

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 4



ISRAEL AS A REMINDER

Scripture Text: Jude 5

*Contend
for the faith
which was
once delivered
to the saints
Jude 1:3*

In this Scripture, Jude has introduced illustrations to remind the saints of the terrible consequences that came upon ones in the past who did not believe. It is revealed to us that the Lord does not hold people responsible for what they have never seen or understood. The real danger to the saints is that after having known truth, walked in it, and testified to it, they might let it become a reality of the past. This is just how apostasy works. It moves people from the position they occupy in the truth to a totally different position, while all the time they think they have not moved. That is why God prompted Jude to bring up these Old Testament examples.

MEMORY VERSE: *For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.*

—Galatians 2:18

Stirring Our Remembrance

I will therefore put you in remembrance. This phrase reveals three things. One, knowledge is necessary for there to be sin. **James 4:17** tells us, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” Jesus said, “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth” (**John 9:41**).

Two, man is a forgetful creature. God ordained that we constantly be reminded by the ministry. **2 Peter 1:12-13** states: “Where-fore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance.”

Three, being repetitious is the evidence of a good minister (see **1 Timothy 4:6**). We should never become weary with repetition, for just as it is in the military, repeated drills can mean the difference between life and death.

The Great Deception

Though ye once knew this. This statement is proof that apostasy had truly made an inroad in Jude’s day and was effective in its work even as it is today. Precious truths that were once carefully considered and lovingly guarded were being viewed as excessive or fanatical and looked upon with disdain and scorn. **2 Peter 2:22** describes it this way: “But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” A dog that returns to its own vomit partakes of what once made it sick.

Apostates build again what they once destroyed. They are people who have moved to a past-tense experience while making a present-tense profession, just as Saul did. Saul said, “Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD” (**1 Samuel 15:13**). He thought he had obeyed. The truth was, he had disobeyed! This is the deception of apostasy.

Unbelief and Pride

How that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. Here Jude was confronting those who had been moved by apostasy with the sobering reminder of the Exodus account (see **Numbers, Chapters 13-14**). Israel was at the very borders of the Promised Land, at Kadish-Barnea. Twelve spies had been sent out to survey the land. Of the twelve, ten brought back an evil report

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that caused the people to murmur against Moses and Aaron. God heard their words and saw their unbelief. He said, “Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness” (**Numbers 14:29**). Of those who were twenty and older, only Joshua and Caleb made it into Canaan.

We must know one thing to understand this example: the men who were corrupting the church then did not regard themselves as enemies of the truth. They considered themselves to be advanced thinkers—a cut above the ordinary saints. They were, by their own estimation, the spiritual elite. Jude chose this example of old Israel to show that even if God has favored people with great privileges, they can still fall away into disaster. Consider those in the past: Adam, Samson, Saul, Solomon, Judas, and Demas. We must be on constant watch against that which could destroy us.

New Testament Warnings

The remembrance of what happened to old Israel haunted the minds of the New Testament ministers, who were as responsible for leading God’s people as Moses was in the Exodus. The Israelites had been delivered miraculously, just as the people in our study of Jude were genuinely delivered out of sin, but later on they were *destroyed*. Why? Because of their unbelief. We must believe the report and obey the Gospel to stay saved. Those with the sense of a superior spirituality do not feel they need to believe. They are moved by spirits with teachings that are contrary to sound doctrine. This is why Paul said, “But with many of them God was not well pleased . . . Now these things were our examples” (**1 Corinthians 10:5-6**).

Jude as well as Paul was trying to awaken those who were falling prey to the enemy so that they would not repeat the errors of the past. John Wesley warned, “Let none presume on past mercies, as if they were out of danger.” **1 Corinthians 10:12** warns, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” There is no place of safe spiritual footing except the place of full obedience.

JUST A THOUGHT

**It is a terrible thing to fall,
but it is worse yet to fall and think you are still standing!**