exactly what He required, else neither could have acted “*by faith*.” “Faith” is simply *believing that which God has to say about a matter*. Abel, believing that which God had to say (exercising faith), acted accordingly by bringing the offering that God required. But Cain, rejecting that which God had to say (not exercising faith), acted accordingly by not bringing that which God required.

Cain was the first of a long list of individuals, following the fall, who governed their lives in “. . . *a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*” ([Proverbs 16:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Proverbs+16.25&t=NKJV)). Cain failed to take into account that man’s *ways and thoughts are in contradistinction to God’s ways and thoughts*:

*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord.*

*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts*. ([Isaiah 55:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+55.8-9&t=NKJV))

Man’s perspective is *finite*, emanating from a fallen human nature. God’s perspective is *infinite*, emanating from a place where that which is imperfect cannot exist. The Creator’s ways and thoughts can become the creature’s ways and thoughts *only* in the realm of “faith,” *i.e.*, in the realm where the creature “believes God,” *followed by his acting in the realm of “faith.”* Redeemed man MUST follow the man of spirit in a walk “by faith.” *There is no other way to please God.*

Christians have a Book, a Book containing the ways and thoughts of God. This Book, the written Revelation of God, has been given for a definite and specific purpose; and that purpose is twofold:

1) Unredeemed man being brought into *a right relationship with God*.

2) Redeemed man following the man of spirit in *a walk by faith within this right relationship*.

In order to walk “by faith,” man MUST know the Revelation of God; for he cannot believe God and act accordingly apart from knowing that which God has to say about the matter. Thus, redeemed man, through the man of spirit, ascertains the ways and thoughts of God through this Revelation; and his pilgrim walk, “by faith,” is then governed accordingly.

Going “the way of Cain,” *the way of the man of flesh*, is set forth in the epistle of Jude as a form of “apostasy,” *a standing away* *from the faith*. Christians knowing God’s ways and thoughts can apostatize by and through removing themselves from God’s ways and thoughts revealed in His Word and going in a contrary direction, governed by their own ways and thoughts. Man’s goals, aims, ambitions, aspirations, plans, methods, and schemes then come into view and find their place among the acts of the apostates and those who do their bidding.

“The way of Cain” is not necessarily something offensive in the eyes of man. In fact, in the eyes of religious man today it is quite the contrary, and the way of Cain is often exalted and held in high esteem. Actions of this nature though are not called “the way of Cain.” Rather, they are *disguised, clothed in proper religious attire, and passed off in Christian circles as the way and work of the Lord.*

This is a relatively easy task to accomplish because very few Christians are grounded in the Word of God in a manner sufficient to ascertain the thoughts and ways of the Lord; and understanding only the thoughts and ways of man, it is a very simple thing for them to, unknowingly, be led in “the way of Cain.”

(For man to act “by faith,” two major things must exist:

1) The person must know that which God has said, for “faith” is simply *believing God*.

2) The person must then *wait on the Lord if his actions are to be solely in the realm of faith.*

There is no getting around either of the preceding. There is no such thing as “blind faith.” A person *must* know that which God has said in order to act “by faith.” There is no alternative.

The latter is where Christians have the most difficulty. They find it difficult to simply wait, to wait on the Lord [*cf*. [Isaiah 40:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+40.31&t=NKJV)]. They, too often, want to get out and do something [*cf*. [Genesis 16:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+16.1-5&t=NKJV); [17:15-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+17.15-21&t=NKJV)].

A person can either *exercise faith*, waiting upon the Lord to do a work through him, or *not exercise faith*, running out ahead of the Lord and doing a work in the energy of the flesh himself.

A person doesn’t prepare himself [a study of the Word, allowing an exercise of “faith”] and then go out and do a work for the Lord. Rather, a person prepares himself [again, a study of the Word, allowing an exercise of “faith”] and then goes out and lets the Lord do a work through him [*i.e.*, *acts by faith*].

Both require knowledge of the Word, allowing the person to act “by faith.” But only the latter, which involves *waiting on the Lord to do the work through that individual*, actually has to do with that person *acting by faith*.

The alternative [the only alternative] is *to not wait, to run out ahead of the Lord*. And even though the person knows the Word and is in a position to act by faith, even though he brings forth works through his own efforts [which may appear to surely be the Lord’s work in man’s eyes], “faith” is simply not involved. And *without faith it is impossible to please God* [[Hebrews 11:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.6&t=NKJV)].

The whole of the matter is that simple, and there is no middle ground. It is either one or the other [[Luke 11:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+11.23&t=NKJV); [Romans 14:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+14.23&t=NKJV)].)

The only protection that Christians have against the onslaught of the enemy today is knowledge of the Word of God, providing the necessary instructions concerning the manner of one’s pilgrim walk. Christians MUST receive the Word of God into their saved human spirits and allow the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them into “all truth” concerning *the ways* and *thoughts of God*. *There is NO substitute!*  Only in this manner can there be an effective walk *by faith*, one which pleases God and ultimately results in the salvation of their souls.

The Error of Balaam

[Jude 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.11&t=NKJV) records “*the error of Balaam*,” [2 Peter 2:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.15&t=NKJV) records “*the way of Balaam*,” and [Revelation 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.14&t=NKJV) records “*the doctrine of Balaam*.” All three of these are used in passages referring to Christians entering into a state of affairs within Christianity that not only defiles their high calling but also dishonors the Lord who purchased their salvation with His own blood.

*The error and way of Balaam* appear in companion portions of Scripture and would seem to refer basically to the same thing. *The error of Balaam* is associated with “*profit* [KJV: ‘reward’]” in Jude, and *the way of Balaam* is associated with the “*wages of unrighteousness*” in 2 Peter. Thus, *the error and way of Balaam* have to do with “monetary gain”; and, according to the Old Testament account, this monetary gain is acquired through one’s willingness to compromise the principles of God and proclaim things contrary to the revealed Word of God.

*The error and way of Balaam* can be found in [Numbers 22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+22&t=NKJV); [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+23&t=NKJV); [24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+24&t=NKJV). Balak, king of the Moabites, hired Balaam to come into his land and pronounce a curse upon the children of Israel. Balak had seen what Israel did to the Amorites; and knowing that this nation would soon be passing through his country, he was afraid. He feared the Israelites because of the power that the nation exercised by and through their God.

Balak knew that the only way in which the Israelites could be defeated was by severing the relationship that existed between Israel and their God. Thus, Balak hired Balaam to come into Moab and pronounce a curse upon the Israelites, incurring God’s anger upon them in an effort to sever this existing relationship and to ultimately bring about their defeat at the hands of the enemy. However, once in Moab, on three separate occasions, only blessings proceeded from the lips of Balaam. Balak was angered by the turn of events and sent Balaam out of Moab into his own country.

*The doctrine of Balaam* is different than *his error and his way*. *His doctrine* had to do with that part of his teaching that was contrary to the Word of God. However, an inseparable relationship exists between *his doctrine, his error, and his way.* That part of his teaching that was contrary to the Word of God (his doctrine) resulted from his willingness to prophesy either good or bad for monetary gain (his error and way).

And, remaining within this same framework, it would be little different among servants of the Lord today. One’s willingness to compromise the principles of God (*the error and way of Balaam*) — for whatever reason — would precede and be inseparably linked to teaching that which was contrary to the Word of God (*the doctrine of Balaam*).

1) Doctrine of Balaam — Past

Scripture surrounding the doctrine of Balaam and its tragic results is given in [Numbers 25:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+25.1-3&t=NKJV):

*Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.*

*They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.*

*So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel*.

The Israelites, after coming into Moab, began to commit fornication with the “*women of Moab*,” to eat meat sacrificed to idols, and to bow down and worship the gods of the Moabites. In order to put a stop to these sins and stay the hand of God’s judgment upon the entire nation, Moses was instructed to slay every Israelite who had “*joined to Baal of Peor.*” And twenty-four thousand Israelites perished under God’s judgment because of these sins.

What caused the Israelites to depart from the one true and living God who had delivered them from Egypt? What caused them to begin serving false gods and following the idolatrous ways of the Moabites?

The answer is given in [Numbers 31:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+31.16&t=NKJV):

*Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.*

Balaam could not curse Israel. Only beautiful prophecies filled with blessings flowed from his lips when he was called into Moab by Balak. But Balaam did succeed in leading the Israelites astray through his counsel. The Israelites, through the counsel of Balaam, were led to commit fornication, eat things sacrificed to idols, and bow down before other gods. And, because of these sins, the judgment of God fell upon His people.

*The counsel of Balaam — i.e., “the doctrine of Balaam”* — had to do with the sins committed by the Israelites in view of their covenant relationship with God. Briefly stated, this doctrine had to do with the fact that the Israelites were the covenant people of God, this covenant could not be broken, and consequently the Israelites could sin with immunity.

However, such was not the case. It was true that the covenant established between God and Israel could not be broken; it was also true that Israel’s position as firstborn could not be changed; but it was not true that Israel could sin with immunity. God’s wrath was manifested because of the sins of His people, and the thousands of Israelites who succumbed to the counsel of Balaam were overthrown in the wilderness, short of the goal of their calling.

2) Doctrine of Balaam — Present

The doctrine of Balaam is one of the most widely taught doctrines in the Church today. Christians know — as their counterparts in the church in Pergamos ([Revelation 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.14&t=NKJV)) — that they have been saved by grace through faith, and nothing can alter their positional standing “*in Christ*.” In view of this unalterable positional standing, they reason that they can conduct their lives in any manner that they choose and it will make no difference.

However, as in the case of the Israelites, so in the case of Christians. Christians, as the Israelites under Moses, have been saved for *a purpose*. Every Christian is enrolled in a race ([1 Corinthians 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.24-27&t=NKJV)), and every Christian is engaged in a conflict ([Ephesians 6:10-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.10-18&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 2:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.4-5&t=NKJV)). The goal set before Christians is to win the race, be victorious in the conflict. And God has made provision for Christians in order that at the end of the race they might say with Paul:

*I have fought the good fight* [‘I have strained every muscle in (to maintain) the good contest’], *I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

*Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing*. ([2 Timothy 4:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7-8&t=NKJV))

The enemy, Satan, on the other hand, is doing all within his power to bring about defeat in the lives of Christians. Satan’s main objective in the present warfare is to prevent Christians from qualifying for crowns and thus positions of rulership with Christ in His coming kingdom. God is presently bringing into existence a new order of *sons* to replace the order now ruling in the heavens; and the incumbent rulers — Satan and his angels — are doing all within their power to retain their present governmental control over the earth.

The main facet of the doctrine of Balaam that is being widely promulgated in churches today is the teaching that future blessings and rewards are guaranteed for every Christian solely on the basis of Christ’s finished work on Calvary and the Christians’ positional standing “*in Christ*.” Thus, all Christians — regardless of their conduct during the present time — will receive crowns and positions of power and authority with Christ in the kingdom.

However, the teaching throughout the Word of God is to the contrary. The Israelites did not sin with immunity, and neither can Christians. Sin in the camp of Israel resulted in the Israelites being overthrown in the wilderness, short of the goal of their calling. And it will be no different for Christians.

. . . *and I took the crown that was on his head* . . . . ([2 Samuel 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+1.10&t=NKJV))

*Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown*. ([Revelation 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.11&t=NKJV))

The Rebellion of Korah

Korah was a Levite, the cousin of Aaron and Moses ([Exodus 6:18-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+6.18-21&t=NKJV)). His sin was speaking against the authority God had vested in Aaron and Moses. Korah sought, particularly, to intrude into the priestly office held by Aaron, saying that all the Levites were “*holy*,” and any of the Levites had as much right as Aaron to perform these priestly functions ([Numbers 16:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.1ff&t=NKJV)).

The word “*rebellion* [KJV: gainsaying’]” in [Jude 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.11&t=NKJV) is *antilogia* in the Greek text, which means “against the word,” or “speaking against.” Korah *moved against, he spoke against, the Word of God*. Aaron was the high priest whom God had appointed, and the power to exercise this priestly office was vested in him alone. Korah dared to question God’s choice of Aaron and the power that He had vested in Aaron, which is looked upon in the three preceding verses ([Jude 1:8-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.8-10&t=NKJV)) as a rebellion against divinely established authority. A rebellion of this nature is a rebellion against the One in whom all power and authority reside, against God Himself (*ref*. Chapter 7 in this book).

Questioning divinely established authority is a serious matter to say the least. In [Numbers 16:25-35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16.25-35&t=NKJV), God’s displeasure with Korah and those who followed him is shown by their removal from the camp of Israel by:

1) Being taken down into *Sheol* alive.

2) Being consumed by *fire* proceeding out from the Lord.

Christians following the path trod by Korah and those who followed him are looked upon in the epistle of Jude as “apostates.” Korah *stood away* *from* the position that he was to occupy in the camp of Israel, and Christians following his example likewise *stand away from* the position that they are to occupy as *new creations “in Christ.”* They move out of the arena of faith — *stand away from “the faith”* — and become involved in things that are foreign to their very existence. And, as set forth in [Numbers 16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+16&t=NKJV), God will not countenance such acts.

