

## Sunday Morning Message

August 1, 2021

*Earnestly Contending for the Faith - Messages from Jude*

*Jude 1:5 – 16 – The Enemies Among Us – Characters from the Past - Part Three – Sodom and Gomorrah*

Text – Jude 1:7

Congregational Reading – Jude 1:5 – 7 and verse 11

### Introduction

In this little one chapter letter, Jude expresses the great need for soldiers who would be willing to earnestly contend or fight for the faith. The reason that these spiritual warriors are needed is due to the fact that Satan is always sending into the church people who were actively working against the cause of Christ by distorting and sometimes even dismissing sound Bible doctrine.

In our introductory message to this epistle, we talked about the fact that, as Christians, we should not like to fight. In fact, we are encourage to: *“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men”* (Romans 12:18). We are taught by the Lord to *“... Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”* (Matthew 5:44).

We shouldn't be contentious as Christians, bud as Jude tells us there are times that we need to contend for the faith. We don't like to fight, but as we stated last week, when our family is under attack, we need to fight; when the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ is under attack, we will fight; and when our freedom to practice our faith is under attack, we will fight.

#### I. Characters from the Past (vs. 5 – 7, 11 – continued from last week)

Two weeks ago, in our second message from this letter, we examined in great detail verse 5 and we saw some examples that Jude gave from the Old Testament that are types of the enemies that are among us today. We looked at just a few illustrations from the wilderness wanderings of Israel and we saw that Moses and Israel were constantly battling enemies from within the congregation who were trying to thwart the will of God.

Last week, we took a deep look at verse 6 where we discussed the fallen angels that were bound by God in a spiritual prison for some particularly heinous act that they committed. Probably, the reference there is from Genesis six where it seems to speak of fallen angels that procreated with human women, producing offspring that were “men of renown” and “giants.”

Peter also writes about the same events that Jude references here:

*"4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast [them] down to hell, and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth [person], a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned [them] with an overthrow, making [them] an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed [his] righteous soul from day to day with [their] unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:" (2 Peter 2:4-9)*

## Transition

Today, we will continue to examine these characters from the past, and see how they illustrate perfectly the types of attacks that Satan may use today to hinder the work of God.

**C. Sodom and Gomorrah** (v. 7; Genesis 19 - Note - Points "A and B" were discussed in previous messages)

Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain were destroyed by the Lord due to fornication – sexual sins. "Strange flesh" is likely a reference to homosexuality, though some have stated that it could be a reference to the cohabitation of men and angels as was dealt with in v. 6. Sodom was a very wicked and godless place where people were consumed with satisfying their hedonistic desires.

*"24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness,*

*covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,"*  
(Romans 1:24-29)

These two cities and the others that God destroyed with them were known for their wickedness and immorality, and God had apparently become fed up with them and was set on destroying them. The only problem was that there was a man who lived there with his family who was a man of faith. The New Testament, in 2 Peter 4:7, tells us that Lot was "just," meaning that he was justified in the sight of God. Justification is a theological term that is used in reference to saved people. So, in the city of Sodom, there was at least one man who was saved, and he had a family that included a wife, at least two married daughters and their families, and two single daughters. God had to do something about Lot and his family before he destroyed the city.

Genesis 19, not only tells the story of God's dramatic destruction of Sodom, but more importantly, it reveals to us God's grace and mercy by removing a somewhat reluctant saved family from within the city before He destroys it.

### **1. The Coming of the Two Angels (vs. 1 – 3)**

I would like to point out a couple of things from these verses:

- a. Lot is sitting "in the gate" of Sodom when the angels arrive. The cities in Bible days were typically walled cities that would have a gate. Anyone leaving or entering the city had to come in through the gate. The gate became an important place of business for the city. It is believed that Lot may have been an important person, possibly even a judge for the city because of his seat in the gate. When Lot first separated from Abraham back in Genesis 13, he was a herdsman who pitched his tent toward Sodom, but now he is a city official dwelling with his family inside of the city.
- b. Secondly, Lot had enough spiritual discernment to recognize these angels. The men of the city have no clue who these men are. Lot was definitely outside the will of God, but he was a child of God and he knew these visitors were sent from God.

### **2. The Character of the City Revealed (vs. 4 – 11)**

Sodom was a wicked place. The men of the city, including both old and young, probably drunk out of their minds, attempt to break into Lot's home so that they could be immoral with these visitors who they think are just men. Had they known that the power of these angels they would not have attempted it.

Notice also the affect that Sodom had on the spiritual character of Lot. His faith is so weak, and he is so far away from God that his only solution to this problem is to give his

daughters to these wicked people hoping that they would satisfy their lusts with them and leave his guests alone. Of course, the angels intervene and solve the problem.

