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MEDITATIONS IN JUDE October 2025

MEDITATIONS IN JUDE

Jude 24-25 (Part 2)

For Sunday, 5th October 2025

HE next words of this doxology which follows naturally are the words 'the only God and Saviour *be glory*, majesty, power and authority'. These express the eternal and permanent truth about God. It is impossible for us, his creatures and even his redeemed creatures, to add or enhance these facts concerning God, but Jude recognises that we must recognise this and so give due honour to God who is so far above us his creatures. God created us in his image, but the image of God in us does not include this ultimate truth about God. Satan, in whose bondage all humanity are bound, lifts up human pride to exalt ourselves, even above God, and this is the sad and terrible fact about sinful and fallen humanity. Because of this it is only us, who have been chosen and redeemed and recreated that are able to recognise God truly, and the revelation of his image given in the Bible revelation; and because of this, we alone are given the longing to worship before his throne.

If we turn to Revelation chapter 4, we are given there the truth concerning all the universe and creation. John is exalted in a vision to see this truth. He sees the throne expressing that God reigns over all in all his perfection. All creation surrounds the throne, the Cherubim are closes to the throne, then the church represented by the 24 elders, the church of the Old Testament, the patriarchs, and the

church of the New Testament, the apostles, and the vision sees all creation giving honour to the throne. In the vision John sees the twenty four elders expressing their worship and submission to the throne by bowing down and casting their crowns down before the throne. In our small and limited way on earth we find this same reverence so fills our hearts that these words of Jude express what we feel we owe to God, that is to give God glory, majesty, power and authority. These are his by right, but in life and living we long to express this in the way we live.

To God be the glory, great things he has done. So begins the hymn we sing and know so well. We give glory to God in every blessing which we know in our lives. If we have peace with God, we give him glory for this gift. If we know we have eternal life, we give God the glory for so precious a gift. And so it goes on. For all the blessings of salvation, and all the progress we have in grace and living to the glory of God, we give the honour and the praise to God alone, for these blessings come from him. In ourselves we know that it is God, in his grace who has saved us, and blessed us in the way.

And so it goes on. If there is any answer to prayer, any success in witness, any progress in holiness, any blessing received, all these come from God in his grace, love and mercy, and it is to God we give the glory. We are terrified if at any time we take glory to ourselves. God is the source of, and fountain of, every blessing and success. We want only give him the glory for what he has done and is and will do in our lives.

Then there is God's majesty. Her reigns as sovereign over all he has created and made. To God be majesty. How is this expressed in making these words of Jude true in our lives. The vision of John in Revelation 4 gives us the clue.

The elders constantly fell down before the throne, and cast their crowns down before the throne. All blessings we know from life, salvation and heaven, come from God and we acknowledge this by the worship from our hearts which in hearts and mind we crown him Lord of all, and in heart and spirit bow down in worship constantly before his majesty. In heaven this will be our constant pleasure and joy and activity.

Be power. All power is in God. He is omnipotent. omniscient, omnipresent. He has total power over the universe he created, to do what he will. How do we recognise this truth about God. We do it to fear him. As redeemed souls, this fear is not a servile fear, nor is a fear of terror, but we fear God as far above us, as our creator and Saviour, as holding us always in his sovereign power, and bow before such power in adoring praise for his redeeming grace which in great power has redeemed us in Christ, who worked a total victory over Satan, and delivered us from his bondage and servitude. Jesus said that all power was given unto him in heaven and earth. He now reigns at the right hand of the Father, to make this victory, this glorious power manifest in the lives of his saints. We worship before his power and unassailable reign and authority

To God be authority. God's authority is absolute. No power, not even Satan, can assail this authority. What is it to express this authority. The one word expresses this and it is obedience. Paul spoke of himself as the slave of Jesus Christ. The word in our Bibles is 'bondservant'. Before God reigning, we seek to believe and obey him in all his revealed will, as it is expressed in the totality of his word in the Bible. We are bondservants of Jesus and the Father. How dare we set ourselves up to criticise or reject any part of his holy revelation. The Bible is our rule of faith and obedience, in all

we do, say and think. 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

MEDITATIONS IN JUDE

Jude 24-25 (Part 3)

For Sunday, 12th October 2025

WHY is praise and extolling God at the heart of every true born again believer? Jude makes this clear and evident in these words in these two verses we are meditating upon – in the words 'who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.' We owe all the eternal blessings we are blessed with to the sovereign grace of God in Christ, alone.