Christendom today is filled with those who follow “*the rebellion of Korah*.” They refuse to recognize that power and authority reside in God alone, and that He has vested His power in certain individuals (men and angels) whom He has chosen and placed in various positions. They, as Korah, *move against, speak against, the Word* — whether they realize it or not — when they move against or speak against those whom God has chosen and appointed, in whom He has vested His power.

1) Government of the Earth

The government of the earth is presently in a very complex state. Satan was originally given dominion over the earth, and a vast number of subordinate angels were placed in positions of power and authority under him. Following his rebellion, Satan and those angels who went along with him were rejected. They were no longer qualified to continue in their regal positions, but they were not immediately deposed. They were allowed to continue exercising dominion over the earth for a period of time.

(God does not leave a throne of this nature vacant. A principle of biblical government necessitates that an incumbent ruler [in this case, Satan, with his angels] continue on the throne until his replacement [in this case, Christ, with His co-heirs] is not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne.)

During this time, God brought man into existence to assume the governmental power that Satan and his angels possessed. The first man, the first Adam, though was disqualified through sin; and Satan continued to rule. God then sent His Son, the second Man, the last Adam, to redeem that which the first man, the first Adam, had forfeited in the fall. Christ not only showed that He was fully qualified to take the governmental reigns of the earth but He also paid the price for man’s redemption ([Matthew 4:1-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+4.1-11&t=NKJV); [John 19:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.30&t=NKJV)).

But the incumbent ruler, Satan (with his angels), was not immediately put down. Jesus did not immediately take the scepter; nor has He taken it to this day. Jesus is presently in a place removed from the kingdom. While in this place, He is calling out a select group to occupy the throne with Him when He returns to take the kingdom.

And individuals whom He is calling out are NOT to become caught up in and involved in the present system under Satan. The present and future status of both Christ and Christians in relation to the government of the earth is graphically set forth in biblical typology in the books of 1, 2 Samuel.

Saul had been anointed king over Israel, but Saul rebelled against the Lord and was rejected by the Lord. David was then anointed king over Israel. There were, following that time, two anointed kings in Israel; but Saul continued to occupy the throne.

As Saul continued to reign, David was forced into exile. The hills of Judaea became the headquarters of David. Certain Israelites gathered themselves to David. They are described as those who were *in distress, in debt, and discontented* ([1 Samuel 22:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Samuel+22.2&t=NKJV)). Those who followed David in this manner constituted a hidden group, separate from the camp of Israel under Saul, and separate from the kingdom plans of Saul.

So long as Saul remained in power, neither David nor his faithful followers sought to control any facet of the affairs of the kingdom under Saul. David had already been anointed king over Israel, but the time had not arrived for him to assume power. David and his followers *waited*.

The day though finally arrived when Saul was put down, his crown taken and given to David, and *then* David ruled over Israel. And the faithful men who followed David during his time of exile *then* found themselves occupying various positions of power and authority in the kingdom under David.

In the antitype, Satan has been anointed king over the earth. He is the earth’s present ruler. Satan rebelled against the Lord, and was rejected by the Lord. Jesus was then anointed King over the earth. There are presently two anointed Kings, but Satan continues to occupy the throne.

As Satan continues to reign, Jesus has gone into a place of exile. Jesus is presently at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Certain Christians ally themselves with and follow Jesus during this time. They are typified by the Israelites *in distress, in debt, and discontented*, who gathered themselves to David. They constitute a hidden group, separate from the world system under Satan, and separate from the kingdom plans of Satan and those who rule with him.

So long as Satan remains in power, Jesus will not seek to control any facet of the affairs in the kingdom under Satan. In like manner, neither should Christians. Jesus has already been anointed King over the earth (*cf*. [Matthew 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+2.2&t=NKJV); [16:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.16&t=NKJV)), but the time has not arrived for Him to take the kingdom, to assume power. Jesus is waiting *until “the time,”* and so should Christians (*cf*. [1 Corinthians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+4.5&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 10:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.13&t=NKJV)).

The day though will eventually arrive when Satan will be put down, his crown taken and given to Jesus, and then Jesus will rule over the earth. And the faithful men who follow the Lord during His time of exile will *then find themselves occupying various positions of power and authority in the kingdom under Jesus the Christ — positions previously held by angels ruling under Satan.*

2) Subject To — Co-Regent With

One of the ancient rabbis in Jewish history stated, “The secret of Adam is the secret of the Messiah.”

To come into an understanding of the entire panorama of biblical truths, one MUST view them after the same fashion in which God gave these truths. And to do this, one MUST go back to the very foundation upon which these truths rest — the book of Genesis — and ascertain the same truths relative to Adam. Scripture MUST be interpreted in the light of Scripture, and Scripture MUST be interpreted after the manner in which it was written (types, shadows, word pictures, etc.).

All other methods of Scriptural interpretation can only lead to the multiplicity of pseudo thoughts and opinions originating from and held by man today.

The Church is to one day reign with the second Man, the last Adam, in the same position that Eve was to reign with the first man, the first Adam. But, during the time when the effects of the fall are present, prior to this reign, the Church is to occupy the same position relative to Christ that Eve occupied relative to Adam following the fall.

Eve, following the fall, was no longer in the position of *co-regent with Adam* but was placed in *subjection to Adam* ([Genesis 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.16&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)). In like manner, the Church today is not in the position of *co-regent with Christ* but, rather, is *subject to Christ* ([Ephesians 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+5.24&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Ephesians 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.6&t=NKJV)). And the Church in this subjective position is completely out of place exercising governmental power and authority today, particularly since that power and authority is presently being exercised by Satan and his angels.

As Eve was to reign as *co-regent with Adam*, the Church is to one day reign as *co-regent with Christ*. Eve could not reign while *subject to Adam*; nor can the Church reign while *subject to Christ*.

The completion of the redemption of Christians must occur first (body and soul). Then, and only then, can they be placed in the position that Eve occupied in relation to the first Adam prior to the fall. Then, and only then, can they reign as “*joint-heirs*” with Christ in the kingdom (*cf*. [Romans 8:16-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.16-23&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9-11&t=NKJV); [4:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.12-13&t=NKJV)).

Concluding Thoughts

The condition of Christians who follow *“the way of Cain,” “the error of Balaam,”* or “*the rebellion of Korah*” is depicted in different ways in [Jude 1:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.12-13&t=NKJV). Their present condition is depicted by showing a fruitless, shameful condition in which they are carried about every which way in the world; and their future condition is depicted by the statement, “*wandering stars*,” to whom is reserved “*the blackness of darkness forever*.”

(The word “*forever* [Greek: *aion*]” in verse thirteen should be translated “for an age,” or “with respect to an age.” The age in view can only be the coming age, the Messianic Era.)

Apostate Christians described in [Jude 1:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.12-13&t=NKJV) will occupy no positions with Christ in the kingdom. These are the same ones who previously, prior to the establishment of the kingdom, will have found themselves in “*outer darkness*” during the time of the wedding festivities ([Matthew 22:1-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.1-14&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Matthew 8:11-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+8.11-12&t=NKJV); [25:14-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.14-30&t=NKJV); [Luke 13:28-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+13.28-29&t=NKJV)); and the thought of darkness is used by Jude to describe the continued condition of these Christians in the kingdom itself.

Compare [Jude 1:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.13&t=NKJV) with [1 Peter 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.4&t=NKJV). There is *an inheritance “reserved”* for Christians, and there is also *the blackness of darkness “reserved”* for Christians (the word “reserved” is the same in both passages in the Greek text). The former is reserved for *faithful Christians*, and the latter is reserved for *unfaithful Christians*.

The “*inheritance*,” according to [1 Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.5&t=NKJV), is reserved for those “*who are kept by the power of God through faith* [faith being brought to its goal through works (*cf*. [1 Peter 1:6-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.6-9&t=NKJV); [James 2:14ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.14ff&t=NKJV))] *for salvation* [salvation of the SOUL (*cf*. [1 Peter 1:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9-11&t=NKJV); [James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV))] *ready to be revealed in the last time*”; and “*the blackness of darkness*,” according to [Jude 1:10-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.10-11&t=NKJV), is reserved for those who “*corrupt themselves*” through following “*the way of Cain*,” “*the error of Balaam*,” or “*the rebellion of Korah*.”

“Faith” is the key issue in both 1 Peter and Jude. The salvation of one’s SOUL, associated with the inheritance reserved in heaven, is contingent on “*faith*” being brought to its proper goal; and the apostates in Jude depart from this path by *standing away from “the faith.”*

Both an *inheritance* and *the blackness of darkness* are being kept in reserve. *The faithful* ALONE will come into a realization of the “*inheritance*.” And *the apostates* have only one thing to which they can look forward: that which is described by Jude as “*the blackness of darkness*.”

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Chapter Nine

**Behold, the Lord Comes**

*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 that they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that 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*. ([Jude 1:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14-16&t=NKJV)).

The prophecy of Enoch, recorded by Jude, is one of the oldest prophecies in all Scripture; and there is no mention of this prophecy elsewhere in Scripture (Enoch is only mentioned four other places in Scripture [[Genesis 5:18-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5.18-24&t=NKJV); [1 Chronicles 5:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Chronicles+5.1&t=NKJV); [Luke 3:37-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.37-38&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 11:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.5&t=NKJV)]).

There does exist a non-canonical, apocryphal book, the *Book of Enoch*, which contains a prophecy similar to the one Jude records; but this is of no moment whatsoever. Jude derived his information, not from apocryphal writings, but from the same source where he derived his information in all other portions of his epistle — from the Lord.

And the Lord has seen fit to reveal Enoch’s prophecy by and through Jude at this exact juncture in His Revelation to man in order to continue the same line of teaching seen thus far in Jude — drawing from events in the lives of individuals in the Old Testament in order to teach Christians different facets of deep spiritual truths.

Enoch, as all the other prophets in the Old Testament, received that which he proclaimed *from the Lord*. He prophesied about an event concerning that which he himself, apart from God, could know nothing — an event that would occur over 5,000 years in the future. Furthermore, the prophecy had to do with judgment upon a particular group of people who would not even be brought into existence for over 3,000 years removed from Enoch’s time. Both Enoch’s prophecy and the record of this prophecy in the epistle of Jude are, as “all Scripture,” *supernatural in origi*n.

(Note that Jude also called attention to another historic event not recorded by any other writer of sacred Scripture — the contention between Michael and Satan concerning the body of Moses [[Jude 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9&t=NKJV)].)

It is commonly taught by most interpreters of Jude that Enoch’s prophecy concerns judgment befalling the unregenerate earth-dwellers when Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation. However, that is not at all what the text states. Enoch “*prophesied about these*” ([Jude 1:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14-16&t=NKJV)). The reference is to individuals in the preceding verses, to apostates. The scope of judgment in Enoch’s prophecy is “*on all*” Christians, but he particularly singles out the apostates “*among them*” ([Jude 1:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.15&t=NKJV)).

Attention has been called in past chapters to the fact that 2 Peter and Jude are companion epistles, paralleling one another in a number of places. The parallel section to [Jude 1:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14-16&t=NKJV) is in [2 Peter 2:18-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.18-19&t=NKJV). These verses in 2 Peter, as the verses in Jude, refer to the ones who have corrupted themselves through apostate acts, outlined in the preceding verses. These are the ones for whom the “*blackness of darkness*” *is reserved* ([2 Peter 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.17&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.13&t=NKJV)), rather than the “*inheritance*” *to which Christians have been called* ([1 Peter 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.4&t=NKJV)).

[2 Peter 2:18-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.18-19&t=NKJV) leads immediately into the thought of having escaped “*the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” ([2 Peter 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV)), though being “*again entangled in them* [again entangled in these pollutions] *and overcome*” ([2 Peter 2:20-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20-22&t=NKJV) [20b]). The same individuals are in view throughout all these verses. Note the expressions:

“*For when they* . . . .” ([2 Peter 2:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.18&t=NKJV))

“*While they* . . . . ([2 Peter 2:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.19&t=NKJV))

“*For if, after they* . . . . ([2 Peter 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV))

“*For it would have been better for them* . . . . ([2 Peter 2:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.21&t=NKJV))

The entire section refers to individuals who escaped “*the pollutions of the world*,” and then apostatized — *stood away from “the faith.”*  They had come into *a knowledge* of “*the way of righteousness*,” and then *turned from that revealed through this knowledge* (*cf*. [2 Peter 2:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.15&t=NKJV)).

The words “*knowledge*” and “*known*” in [2 Peter 2:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20-21&t=NKJV) are translations of a word in the Greek text that means “mature knowledge” (*epignosis*, the noun form, appears in [2 Peter 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV); and *epiginosko*, the verb form, appears in [2 Peter 2:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.21&t=NKJV)). And escaping the pollutions of the world through a mature knowledge (*epignosis*) of the Lord Jesus Christ is impossible for unsaved individuals. They do not possess a saved spirit into which the Word of God can be received ([1 Corinthians 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.14&t=NKJV)); nor do they possess the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them into “*all truth*” ([John 16:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+16.13&t=NKJV)).

