

# The Sound of Sirens

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Father, we come into this place perhaps joyful. Maybe we come into this place sorrowful and grieving.

! Some of us come here because there is real hurt and pain,! whether physical or emotional, mental. Perhaps some of us come to this place feeling some measure of spiritual distance.

Between you and us. Maybe this week has not gone the way that we hoped or the way that we planned, the way that we expected or dreamed, and yet here we are again, gathered with your people to sing songs that remind us of your goodness, your greatness, your grace, your glory, and to also find ourselves now in your presence, before your word, desiring to hear what you would say to us.

So would you please speak to us through your word, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Help us to see those things that we need to see this morning, to understand those things that are meaningful and relevant and important for us for this particular morning.

Help us to turn our attention again to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen. This is Jude, starting at verse number 3.

[ 1 : 38 ]     Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels, who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day.

Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

And yet, in like manner, these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones.

[ 3 : 03 ]     But, when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke you.

But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand. And they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

At High Point Networks, I occasionally take part in conversations where we warn customers about potential security threats.

We call these indications or indicators of compromise. There are signs that malicious activity has already happened in their network or perhaps we're concerned because we're seeing something that looks like malicious activity may occur in their network.

Some customers take these conversations seriously. Others delay and disregard or assume the best.

[ 4 : 18 ] And I want to tell you that how customers respond to this conversation can mean all the difference between minor damage and a full-scale network security breach.

Warnings matter. Think of your parent saying, No dessert unless if you finish your dinner.

When the homemade ice cream comes out and you're stuck with cold roast beef, you learn warnings matter.

I confess that I can be a little cynical around the hype around storms. Social media gets crazy. Weather apps blow up your phone with notifications.

But listen, when the thunder rolls and you hear the sound of sirens, it's wise to take shelter.

[ 5 : 24 ] Because when the power flickers, you will be thinking, Hello darkness, my old friend. And you will know in that moment that warnings matter.

Or imagine this. Someone pulls a prank. They peel off the warning labels off a bottle of poison and they replace it with a cheerful cartoon smiley face with the thumbs up.

Maybe there's even a sticker that says, Delicious. Berry Blast flavor. What would you think about that person? This is not a funny prank, is it?

Removing the warning does not make the poison less dangerous. It makes it more deadly. It's more likely that someone will be harmed, maybe even killed, because the truth has been covered up.

This is exactly what Jude says is happening in the church. People have crept in unnoticed. And they have relabeled sin as grace, rebranded rebellion as freedom, and rejected the authority of the Lord Jesus, all while claiming to be speaking for God.

[ 6 : 51 ] And so Jude finds it necessary to appeal to the church to contend for the faith. I hope that you hear the sound of sirens today, not because I want to scare you, not because I am here to stir up drama like a storm chaser.

I want you to see God's perspective. I want you to recognize the danger of relabeling sin. I want you to see the grace of warnings, grace that keeps us from drifting into unbelief and godliness and ungodliness.

In Jude 4, he asserts that those who crept in unnoticed are destined for judgment. And then in verses 5 through 7, he reminds his readers of three examples of God's judgment.

Notice the first one in verse number 5. Now, I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

God, or as some manuscripts say, Jesus saved the nation of Israel from centuries of slavery in Egypt.

[ 8 : 22 ] He did this deliverance through a powerful display of miracles. we call them the ten plagues. But even though they saw God's deliverance, when they arrive at the borders of Canaan, they didn't believe God.

They doubted his promise. They doubted his power to be able to actually get them into the land. And so, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, during 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, every adult who Jesus saved out of Egypt was also destroyed because of unbelief.

Jude's first warning, remember the danger of unbelief. It leads to judgment.

judgment. This isn't just a story of Israel's failure. This is a mirror for us. Those who do not persevere in faith forfeit God's promises for the future.

Second example, verse number six. And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day.

[ 9 : 58 ] Now, you may recall that we saw a similar reference to rebellious angels in 2 Peter. So, let me just add a word or two more.

Most early interpreters, including Jude, who draws on another writing called One Enoch, most early interpreters understood this to refer to the angels in Genesis 6.

And, since he doesn't tell us that he's referring to a different angelic rebellion, then it seems safest to follow the traditional understanding.

So, what happened here? Well, these angels left their assigned place of spiritual authority. They took on a physical form and they entered into relationships with women, crossing a boundary that never should have been crossed.

Now, some may demur from this particular interpretation, and often they will point to Jesus' teaching in Matthew 22 and verse 30. There, Jesus says, in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven.