God keeps us in this life. We are believers by God's sovereign choosing, his electing of us before the foundation of the world. We believe in Jesus for the gift of eternal life, forgiveness of all our sins, and being raised to new life in his family. We are saved from sin, Satan, death and hell by God in sovereign grace alone. This the glorious beginning of life eternal that God has given us. Our praise and thanks to God is full, firstly because he keeps. Jude says he is able to keep us from falling. Glorious truth, for we know how frail we are. We know the power of Satan. We know the corruption of our flesh. We fear, we know, that if our perseverance depended on us, we would fall hopelessly. Jude reminds us that God, having begun a good work in us in and through Jesus, he will continue this blessed work throughout this life, with all its dangers and our weakness. He will never

allow Satan to snatch us out of his hand. We are his precious redeemed children which he wants to share eternal glory with him, and so we may be sure that in all our stumbling he will keep us from falling, falling again under Satan's dominion.

God keeps us by the gift of his indwelling Holy Spirit. This is the promise which Jesus made to his disciples before he left them. His promise was for another comforter, advocate like himself who would be with them for ever (John 14: 16), who would be with his believing people forever. By the Holy Spirit Jesus told his disciples he would be with them always. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of truth, would lead them into all truth. He is the One who opens God's word to us, and blesses and keeps us in the truth.

From this we are sure that whatsoever our weaknesses we will be kept by the Spirit from falling. Satan leaves all those who are alone in his power, without hope, and without God in the world. He has them under his dominion. As soon as we are given grace to repent and believe unto salvation Satan is busy with every power at his disposal, to attack and regain us if he can. Paul warns that this attack may be very severe, and it is more virulent the closer we live with Jesus. Satan wants us to fall into sin; he wants us to gain his dominion over us; but the promise in this doxology, and why we are able, and desire, to praise God is because the promise here is that he will keep us from falling. In spite of our weakness. God has promised that he will never allow Satan to snatch us from his hand. There may be times when Satan's attach is so severe that we fear our safety, but here Jude tells us that the Spirit will present us faultless before the throne in glory.

We feel our weakness in this life and we know that if it was only up to us, we would never persevere to the end. Satan Page 5

constantly brings before us our sinfulness and the many ways we fall short of the glory of God. We know so clearly that we are far from faultless in this earthly life, but the promise is that we will be presented faultless before the heavenly glory in heaven. This assurance is the constant food for praising God.

The last encouragement for praise and thankfulness to God is these words in this doxology 'present us before his glorious presence and with great joy'. Whatever Satan suggests in his attacks, like the great reformer at the reformation, Martyn Luther, we can say to Satan and tell him to write at the bottom of the lists of our sins he brings before our minds, the blood of Jesus Christ cleans us from all sin.

We cannot help but to lift up hearts and minds in praise and thanksgiving to God, for the fact that we repented and repent because he has taught our hearts to fear and cry to him for mercy; and because the Spirit and the Word of God, assures us that Jesus in a glorious, wonderful and all-sufficient Saviour, and we are led to put our whole trust and confidence in him, pleading no personal merit before God, but pleading his perfect life and death and sacrifice for sinners. We are given grace to hold fast to the many promises in the Bible that tell us that whosoever believes in Jesus has eternal life.



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MEDITATIONS IN JUDE

Jude 24-25 (Part 4)

For Sunday, 18th October 2025

WE now come to our last meditation in Jude, and the fourth time we look at this closing doxology. The words to consider in this meditation are 'through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and evermore! Amen'.

The blessing we have had brought to our notice in this doxology, which fills our hearts with praise and thanksgiving, are from our Lord Jesus Christ alone. It is because we who believe in him for forgiveness and eternal life, and have been given the grace to see him, and embrace him, as our all-sufficient Saviour, that this doxology resonates in our minds and hearts.