Consequently, a mature knowledge of this nature is completely out of the question. Accordingly, it is also completely out of the question to think that Peter and Jude are referring to any group of individuals other than Christians.

The Seventh from Adam

The record is given of only two individuals in the antediluvian world who carried God’s message to man. There were undoubtedly many (*cf*. [Genesis 4:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+4.26&t=NKJV)), but God has seen fit to reveal only *the one prophecy* that Enoch uttered and the fact that Noah was *a preacher of righteousness*.

Both of these accounts are passed over without mention in the Old Testament and are revealed only by Peter and Jude in the New Testament. Noah’s preaching is mentioned in [2 Peter 2:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-5&t=NKJV), and Enoch’s prophecy is recorded in [Jude 1:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14-16&t=NKJV). The parallel section to [2 Peter 2:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.4-5&t=NKJV) in [Jude 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.6&t=NKJV) does not refer to Noah’s preaching; only Peter records this. And the parallel section to [Jude 1:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14-16&t=NKJV) in [2 Peter 2:18-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.18-19&t=NKJV) does not refer to Enoch’s prophecy; only Jude records this.

“Enoch,” in typology, has to do peculiarly with *Christians*; and “Noah,” in typology, has to do peculiarly with *Israel*. Enoch was removed into heaven before the Flood, while Noah, remaining here on earth in a place of safety, passed through the Flood.

The “Flood” coming upon the world in the Genesis account typifies *the Tribulation* that is to come upon the world yet future ([Luke 17:26-30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+17.26-30&t=NKJV)); “Enoch” being removed before the Flood typifies *the Church* being removed before the Tribulation; and “Noah” passing through the Flood in a place of safety typifies *the nation of Israel* passing through the Tribulation in a place of safety ([Luke 17:26ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+17.26ff&t=NKJV)).

This is the order set forth in the Genesis account, the book wherein the roots of all biblical doctrine lie (*cf*. [Hebrews 11:4-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.4-7&t=NKJV)); and the Word of God clearly states:

*And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man.* ([Luke 17:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+17.26&t=NKJV))

During the days of Noah, preceding the Flood, *one man* was removed from the earth *alive* and taken into the heavens. During the days of the Son of Man, preceding the Great Tribulation, *one man — the one new man “in Christ”* — will be removed from the earth *alive* and taken into the heavens.

Then, as Noah passed safely through the Flood during his day, Israel will pass safely through the Tribulation during that coming day.

In view of the place that Enoch occupies in biblical typology, it was only natural that God chose this man, millennia before the Church was even brought into existence, not only to be the one to typify the Church being removed but also to be the one to prophesy concerning judgment upon Christians following their removal. Enoch’s prophecy is *a warning*, not to individuals during his day, but to individuals during our day. It is *a warning* concerning judgment awaiting all Christians throughout the present dispensation at the time of the Lord’s return, with severe consequences awaiting apostate Christians at that time.

In the type dealing with *Enoch* in [Genesis 5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5&t=NKJV), the genealogy in this chapter moves through *ten generations* — from Adam to Noah. Within this genealogy, Enoch was *the seventh* from Adam, and Noah *the tenth*.

“Seven” and “ten” are two of several numbers used in Scripture to show *completeness*, with each showing a different aspect of completeness. “Seven” shows *the completeness of that which is in view*, and “ten” shows *numerical completeness*. In each case, at a terminal point in each of the two sets of generations — *seven generations* extending to Enoch, and *ten generations* extending to Noah — divine intervention into the affairs of man is seen.

At a terminal point in the first set of generations, a man was removed from the earth alive; then, at a subsequent terminal point in the second set of generations, a man (along with his family) passed safely through a time of destruction, with the remainder of the world perishing during this time.

That to which this introductory, overall type points (the antitype), as previously seen, is simple and easy to see, though this type only presents particular facets of the complete picture.

“Enoch” being removed from the earth preceding the Flood typifies *Christians being removed from the earth preceding the coming Tribulation*; and “Noah” passing safely through the Flood typifies *Israel passing safely through the coming Tribulation, with Gentile world power, in the end, destroyed, and Israel then occupying the nation’s proper place in relation to the remainder of mankind* (*cf*. [Genesis 9:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.26&t=NKJV), [27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.27&t=NKJV); [10:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+10.10&t=NKJV); [11:1-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+11.1-9&t=NKJV)).

The things seen in [Genesis 5-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5-11&t=NKJV) [11a] form a foundational type upon which all subsequent Scripture dealing with the subject must rest (similar to [Genesis 1:1-2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1-2.3&t=NKJV) forming a foundational framework upon which all subsequent Scripture rests). And, in complete accord with that which is established in this foundational type, the things that are foreshadowed by events in the type will occur in the antitype *when matters have been brought to completion relative to both the Church and Israel.*

The Church at this time, typified by “Enoch,” *the seventh from Adam*, will be removed; and Israel at this time, typified by “Noah,” *the tenth from Adam*, will pass safely through the worldwide destruction that will follow the Church’s removal. At a future time, God will intervene in the affairs of man once again, supernaturally bringing matters foreshadowed by events in this complete, overall type to pass.

This is the first part of the picture presented in Scripture. Then, from here, to complete the picture, an individual has to move to subsequent types dealing with the subject. Each subsequent type presents a different facet of the picture and further adds to that which, in the end, sets forth a complete word picture, *given to shed light upon and help explain the antitype.*

Coming with His Saints

1) “Holy Ones”

At the time of the Lord’s return for Christians, as set forth in [Jude 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV), He will be accompanied by “*ten thousands* [*lit*., ‘myriads’ (an innumerable multitude)] *of His saints*.” The word “*saints*” is a translation of the Greek word *hagios*, meaning “holy,” or in its plural form as used here, “holy ones.”

The word *hagios* is used in the New Testament to refer to individuals, places, and things that are “*separated to the service of God*.” It is used of Christians, Jewish prophets, angels, the city of Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies in the temple, the Scriptures, etc. (*cf*. [Matthew 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+4.5&t=NKJV); [24:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.15&t=NKJV); [Luke 1:70](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+1.70&t=NKJV); [Romans 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.2&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.1&t=NKJV); [Revelation 14:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.10&t=NKJV)). This is also the word used throughout the New Testament referring to the Spirit of God — *the Holy Spirit*. Thus, the manner in which this word is used in New Testament passages *must always be shown* by accompanying, identifying words or textual considerations.

Jude used the word *hagios* four times in his epistle ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV), [20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV)). In [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV) the reference is to *Christians*; in [Jude 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV) the reference is to *angels* (shown by textual considerations, along with related passages); and in [Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV) the reference is to *the faith of Christians* and to *the Holy Spirit*. Enoch’s prophecy in [Jude 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV) has to do with the Lord coming with His “*saints* [‘holy ones’ (angels)],” to execute judgment upon His “*saints* [‘holy ones’ (Christians)],” referred to in [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV). These two groups of individuals, both called “*saints* [from *hagios*],” must be kept separate and distinct.

Many individuals among those who do not understand that [Jude 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV) has to do with the return of Christ for Christians (bringing Christians into judgment preceding the Tribulation [in keeping with the place Enoch occupies in biblical typology], rather than judgment befalling the earth-dwellers when He returns at the end of the Tribulation) believe that the word *hagios* in this verse is a reference to Christians accompanying the Lord at the time of His revelation.

However, the thought of Christians returning to the earth with Christ at this time is not at all in accord with Scripture. Christ will be accompanied *by angels*, *not Christians*, when He returns to deal with Israel and the nations. He will be revealed at this time with *“His mighty angels,” “the armies”* of heaven ([2 Thessalonians 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+1.7&t=NKJV); [Revelation 19:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.14&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Job 25:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+25.3&t=NKJV); [Psalm 103:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+103.20&t=NKJV); [Zechariah 14:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+14.5&t=NKJV); [Revelation 12:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.7&t=NKJV)).

Christians at the time of Christ’s return, those retaining their birthright, will constitute *the bride of Christ*. And, as biblical typology plainly reveals, Christ’s bride (about to become His wife at this point in time) *will not* accompany Him to the earth when He returns to deal with Israel and the Gentile nations.

Moses’ wife, Zipporah, did not accompany him when he returned to Egypt to deal with his brethren, followed by the destruction of Gentile power in the Red Sea. She remained behind and was reunited with Moses, appearing with him only *after these events* ([Exodus 4:19-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.19-26&t=NKJV); [18:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+18.1ff&t=NKJV)).

Joseph’s wife, Asenath, in the same fashion as Zipporah in relation to Moses, was not with Joseph when he dealt with his brethren. She was in another part of the palace at this time ([Genesis 45:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+45.1ff&t=NKJV)).

Thus will it be when Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation. His bride, comprised of those Christians called out of the called, will apparently remain behind in the New Jerusalem and be reunited with Him as His wife, appearing with Christ in the antitype of Zipporah in [Exodus 18:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+18.1ff&t=NKJV), *only after He deals with Israel and the nations.*

(For an explanation of the preceding, how Christ’s bride will become His wife and when this will occur, refer to the author’s book, in this site, [The Time of the End BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-in-revelation.php#The%20Time%20of%20the%20End), Chapters 8, 9.)

[Deuteronomy 33:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+33.2&t=NKJV) provides a similar reference to the subject under discussion in [Jude 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV). In this passage, “*ten thousands of saints* [*lit*., ‘myriads of holy ones’],” are said to have accompanied the Lord at the time He gave the Law through Moses at Mt. Sinai. These *saints* were instrumental in giving the law and are identified in [Psalm 68:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+68.17&t=NKJV) as “*angels*” (*cf*. [Acts 7:53](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.53&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.19&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.2&t=NKJV)).

*Angels* (“saints,” “holy ones”) will accompany the Lord when He returns for His Church before the Tribulation and again when He returns to deal with Israel and the nations following the Tribulation (*cf*. [Matthew 16:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24-27&t=NKJV)). Enoch prophesied concerning the former, and his prophecy must not be confused with events surrounding the latter.

(The Hebrew word translated “*saints*” in [Deuteronomy 33:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+33.2&t=NKJV) is *kodesh*, a Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word *hagios* used in [Jude 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14&t=NKJV). See also [Psalm 89:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+89.5-7&t=NKJV); [Daniel 8:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+8.13&t=NKJV); [Zechariah 14:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+14.5&t=NKJV); [1 Thessalonians 3:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+3.13&t=NKJV) where angels, called “*saints*,” are referred to by the Hebrew word *kadosh* [a cognate of *kodesh*] and by the Greek word *hagios*.

Also note that the angels at Sinai acted under fixed laws, as will the angels accompanying Christ when He returns to the earth. And with angels exercising delegated power and authority in this manner, their actions become the Lord’s actions.

For more information on the preceding, refer to the author’s book, [Bible One - By Faith by Arlen Chitwood](http://bibleone.net/BF.htm), Chapter 9.)

2) “Ministering Spirits”

Angels were instrumental in God’s dealings with Israel in the Old Testament (*cf*. [Genesis 18:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+18.1ff&t=NKJV); [1 Kings 19:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Kings+19.5&t=NKJV); [Psalm 103:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+103.21&t=NKJV); [104:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+104.4&t=NKJV); [Daniel 8:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+8.16-17&t=NKJV); [9:20ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+9.20ff&t=NKJV)); they were instrumental in events surrounding the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ at His first coming ([Matthew 4:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+4.11&t=NKJV); [Luke 2:9ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+2.9ff&t=NKJV); [22:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+22.43&t=NKJV); [John 20:11ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+20.11ff&t=NKJV)); they are instrumental in God’s dealings with the Church today (*cf*. [Hebrews 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.7&t=NKJV), [13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.13-14&t=NKJV); [Revelation 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.1&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.8&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.12&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.18&t=NKJV); [3:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.1&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.7&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.14&t=NKJV)); they will be instrumental in events affecting Israel and the nations during the Tribulation (*cf*. [Revelation 7:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+7.1ff&t=NKJV); [8:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+8.1ff&t=NKJV); [9:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+9.1ff&t=NKJV); [10:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+10.1ff&t=NKJV) . . .); and they will be instrumental in events surrounding Christ at His second coming.

Angels are “*ministering spirits*” who execute the will, purpose, judgments, etc. of the Lord; and angelic accompaniment at the Lord’s return will be for this purpose. Angels who accompany Christ when He returns to the earth after the Tribulation, for example, will be instrumental in re-gathering Israel and in removing from Christ’s kingdom “*all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness*” ([Matthew 13:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.41&t=NKJV); [24:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.30-31&t=NKJV)).

To Execute Judgment

*For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?*

*Now if the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?*

*Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.* ([1 Peter 4:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17-19&t=NKJV))

1) Upon Christians

When the words “*ungodly*” and “*sinner*” appear, as in [1 Peter 4:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.18&t=NKJV) and the text in [Jude 1:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.15&t=NKJV), the normal reaction among Christians is to think in terms of *unsaved individuals* and of *eternal verities*. However, neither the unsaved nor eternal verities are in view in these passages. Thinking along these lines is a shift from the subject matter at hand to things that are not being dealt with at all. These passages concern judgment upon those in the house of God, and this judgment is with a view to a salvation placed in the future, having to do with the Messianic Era.