[ 11 : 13 ] But notice carefully what Jesus says here. Jesus says that angels don't marry. He does not say that they are incapable of appearing in male form or interacting physically.

In fact, you may recall that in Genesis 18, Abraham and Sarah host three angelic and visitors, visitors who they clearly perceive as men.

Jude offers then this second warning. Remember the shame of rebellion. It leads to judgment.

Now, I don't want you to think about this as just a bizarre side story from ancient tradition. This is God's gracious warning. God judges rebellion and no one, not angels and not you, are outside of his authority.

The angels who doubted, the angels, sorry, Israel who doubted, the angels who rebelled, and finally, the cities that indulged. Verse 7. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

[ 12 : 52 ] Now, I just mentioned Genesis 18. Two of those angels went on in Genesis 19 to visit the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Abraham's nephew Lot takes them into his home, but the men of the city surround his house, and they are enraged when Lot refuses to give them these two angels, who again, they clearly perceive to be men.

And as a result of their immorality and their unnatural desire, God destroyed the cities. Listen to Genesis chapter 19. This is verse 24 and 25.

Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities and all the valley and all the inhabitants of the cities and what grew on the ground.

Even to this day, the name Sodom is linked to perversion. And God's fiery judgment on these cities remains a warning for those who sin brazenly.

[ 14 : 14 ] Listen to Revelation chapter 21 and notice these similarities. Revelation 21 in verse 8. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.

death. Here's Jude's third warning. Remember the destiny of the immoral. Those who follow in the footsteps of Sodom and Gomorrah, flaunting what God forbids, will finally face his judgment and that for all eternity.

Notice how Jude connects these three examples of judgment to those who crept in to the church. Verse 8. Yet in like manner, these people also, if you're taking notes, you can draw a line from these people back up to verse 4.

Certain people, like in manner, yet in like manner, these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones.

Like the unbelieving Israelites, like the rebellious angels, like indulgent Sodom and Gomorrah, these people who crept in unnoticed will also receive God's judgment.

[ 16 : 22 ] Why? Because instead of keeping the faith, once for all delivered to the saints, Jude says they rely on their dreams.

rather than believing God's promise, they consider whatever appears in their subconscious minds as justification for their behavior.

If you dream it, you can do it with divine approval. Denying Jesus' authority, they sin openly, defiling themselves, perverting God's grace into sensuality, and arrogantly disregarding the power and influence of glorious ones.

Likely, Jude is referring here to demonic spiritual forces. Notice the connection between verse 8 and verse 9. verse 9.

But, in other words, in contrast to their behavior towards the glorious ones, but, when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, the Lord rebuke you.

[ 17 : 58 ] Now, you might be thinking, wait just a minute. I don't remember this story about Michael and Moses' body. And you are correct.

You are correct not to remember that. That's because this comes from an ancient source that is outside of scripture. An ancient source called, very likely, the assumption of Moses.

And God did not see fit to preserve this book for the church. And yet, Jude's reference to this contest over a corpse indicates that that story, at least, is true.

Perhaps God assigned Michael, the archangel, to care for Moses in his life, or perhaps he was assigned to attend to Moses' body after his death.

But there in that moment, the devil makes some kind of a legal claim to Moses' body. Perhaps because Moses was a sinner. Perhaps because Moses was a murderer.

[ 19 : 11 ] And even though the devil stood condemned, Michael doesn't talk or act presumptuously in his dealings with him.

He doesn't elevate himself to God's role as the one who judges the wicked, though he is an archangel, chiefly powerful among the hosts of heaven.

Michael recognizes and submits to God's prescribed limits. What is Jude doing here?

He uses this story about Moses' body to make a contrast. A contrast between Michael's humble trust in God's judgment and those who crept in unnoticed.

They speak arrogantly about glorious ones. They have no qualms about denying Jesus' authority in order to establish their own.

[ 20 : 20 ] Here's the result of their behavior in verse 10. Again, if you're taking notes, you can draw a line from these people back to verse 8, these people, and then back up to verse 4, certain people.

But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand. And they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

Now, we believe that Jude intends for this verse to be ironic, and as a result, the translation is challenging, and as a result, the meaning for us can feel a bit obscure.

so let me just try to paraphrase. Rather than relying on the Scripture, these people rely on their dreams, as if the vision softly creeping into their head at 2 a.m.

is some kind of divine revelation. And so they wake up and they declare, I've come to talk with you again. They claim knowledge of heavenly matters.

