

**Jude - verses 12-19** a study for Gulf Coast Baptist Church  
Sunday Evening Breakouts by Steve Thomas 7-21-24

**Introduction**

After reminding the readers of the instances where God brought instant judgement on evil doers, Jude takes aim at those who are teaching false doctrine in their midst. He uses several word pictures to describe their attitude and actions in the testimony. He warns of the coming judgement that will be brought on these individuals, quoting an ancient manuscript that the people must have been familiar with. He wraps up this section by reminding the believers of the words of Jesus Christ, and begins to give the believers actionable steps that will reflect the grace of God in their lives.

**Jude Describes the “Certain Men”**

*Rocks covered with water, shepherding themselves, clouds without water, twice dead trees with withered fruit, wild waves spewing shame, wandering stars* - Each of these metaphors show the danger of the men that have crept in unawares. They demonstrate things that are for one purpose, but actually failing and causing harm on those around them.

*Rocks covered with water* is a metaphor demonstrating the hidden danger to mariners that approach the shore. If the pilot of the ship is unable to see the rocks, they might strike these rocks and ground or damage the ship. Jude alludes to the hidden dangers that these men and their false doctrine produce for the believer.

*Shepherding themselves* reveals the selfish intentions of these men as they attend the feasts feeding themselves before allowing the people to get their needs met. These men care nothing for the wellbeing of the flock, making sure that they are taken care of first.

*Clouds without water* alludes to the emptiness of the true substance of these men. Church leaders should have more to them than empty words. The shepherd gives his life for the sheep, and does not profit and get well-fed while they starve. When the farmer sees clouds, he hopes that they bring rain, to benefit his fields. If the cloud will block the sun, at least it can bring life-giving moisture to the crops. If these clouds have no water, then they are useless for the farmer, bringing false hope. These clouds are carried about by winds, demonstrating the lack of stability in these false teachers.

*Twice dead trees with withered fruit* is a clear description of wood that is only fit for the fire. The tree is not producing life-giving fruit, but is fruitless, and then uprooted, now twice dead. Any fruit that was produced did not last, but withered. It is lifeless for not bearing any beneficial fruit, and it is now lifeless for not taking nutrients and growing at all because it has been uprooted.

*Wild waves spewing out disgraces* - When the sailor sees foam on the waves, they know that they are dangerous and should be avoided. These men should be avoided for the shipwrecking that

they could cause the saint. The apostle Paul describes the false teachers at Philippi “whose glory is their shame” (3:19). These individuals are proud of things that they should actually be ashamed of.

*Wandering stars* is a reference to the shooting star that is useless to the navigator at night because it gives no lasting light, nor provides information that allows the sailor to know where he is. Sailors used the stars to navigate the seas, plotting the safest and best course for those traveling by ship. If the stars are not visible, then navigation is impossible. The only thing worse than no stars, are stars that are not reliable, and serve no purpose.

### **The Book of Enoch**

This book was a manuscript whose authorship is unknown and written around 300-200 BC. The blue letter Bible labels it pseudographia - meaning a book that was claimed to be written by one author but was not. This was over 3000 years after Enoch lived. Enoch was the father of Methuselah who died the year of the great flood of Noah. The words referenced in Jude are found in the manuscript of the book of Enoch, but they are also found in Deuteronomy 33:2. It is not important to establish the validity of the Book of Enoch because it is not a part of the canon of scripture. As believers we will not recognize anything from this book that hasn't already come from authoritative scripture. The books of Enoch (there are three) add much to scripture, but the believer should focus here on what can be referenced by the canon. It is possible that Enoch did make this prophecy, and it was handed down verbally for Moses to include it in Deuteronomy. It is likely that the parts of the verbal record of the people of Israel survived to be included in the Torah. Moses, in his last blessing to the people, included part of the verbal record attributed to Enoch in his blessing. The author of the book of Enoch also included parts of this written record mixed in with what was most surely fiction.

The point of this passage is that God will hold those false teachers accountable and will come with the hosts of heaven to give judgement to the evil doer.

Jude closes this portion by calling the men complainers, murmurers. Each of these words is only used once in the NT, in this passage. He does say that they show a respect of persons to their own advantage. They show a greater level of respect to those who can bring them benefit. Be careful of someone who will only give time and effort to one who can reciprocate. The true servant serves all, even those who have nothing to offer him.

### **Mockers, Walking after their own lusts, Sensual and Spiritless**

Jude closes with the words of Christ. Giving a final indictment of these men showing that they are not serious (false teacher or scoffer), only fulfilling their own desires. The Word for sensual is the soulish man in Corinthians that cannot understand the things of God. He does not have the Spirit of God. They make separations (a work of the flesh) that God does not make.