Not only is it evident from *the futuristic aspect of judgment awaiting Christians* that the salvation that we presently possess is not in view (judgment relating to one’s presently possessed salvation occurred, *in its entirety, in past time*), but the words “*scarcely saved* [*lit*., ‘with difficulty be saved’]” *also make this fact clear*. No one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is saved “with difficulty,” for eternal salvation is based entirely on the finished work of Christ at Calvary. And viewing a person as having come into possession of this salvation “with difficulty” could only emanate from *a complete misunderstanding of salvation by grace through faith.*

Eternal salvation is the simplest thing in the world:

*What must I do to be saved?*

*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.* ([Acts 16:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+16.30-31&t=NKJV))

*Nothing on man’s part involves difficulty*. It can’t, for unsaved man is “*dead in trespasses and sins*,” totally incapable of operating in the spiritual realm. All he can possibly do is *receive that which has already been done on his behalf*. And he does this by simply *believing, putting his trust in the One who did everything on his behalf.*

The epistles of 1, 2 Peter and Jude, as all other epistles, deal specifically with the salvation of the soul. The salvation that Christians presently possess has to do with *the spirit*, not the soul ([John 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.6&t=NKJV)). The epistles though, both Pauline and General, deal with those who already have eternal life — *salvation of the spiri*t, wrought by and through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ — and pertain to things surrounding a salvation to be revealed. Each epistle has its special and particular emphasis in this area; and when studied together, in the light of one another, the epistles present a complete, composite revelation concerning this future salvation.

The special and particular emphasis in the epistle of Jude is upon exhorting Christians *to earnestly strive with reference to “the faith,”* with attendant warnings against *standing away from “the faith,”* *apostatizing*. The issues pertaining to the unsaved, eternal damnation, *do not, in any way*, enter into this subject matter. It is not the unsaved who are called *“ungodly,” “sinners,” “murmurers,” “complainers,”* etc. NO! These are words that Jude used to describe individuals from among the saved. These were apostates, those who had *stood away from “the faith”* and will, before the judgment seat of Christ, experience the loss of their souls.

[1 Peter 4:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17-19&t=NKJV) begins with a reference to *judgment*, which “*must begin at the house of God*” ([1 Peter 4:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17&t=NKJV)), and there is then an exhortation to suffering Christians to “*commit their souls to Him* [God] *in doing good, as to a faithful Creator*” ([1 Peter 4:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.19&t=NKJV)). Then, placed squarely between these two verses lies a question, having to do with two groups of Christians:

*Now If the righteous one is scarcely* [with difficulty] *saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?* ([1 Peter 4:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.18&t=NKJV))

[1 Peter 4:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.18&t=NKJV) MUST be understood and interpreted in the light of its context — *the judgment of Christians* ([1 Peter 4:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17&t=NKJV)), and issues surrounding *the souls of Christians* ([1 Peter 4:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.19&t=NKJV)). The salvation in [1 Peter 4:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.18&t=NKJV) is in connection with both *a future judgment* in [1 Peter 4:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17&t=NKJV) and *suffering according to the will of God and committing the keeping of one’s soul to the Lord* in [1 Peter 4:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.19&t=NKJV). To understand this verse in any other fashion is to ignore the context and, in this manner, obscure teachings that the Spirit of God, through Peter, is setting forth.

As evident from [1 Peter 4:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17-19&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.15&t=NKJV), the words “*ungodly*” and “*sinner*” are used in a broader sense in Scripture than many realize. These words are used of those in the world in relation to eternal salvation, the salvation of their spirits ([Romans 5:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.6&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.8&t=NKJV), [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.19&t=NKJV)); but, as in both [1 Peter 4:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+4.17-19&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.15&t=NKJV), these same two words are also used of Christians in relation to salvation for the coming age, the salvation of their souls (*cf*. [2 Timothy 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.16&t=NKJV); [Titus 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+2.12&t=NKJV); [James 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+4.8&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.18&t=NKJV)). Scriptures dealing specifically with the salvation of the soul in the epistles (Pauline or General) MUST be understood and interpreted in the light of their subject matter.

In [James 5:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV), a brother who wanders “*from the truth* [truth revealed in the message of James]” is called “*a sinner*.” This sinning brother is in danger of losing *his soul,* and the only thing that will prevent this from happening is *his conversion* (his being turned about, turned back to the truth expounded in James).

There is *nothing* in this passage about eternal verities. James, in his epistle, deals with *an entirely different subject*. James expounds on works, emanating out of a Christian’s faithfulness, which bring faith to its proper goal ([James 2:14ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.14ff&t=NKJV); *cf*. [1 Peter 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9&t=NKJV)). And a man who turns aside from the truth expounded in James places himself in danger, not of suffering eternal damnation, but of experiencing the loss of his soul. Faith will not have been brought to its proper goal. [James 5:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV) must be understood and interpreted in this light.

Thus, always follow the text, context, and message of the book when interpreting Scripture. Making certain basic errors through erroneous interpretations one place in Scripture will, more often than not, open the door to other erroneous interpretations elsewhere in Scripture; but, realizing certain basic truths one place in Scripture will always, at some point, open the door for one to see and grasp other truths elsewhere in Scripture. Then, once a person begins to build upon these basic truths, he begins moving from *gnosis* (knowledge) to *epignosis* (mature knowledge); and the great truths of Scripture throughout the Word of God begin to unfold before him.

2) Future Judgments

For over 1,900 years Christ has been exercising the office of *High Priest* in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly tabernacle on behalf of Christians. Although all judgment has been committed into His hands ([John 5:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+5.22&t=NKJV)), He has not been judging during this time. Judgment has been deferred to a future date. Christ will execute judgment only *after* He comes forth from the tabernacle at the end of the present dispensation.

Following the present high priestly ministry of Christ, when He comes forth as Judge, Christians will come under His judgment *first*. This will be followed approximately seven years later by judgment of Israel and saved Gentiles; and then, 1,000 years later, the unsaved from all the ages will stand before God’s Son to be judged ([Isaiah 1:18-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+1.18-31&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 20:33-44](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+20.33-44&t=NKJV); [Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV); [Revelation 20:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.11-15&t=NKJV)).

Every person who has ever lived or ever will live MUST, at some point in time, appear before God’s Son in judgment. There is no escaping this fact; for, in connection with “death,” either *in Christ* or *outside of Christ*, this is an appointment that MUST be kept ([Hebrews 9:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+9.27&t=NKJV)).

The principle that judgment must begin at the house of God establishes a certain order for future judgments. God is today dealing with *the Church*, during which time Israel has been set aside. And God will conclude His dealings with *the Church*, which include both Christ’s present high priestly ministry and Christ’s future appearance upon the judgment seat, before resuming His national dealings with Israel.

Then, once God resumes these national dealings, the principle concerning judgment beginning at the house of God will hold true relative to Israel. In a respect, the Tribulation itself will be a time of judgment upon all who dwell upon the earth — *Israel first, and then the nations*. This period of time is specifically called “*the time of Jacob’s trouble*” ([Jeremiah 30:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jeremiah+30.7&t=NKJV)).

After the Tribulation, when Israel and the Gentiles stand before God’s Son in judgment (those Gentiles saved during the Tribulation, both resurrected martyrs and those surviving the Tribulation), Israel will still retain priority. Though both could be viewed as *the house of God*, Israel will, at that time, be judged *first*.

There are a number of parallels between the judgment of Israel and the judgment of Christians that should not be overlooked, for one will cast light upon the other. Preceding both judgments, Christ will come forth accompanied by angels. Preceding both judgments, the dead will be raised and, together with those who are alive at that time, will be taken to designated places to be judged. Christians, before the Tribulation, will be taken into heaven; Israel, after the Tribulation, will be taken into “*the wilderness of the people*” ([Ezekiel 20:34-37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+20.34-37&t=NKJV)), which is possibly a reference to the Sinai area (the new covenant to be made with Israel could very well be instituted in the same place that God brought Israel into the bonds of the old covenant).

Both the judgment of Christians and the judgment of Israel have to do with *the house of God*. These constitute judgments upon the people of God, and both judgments are for the same basic purpose. The Church and Israel constitute two separate and distinct groups of individuals that are about to assume positions of power and authority over and on the earth, and these individuals must first appear in judgment before God’s Son to either be apportioned or be denied positions in the kingdom.

At the time Christ judges Israel, following His return to the earth, there will be two classes of individuals: *the faithful*, and *the unfaithful*. At this time He will “purge out” *the rebels* and *transgressors*, “and they shall not enter into the land of Israel.”

One Scripture passage showing exactly what is involved concerns God’s judgment upon the Levites at this time ([Ezekiel 44:10-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+44.10-16&t=NKJV)). Among the Levites there will be those singled out who had previously involved themselves with idolatry and, in this manner, had led other Israelites astray. These individuals will, during the coming age, bear their “*shame*” and “*abominations*” by being servants rather than priests in the Lord’s house (*cf*. [Ezekiel 20:37-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+20.37-38&t=NKJV)).

The judgment of Christians, preceding Israel’s judgment, will be identical in nature. There will be a division between *the faithful* and *the unfaithful*, and only the faithful will be apportioned positions of power and authority with Christ in the kingdom. In the coming age, the lot of unfaithful Christians in the heavens will be comparable to that of unfaithful Israelites on the earth. They — the “*murmurers*, *complainers* . . . .” — will bear their *shame*, occupying NO place among the “*kings and priests*” reigning with Christ ([Jude 1:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.16&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Jude 1:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.13&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.11-15&t=NKJV)).

Then, following Israel’s judgment, there will be a judgment of saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation — both those slain for their faith (resurrected) and those surviving the Tribulation. And two classes of individuals, both *faithful* and *unfaithful*, will appear at this judgment as well. ([Matthew 25:31-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+25.31-46&t=NKJV); [Revelation 7:9-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+7.9-17&t=NKJV); [20:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4-6&t=NKJV)).

(For additional information on saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation, refer to the author’s books, [Prophecy on Mount Olivet](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/POMO.pdf) [Revised Edition], Chapters 22-24, and, in this site, [The Time of the End BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-in-revelation.php#The%20Time%20of%20the%20End), Chapters 26, 33.)

Decisions and determinations rendered at the judgments of the Church, Israel, and saved Gentiles precede and anticipate the kingdom to follow. Out of these judgments will come the ones who are to exercise supremacy — from the heavens, and on the earth. And in that day, following these judgments, God’s complete purpose pertaining to the existence of both the Church and Israel will be brought to pass.

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Chapter Ten

**Mockers in the Last Time**

*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.* ([Jude 1:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.17-19&t=NKJV))

Verses seventeen through nineteen conclude Jude’s remarks on the apostasy prophesied to prevail throughout Christendom in the latter days. And the remaining six verses in Jude ([Jude 1:20-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20-25&t=NKJV)) have to do with exhortations and promises to believers in the face of the existing apostasy.

In these closing remarks on apostasy in verses seventeen through nineteen, we are introduced to “*mockers*,” who are associated specifically with “*the last time*.” The apostles had previously spoken of their appearance (*cf*. [1 Timothy 4:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1-3&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 4:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.1-4&t=NKJV); [2 Thessalonians 2:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+2.2-3&t=NKJV)). And their appearance near the close of the dispensation results from the terminal corrupting process of the leaven that the woman placed in the three measures of meal in [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV) (“. . . *till it was all leavened*”), which could only have been placed in the meal very early in the dispensation.

And because of this, one could only expect to see *Satan’s most corrupt, most damaging, work* occurring near the end of the dispensation when the Church finds itself rapidly moving into *a completely leavened state* — a state in which Christ’s question in [Luke 18:8b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.8b&t=NKJV), requiring *a negative answer*, will be true of the Church in a universal respect:

. . . *when the Son of man comes* [a Messianic title], *will He really find faith* [*lit*., ‘the faith,’ an expression having to do peculiarly with *the Word of the Kingdom*] *on the earth?*

And *the spiritually destitute condition* of the Church in the end-time is not really a state into which the Church is yet to move, except for the fact that the leaven is still working, producing *an even more corrupt and a deeper spiritually destitute condition*. Christians in the world today are living during the time prophesied in Scripture when the leavening process has already worked into the entire mass and is about to complete its deadly work.

This is a time immediately preceding Christ’s return, when the prophesied apostasy of Scripture is rapidly nearing its most intense stage. This is a time depicted by the Laodicean period of Church history seen in [Revelation 3:14-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.14-21&t=NKJV). And the present spiritual condition of the Church, typified by the spiritual condition of the Laodicean church, is described by the words, “*wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*” ([Revelation 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17&t=NKJV)). It is in these days, during the very time in which the Church in the world finds itself, that the “*mockers*” from Jude appear in all their destructive force.