God sent his Son into the world in order to save and give eternal life to those given him by the God the Father before the foundation of the world. This gift involves Jesus humbling himself and letting go all his prerogatives as the eternal Son of the Father, and taking the form of a servant and accepting the will of the Father to send him 'in the likeness of sinful man', yet without sin, so that he could be our surety and represent us before the Father for our salvation. In this role he fulfilled all righteousness in his life and death, so fulfilling in our place all the demands of God's holy justice. He did this by living in our place a perfectly sinless and holy life, and then for us and in our place, accepting all responsibility for our sins, and so providing complete and perfect salvation for all who are enabled to put their trust in him as Saviour. God testified to this perfection when he raise Jesus from the dead, raised him to to glory, and exalted him to his right hand in glory, in

order to dispense his salvation to and upon all the Father had given before the foundation of the world. (Ephesians 1: 4).

So all spiritual blessings, as Jude declares in this doxology, which the believer has received are found in, and from, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has pledged his word that he not only has won salvation for us, but he makes it known to us in time, and that we are united to him in his death and resurrection, so that he keeps us in his love in time and eternity.

Jude tells us that this everlasting blessing is before all ages. Time in which we live in this earthly life is part and parcel of God's earthly creation. God the Father is beyond time, eternally existing. He knows everything completely of his creation, all the time. He knows the beginning and the end, and all that happens in time. It is permanently before him and known in perfection and fulness from the beginning of time to the end of time. Living in time and subject to time, this truth about God is difficult to comprehend, but it tells us that he knows our beginning and our end always in its every detail. God eternally gave us to Christ. Jude expresses this in his words 'before all ages'.

Jude then makes clear that throughout our lives, Jesus our Lord and Saviour, keeps us 'now' in time. This 'now' applies to every moment of our lives. There is never a moment throughout our lives that Jesus was not saving, holding, us in his strong and mighty hand. In this truth we are being assured there has never been, and never will, be a moment when Jesus ceases to keep us in his salvation and protection. In all our failings and sins, he holds us and will never let us go. We may, through Satan's assaults, be made to feel desolate and even lost, but Jesus is mighty to save and keep us from all the assaults of the evil one, and

this will be true for us, even when Satan makes us afraid, and in his subtilty darkens our faith and assurance in Christ, and when he clouds us in darkness and we are afraid. A hymn has these words, I believe in the chorus, which go something like this — No! Never alone. He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone. Wonderful assurance, even in the darkest hour of our experience.

So in the last phrase of this doxology, Jude tells us, this care of Jesus, this almighty care and love, is 'for evermore'. Jesus is our loving friend and Saviour now and forever. His friendship and work in saving us is forever. Not just for this life, but in the timelessness of his eternal glory.

Whatever our condition – whether sickness, old age, or nearing death, Jesus our almighty Lord and Saviour is by our side. When we are alone at the time of death, Jesus is with us, and we go through the river of death with Jesus holding our hand to bring us safely to the shores of his eternal presence.

Jude closes with the declaration of faith. He closes this doxology, and his short letter, with the word 'Amen'. This is the word which expresses the absolute assurance we have as saved believers, that these words are all true. We shout Amen as this assurance is confirmed in our mind and heart by the Spirit.



MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY 1 Timothy 1: 1

For Sunday, 26th October 2025

As always the apostle Paul begins his letter with a greeting from himself to the one or ones he is writing. The difference with this letter to Timothy is that it was a personal letter to Timothy, and not to a church or an area. Nonetheless it is letter addressed to all believers and to the whole church of God in Christ. Because of this Paul's greeting has a unique flavour and direction.

As usual Paul makes clear his authority to write such a letter to Timothy. He makes clear that he is an Apostle of Jesus Christ. This was established because Paul saw the Lord in a direct and individual way, when the risen and reigning Jesus Christ spoke to him as he was journeying to Damascus on his mission to annihilate the church. Paul speaks of himself as an apostle by the command of God our Saviour and the Lord Jesus Christ our hope.

By speaking of himself as an apostle by the command of Jesus Christ, he was making clear that his apostleship was an unique one. In the normal course of events to be an apostle required that Jesus had chosen such a person to this position of authority in the church while he was on earth. Paul never knew Jesus personally while he was alive. In fact he became what the rest of the church might have judged to be the most unlikely person to be call and apostle.

