

# Natural Disasters

Jude 12-13

Jude

a study of the epistle

## Jude 12-13

**12** These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; **13** wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

## William Barclay wrote:

“This is one of the great passages of invective of the New Testament. It is a blaze of moral indignation at its hottest... ‘Sky, land and sea are ransacked for illustrations of the character of these men.’”

## Three Dangers in v. 12

1. “hidden reefs in your love feasts”
2. “feast with you without fear”
3. “caring for themselves”

# Hidden Reefs?

- **KJV:** “These are spots in your feasts of charity”
- **NIV:** “These people are blemishes at your love feasts”
- **Parallel Text in 2 Peter 2:13 –**  
“They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you”

# σπιλάδες – “hidden reefs”

- *spilos* – “stain” or “spot” (2 Peter 2:13)
- *spilas* – “a rock in the sea, ledge, reef”

The most common usage in Greek literature refers to rocks, and so, I think the idea here is that the false teachers were like hidden reefs concealed from ships trying to make safe passage into harbor.



# ἀγάπαις – “love feasts”

What is a “love feast?”

During “love feasts” the early Christians shared a meal together that probably was consummated by the celebration of the Lord’s Supper.



# Joseph Bingham wrote:

“The first Christians had all things in common, as we see in the Acts of the Apostles; and when that ceased, as it did in the apostles’ time, this came in its room, as an efflux or imitation of it. For though the rich did not make all their substance common, yet, upon certain days appointed, they made a common table; and when their service was ended and they had all communicated in the holy mysteries, they all met at a common feast: the rich bringing provisions, and the poor and those who had nothing being invited, they all feasted in common together.”

- *From Manners & Customs of the Bible (p. 549)*

## Acts 2:42, 46

**42** They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer...**46** Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart”

**A Problem in Corinth, as Well**

**Turn to**

**1 Corinthians**

**11:17-22, 33-34**

# The Purpose of the Feast

- The love feast was supposed to be a powerful symbol of the love that flowed among believers.
- Jude is warning his readers that all was not what it seemed—some of those present in the love feasts were dangerous, pretending to be full of love but hiding their dangerous teaching and lifestyle that threatened the church.

## 2. “feast with you without fear”

- Alternate translation: “shamelessly”
- They felt no pang of conscience in participating in such meals, even though their lifestyles were not characterized by love.
- Perhaps they are excluding some from the table, as well.

**What reason is there to fear?**

**Turn Back To**

**1 Corinthians**

**11:23-32**



“And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things.”

**Acts 5:11**



3. “caring for  
themselves”

**ESV:**  
“shepherds  
feeding  
themselves”

**ποιμαίνοντες**



**I Believe**

**Jude has**

**Ezekiel 34:1-10**

**in Mind**

# These False Teachers

- Were aspiring leaders in the church, claiming that they had the ability to lead and guide the people of God.
- **But, in reality, they had no concern for anyone but themselves; they did not exert effort and care for the flock but instead used their positions of leadership to establish comfort for themselves.**

## Isaiah 56:11

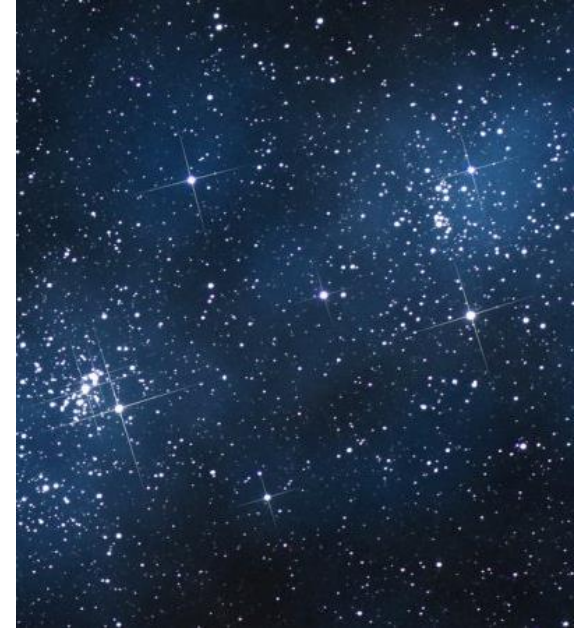
“And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who have no understanding; They have all turned to their own way, Each one to his unjust gain, to the last one.”

# This is the Antithesis of Jesus

**Matthew 18:12** “What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying? **13** If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray.

# 1 Peter 5:1-3

1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 **shepherd** the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.



# Jude Gets Natural

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## 4 Illustrations from Nature

1. “clouds without water”
2. “autumn trees without fruit”
3. “wild waves of the sea”
4. “wandering stars”

# 1. “clouds without water”

- Israel is a dry climate, entirely dependent upon rains at crucial times to sustain life.
- **When rain is desperately needed and thick clouds appear, the hope for rain climaxes.**
- If no rain falls, and the wind carries them away, bitter disappointment follows.
- **The false teachers are like these clouds.**



## John 4:13-14

**13** Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; **14** but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

**Again, these men are the antithesis of Jesus and His gospel.**

## Proverbs 25:14

“Like clouds and wind  
without rain Is a man  
who boasts of his gifts  
falsely.”