Mockers

Jude’s point of termination for his discourse on apostasy is the same point of termination that Peter records in the parallel section of his second epistle. This, of course, is easy to understand, for the Holy Spirit moved both of these men to write about the same thing, revealing the end of the matter through both men (*cf*. [Deuteronomy 17:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+17.6&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 13:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+13.1&t=NKJV)). These are the words of Peter and Jude only insofar as they were the human instruments used to record the words. These passages are, as all Scripture, the very Word of God. God Himself, near the beginning of the present dispensation, revealed through Peter and Jude exactly how conditions would be at the end of the dispensation, immediately preceding His Son’s return.

[2 Peter 3:1-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.1-13&t=NKJV) forms the parallel section to [Jude 1:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.17-19&t=NKJV). In the Authorized Version of Scripture, the word “*scoffers*” appears in [2 Peter 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3&t=NKJV) ([2 Peter 3:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.3&t=NKJV)) rather than the word “*mockers*,” as in Jude. However, the same word (empaiktes) appears in both passages in the Greek text; and there can be no difference in the way that these two passages are understood, for both passages refer to the same individuals and their actions.

*Empaiktes* means “mocker,” or “scoffer.” The only other appearance of this word in the New Testament is in its verb form (*empaizo*) in the gospel accounts. With two exceptions ([Matthew 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+2.16&t=NKJV); [Luke 14:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+14.29&t=NKJV)), *empaizo* is used in these accounts only in passages describing the degradation that Christ endured at the hands of both the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders in Israel during His trial and crucifixion (*cf*. [Matthew 20:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+20.19&t=NKJV); [27:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.29&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.31&t=NKJV), [41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.41&t=NKJV); [Mark 10:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+10.34&t=NKJV); [15:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+15.20&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+15.31&t=NKJV); [Luke 18:32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.32&t=NKJV); [22:63](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+22.63&t=NKJV); [23:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+23.11&t=NKJV), [36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+23.36&t=NKJV)). The same basic thought is in view throughout all these references, including [2 Peter 3:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.3&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.18&t=NKJV).

*Mockers*, in the Word of God, are those who “belittle,” “ridicule,” “scorn,” “make light of” *the written Word of God*. And making light of the written Word is synonymous with making light of the living Word, for *They are inseparably related*.

(The reference to “*the Word*” [[John 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.1-2&t=NKJV)] “*made flesh*” [[John 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.14&t=NKJV)] was simply the Old Testament Scriptures [inseparably identified with God] manifested in another form [*in the person of the Son, God* (“the Word”) *manifested in the flesh*].)

A cognate form of *empaiktes* is the word *paizo* used in [1 Corinthians 10:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.7&t=NKJV) (the only appearance of this word in the New Testament). This word means “amuse” or “play” and is itself closely related to the word *pais*, meaning “child.” Thus, the thought behind *paizo* has to do with “acting as a child,” “childlike,” etc. Moving the thought of “acting as a child” into the rationale of the mockers in [2 Peter 3:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.3&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.18&t=NKJV) will illustrate one facet of their actions.

Another facet of their actions can be derived from the way *paizo* is used in [1 Corinthians 10:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.7&t=NKJV). Events in this passage have to do with the time in the wilderness of Sinai when the Israelites *reveled in pagan idolatry* ([Exodus 32:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.1ff&t=NKJV)). *They, reveling in this pagan idolatry, “sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play”* ([Exodus 32:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.6&t=NKJV)). This occurred after Moses had been away from the camp, on the mountain, for many days. The people “*saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain*,” and their thoughts turned to new leadership and back to the things of Egypt that they had left.

They desired to make a god (an *elohim* [*cf*. [Exodus 32:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.1&t=NKJV), [4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.4&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.8&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.23&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.31&t=NKJV)], same Hebrew word used for the one true and living God throughout the Old Testament) who would “go before” them, for they didn’t know what had become of Moses. A “*molded calf*” was formed to serve as their god (their *elohim*), sacrifices were offered to this calf, and within the festivities surrounding these sacrifices there were *times of eating and drinking*. The people rising up *to play during the festivities* was associated with the gay times of pagan dancing, etc. attendant to such festivities. And all of these things were performed after the manner, customs, and idolatrous practices of the Egyptians.

Moses on the mountain, away from the camp of Israel for a period of time, forms a type of Christ in heaven, away from the Church for a period of time. The Israelites, because of Moses’ lengthy stay on the mountain, not knowing what had become of him, looked toward new leadership and fell into idolatry; and Christians, because of Christ’s lengthy stay in heaven, not knowing what has become of Him, have done exactly the same thing (*e.g*., note the “*scoffers*” question from [2 Peter 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.4&t=NKJV): “*Where is the promise of His coming?*”).

Upon Moses’ return, God’s judgment fell upon His people ([Exodus 32:15-35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.15-35&t=NKJV)); and upon Christ’s return, God’s judgment will, once again, fall upon His people ([Jude 1:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.14-16&t=NKJV)).

Thus, putting these things together, the “*mockers*” in 2 Peter and Jude are seen as individuals who have not only *stood away from “the faith”* but their actions are associated with both *those of a child and those of the world*. They, in their oft-times pretense of exhibiting a spiritually mature, superior knowledge, in reality exhibit a carnally immature, inferior knowledge (*cf*. [2 Peter 2:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.18&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.16&t=NKJV)). They, as their counterparts in the wilderness of Sinai during Moses’ day, *revel*, *not in the things of God, but in the things of the world*. They have rejected the wisdom that comes from above and resorted to that which is base, that which is from below.

Divisive, Sensual

The *mockers* who appear “*in the last time*” are said to “*cause divisions*” ([Jude 1:19a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.19a&t=NKJV)). They, by and through their false doctrines, cause schisms among Christians, seeking to overthrow the faith of those to whom Jude’s epistle is addressed. They themselves are no longer *earnestly striving with respect to “the faith”*; and their efforts are directed toward, not those in the arena that they now occupy, but those in the arena that they left.

The method that they use to produce divisions among Christians, according to [2 Peter 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.4&t=NKJV), is *questioning the Word of God*. They, in essence, *sit in judgment on God*.

By and through *their “great swelling words” they make light of that which God has promised in His Word*; and Peter, introducing his message on apostates, stated that *many* would follow the “*destructive ways*” of men such as these, “*by reason of whom the way of truth*” would be “*evil spoken of*.”

These apostates have defiled their own garments; and, through “*destructive heresies*,” they seek to lead other Christians to do the same ([2 Peter 2:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.1-2&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.18&t=NKJV)).

These mockers are further described as being “*sensual persons . . . not having the Spirit*” ([Jude 1:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.19&t=NKJV)). The word “sensual” is a translation of the Greek word *psuchikos*, meaning “soulical,” “natural.” The “soul” is that part of man associated with *the natural life*. The soul is the seat of a person’s emotions, feelings, and desires pertaining to his man-conscious existence. Christians possess an unredeemed soul, and Christians resorting to the soulical nature are following the man of flesh rather than the man of spirit.

The thought in this passage is not at all that the Spirit of God does not indwell these individuals, for He indwells every believer; and these are “apostates” — believers who have *stood away from “the faith.”* The thought centers on the fact that here are individuals who, within their apostasy, now “mock” the things of God. They follow the ways of the man of flesh, and the Spirit of God has nothing to do with the entire matter. The leaven has done its work, everything is alien to the Spirit’s control, and these apostates are completely estranged from the Spirit’s work in their lives.

(An unsaved person, unlike a saved person, is spiritually dead. He is no more in a position to act in the spiritual realm, understand spiritual truth, than a physically dead person is in a position to move about in the physical realm.

A similar situation exists between Christians who have an understanding of the Word of the Kingdom and the apostates existing among these Christians [along with numerous other Christians in the Laodicean church of today who would not be considered true apostates but still have no understanding of, and often have an aversion to, the message concerning the coming kingdom of Christ].

One group is *spiritually attuned to the Word of the Kingdom*, and they can not only understand the message but they can experience spiritual growth through a continued study of the message. The other group though is *completely estranged from the Spirit’s work in this respect*. And, relative to the Word of the Kingdom, they find themselves in a similar position, spiritually, to that of the unsaved person. Their spiritual senses either remain or have become so dulled and deadened that they cannot understand any more about the message than an unsaved person can understand about it [*cf*. [Hebrews 5:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.13-14&t=NKJV)].

And this, of course, will explain one aspect of what the working of the leaven has done over time. *Christendom, at the end of the dispensation, could not possibly exist after any other fashion. Scripture is quite clear on this matter*.)

Their Message

1) *Where Is The Promise Of His Coming?*

The pseudo message proclaimed by the mockers who appear during the latter days is given in [2 Peter 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.4&t=NKJV). This message involves a naturalistic, uniformitarian outlook that smacks at the very heart of all prophetic Scripture:

*Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.*

This message, sequentially, appears immediately following Enoch’s prophecy. Enoch prophesied during the days before the Flood — five millennia ago — concerning the very thing that the mockers of the end-time deny. Enoch’s prophecy pertained to a judgment that would come upon the mockers, other apostates, and all other Christians — *faithful and unfaithful alike* — at the time of Christ’s return. The Lord is going to “judge His people”; and Scripture states, concerning Christians in relation to this judgment:

*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*. ([Hebrews 10:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.30-31&t=NKJV); *cf*. [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.11-15&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:10-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.10-11&t=NKJV))

Many Christians deny that such a judgment will occur, but the mockers carry this one step further and deny the very return of Christ to bring about this judgment. They deny Enoch’s prophecy *in toto*.

God, in His Word, is very specific and clear concerning the fact of His Son’s return. *Jesus will return*; and insofar as Scripture is concerned, *that’s the end of the matter. The subject is not open for discussion.*

Jesus’ words, “*And if I go . . . I will come again*” ([John 14:3a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+14.3a&t=NKJV)), mean *exactly what they say*. *He has gone away to prepare a place for Christians*, fulfilling the first part of this verse; and *He will come again to receive Christians unto Himself*, fulfilling the latter part of this verse.

His departure, as Moses’ departure to the mountain, was fulfilled in a literal manner; and His return, as Moses’ return back to the camp, will, likewise, be fulfilled in a literal manner.

Moses, prior to his departure, promised that he would return, and *he did* ([Exodus 24:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+24.15&t=NKJV); [32:15ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.15ff&t=NKJV)); Christ, prior to His departure, promised that He would return, and *He will* ([John 14:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+14.3&t=NKJV); [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.16-17&t=NKJV)).

The mockers, however, in spite of all the great prophecies of Scripture, ridicule and belittle the doctrine of Christ’s return. Their reasoning is built around a naturalistic, uniformitarian premise that nothing has changed since the creation of the heavens and the earth, and nothing is going to change. *Time*, as we know it, will continue on and on, uninterrupted. God is not going to intervene in affairs as they relate to the earth or to man. He has not so done in the past, nor will He so do in the future. This is their reasoning, but this is not at all in accord with that which the Word of God has to say about the matter.

2) *Willingly Are Ignorant* ([2 Peter 3:5 KJV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5&t=KJV))

The interesting point that Scripture reveals concerning these mockers and their message is the fact that they are *willingly ignorant* concerning their false claims of uniformitarian theology. The word “ignorant” in the Greek text is *lanthano*, which means to “escape notice,” or “be hidden.” They have *willingly allowed that which Scripture has to say about the matter to escape their notice, be hidden from them.*

They are in a position to understand God’s Word. They possess a saved human spirit into which the Word of God can be received, and they possess the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them into “*all truth*.” But they have resorted to the soulical man, rejecting the leadership of the Holy Spirit in their lives ([Jude 1:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.19&t=NKJV)). Through this means, *they have willingly allowed a veil to be placed over their eyes* (*cf*. [2 Corinthians 4:3-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+4.3-5&t=NKJV)).

That which the mockers have willingly allowed to be hidden from them is something that would expose the entire pseudo uniformitarian claim upon which their pseudo message rests. They seek to substantiate their question concerning Christ’s return by resorting to that which is itself false (a naturalistic, uniformitarian premise). And the Holy Spirit, through Peter, showing the utter futility of their ways, exposes their pseudo message *by destroying the false premise upon which it is built.*

The Holy Spirit draws from biblical history to show that all things *have not continued “as they were from the beginning of creation.”* *God has intervened in affairs as they relate to this earth in the past* ([2 Peter 3:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5-6&t=NKJV)). The Holy Spirit then advances this same thought into the future to show that all things *will not continue* indefinitely as they presently exist. *God will intervene once again in affairs as they relate to this earth* ([2 Peter 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.7&t=NKJV)).

3) *The World That Then Existed*

[2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV) has to do with a destruction of the world following its creation, referred to in [2 Peter 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.4&t=NKJV). There is some controversy in theological circles concerning whether this pertains to the pre-Adamic destruction in [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV) or to the post-Adamic destruction produced by the Flood during Noah’s day ([Genesis 6-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6-8&t=NKJV)). Either of these destructions would serve to expose the mockers’ false uniformitarian ideology in verse four. However, even though this is true, it must be kept in mind that Scripture at this point is only dealing with one of these two destructions; and it is necessary that the correct destruction be ascertained in order to properly understand this section of the Word of God.