After the apostasy of Judas who betrayed Jesus to his death, the apostles sought to make up the deficiency in the number of the apostles by themselves according to the true criteria that an apostle had to be a witness of the

resurrection of Jesus. We read how this was managed in Acts 1: 21-26. It is recorded in these verse we read that they chose two persons Justus and Matthias, they then prayed for guidance followed by casting lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. If both Matthias and Paul were true apostles this would make the number 13 and not twelve. Because of this it seems evident to me that the church acted before Christ, and the risen and reigning Christ had Paul in mind for the apostleship from the beginning. There is no doubt that Paul fulfilled the credentials to be an apostle. He saw in a miraculous way the Lord both risen and reigning, and was given by the reigning Lord Jesus a command concerning his future. We read this in the account of Christ's command to Paul, then known as Saul, in Acts chapter 9.

In order to establish his right as an apostle to command Timothy, Paul adds further credentials for his authority as an apostle.

Paul tells us the command came from God our Saviour. We speak of Jesus as our Saviour, but as God is plainly seen in the Scriptures as the real authority behind the work of salvation worked by His only well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, God is very much our Saviour and the author of salvation.

Paul in the opening of his letter to the Ephesians makes this Saviour hood of God so clear. In chapter 1: 3-4 we read 'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight'. However hard it is to understand or even accept, it was the sovereign choice of God even before creation had occurred to chose those who are saved to be holy and blameless in his sight. In this choosing is all the fulness of God's sovereign choice, mercy

and grace, to save and eventually make holy to dwell with him forever in his eternal glory, those he chose in this completely sovereign way.

The truth about all humanity is that we are born in trespasses and sins through the decision of our first parent Adam. No human being deserves salvation, or the eternal blessing of being brought to dwell with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, in his everlasting Glory. It is no wonder that Paul commence these words in Ephesians with the words 'Praise be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

Paul is always complete in his words concerning truth about his authority as and apostle. He continues telling us it is also the command of Jesus Christ our hope. His authority came from God the Father and the Son by the revelation of the Holy Spirit – the one eternal God who has revealed himself in three persons yet one eternal God

Let us lastly note the inclusion of Jesus as our hope. Jesus is our sure hope because in obedience to the Father he worked all the perfect and all-sufficient work to fulfil all righteousness. This is made so clear in the words of 2 Corinthians 5: 21 'God made him (Jesus Christ) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.'



GOD'S WORD FROM HOSEA

Number 24

TRUE STATE EXPOSED

"(8) Gilead is a city of wicked men, stained with footprints of blood. (9) As marauders lie in ambush for a man, so do bands of priests; they murder on the road to Shechem, committing shameful crimes. (10) I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel. There Ephraim is given to prostitution and Israel is defiled. (11) Also for you, Judah, a harvest is appointed. Whenever I would restore the fortunes of my people..."

Hosea 6: 8-11

THESE verses follow on from the previous verse, where the prophet showed us that we were following the condition chosen for us by our first parent Adam. Before we continue I feel it is important to be clear in our minds of what Hosea was saying, so that we are able to see that I have not been introducing into the Old Testament, what is made plain in the New Testament, specially by the apostle Paul. It may be felt by some that this is not quite justified as the meaning of Hosea's words in verse 7.

In the Hebrew there are two words used for man and women. The normal usage in the Old Testament of 'ish' for man and 'ishah' for the woman. However another two words for man and woman is used in Genesis in the opening three chapters. These are 'adam' for the man, and 'adamah' for the woman. This is why in these opening chapters of Genesis it has always been the custom to speak of the man as named Adam. It is clear that the designation for Adam is sort of unique here in Hosea, and takes us back to Genesis and the disaster which our first parent brought on all the human race. So all who have been born into the world from this first human pair suffer from this choice our first parents made for all human beings. I have consulted my Hebrew Old

Testament, and it is plain, even to me whose limited understanding of Hebrew, which has now become hazy, that the word 'ish' for man is not used in verse seven, and the word used is in fact 'adam'. In this usage it is plain that Hosea in verse 7 is referring back to our first parent, and the choice he made to obey and trust Satan, and what this has meant for all humanity. When Hosea says 'Like Adam' he is referring to the action and disobedience to God which is so clear in the historic narrative of Genesis 3. So Hosea is telling us is that Israel in his day was imitating our first parent in disobedience to God. God had given Israel and Judah his clear commands in the ten commandments, and the way he is to be approached by sinners in the ceremonial law handed down through Moses, and Israel, even if it still gave lip service to this law and way to approach him, in reality in their gross disobedience to this way from God, they were like Adam and acting in disobedience to God.