[ 21 : 39 ] They claim authority over demonic powers, and yet their understanding of such things is no greater than that of an animal's. And as a result, like the three examples that Jude has already provided, they will face eternal judgment, and they will pay the consequences for their sinfulness, which is really the only thing that they instinctively understand.

As we consider these people who crept in unnoticed, it is vital that we remember what is underneath their ungodliness. They deny, Jude tells us, our only master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

At its core, ungodliness is a rejection of Jesus' authority. And yet Jude gives us this striking contrast in Michael the archangel.

He does not seize authority for himself. He refuses to even accuse the devil directly, even deferring that to the Lord. Now, that's not weakness.

weakness. That's wisdom. That's humility before Jesus, the true and final judge.

[ 23 : 11 ] Jesus is the ultimate authority. He doesn't quarrel over corpses. Through his death, he destroys the one who has the power of death, Hebrews 2.

That is the devil. And let's not forget what Ryan reminded us recently. While the devil accuses, Jesus intercedes, the devil may accuse you of sin.

And I don't know, if you're anything like me, let's be honest. Most of the time, he's right. He's right to accuse us of sin.

But for those in Christ, not one of those accusations will stand. not one. Because in his resurrection, Jesus triumphed darkness, over sin, and over death.

Your hope is not in your cleverness, not in your strength, not in your ability to out-argue, out-maneuver Satan. So you don't need a community that is obsessed with spiritual warfare or deliverance ministries.

[ 24 : 42 ] Your deepest need is Jesus. Jude's warnings of judgment are shadows of greater judgment that every one of us will face.

We find this in Hebrews chapter 9. It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.

Your only hope on that day is Jesus's righteousness. Perhaps you professed faith in Jesus in the past, and yet you have found that that initial decision has not led to a growing knowledge of him, a deeper love for him, an increasing desire to obey him.

If that's you, don't wait. Hear his sweet call as we sang together this morning. Come to Jesus truly, fully, and life-changingly.

come, because the one who warns is also the one who will judge, but praise God, he is the one who also provides a perfect salvation.

[ 26 : 15 ] Heed God's grace, or face Jesus's judgment. Brothers and sisters, I am thankful that Jude dares to disturb the sound of silence with these warnings.

Warnings are not cruel. They are not restrictive. They are not limiting. You are not missing out by skipping the poison. You are being spared.

These warnings are God's grace, intended by God to wake us up, to call us to repentance, to redirect us before it is too late.

heed God's grace, or face Jesus's judgment. Sometimes you don't know what you don't know.

And when you finally discover what you didn't know, like when your network has been compromised, compromised, the damage is almost always more devastating because of the delay.

[ 27 : 32 ] Those who minimize, trivialize, or rationalize away God's gracious warnings are hearing without listening. They are rejecting the grace that is meant to draw them to faith.

by means of such warnings. God keeps you, church. It's by means of these warnings that God keeps you, that He preserves you in faith.

And so mindful of God's calling, God's loving, and God's keeping, let's also heed God's warnings. Let's respond with repentance, and with faith, and with obedience, not because we are so smart or so strong, but because we are confident that our God is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy.

Let's pray. good Father, we are so grateful for Your kindness to us in Christ. We are humbled to receive these warnings.

Thank You for preserving the book of Jude so that we could see these warnings and we could examine them, and we could begin to wrap our minds around what it is that Jude is trying to tell us, and really ultimately, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, what You are endeavoring to reveal to us.

[ 29 : 22 ] Thank You for these warnings. Please forgive us for seeing warnings as somehow limiting, reducing our freedom, making life hard or miserable.

people. Forgive us for seeing Your warnings that way. Cause us to repent and give us fresh eyes to see warnings as grace, warnings that are intended to preserve us, because You, Father, are committed to keeping us for Jesus Christ until that day.

Thank You for Your kindness to us in Christ. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for going to the cross and suffering and dying and defeating our adversary, the devil.

Thank You that we look forward to the day when He will finally and ultimately be banished and we will enjoy perfect, unbroken,!

eternal communion with You. Our bodies won't fail us anymore and our hearts won't be prone to wander and our minds won't be caught up with so many lesser things.

[ 30 : 52 ] We will see You, Lord Jesus. We will see Your face as Your revelation tells us and we will reign with You.

What grace is this that You would take sinners from the ash heap and lift us to Your glorious presence and seat us with You in the heavenly places.

O Lord Jesus, thank You for Your intercession for us. Please continue to preserve us in faith by Your grace for Your glory until You return.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.