As will be shown, “*the world that then existed*,” refers to the pre-Adamic world, not to the post-Adamic world of Noah’s day. Peter dealt with the Noachian Flood in chapter two ([2 Peter 2:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.5&t=NKJV)), but in [2 Peter 3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3&t=NKJV) he dealt with something entirely different.

First of all, the text has to do with a destruction of the earth following its creation, not a destruction of the earth following its restoration. This destruction came upon a creation which, “*by the word of God*,” was “*of old*” ([2 Peter 3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5&t=NKJV)). These words are a direct allusion to the creation of the heavens and the earth in verse four, referring back to [Genesis 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1&t=NKJV). The world of [Genesis 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1&t=NKJV) (*a cosmos*, an orderly arrangement) is the world that was destroyed (became a *chaos*) in [2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV). [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV), revealing this destruction, forms the Old Testament commentary for [2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV), not the Flood during Noah’s day.

Second, the parallel drawn between past and future destructions in [2 Peter 3:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5-7&t=NKJV) will show that *only the destruction of* [*Genesis 1:2a*](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV) can possibly be under consideration in [2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV). The pre-Adamic destruction was quite different than the post-Adamic destruction during Noah’s day. The destruction of [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV) *involved not only the earth but the heavens as well*. The light of the sun, moon, and stars was blotted out (*cf*. [Genesis 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [14-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.14-19&t=NKJV) [2a]). Nothing comparable to this occurred during the Noachian Flood.

[2 Peter 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.7&t=NKJV), paralleling the past destruction, reveals a future destruction of the earth that will also include the heavens. Thus, in the sense of *parallel counterparts* — comparing past and future destructions, revealing a textual parallel — only the destruction of [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV) can be considered as the past destruction to which the text refers.

Further, the emphasis, and really the only matter under consideration in the pre-Adamic destruction, was upon the material creation, as in the future destruction. However, the emphasis or main thrust of the matter under consideration in the destruction during Noah’s day was upon a people inhabiting this material creation — upon the people of the earth. The pre-Adamic destruction was of such a nature that God had to restore the heavens and the earth. This He did over the six-day period of [Genesis 1:2-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2-25&t=NKJV) [2b]. God brought into existence order out of disorder. He brought into existence a *cosmos* out of a *chaos*. The destruction during Noah’s day, however, was quite different. The heavens were untouched, and the earth itself was not destroyed in the same sense as the destruction in [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV). No restoration of the earth followed the Flood during Noah’s day, as in the pre-Adamic destruction, simply because no restoration per se was necessary.

4) *The Heavens And The Earth Which Are Now*

The expression, “*the heavens and the earth which are now*,” refers to the heavens and the earth existing since the restoration of [Genesis 1:2-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2-25&t=NKJV) [2b]. Both the heavens and the earth were destroyed in the previous destruction, and both will be destroyed in the future destruction. This future destruction will occur at the end of the coming Day of the Lord, at the end of the Messianic Era.

At the close of the millennial reign of Christ the present heavens and earth will, through a destructive process, pass out of existence; and a new heavens and earth will, through a creative process, be brought into existence ([2 Peter 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.7&t=NKJV), [10-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.10-13&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Isaiah 65:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+65.17&t=NKJV)).

Following “the Day of the Lord,” following the time of the destruction of the present heavens and earth and the creation of a new heavens and earth, “*the day of God*” will be ushered in ([2 Peter 3:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.12&t=NKJV)). Immediately prior to this time, at the conclusion of the Day of the Lord, the Son *will hand over “the kingdom to God the Father.”* All rule, authority, and power will have been *“put down,” abolished; “the last enemy,”* *death*, will have been “*destroyed*”; all things will have been placed under the Son’s “*feet*,” “*made subject to Him*.”

Then the kingdom, in this state, will be *handed over to God the Father* that *“God may be all in all* [*lit*., ‘God may be all things in all of these things’]” ([1 Corinthians 15:24-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.24-28&t=NKJV)). At this time, at the end of the Day of the Lord and the beginning of the Day of God, the first of the endless ages, comprising eternity, will commence.

Mockers in the last days have willingly allowed both biblical history and biblical prophecy to escape their notice. The leaven in the meal has accomplished its deteriorating work, and this leaven will be allowed to continue working — the mockers will be allowed to continue their pseudo message — until Christ Himself returns and puts a stop to the entire matter.

That is, the mockers will be allowed to continue their pseudo message until the time when the very event that they have been speaking against occurs. They will then be brought into judgment, as unfaithful servants, to render an account.

*God has intervened in affairs as they relate to this earth and/or man in the past, and God will intervene yet future. Make no mistake about these matters, for they have been set forth in an unchangeable manner in biblical history and biblical prophecy.*

This One Thing

*But, beloved, do not forget* (KJV: be not ignorant of) *this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*. ([2 Peter 3:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.8&t=NKJV))

Peter’s summation of the matter concerning “*the world that then existed*” and “*the heavens and the earth which are now*” involves a period of time referred to by the expressions “*day*” and “*one thousand years*”; *and Peter does not want Christians to be ignorant concerning this time*.

The word “*ignorant*” (KJV) is a translation of the Greek word *lanthano*, the same as in [2 Peter 3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5&t=NKJV); and the manner in which the prohibition appears in the Greek text of [2 Peter 3:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.8&t=NKJV) indicates that those addressed were, as the mockers in verse five, allowing something *to escape their notice*. Literally, Peter states: “But, beloved, *stop allowing this one thing to escape your notice*, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

1) One Day, One Thousand Years

*The time* in verse eight is to be ascertained by reference to the preceding verses. These preceding verses set forth biblical history as it relates to biblical prophecy. This section covers the complete scope of revealed events pertaining to the heavens and the earth — from the point of their creation, through the time of their first destruction, to the time of their second and final destruction.

*Time*, however, does not come into view until the restoration of the ruined creation following its first destruction. Behind this is *a dateless past, wherein time, insofar as the revealed scope of time in Scripture is concerned, is not reckoned*. Thus, *time* in verse eight, within its context, must be reckoned to begin at the point of the restoration of the heavens and the earth (“*the heavens and the earth which are now*”) in verse seven.

[2 Peter 3:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5-8&t=NKJV) can be outlined under four headings: *Creation, Ruin, Restoration*, and *Rest*.

a) Creation (v.5): Parallel [2 Peter 3:5b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5b&t=NKJV) with [Genesis 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1&t=NKJV).

. . . *by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water* [the earth having been placed together out of water and between water]. ([2 Peter 3:5b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5b&t=NKJV))

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*. ([Genesis 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1&t=NKJV))

b) Ruin (v. 6): Parallel [2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV) with [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV).

*by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.* ([2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV))

*And the earth was* [became] *without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep* [became upon the face of the raging waters]. ([Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV))

c) Restoration (v. 7): Parallel [2 Peter 3:7a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.7a&t=NKJV) with [Genesis 1:2-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2-25&t=NKJV) [2b].

*But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word* . . . [*ref*. v. 5]. ([2 Peter 3:7a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.7a&t=NKJV))

*And the Spirit of God was hovering over* (KJV: moved upon) *the face of the waters* [beginning the restoration process for “*the heavens and the earth which are now*’] . . . . ([Genesis 1:2b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2b&t=NKJV))

d) Rest (v. 8): Parallel [2 Peter 3:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.8&t=NKJV) with the septenary arrangement of time set forth in [Genesis 1:2-2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2-2.3&t=NKJV) [2b].

(God worked six days and rested the seventh in the past restoration; and, following man’s sin, bringing both himself and the material creation under “*the bondage of corruption*,” God began working to bring about another restoration — that of the creature and the creation.

The latter restoration and rest is patterned after the former. God will, once again, work six days and rest the seventh. In the latter restoration and rest, each day is one thousand years in length. This is the teaching set forth in [2 Peter 3:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.8&t=NKJV).

Note that within the septenary arrangement of time in [2 Peter 3:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.8&t=NKJV) attention can be directed *only* to the restoration of the heavens and the earth destroyed in [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV). Thus, the destructions of [Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV) and [2 Peter 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.6&t=NKJV) MUST be looked upon as synonymous, for the septenary arrangement of time in verse eight is drawn from its context [[2 Peter 3:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.5-7&t=NKJV)].

Note also that the epistle beginning in chapter one [[2 Peter 1:15-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.15-18&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Matthew 16:28-17:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.28-17.5&t=NKJV)], is seen to be built around the same septenary structure that pervades all Scripture.

Refer to the author’s book, in this site, [The Study of Scripture BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/the-study-of-scripture.php), Chapters 2-4 for a detailed discussion of the septenary structure of Scripture.)

2) The Sabbath

According to [Exodus 31:13-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+31.13-17&t=NKJV), the Sabbath was given to Israel to keep the thought ever before them that the present six- and seven-day (six- and seven-thousand-year) pattern of restoration and rest is based on the original pattern of restoration and rest in [Genesis 1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1&t=NKJV); [2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2&t=NKJV). Just as God rested on the seventh day following six days of restorative work in the Genesis account, He is going to rest for one day following the present six days of restorative work.

The Sabbath was “*a sign*” established between God and the children of Israel forever. It was a sign that drew from the day of rest in [Genesis 2:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.2-3&t=NKJV) and pointed forward to that coming day of rest yet future.

Every time the Israelites kept the Sabbath they were *acknowledging* the God-ordained pattern of one day of rest following six days of work. They were acknowledging that the six and seven days of Genesis chapters one and two form a pattern of God’s present restorative work and future rest.

Their failure to keep the Sabbath, on the other hand, was looked upon as *a rejection of this truth*. Such failure always ultimately resulted in God’s judgment, with dire consequences befalling both individuals and the nation as a whole (*cf*. [Numbers 15:32-36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+15.32-36&t=NKJV); [2 Chronicles 36:18-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Chronicles+36.18-21&t=NKJV)).

The present day counterpart to the Israelites failure to keep the Sabbath, and thereby rejecting that which God had to say concerning a day of rest following six days of work, is Christians who reject that which Scripture has to say concerning the coming Sabbath of rest. These individuals in Christendom today are known as “amillennialists,” a word designating their belief that there will be *no Millennium or Sabbath rest following the present six days of work*.

And it should come as no surprise that amillennial teaching has become far more prevalent in Christendom than millennial teaching. Why? Simply because of the corrupting process of the leaven over a period of nineteen hundred years. God judged the Israelites in the Old Testament for their failure to recognize *the sign of the Sabbath*, and God will judge Christians for exhibiting *this same attitude today toward that which Scripture teaches*.

A Sabbath rest is coming. [Hebrews 4:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.9&t=NKJV) states:

*There remains therefore a rest* [Sabbath keeping, Sabbath rest] *for the people of God.*

The word translated “rest” is *sabbatismos* in the Greek text. This is a form of the word for “Sabbath,” referring to “a Sabbath keeping,” which is *a seventh-day rest.*

The allusion is by no means to a present rest into which Christians enter, for such has nothing to do with the seventh day. The *sabbatismos* can only be millennial in its scope of fulfillment. This is in keeping with the context ([Hebrews 4:5-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.5-11&t=NKJV)), the septenary arrangement of the pattern established at the very beginning of Scripture ([Genesis 1:1-2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1-2.3&t=NKJV)), the reason why the Sabbath was given to Israel in the Old Testament ([Exodus 31:12-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+31.12-17&t=NKJV)), and the meaning of the word *sabbatismos* itself.

God answers the mockers in [2 Peter 3:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.3-4&t=NKJV) by calling attention to a panorama of events that encompasses the entire scope of God’s Revelation to man, written in a septenary structure, in complete keeping with the septenary arrangement of time established in the opening thirty-four verses of the book of Genesis.

*All the Scriptures* are about Christ ([Luke 24:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.27&t=NKJV)), and Christ is simply the Old Testament Scriptures in the form of flesh — *the Word which became flesh in the person of God’s Son* ([John 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.1-2&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.14&t=NKJV)). And His first coming (extensively dealt with in the Old Testament) is incomplete without His second coming (extensively dealt with in both the Old Testament and New Testament).

“*Where is the promise of His coming?*” It’s in Genesis… Psalms… Malachi… Matthew… Acts… Revelation. The enlightened Christian might well ask,

“*Where ISN'T the promise of His coming?*”

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Chapter Eleven

**“But You, Beloved . . .”**

*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,*

*keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

*And on some have compassion, making a distinction;*

*but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*

*Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,*

*To God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen* ([Jude 1:20-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20-25&t=NKJV))

As foretold in [Jude 1:17-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.17-19&t=NKJV) and [2 Peter 3:3ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.3ff&t=NKJV), “*mockers*” will appear “*in the last time*” with a *pseudo message concerning Christ’s return*. They will follow a uniformitarian philosophy that nothing has changed in the past, and nothing is going to change in the future. God has not intervened in affairs as they relate to the earth or man in the past, and He is not going to intervene in the future. By and through this form of reasoning, *originating from man’s wisdom during Man’s Day,* mockers appearing in Christendom during the latter days will *scoff at, make light of, belittle, the great doctrines surrounding Christ’s return.*

The Old Testament counterpart to that which Scripture has foretold will occur in Christendom during the latter days is *the experiences of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai during the time Moses was on the mountain*. A word study of “*mockers*” from [Jude 1:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.18&t=NKJV) will lead directly to this particular time in the history of Israel, referred to in [1 Corinthians 10:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.7&t=NKJV) (*ref*. Chapter 10 in this book).