As we address the words of Hosea which follow it is plain that Hosea is showing clearly the terrible state of Israel in his day, and this is why the title I have given to this sermon is True State of Israel. What an awful revelation it is. In verse 8 we need to understand the words Hosea used. Gilead was an area in central Israel, with Jabesh Gilead the capital city, so it is plain that Gilead used by Hosea here is representative of all the area in which was occupied by the 10 tribes who had split away from Judah and Benjamin in the days of Rehoboam seen in 1 Kings 12.

The imitation of Adam in his tragic choice to disobey God is seen in the accusation brought against Israel in verse 8. Hosea speaks of Gilead as a city of wicked men, which was specially evident in the fact that Hosea tells us these inhabitants of Gilead were 'stained with foot prints of blood'. This is a graphic description of the fact that murder had become prevalent. Israel was stained with blood of other Israelites. Plainly law and order had almost vanished, and breaking of the of the sixth commandment was awfully common.

The terrible nature of this condition continues to be revealed as Hosea continues in the next verses. Verse 9 speaks of how this practice of murder was carried out so successfully. Hosea speaks of this as 'marauders lie in ambush for a man'. This speaks of deliberate planning on behalf of these men. They had planned there action carefully. They plainly waited at a place in the road where they could hide and conceal themselves. Then they waited all prepared for violence until an unwary passer revealed himself as a likely possessor of rich booty. Some travellers passed by this ambush and were left alone as not being thought to be profitable targets, but when a traveller appeared who was plainly worth plundering, they leapt out of their hiding, armed, and before the unsuspecting traveller was aware, he was pounced on and killed, together with all others who travelled with him. These victims would be left to rot, and all possessions of any worth were plundered before the thieves carried off their booty.

This is illustrated so clearly in the parable of the good Samaritan which is recorded in Luke 10: 25-37. In Hosea it is fellow Israelites who were designated as the 'marauders'. In the parable of the Good Samaritan we are simply told that a man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho fell into the hands of robbers. This describes of the sort of action of these marauders. The actions of the robbers in the parable is a description of the marauders Hosea is describing. The thought which Hosea was making clear that this heartless and selfish practice of these robbers was behaviour which was rife in Israel in Hosea's day, and showed the true state of Israel which Hosea speaks about. No doubt there were still people in Israel at this time who were obedient to Jehovah, but such was the sate of Israel as a whole that such acts of murder, theft and violence was endemic in Israel. How far had Israel fallen from obedience to God.

Hosea in the words 'so do bands of priests' this murder and violence was common amongst the priests set apart by God to lead the worship of God in Israel. Priests were set apart to offer sacrifices to God, according to the ceremonial law handed down by Moses, and were

given these direction directly from God. The tribe of Levi, from whom the priests were found, were not given land in the time of Joshua, because God had laid down in the law of Moses that they dwelt amongst the people, and were supported by tithes given, according the law, from the various other tribes. They were set apart by God for holy use, and to lead the people in the worship of God. In this they offered sacrifices of atonement on behalf the people for the remission of sins. Perhaps the reason why these priests had fallen so sadly was because the people, in their following of idols, had ceased to pay the tithe appointed by God, and so in consequence the priests, badly affected by the godlessness of the people, sought this way of violent robbery to sustain themselves in comfort. Whether this was true or not, Hosea is clearly stating that the priests who were supposed and consecrated for holy use, had degenerated into copying the godlessness so plainly seen in the rest of the society of Israel. Hosea goes on to say that they murder on the road to Shecham. Perhaps this describes that the people were coming to worship God, and that the priests new this, and so waited in secret to rob them.

Hosea goes on in the next sentence to describe this action of the priests as 'committing shameful crimes'. They were shameful in themselves but even more shameful because they were committed by men who had been set apart for God, and to lead the people in the worship and service of God. We have this behaviour described in Ezekial 22: 8-9 'You have despised my holy things and desecrated my Sabbaths. In this you are slanderous men bent on shedding blood; in you are those who eat at the mountain shrines and commit lewd acts'. Then again in Jeremiah 7: 9-10 we read 'Will you steal and plunder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, 'We are safe' – safe to do all these detestable things?'

Hosea goes on to describe the words of God in verse 10 – 'I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel.' There Ephraim is given to prostitution and Israel is defiled'. Ephraim is a name given to all Israel

made up of the ten tribes separated from Judah and Benjamin, and made up what was known as the Northern kingdom.

