

“Reap It” Jude 1:5-16

Context: Jude’s message, like that of Peter’s last epistle, warns the Christian community about the danger of false teachers. He begins with words of assurance to those who are called by God, the elect. He encourages them to take heart for they are loved by God the Father and they are ever preserved unto and through eternity for Jesus. Following these words of encouragement, come words of caution. The cautionary words focus on the intent of the false teachers desiring to promote rejection of Jesus as Messiah as well as rebellion against God’s holy created order. Their ultimate goal is personal gain, power, and sensual self-indulgence at the expense of the faith community.

Pivotal verse: Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life (cf. Jude 1:21).

1. Exacted in the past – Jude 1:5-7

Jude previously warned believers to be on guard against the secret entrance and attempts of seduction by deceptive charlatans. The letter now transitions to a description of the impostors’ end. They reap destruction even as others in the past who rejected God’s authority, God’s word, and God’s design.

2. Shall be exacted in the future – Jude 1:8-10

Details surrounding confrontation between Michael and Satan over Moses’ remains are vague (Num. 2:12; Deut. 34:6). What is clear is the example of Michael’s humility and Satan’s arrogance. The two figures are used as representatives of contrast regarding those who receive God’s judgment and punishment and why. Ungodliness with arrogance reaps God’s exacting judgment and punishment.

3. Woes for what they do – Jude 1:11-16

Jude brings a sobering warning about slick con men, a reminder that their presence was prophesied in times past, and certain judgment with attending punishment upon them in times future.

For Further Study:

- Why does Jude draw a parallel to the heretics who have secretly entered his believing community with the Jews in the Sinai exodus and with the residents of Sodom (cp. Numbers 14:33, common Jude 1:4-7)? What practical advice can we glean from these examples?

- As a **Theological study method**, look up the stories of Cain, Balaam, and Korah (cf. 2 Peter 2:15; Numbers 22:16ff; Numbers 16:1-32; Genesis 4:3-8). What attitudes do they have in common? What outcome do they have in common with those receiving condemnation in Jude's epistle? What warning does this bring to you, me, and the believing community?

- Jude prophesies certain judgment with attending punishment upon false teachers that have covertly entered the fellowship. His predictions parallel common teaching throughout the New Testament. Look up the following passages and use your Bible's cross references for a more in-depth description. Describe two characteristics of false teachers that you should be aware of when attending any church (cf. Luke 21:8; Matthew 24:11-12).

Transformation reflection:

Practice praying for the Spirit's discernment as a habit every time you enter into a time of teaching and in particular when you do not personally know the character of the teacher (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:17-22; Acts 17:10-11).