

Jude 1:12-13

“Five pictures from nature”

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- II. Unseen danger
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I. Intro.

We started examining Jude’s words verses 12-13 into the realm of poetry in the use of five word-pictures that directly and indirectly revealed three things:

1. As five characteristics of false teachers
2. As five conditions that plague fallen humanity
3. As the exact opposite of what Jesus offers humanity in the giving of Himself

We also took time looking at these five word-pictures generally as we discovered three things about them:

- A. These five word-pictures are natural phenomena! None of these five word-pictures are outside the realm of reality; they are NOT supernatural in nature as they normally occur.
- B. These five word-pictures are meant to compliment BUT NOT complete the truths with regards to false teachers. These five-word pictures are not duplicates of what Jude has already wrote. Instead they offer further revelation on false teachers!
- C. These five word-pictures can be best understood when we consider them from three different criteria: What they illustrate, What they represent and What Jesus is in contrast

This morning we will go back to them and complete them from not only the five-word pictures but also the commentary that Jude offered after each of them.

II. Unseen danger

Vs. 12a “*These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves*”. As noted the words “Spot” in the Greek only appears here in the NT and refers elsewhere in ancient Greek literature as a reef or hidden rock. Jude uses this word-picture to describe the Unseen danger these false teachers presented the body of Christ. The reason for this was that they were invisible to most of the Church as they were in calm and safe waters and not

the turbulent seas of the world. Jude says they were under the surface of detection and were “reefs” in the love feasts that brought shipwreck to many who were drawn into their current. The custom of the first church was to hold feasts known as “love feasts” and the word used for love here is agape and it was usually held around when they took part in the Lord’s supper or communion. It was common for those who were blessed with more provisions to love on the those with less and provide enough food so all could enjoy. But based upon the words here as well as Paul’s teaching on this in his letters to the Corinthian church; some of those that gathered brought only enough for themselves or those that were wealthy to the exclusion of those that shared fellowship with them in Christ. They would flaunt their wealth instead of sharing it and this even became decadent as they got drunk so that Paul had to rebuke them. Jude recognizes the root of this was “selfishness” and is always present with false teachers who unlike Jesus have come to “be served” and not to serve. These selfish leaders see themselves as better than those that they take advantage of. This selfishness reveals that they don’t belong to be in the company of true believers and are showing that they have fallen away from the truth.

III. False promises

Vs. 12b *“They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds.”* As noted last week, this word-picture is best interpreted based upon the location of where it was first offered. Israel is a very arid climate with little water while being an agrarian society which was almost completely dependent upon rainfall as they practiced “dry farming”. It is interesting to note that Jude uses the same illustration that Jesus did in Luke 12:54 in the opposite way. Jesus said, *“Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming’; and so it is.”* The clouds Jude writes about as an illustrations of the teaching of false teachers is that they give **“false promises”** of refreshment to a thirsty world, and they bring no truth only disappointment.

Solomon wrote of them the same way saying in Proverbs 25:14 “*Whoever falsely boasts of giving is like clouds and wind without rain.*” Their “***false promises***” are due to a “***false profession***” as they had never received the gift of “***living Water***”. “Clouds without water” can only produce “***the croups of deception and discouragement***” to those look to their path to refresh them. Another problem with these false teachers is that ***their teaching only darkens skies of truth which dims the vision of the “Son of Righteousness”!*** It is of further interest to realize that the words “without water” are the same words used in Matthew 12:43 of “dry places” in which unclean spirits go. This suggests that there is a correlation between false teaching and demons that influence them as Paul warned Timothy in 1 Tim 4:1, when he wrote “*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.*” These clouds are “caried about by the winds” Jude declares but it is the winds of this world and wicked spirits that is driving their teaching. They are as Paul warned in Eph. 4:14 when he encouraged the Christian to no longer be like little children who are, “*tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.*” Clouds cannot go where they please they must go where the wind carries them and either it is the wind of the Holy Spirit or the aimless lies of demons. What a contrast to what the Word of God by the Spirit of God offers as we are told in Proverbs 25:25 that this is “***As cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a far country.***”

IV. Barren profession

Vs. 12c “*Late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots.*” As noted last week, the Greek word for “autumn” is a word used for a season where fruit is harvested. There are many prophetic passages that speak to a “late harvest” of souls when the world will be ripe for evangelism but also for judgment. Jesus said in Matt. 13:30 that He will gather His wheat of true

believers into His barn, but He also warned in Matt. 15:13 of what Jude does here and that is that every plant, which God the father had not planted will be up rooted. Based upon this passage we know that Jesus was speaking of the Pharisees and Jesus said that those that would not accept His teaching would be rooted up. Those that follow God word are likened to “Trees planted by rivers of water” according to Psalm 1:3. Here in verse 12 Jude speaks of false teachers as trees but uses the illustration to warn those who would listen to them that they are “*twice dead*” that is without any “*fruit*” and “*without any roots into truth*”! **These false teachers were dead: In the fruit of profession and they were dead in the root of possession?** Their fruitlessness was a sign of their absence of life. Their uprooting will be their 2nd death as their doom is sealed as the tense of this verse suggests that in the sight of God they are already uprooted and will be cast into the fire. The damage that false teachers have done to souls is something that those who have been given the charge to teach the truth great reflection on the consequences if we are not faithful stewards as we shall receive stricter judgment!

V. Wasted effort

Vs. 12d “*Raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame.*” Here is another illustration that the Bible used frequently. It is used of those who do not know God as Isa 57: 20-21 we are told that the “*Wicked are like troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.*” Jude picks up on this idea as he describes false teachers as wild waves who try change the truth and all they do is reveal their own shame. They have great shows of passion and sincerity of conviction, but it isn’t of the truth it’s against the truth! The motion and emotion of the false teacher can never have any affect upon the rock of truth it will only pound upon that which will never be moved. The illustration serves as a reminder for those who are prone to follow the instrument instead of evaluating what the

instrument is playing. The Christian and Church will only be tossed to and fro if they are into the waters of false teachers instead of the rock of the Word of God. It is God's word that stills the storms and calms the seas that false teachers exclaim. Such false teaching is ineffectual against truth no matter how many waves sent to pound against it as the waves only in up foaming up their shame defeated by the truth of God's Word. Throughout church history there have been waves of false teachers who have sent the full force of their lies upon the rock of truth and many have been shipwrecked their faith. But those who make their stand upon God's word will always be able to withstand the continual attacks against God's truth.

VI. Aimless course

Vs. 12e "*Wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*" Our world is one of many planets revolving around a sun. It is from this continual track that we enjoy light and climate that is controlled. If we weren't on this consistent track we all be wandering away from life! This is how Jude describes false teachers as those who tempt people with their brief brilliance as they enter our atmosphere only to pass out of view or crash into something solid. These falling stars are impressive for a moment but are erratic in their direction as they come claiming illumination, but they are only because they are doing so under the brilliance of the Sun. It is only He that is the light of the world not these imposters. They have no order as does truth they aren't stars that are all on a course as the planets and galaxy's instead they are mere fragments, disconnected from what they were once attached to. They have no orbit and once they move away from that which illumination they steal they will end up only in darkness, forgotten

dislodged from what they could have been. These comets only give an impression of illumination but move away from the order of the truth of the Creator they claim to represent. The darkness is the end of their aimless journey, they offer love but are on the run from the One in whom has demonstrated Love! These five word-pictures do far more than point out characteristics of false teachers as they point to the amazing blessings God has granted us to be students of His Word!