In this verse Hosea specially mentions prostitution. No doubt physical prostitution is described here, that is serious illicit sexual activity such as Paul describes in Romans 1: 18 ff; but there is a deeper prostitution also included in this description of the sad state which had flooded Israel in his day., and this is particularly in the life and actions of the priests.

This prostitution is seen in leaving love and faithfulness and service of Jehovah, to whom all worship must and ought to be given, to Baal and other gods of the heathen worshipped all around Israel. This is spiritual prostitution. Here is the heart of sin and sinfulness. It is disobedience to the first two commandment, of the ten commands given to Moses at Sinai in the wilderness. These are described in the words of Exodus 10 – 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other god's before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow to them or worship them; for I, am the Lord your God, and am a jealous God, punishing the children for sin of the fathers to the third and forth generation of those who hate me, but show love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments'.

This the core and heart of all sin and sinfulness. It is giving attention and obedience to Satan which should only be given to God. Satan is the father of lies, which seen so clearly in his temptation of Adam. In fact today in the visible church, there is more idolatry than there wwwe was in Israel in Old Testament times. It is caused by the attitude which has turned the Bible from being, in its entirety, the infallible word of God, that is God speaking his truth, to saying that the Bible simply contains the word of God, which we discern by the use of our reason. This results in almost everyone who says they trust in God as he is revealed in the Bible, are worshipping an idol which they have created with their minds and reason. The fact is that with our fallen human reason we are well



able to reason out ordinary problems, but in using our fallen reason to see what is the mind and revelation of God, each will choose out of the revelation of God which is given in the Bible, that which suits our idea of what God should be like, or the god which people decide is the god they believe to be God in truth and reality.

When we come to verse and the first sentence we see that this prostitution has spread to them also. The harvest appointed is that they also have been infected by this spiritual prostitution, which is made clear as we read on into chapter 7.

What shall we say and think as we read this sad declension amongst the people of God in the Old Testament. The Bible is always up to date. This exposure of the state of Israel and Judah is as much evident greatly in the visible church today. This spiritual prostitution is rife in the UK and even in the rest of the world. The Roman Catholic is possessed with this idolatry, and is the other main denominations.

There is still great examples of churches in each denomination which are faithful to the Bible as the word of God in its entirety from Genesis to Revelation, and in most cases these churches show the evidence that God is blessing the ministry and witness in these churches. However, in the UK at least, these are few and far between, revealing in belief and practice an attitude which is so far from the truth in the whole inspired word of God. This is made clear is the decline in

worshippers, the rather secular and arid preaching, and the fact that the people seem to love it to be so, and react violently in mind at least, to any preaching that is faithful to the whole Bible.

This patently seen in the reaction to people when they are told the truth of human nature, which rejects the words of Paul in Romans 3: 23 'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'. This is seen that people are taught that they are good people, even though it is confess we are not perfect, and sin is limited to the gross sins which are seen more and more in society. In this light people resent being called sinners, and so there is felt no need of a Saviour, and truth of God, who in amazing love, came into the world in the person of his well beloved Son, in order to fulfil all righteousness in our place so that all who believe in him as Lord and Saviour, are justly justly counted righteous by God, on the grounds that Christ has met in full all the holy requirements of God in the place of the believing sinner.

In this scenario the blessed truth that Jesus lived a holy life in our place, and then as the Lamb without blemish gave himself voluntarily, at the command of the Father, and on the cross and suffered the whole just penalty of God against sin in our place, who could cry at the end of the suffering, just before his life expired, the tremendous words 'IT IS FINISHED', and this was confirmed by the Father when he raised Jesus from the dead on the third day.

It is a terrible victory of Satan in the visible church, as it was as described by Hosea in his day, as we have seen in this sermon. If God had not reserved for himself a faithful remnant today as he did in the Old Testament, Satan's victory would be complete.

What can the faithful to the word of God do in these times of apostasy? God in many times in the past has given revivals, when the Spirit of God comes down in great power and thousands are born again and made new, and although these great numbers may seem small compared to the majority in society, yet their numbers, under God, cause great changes in society for good.

If we look out on the world as a whole such blessing can be seen in different parts of the world, for example in parts of Africa and in South Korea, and in different churches even in the UK. We can look at these and be encourages and cause us even more urgently to pray for revival in our fellowships and areas around us, even effecting whole nations. Lord Jesus bless your church even today, that we may behold Satan's rule and authority crumbling as the Spirit of God is poured out in revival blessings. If this is to be so, revival must commence in us who pray, as we fall down before the Father in confession of sin and in more holy living.