Practical Note – It is impossible to live within the spiritual filth of this world and not get some dirt on you. We live in a world that is almost as bad as Sodom was. Jesus said that we were to be “in the world”, but not “of the world.” If we are going to keep ourselves clean while living in a very dark and wicked place, we are going to have to be filled with the Spirit, saturated in the Word of God, and separated from the world.

### **3. The Compelling of the Angels (vs. 12 – 17)**

The angels are very insistent. Lot has to get his family, and get out of the city. Unfortunately, Lot’s testimony is so damaged because of the compromises that he has made, that his married daughters and their husbands mock him as he tries to warn them to flee the city before it’s too late. The angels practically have to force Lot and his family out of the city.

Practical Note – When you are away from God spiritually you cannot see the dangers that are out there in the world. You become numb to the reality of a coming judgment.

### **4. The Conflict of Lot and the Compromise of the Angels (vs. 18 – 22)**

Lot does not want to go to the mountains. He has developed a taste for city life, and he begs the angels to let his family go to Zoar.

Practical Note – Stay as far away from the world as you can get. Too many Christians today are in love with the world, being conformed by the world, instead of being transformed by the Word of God.

Notice in v.22 – “I cannot do anything till thou be come hither.” This is a wonderful picture of eternal security. God would not destroy Sodom until Lot and his family were out of it. As backslidden as Lot was, He was still God’s child and God was protecting him.

### **5. The Calamity of Looking Back (vs. 23 – 26)**

The Angels warned Lot not to look back once they left Sodom. Unfortunately, Lot’s wife could not resist the temptation of taking one last peek at the life she was leaving behind.

Humanly speaking, I can understand why she did it:

- a. She had family and friends back there in Sodom that she cared about.
- b. Everything she knew was behind her, and the future was uncertain.
- c. Her flesh enjoyed living in Sodom. Carnal Christians have a difficult time enjoying the separated, Spirit-filled life.

Looking back destroyed Mrs. Lot. Too many Christians today are also looking back at their old life and are being spiritually destroyed.

Jesus uses the story of Lot's wife to warn the saints during the Tribulation Period to not look back once they flee from Jerusalem escaping the antichrist. (Read Luke 17:22 – 37)

Today, Jesus warns those that have surrendered to serve him to not turn back.

*"And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* (Luke 9:61-62)

Paul warns us to not turn back in our beliefs:

*"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"* (Ephesians 4:11-14)

James warns us not to turn back in our faith:

*"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."* (James 1:5-8)

If you are saved, don't look back at your old unsaved life. Don't go back to your old unsaved friends. Immerse yourself in what God has for you now. Get into your Bible. Get around God's people. Don't look back.

If you are called by God to serve Him, don't look back. The road may be difficult, the giants may be big, and there may be a lot of obstacles out there, but God's with you. Don't look back.

Illustration - When God called Elisha who was a farmer to serve Him, he first burnt his old plow and sacrificed the animals that he used to pull the plow with. He took a drastic step in order to see to it that he would not go back to plowing after God had called him to preach.

Illustration – In 1519, Spanish conqueror, Hernan Cortez, upon arriving in Vera Cruz, ordered his ships to be destroyed. He sent a strong message to the 600 men with him, that they would not be turning back.

When it comes to the spiritual life, we really do need to burn the bridges that connect us

to the old life.

Illustration – Missionary William Borden who was an heir to the Borden family fortune left all of the wealth behind and became a missionary. Tragically, he died at the very young age of 25 after contracting spinal meningitis. In the back of his Bible were written the following words: “No reserves, no retreats, no regrets.”

We sing the song, “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.” One of the key phrases in that song is, “no turning back, no turning back.”

## Conclusion

Let’s tie this story from Genesis in with the message of *earnestly contending for the faith* from our text in Jude’s Epistle.

God wants us to contend for moral purity within the household of faith, and within our own households. The culture has completely thrown in the towel on moral purity. Just about anything goes. Heterosexual fornication, homosexuality, transgenderism are all promoted in our society. We are called bigots if we say anything against these practices, but Christians must stand firm against these sins. The practice of homosexuality is just as much an abomination to the Lord today as it was in the Old Testament.

How are we going to fight against immorality in our homes and churches.

### 1. Walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5)

Read your Bible

Pray

Stay in Church

### 2. Maintain Separation from the immoral philosophies of this world.

Stop watching all of the junk on television that is shoving this ideology down your throats.

Illustrate – Television show – the first season was great. In the first episode of the second season there was a very noticeable change. The language got very bad, and then there were two guys making out. My wife and I had to shut it off.

Support the few entertainment sources out there that are holding the line on morality.

### 3. Stay Pure in your own relationships

Sex was designed by God to be within the boundaries of marriage. Keep the fences up.

*"9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." (1 Corinthians 7:9)*

*"4 Marriage [is] honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4)*

- II. Characteristics that are Present (vs. 8 - 10, 12 – 13; 16)
- III. Cautions from our Predecessors (vs. 14 – 15)