And Christians have been instructed in [1 Corinthians 10:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.6&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.11&t=NKJV) that “*all these things*” occurred within the sphere of God’s sovereign direction and control of all things in order that He might have these experiences to draw upon in teaching Christians the deep things pertaining to His plans and purposes relating to man and the earth.

Moses in the type, before departing the camp of Israel and ascending the mountain, left specific instructions for his people:

“*Wait here for us* [Joshua accompanied Moses], *until we come back to you* . . . .” ([Exodus 24:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+24.14&t=NKJV))

The people of Israel were to tarry in the wilderness of Sinai, awaiting Moses’ (and Joshua’s) return.

But after a lengthy period of time, seeing that “Moses delayed to come down out of the mount,” the people grew weary and sought new leadership. They went to Aaron (who, along with Hur, had been left in charge [[Exodus 24:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+24.14&t=NKJV)]) and said:

*Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him*. ([Exodus 32:1b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.1b&t=NKJV)).

Aaron, acceding to their request, collected gold from the people, melted the gold, and formed “*a molded calf*.” The people then offered sacrifices unto the calf, worshipped the calf, and engaged in times of festivities surrounding the sacrifices and worship. In this manner the people of Israel, during the wilderness journey, became involved in *pagan idolatry* ([Exodus 32:2ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.2ff&t=NKJV)).

Because of this lapse into idolatry, God’s thoughts turned toward the destruction of the entire nation. God revealed both the idolatry and His intentions to Moses while he was still on the mountain, and Moses then interceded and fasted for “*forty days and forty nights*” on behalf of the nation. As a result, God stayed His hand (*cf*. [Exodus 32:10-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.10-14&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 9:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+9.13-14&t=NKJV), [18-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+9.18-20&t=NKJV), [25-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+9.25-29&t=NKJV)).

But upon Moses’ return from the mountain, even though the nation itself had been spared, God’s judgment still fell upon His people. The molded calf was burned and ground to powder. The powder was then thrown “*into the brook that descended from the mountain*,” and the children of Israel were made to drink of the water. Following this, three thousand Israelites were slain by the sword; and a plague was sent throughout the camp (*cf*. [Exodus 32:15ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.15ff&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 9:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+9.21&t=NKJV)).

Had the Israelites believed Moses and followed his instructions — *tarrying in the wilderness of Sinai, awaiting his return* — they would not have fallen into idolatry, incurring God’s wrath.

Thus, carrying this over into the antitype, one can immediately see the importance of Christians understanding and following exact biblical guidelines concerning activity during Christ’s absence while awaiting His return.

Christ, as Moses, is away from the camp today. He is in heaven, interceding on our behalf; and He has been there for an extensive period of time.

(“Forty” is a number showing *completeness*, and the number is used extensively throughout Scripture in this manner [*e.g.*, [Genesis 7:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+7.17&t=NKJV); [Numbers 13:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+13.25&t=NKJV); [Luke 4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+4.12&t=NKJV); [Acts 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+1.3&t=NKJV); [7:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.23&t=NKJV), [30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.30&t=NKJV)]. Moses’ intercession for “*forty days and forty nights*” on behalf of the Israelites because of their sins foreshadowed Christ’s present intercession as High Priest on behalf of sinning Christians. And, as Moses, Christ is interceding in this manner for *a complete period of time — the entire dispensation.*)

Before His departure into heaven, Christ, as Moses before his departure to the mountain, left specific instructions for His people:

*So he called ten of his servants* [“ten,” the number of ordinal completion, signifying all His servants], *delivered to them ten minas* [signifying all His business], *and said to them, “Do business till I come.”* ([Luke 19:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+19.13&t=NKJV))

All Christians, by direct command from their Lord, are *to be engaged in His business* (not their business, but His business, left in their charge), *AWAITING His return*. And also by direct command from their Lord, they are *to remain engaged in His business* (again, not their business, but His business, left in their charge), *UNTIL He returns*.

However, Christians, as the Israelites, have taken their eyes off this command. They have grown weary, ceased to be engaged in the Lord’s business, and ceased to await His return. And they, as the Israelites, have become involved in other things, namely *idolatry*.

The “molded *calf*,” formed by Aaron during Moses’ stay on the mountain, was an idol apparently derived from the Israelites’ former association with Egypt. According to [Joshua 24:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+24.14&t=NKJV), the Israelites had previously worshipped the false gods of Egypt; and the ox was the principle Egyptian god (“Apis”) with which the Israelites had been familiar.

In the antitype, idolatry in which Christians find themselves involved during the time Christ is in heaven, has, in like manner, been derived from their former association with the world. Anything coming between a Christian and God, in actuality, constitutes an idol (*e.g.*, note that “covetousness” is called *idolatry* in [Ephesians 5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+5.5&t=NKJV)); and the Church today is filled with Christians following *the ways and practices of the world from which they have been delivered.*

*One need only look at the state of Christendom today to see that idolatry of this nature is rampant.*

Nakedness, Shame

Scripture reveals three very significant points concerning Israel’s degenerate condition at the time Moses returned ([Exodus 32:25 KJV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.25&t=KJV)):

1) The people were *naked*.

2) The people were *ashamed*.

3) Aaron, the one (with Hur) left in charge, was held *responsible*.

This refers, in the antitype, to a parallel degeneracy that will exist in Christendom at the time Christ returns:

1) The people will be *naked*.

2) The people will be *ashamed*.

3) The leaders (shepherds of the flock) will be held *responsible*.

(The Hebrew word translated “naked” [KJV] in [Exodus 32:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+32.25&t=NKJV) has to do with “loosening,” from the idea of *loosening* or *casting off* one’s garments, *shaving* the head, etc. [*cf*. [Leviticus 10:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+10.6&t=NKJV); [13:45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+13.45&t=NKJV); [21:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+21.10&t=NKJV); [Numbers 5:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+5.18&t=NKJV); [2 Chronicles 28:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Chronicles+28.19&t=NKJV)]. Most translators and interpreters have understood the thought of “loosening” in this verse to be a reference to the *removal of all restraints* upon individuals, *i.e.*, to “lawlessness,” to “running wild,” etc. [*ref*. NASB, NIV]. However, understanding the word in this latter sense is still only another apt illustration of Christians in the latter days, with *nakedness* at Christ’s return still being seen as the end result.)

*Nakedness* and *shame* are subjects that have their roots in the second and third chapters of Genesis, in Scriptures surrounding the creation and fall of man. Adam and Eve, in an un-fallen state, following their creation, were both “*naked*” and were “*not ashamed*.”

However, in a fallen state, following the entrance of sin, they “knew that they were *naked*” and were “*afraid*.” They attempted to hide their nakedness by constructing fig-leaf aprons, and they then “*hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden*” ([Genesis 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.25&t=NKJV); [3:6-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.6-10&t=NKJV)).

God, rejecting their fig-leaf aprons as completely unsuitable for covering their nakedness, provided His own covering made from animal skins ([Genesis 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.21&t=NKJV)). This provision was from God:

*He performed the work to bring about the covering.*

*A vicarious sacrifice was involved.*

*Blood was shed.*

This is the method that God used at the very beginning to cover fallen man’s nakedness, *i.e.*, to effect fallen man’s redemption; and this method, originally set forth by God in Genesis, establishes a pattern that can never change throughout Scripture.

The promised Redeemer in [Genesis 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.15&t=NKJV), at some following point in time, MUST effect man’s redemption after the established pattern in [Genesis 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.21&t=NKJV). That is:

*First, the Redeemer must be God, for only God can perform the work of redemption.*

*Second, the Redeemer must provide a vicarious sacrifice.*

*Third, blood must be shed.*

Christians today, because of Christ’s vicarious sacrifice and shed blood, are clothed in the righteousness of Christ — the antitype of Adam and Eve clothed with the provided animal skins in [Genesis 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.21&t=NKJV). Christians, in this respect, now possess a right relationship with God, for this relationship is based entirely on the righteousness of Christ and His finished work. Nothing that man does — typified by the fig-leaf aprons — can have anything to do with either establishing or adding to this right relationship. Man’s reception of imputed righteousness is *entirely of God*. Man can bring nothing whatsoever into a work — either before or after his salvation — which God Himself, in the person of His Son, has finished.

Consequently, Christians MUST remain clothed in the righteousness of Christ forever, else the completeness, sufficiency, etc. of the very redemptive work of God Himself would be brought into question. Hence, in this respect, Christians can NEVER be found naked.

Thus far the subject under discussion has been “nakedness” relative to *the righteousness of Christ and eternal salvation*. However, there is another type of “nakedness” in Scripture. The Israelites had appropriated the blood of the paschal lambs in Egypt. Yet, they were later found “naked” in the wilderness (or in a “lawless” state, which would, of necessity, be associated with *nakedness* by and through the exact meaning of the Hebrew word in relation to the antitype).

Individuals in the Laodicean church in [Revelation 3:14ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.14ff&t=NKJV) (saved individuals, those clothed in the righteousness of Christ, those who [in the preceding respect] could never be looked upon as naked) were said, among other things, to be “*naked*” ([Revelation 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17&t=NKJV)). In [Romans 8:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.35&t=NKJV), “*nakedness*” is mentioned alongside six other things — *“tribulation,” “distress,” “persecution,” “famine,” “peril,”* and *“sword”* — as something possible for Christians to experience.

The main thrust of this verse though has to do with something that Christians cannot experience — *separation “from the love of Christ.”* Since the things listed in this verse cannot separate one from the love of Christ, it becomes evident immediately that “*nakedness*,” as used here, can have nothing to do with Christians being clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Rather, the possibility of Christians appearing naked, as in [Romans 8:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.35&t=NKJV), as well as in [Revelation 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17&t=NKJV), refers to something else entirely (*cf*. [Revelation 16:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+16.15&t=NKJV)).

Two Justifications

Understanding the matter surrounding more than one type of nakedness is contingent on understanding that there is more than one type justification. This is dealt with in James chapter two ([James 2:14-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.14-26&t=NKJV)). There is *a justification by faith*, and there is also *a justification by works*. Accordingly, there is a covering for one’s nakedness associated with each.

*Justification by faith* has to do with the salvation that we presently possess, *the salvation of the spirit*; and j*ustification by works* has to do with the salvation to be revealed at the time of our Lord’s return, *the salvation of the SOUL*.

*The covering for nakedness* that we presently possess, associated with eternal salvation, is *the righteousness of Christ*; and *the covering for nakedness*, associated with the hope set before Christians, is *the righteous acts of the saints* — the wedding garment ([Revelation 19:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.8&t=NKJV)).

“Justification” is NEVER *by faith and works* (*i.e.*, a single justification where faith and works are both involved). It is always by one or the other, NEVER a combination of the two (though, in the salvation of the SOUL, works emanate out of faith); and justification *by faith MUST always precede any mention of justification by works*.

*Justification by works* emanates out of *a person’s faithfulness following his justification by faith*, and works of this nature bring faith (a Christian’s faithfulness) to its proper goal ([James 2:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.22&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9&t=NKJV)). Thus, a person MUST first be in a position to exercise faith before works can enter. That is to say, he MUST *first be justified by faith before he can be justified by works.*

*The wedding garment* (“*fine linen*”) in [Revelation 19:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.8&t=NKJV) is specifically said to be made up of “*the righteous acts* [works] *of the saints*” (NKJV; ASV). The word translated “*righteous acts*” (“righteousness,” KJV) is plural in the Greek text (*dikaiomata*) and cannot refer to the imputed righteousness of Christ. *Dikaiomata* in this verse has to do with “*righteous acts*” producing *justification*.

In this respect, these are “justifying acts” *of the saints* (the same word, appearing in the singular, is translated “justification” and “righteousness” [referring to *justification by faith*, made possible through Christ’s *righteous, justifying act*] in [Romans 5:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.16&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.18&t=NKJV); and the cognate verb [from *dikaioo*] is translated “*justified*” in [James 2:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.24&t=NKJV) [referring to both *justification by faith* and *justification by works* — *a justification by faith* (Christians exercising faithfulness) *which is inseparably connected with a justification by works*]).

*Justification by faith*, inseparably connected with *justification by works*, in [James 2:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.24&t=NKJV) has to do with the saved alone, with Christians, with those *who have already been justified by faith* (completely apart from works) as seen in [Romans 5:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.16&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.18&t=NKJV). [James 2:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.24&t=NKJV) has to do with works *emanating out of faith*, with justification seen in connection with both in this respect (*cf*. [James 2:14-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+2.14-23&t=NKJV)). And *works emanating out of faith, resulting in justification by works, provide the Christian with a wedding garment.*

(For additional information on faith and works in the book of James, refer to the author’s book, in this site, [Salvation of the Soul BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/salvation-of-the-soul.php), Chapter 5, “Faith Made Mature.”)