October 2025

GOD'S MESSAGE IN 2 PETER

Expository Sermons in the 2nd Epistle of Peter

FALSE WITNESSES DESCRIBED Continued

"They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, revelling in their pleasures while they feast with you. With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed – an accursed brood! They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But he was rebuked for his wrong doing by a donkey – a beast without speech – who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophets madness."

2 Peter 2: 13-16 (Part 2)

PETER goes on to describe the true character of these false witnesses. As we read the description Peter gives of these false witnesses in his day, his description may not seem to be altogether true of false witnesses in our day.

Peter's description speaks of gross immoral, loose and worldly behaviour which we may feel is not the behaviour we have observed of false witnesses in the church today, though it may be hidden secretly in some. This may have been true and patent in the society of the time of the apostles, but, even in our corrupt society today, those who claim to be of the church are usually living respectable moral lives even though the beliefs and opinions in their teaching they are, from the perspective of the Bible, teaching very harmful, and even blasphemous opinions.

However, in spiritual terms, all that Peter describes is certainly true. The people may not be committing physical adultery, but in their opinions and teaching their living can be described as serious adultery, even worse than any physical adultery. What is adultery? It is unfaithfulness to a married partner. What is spiritual adultery except unfaithfulness to God whom in Christ all true believers are consider married. When these false witnesses speak false beliefs and reject bible truth, surely they are being grossly immoral to God.

Further the opinions of the false witness are conforming to the opinions of the world, and allowing worldly opinions into the church, which deny the truth, and allow the values of the world to determine Christian living and behaviour and thinking.

Spiritual adultery was the great offence which was so prevalent in the Old Testament during times of the kings. This spiritual adultery was seen in that they were forsaking Jehovah to worship the idols of the heathen around them. They had forsaken God who has chosen them, and so blessed them, for idols These idols allowed them to fulfil the desires of their sinful nature. In those days the expression of these desires allowed gross sinful living. Perhaps this

was what was occurring in the time of Peter. It is an awful evil if people worship gods whom they prefer by their fallen nature. All spiritual adultery is rejecting and despising the revelation which God has given of himself in the Bible.

When Peter speaks at the end of verse 13 that these false witness's were revelling in their pleasures while they feast with you, he is indicating by this that the false witnesses were members of the church family, and my NIV Bible has a marginal note which informs me that in the early church it was the practice to join together in what was called the 'agape' meal where the church met together for a family fellowship meal, in which at a point in this feasting the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated. This is what Paul is speaking about in 1 Corinthians 11: 17-34.

So if we think of the situation in the present time of false witnesses in the church, who may be members and even clergy and ministers, the idea of revelling in their pleasures, would be seen as in revelling in their false opinions, despising and the truth, and carrying many people to take on board the easy belief they promote which will destroy their souls.

At the beginning of verse 13 Peter speaks of these false witnesses 'being paid back with harm for the harm they have done'. When we observe the situation in the modern church, these ministers in church who turned the truth of God's word into falsehood, even rejecting the true meaning of Scripture which contradicts their opinions, seem to flourish. They appear to be honoured and rewarded and looked up to as teachers and servants of the church. They flourish. No harm seems to come to them. How are the words of Peter that they will be paid back with harm true. The fact is that these false ministers and witnesses receive their rewards while they live, but they will receive harm in

the life to come. We have this vividly in the parable Jesus told of the rich man who had everything, and the beggar with sores begging at the gate of his mansion. When they both die, the beggar is found in Abraham's bosom, but the rich man found himself in the fire of hell in excruciating pain.

Why is such harm waiting for these false witnesses? It is because the great harm that they have done in their lives by promoting their opinions. Men and women who have been deceived by their witness will also arrive at the same destination they end in. What an awful and terrible thought this is. It brings deep sorrow to the soul of the faithful – if it does not to yours, it fills me with horror for them and tremendous sadness. I speak so strongly because this terrible tragedy drives me to prayer that God in mercy and grace will revive his church again, and look with pity and love on these poor people who do not know where their future is bringing them.