## 2. “autumn trees without fruit”

- Like clouds without rain, the false teachers are also trees without fruit.
- It is autumn, and the tree should have produced its fruit, however, there is no fruit to be found.
- Matthew 7:20 – “So then, you will know them by their fruits.”

## Psalm 1:3

“He will be like a tree firmly  
planted by streams of water,  
Which yields its fruit in its  
season And its leaf does not  
wither; And in whatever he  
does, he prospers.”

# And Not Only That

- They are “doubly dead”
- **A few interpretations:**
  - They were dead before their “conversion” and had died again by virtue of their apostasy.
  - **Jude is referring to the second death, in which they will die eternally.**
  - It is an emphatic statement emphasizing that they are completely dead.

**And they have been “uprooted”**

- **In Matthew 15:13, Jesus said:**

**“Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.”**

## In the OT – Psalm 52:5

“But God will break you  
down forever; He will snatch  
you up and tear you away  
from your tent, And uproot  
you from the land of the  
living.”

**They Are Not His**

**Look at**

**John 15:1-8**



### 3. “wild waves of the sea”

- Not only do these men lack good works, but they specialize in evil ones.
- Once again I think Jude has the OT in mind, specifically Isaiah 57:20 –  
“But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud.”

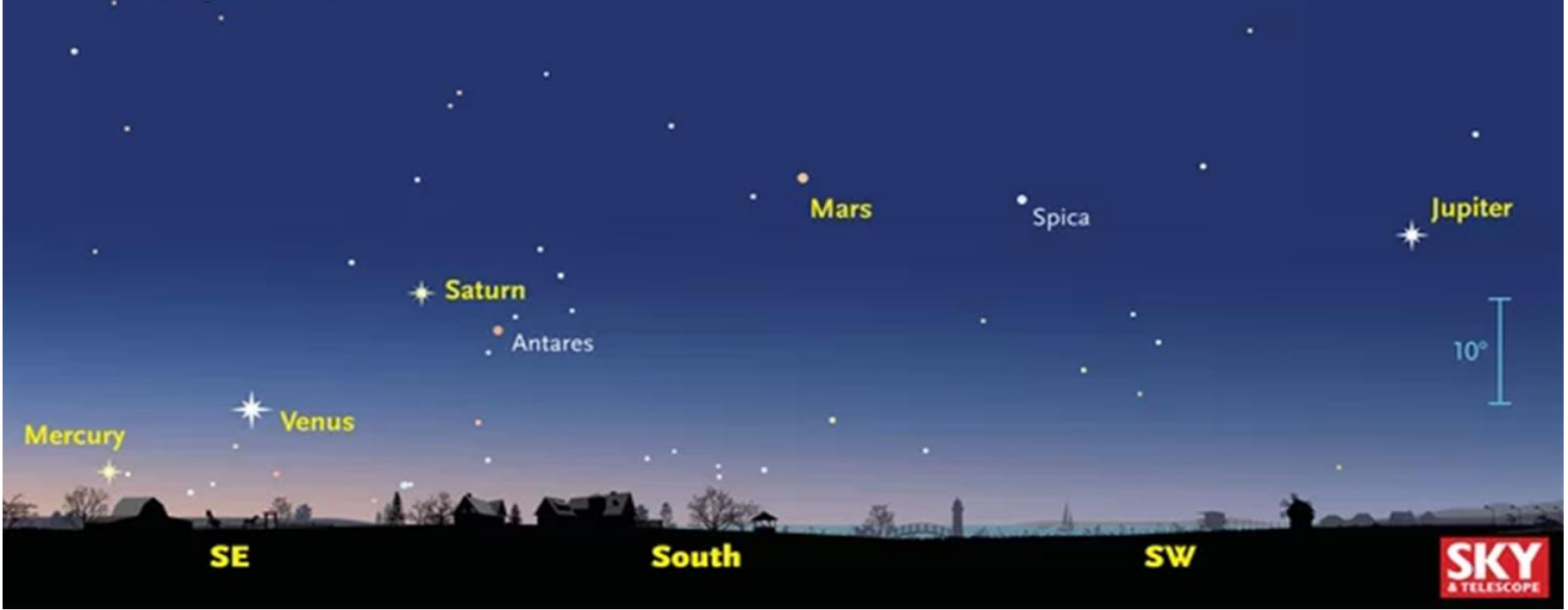


## 4. “wandering stars”

How Do Stars  
“Wander?”

## Five Planets at Once

45 minutes before sunrise



It is possible that Jude has planets in mind here.

*planetai* – “wandering”

# Traveling in the Ancient World

- The stars were often your map.
- Hence, if you mistakenly began following a planet (or as Jude says, a “wandering star”), you are being misled.
- And of course, the false teachers themselves have wandered from the source of truth into blasphemy.

# And the Judgment Remains

“for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever”

- 2 Peter 2:17 uses the same terms, and this parallels the fate of the angels in v. 6 –

“And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day”

# “Darkness” in Matthew

- **8:12** – “but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness”
- **22:13** – “Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness’”
- **25:30** – “Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness”

# Those 3 Verses All End the Same:

“in that place there will be weeping  
and gnashing of teeth.”

The future punishment of the  
wicked will be horrible, and it should  
provoke fear in all who think to  
oppose God.



# BRING



Next Week:

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**Jude Goes Extra-Biblical Again!**