Apart from the wedding garment, a Christian will be found *naked* at the time of Christ’s return. Having been justified by faith and clothed in the righteousness of Christ, he can never be separated from the love of Christ. He can never be found *naked* relative to his justification by faith. But, failing to be justified by works *following* his justification by faith — resulting in no wedding garment (*nakedness relative to justification by works*) — dire consequences will follow at the time of Christ’s return (note: “judgment” on the basis of works [[1 Corinthians 3:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.12-15&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Matthew 16:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24-27&t=NKJV); [Luke 19:15-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+19.15-26&t=NKJV)]).

Appearing in the presence of Christ without a wedding garment is portrayed in [Matthew 22:11-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.11-14&t=NKJV) by the man appearing at the marriage festivities without a wedding garment (the man from among the “*guests*” [Greek: *anakeimenon*, “reclining ones” — *i.e.*, not ‘guests,’ but *those reclining at the table*]). This man would not have been at these festivities in the first place had he not previously been justified by faith.

This section of Scripture is prophetic in its scope of fulfillment. The festivities portrayed here have to do with festivities surrounding the marriage of the Lamb; and these festivities will occur *in heaven at the end of the present dispensation*.

The man without a wedding garment was questioned concerning both *his presence at the marriage festivities* and *the manner in which he appeared*. The subtle distinction between two different negatives in the Greek text of [Matthew 22:11-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+22.11-12&t=NKJV) (*ou* and *me*) show that *the man knew he was supposed to have a wedding garment, but he knowingly, defiantly, appeared without the necessary attire*.

Because the man was not properly clothed, he was denied admittance, bound, and cast into the darkness outside. That is, *he was found naked*; and, as a result, *he was denied admittance, bound, and cast into a place comparable to a darkened courtyard outside a brilliantly lighted banqueting hall.*

This man sets forth the fate awaiting, not unsaved individuals, but certain saved individuals. The wedding garment (righteous acts of the saints) is in view, not the imputed righteousness of Christ.

This man typifies those Christians who, in that coming day following their removal from the earth, seek admittance to the festivities surrounding the marriage of God’s Son without being clothed in the proper attire — the wedding garment.

Apostasy in the camp of Israel during Moses’ day could have been prevented had the Israelites followed Moses’ instructions: “*Wait here for us until we come again to you*.”

Apostasy in Christendom today could, likewise, have been prevented had Christians followed Christ’s instructions: “*Do business until I come*.”

During Moses’ day the blame for the Israelites’ departure from Moses’ instructions was laid directly at the feet of *the leadership in the camp during the time Moses was on the mountain* ([Deuteronomy 9:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+9.20&t=NKJV); [Jeremiah 23:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jeremiah+23.1-2&t=NKJV)).

And the blame for Christians presently refusing to follow Christ’s instructions must, in like manner, be laid directly at the feet of *the leadership in Christendom during the time Christ is in heaven* ([Matthew 24:45-51](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.45-51&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 5:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+5.1-4&t=NKJV)).

The shepherds in Christendom, the ones who are supposed to keep the great truths surrounding Christ’s return ever before the people, have become engaged in other activities; and they have led their flocks into these other activities. The end result, foretold thirty-five hundred years ago during the days of Moses, has been *apostasy*. The mockers are present, and the Laodicean church of the end-time is in existence.

*It is all exactly as foretold*. We’re seeing on every hand in Christendom today the antitype of activities in the camp of Israel *immediately before Moses descended the mountain*, and it is only a matter of time before we witness in Christendom the antitype of activities in the camp of Israel *at and following the time Moses descended the mountain*.

Building Oneself Up, Praying…

Immediately preceding Jude’s discourse on apostasy ([Jude 1:4-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4-19&t=NKJV)), he exhorted Christians to “*contend earnestly for* [‘earnestly strive with respect to’] *the faith*.” Then, immediately following Jude’s discourse on apostasy, he again refers to the proper place which “faith” is *to continuously occupy in a Christian’s life*:

*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.”* ([Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV)).

Rather than an exhortation though, as in [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV), [Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV) simply refers to *Christians being built up in the faith.*

The thought from the Greek text has to do with building upon an existing foundation. [Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV) is actually a continuation of [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV), with the intervening section on apostasy separating the verses. Jude exhorted Christians concerning “*the faith*” prior to his discourse on apostasy; and now, having completed this discourse, he picks up with the Christians’ relationship to faith exactly where his discourse leaves off.

How does a person “*contend earnestly for* [‘earnestly strive with respect to’] *the faith*”? Jude’s response concerning the manner in which this exhortation is to be carried out is given in the continuation of the subject in [Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV). A person *earnestly strives with respect to “the faith”* through *building himself up by means of his faith*. This is in perfect agreement with the parallel section to [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV) in [2 Peter 1:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV). In this parallel section, Christians are exhorted to “*add to* [‘abundantly supply in’] *your faith* . . . .” [2 Peter 1:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV), [20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV) refer to the same thing (*ref*. Chapter 2 in this book).

Christians are presently engaged in a battle. This battle is *spiritual*. It is not against “*flesh and blood*,” but “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [‘against the spirit forces of wickedness in heavenly places’].” In this battle, Christians are to properly equip themselves with an armor, and among the pieces of this armor is “*the shield of faith*.” Christians holding forth this shield in the warfare against the spirit forces of wickedness will be able “*to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one*” ([Ephesians 6:11-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.11-17&t=NKJV)).

According to [Romans 10:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+10.17&t=NKJV), “*faith comes by* [‘out of’] *hearing, and hearing by* [‘through’] *the Word of God*.” Individuals equip themselves with the shield of faith by being *built up in “the faith.”* It is in this manner, *and in this manner alone*, that Christians are able to protect themselves from the wiles of Satan — his “*fiery darts*” in the form of *apostasy*, as in Jude, etc.

Immediately following the statement concerning individuals being *built up* by means of their “*most holy faith*,” Jude refers to “*praying in the Holy Spirit*.” The divine commentary on this verse is [Romans 8:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.26-27&t=NKJV):

*Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

*Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

Praying in the Holy Spirit is prayer motivated by the Holy Spirit that emanates from the man of spirit. It is praying by means of and dependence upon the indwelling Holy Spirit. Prayer of this nature plays an integral part in Christians being built up in the faith. The Word of God is “*spiritually discerned*,” and Christians receiving this Word into their saved human spirits MUST rely upon the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them “*into all truth*” ([1 Corinthians 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.14&t=NKJV); [John 16:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+16.13&t=NKJV)). Christians MUST ever combine their study with prayer after this fashion.

Concluding Exhortation

Jude, in his discourse on faith and apostasy, has been building toward a climactic exhortation. He previously exhorted Christians to *contend* (strive) *earnestly with respect to “the faith”* ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV)); he warned Christians concerning *standing away from “the faith”* ([Jude 1:4-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.4-19&t=NKJV)); and he then came back to the positive side of *the Christian’s relationship to faith* ([Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV)), continuing from [Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV). All things in the first twenty verses point to that which Jude states in [Jude 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.21&t=NKJV):

*Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for* [awaiting] *the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life* [unto life for the age]. ([Jude 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.21&t=NKJV))

The “*love of God*” in which Christians are to keep themselves is the same love previously mentioned in [Jude 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.2&t=NKJV). The word “*love*” in both instances is *agape* in the Greek text, the same as in [2 Peter 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.7&t=NKJV). *Agape* refers to “divine love,” *which God is in His character and nature*. *“God is love,” i.e., God is Agape* ([1 John 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+4.8&t=NKJV)). This is the highest type of love attainable. It is the love produced in the life of faithful believers by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and Christians are to keep themselves within the sphere of this love.

*Agape* appears at the conclusion of the list of things to be “abundantly supplied in” a Christian’s faith in [2 Peter 1:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV). And it is placed last, as also in [Jude 1:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20-21&t=NKJV), because it is the height of Christian experience, and nothing can be added therein.

Christians — being brought to *maturity* by and through being built up in the faith ([Jude 1:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20&t=NKJV); *cf*. “*knowledge*,” Greek: *epignosis* [[2 Peter 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV)]), keeping themselves in *the love of God* ([Jude 1:21a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.21a&t=NKJV)) — are *to await “the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life* [‘unto life for the age’]” ([Jude 1:21b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.21b&t=NKJV)). This, of course, is the goal upon which all things in the present pilgrim walk focus.

The goal of faith is the salvation of the SOUL (life), which has to do with life in the coming age. The entire concept concerning *faith* in relation to *one’s calling* and *life in the coming age* set forth by Jude is identical to that set forth by Paul in [1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV):

*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life* [*lit*., “Strive in the good contest of the faith; lay hold on life for the age”], *to which you were also called…*

Jude directs his entire epistle toward *exhorting and warning Christians*, with one thing in view. Jude looked out toward that day when Christians would be called to an accounting and, at that time, either realize or be denied the goal of their calling.

Jude’s concluding exhortation centers on Christians awaiting Christ’s return in a prepared, ready manner. The failure of innumerable Christians to do so has resulted in the present apostasy throughout Christendom — *as Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, so Christians in the world today*. To those who “*eagerly wait for Him*” He will “*appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation*” ([Hebrews 9:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+9.28&t=NKJV)). No such promise is given to *those who do not eagerly await His return.*

Concluding Thoughts

*And on some have compassion, making a distinction* [*lit*., “And you show mercy to the ones who are wavering (or ‘doubting,’ ‘being contentious’)”];

*but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh*. ([Jude 1:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.22-23&t=NKJV))

As Christians are to await “*the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ*,” they are themselves, to show mercy, have compassion on other Christians. The words, “*making a distinction*” (NKJV) in [Jude 1:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.22&t=NKJV) are the translation of the Greek word *diakrino*, which is often used in other portions of the New Testament in the sense of *“wavering,” “doubting,”* or “*being contentious*” (*cf*. [Matthew 21:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+21.21&t=NKJV); [Acts 10:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+10.20&t=NKJV); [11:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+11.2&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+11.12&t=NKJV); [Romans 14:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+14.23&t=NKJV); [James 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.6&t=NKJV); [Jude 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.9&t=NKJV)). This would appear to be the way it should be understood in [Jude 1:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.22&t=NKJV). Those Christians who are wavering, doubting, or being contentious concerning the great truths set forth in [Jude 1:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.20-21&t=NKJV) are to receive mercy at the hands of Christians who understand these truths, *not* a contentious, doubting, or wavering spirit in return. Such responses as the latter will only serve to further alienate them. *Mercy* is the quality that must be exhibited to win them.

The salvation in verse twenty-three has nothing to do with eternal life. That’s not the issue being dealt with at all. The text is dealing with *Christians awaiting “the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ” to life for the age* ([Jude 1:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.22-23&t=NKJV)). The same basic thought is set forth in [James 5:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV):

*Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back* [turns him back to the truth],

*let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

Turning Christians either to the truth or back to the truth, as in [James 5:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV) and [Jude 1:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.22-23&t=NKJV), has to do with *the salvation of the SOUL* alone. The entire matter of the unique relationship that Christians have with one another occurs on the basis of the fact that both are *new creations “in Christ”*; but, within this relationship, Christians MUST look from the present *forward to the land set before them*, not from the present back to the land that they left (typified by Egypt). Christians MUST *keep their eyes fixed on the goal of their calling, the goal of faith, the salvation of their SOULS*.

The thought of pulling Christians “*out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh*” ([Jude 1:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.23&t=NKJV)) is similar to Joshua the high priest in [Zechariah 3:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+3.1-7&t=NKJV) being clothed in filthy garments and plucked as a brand “*out of the fire*.” The thought in Jude though would have to be brought over into the context of Christians being clothed in the wedding garment rather than unsaved individuals, as portrayed by Joshua, being clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

The thought in Jude extends into the area with which Joshua found himself confronted *following* his being plucked as a brand from the fire and being clothed with a change of raiment. He was then told:

. . *If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My command, then you shall also judge My house* . . ([Zechariah 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+3.7&t=NKJV))

Just as there are two different justifications and two different garments in connection with these justifications, there are also dual truths on being removed as a brand from the fire. [Zechariah 3:2-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+3.2-4&t=NKJV) sets forth one and [Jude 1:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.23&t=NKJV) sets forth the other.

How are Christians able to so live as Jude has previously exhorted? How are Christians able to govern their lives in such a manner that an *abundant entrance “into the everlasting* [‘age-lasting’] *kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” will be their portion? ([2 Peter 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.11&t=NKJV)).

They are able to so live and govern their lives in this manner only because the One who loved them and gave Himself for them continues to love them and is “*able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us*” ([Ephesians 3:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.20&t=NKJV)). The concluding words of Jude sum up his entire epistle after this fashion:

*Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,*

*To God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.*  ([Jude 1:24-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.24-25&t=NKJV))