As we continue to verse 14 of 2 Peter 2, Peter's warning becomes even more urgent. He is being carried along by the Holy Spirit, being filled with the love and care for the lost in the heart of God. So Peter makes even more clear the evil and harm Satan promotes through these false witnesses. He says 'with their eyes full of adultery'. We need to appreciate this awful adultery. Adultery is unfaithfulness to a married partner by going after another which is not their true married partner. As we have already indicated, this is not necessarily only referring to physical adultery, and it may be true that in marriage these false witnesses are found to be faithful to their wives or husbands. It is a spiritual matter. It is departing from faithfulness to the Lord, and his word of truth in the Bible, even claiming that by using and rely on their reason and opinions, they are justified to decide what is truth to be

believed or not in the Bible, and they are justified to question God's word. This is terrible spiritual adultery, for God has given the Bible in its entirety as revelation of himself in wondrous love, grace and mercy.

The next phrase continues to vigorously apply this truth about false witnesses. He says 'they never stop sinning'. In other words they persevere in trusting in their false opinion, and continue to persevere in promoting them more and more to other people. This is their continual action and mind as they live. It speaks of firmly holding fast to their opinions, and forcefully doing this by despising those who are faithful to the truth, and causing people to think that those who are faithful to the truth are ignorant fools, in order to cause people to despise those are faithful to the truth, and so to listen to false opinion and reject the truth.

The next phrase in Peter's witness against false witnesses is 'they seduce the unstable'. The truth today in the visible church is that there is a terrible famine of the word of God. In most churches there will be a sermon preached at some appointed place in the service. But the sermon will be absent of Bible exposition and explaining; but using the words of the Bible and from them simply speaking human opinions, and pious thoughts, of everyday wisdom in society. They uphold things like love, and kindness. They commend peoples' way of life. They deal with people's difficulties in a human kind of way; but the truth of God is hardly spoken of. There revelation of God in the Bible is absent; the cross of Christ is hardly evident. They neglect speaking of the sinfulness of all of us in the site of God, and how desperately we need the Saviour from sin, death and hell. They tell people they are good, and speak of sin in terms only of terrible evils like murder, and theft, and the like

They seem to preach only to entertain and please the congregation. They have no conception of humanities terrible condition of death and separation from God due to our first parent Adam's disobedience to God. To so many clergy the first three chapters of Genesis can not be believed because science and the theory of evolution is the gospel they espouse.

Peter, in continuing his warning in verse 14, may seem to us as going almost over the top. Peter goes on describing false witnesses, because he is so concerned at the harm they do to souls. His words are 'they are experts in greed – an accursed brood'. It seems difficult see what they are greedy for in this modern age. In Peter's time such false witnesses may have taught as they did so that they may increase their worldly wealth, but today many who the Bible call false witnesses sacrifice greatly in their desire to help other people, though in the past so many clergy enter the ministry for a quiet life.

All ministers need to be concerned about the temporal and social condition of people. This is not denied or questioned. But ministers are there to care for peoples' spiritual and eternal needs, for these are more important than any temporal needs. In the past the church has been criticised for neglecting ordinary present human need, and to only speak of what these critics have called pie in the sky, and neglecting pie in the now. But all of us have spiritual and eternal needs. This present life is so very short when compared with eternity. None of us can live forever. The length of our human life is not in our control. Only God decides when this life is over and we enter eternity. How important to know and receive eternal safety.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe on him, should not **perish** (in hell), but Page 25

have eternal life (in the peace and joy of heaven and the presence of God). The love of God in giving his Son as this scripture declares is infinitely great. He sent his Son to perish in hell in our place; and in this way Jesus could fully and completely satisfy all that the holiness of God demands, so that God may justly be able to forgive and save all that come to him through faith in Christ. What incredible love this is. It is beyond understanding. In Christ God suffered so that he could be able to forgive sinners. It is right that we accept and believe that God is over all, and can do all things, which we see demonstrated in bringing all the universe into being and sustaining it, but God has demonstrated that he is unable to deny any part of his being. God has revealed himself as holy, holy of holiness. and he therefore is unable to overlook anything, any behaviour or thought, which is contrary to his holiness. So he gave himself in the person of his well-beloved Son, to fulfil all his righteousness, so he could 'be just when he justifies the ungodly'. O love beyond compare, that I so terrible a sinner in his site, could have my sins washed away in the blood of Jesus, and be loved by God for all eternity.

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