

## Episode 14: Jude 12-13, 16

Welcome back. In this podcast we will finish with the remaining phrases in **Jude 12** and **13**, and for now we will skip **Jude 14-15** and instead pick up **Jude 16**. We will most definitely go back to **Jude 14-15**, but that will be in the subsequent podcast.

### *Jude 12-13*

...autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

### Triad 13: "autumn trees," "wild waves of the sea," "wandering stars."

*Autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted.*

Autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted. Clearly, the Spirit is being extremely sarcastic. What would make us think that we could expect to receive anything from a tree in this condition? Yet, for some reason (as with the clouds without water), we come running to this doubly dead and uprooted tree looking for something to eat.

"Autumn trees" refers to trees that are pre-winter/post fall, whose leaves have fallen off. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to expect there to be any ripe fruit on those trees. And not only is it beyond its fruit bearing season, in this case, **Yahweh** has pulled it out by its roots, and it is not alive—it is doubly dead (dead from the fruitless season and dead in fact).

Think of a Christmas tree. It stands there as a beautiful and central decoration in our holiday celebration. And despite its green needles and beauty, it is more than obvious that it is dead and dying (soon the green needles will be all over the floor) and its destiny is to be burned or thrown away. Jesus speaks to this as He warned us to watch out for false prophets. He said a tree is known by its fruit, or lack thereof.<sup>1</sup>

One critical piece of evidence indicating that a person is saved is the production of spiritual fruit. **Psalm 1:3** says that a spiritual man will be like a tree that is planted by streams of water, which yield its fruit in its season; and its leaf does not wither and in whatever he does he prospers. That is also the central theme of the parable of the farmer who scatters seeds.<sup>2</sup> Jesus talks about the seed which lands on different kinds of soil. It was however only when the seed landed on soft soil that it took root, grew up, and bore fruit.

These idioms mean that it does not matter how much a spiritual leader talks about the word of God, quotes the word of God, or does good deeds in accordance with the word of God, if their lives do not produce God's *agape* love—the fruit of the Spirit—it is all for naught. As the Spirit affirms, religious ceremony and activity means nothing, all that matters is faith expressing itself through God's *agape* love.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Matthew 7:15-22**

<sup>2</sup> **Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23**

<sup>3</sup> **Galatians 5:6**

The fact that they are known by their fruits, once again speaks to the reality that we must be able to judge and discern between the fruit of the Spirit<sup>4</sup> and the fruits of religion, which attempt to mimic the fruit of the Spirit. We must have discernment, we must be on guard, and we must not be fools. In fact, these ridiculous images (autumnal tree, doubly dead, uprooted, without fruit) make it seem that the condition of these people and their religious strivings are obvious for us to see and recognize.

Yet, it is sad that we keep running out to the dry clouds expecting to receive rain, and we keep running up to dead trees expecting to find something good and nutritious to eat. Are we that desperate? Are we that ignorant? Are we so lacking in discernment?

Perhaps we do see as the Spirit desires us to see, but we are too afraid to take a stand for the truth and risk the personal repercussions. After all, Jesus was clear that the persecution we will receive will come from those who are religious—our so called “brethren”—who are absolutely convinced they are doing a service for God.<sup>5</sup> Maybe we are too afraid to stop pretending and admit that the religion of Christianity is not working. Maybe it is because everyone else is looking for the clouds and running to the dead trees, and we do not want to be left behind.

Whatever the reasons why we miss the obvious or refuse to accept the obvious, I believe the Spirit uses these ridiculous examples because at one-time-or another we have all been taken captive in the name of being “good” Christians. Honestly, we ought to have stopped our striving in the religion of Christianity years and years ago, even if nobody else would have followed us. The truth is that the religion of Christianity did not work for us and it does not work for anyone.

The reason these teachers are like autumnal trees that are double dead and pulled out by the roots is because they still hold to and teach a “Christianized” form of the law where they convince people that there is something they must do, other than be **willing** to let God have his way with them, to earn favor, blessing, and attention from God.

But the law in every form, whether it is the law, my law, your law, or the law of anyone else that prescribes what we must do to experience God is just like these autumnal trees that are double dead and pulled out by its roots. This is so clear when the Spirit explains: “**When He said, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.**”<sup>6</sup> The first covenant was based on works and requirements to make one acceptable to God—to earn His favor and blessing. But this covenant has been made entirely obsolete since it was impossible for any man (other than Jesus) to keep the law. And being rendered in the *perfect* tense, it is a done deal. It is dead and now has vanished, it is doubly dead.

The writer of **Hebrews** penned these words shortly before the religion of Judaism and the Levitical system of worship was wiped off the face of the earth by the Roman Legions, never to be reinstituted. This tree of religion is dead, doubly dead, and pulled out from its roots. It has vanished.

Thus, law, in any format is entirely worthless to us, whether it is the law that we live under that makes us feel guilty if we did not have our quiet time or did not pray enough (if at all), the law that makes us feel guilty if we did not tithe 10% of everything, the law that makes us feel guilty that we did not witness to

<sup>4</sup> Note: fruit is singular not plural, it is fruit and not fruits. And that fruit is *agape* love.

<sup>5</sup> **John 16:1-3, 9:22; Isaiah 66:5; Acts 26:9-11**

<sup>6</sup> **Hebrews 8:13**

our co-workers, the law that tells us that we need to start a homeless ministry and reach out to the poor, the law that tells us we need to serve in the church, the law that tells us that when we sin we need to feel guilty, feel remorse, and repent, the law that tells us that we should have done it better, we could have done it better, and next time we will do it better.

*Wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam.*

The second phrase in **Triad 13** speaks of the “*wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame or disgrace*”.

Have you ever been on a beach immediately after a storm? It’s not pretty. The churning of the waves during the storm brings up all the muck and mire from the bottom of the sea and deposits it on the beach, and it leaves a foam or film that coats the shore. That is the visual image to which the Spirit wants us to connect—muck and mire.

Like the waves of the sea that bring forth filth, these apostates are loud, arrogant, and boastful. Their mouths continue to churn with all sorts of religious chatter, over-and-over-and-over again, never stopping! But all they really throw off is a disgusting foamy muck and mire. They may be able to talk a good story and say, “God this” and “God that,” but it all amounts to nothing but filth in their own lives and will produce nothing but muck in the lives of others.

The Spirit says that they cast up their own shame. That is an interesting phrase. The idea is that what they have to say, what they are presenting to others has, to their own shame, no power even though like waves they keep repeating the same teachings and the same worn-out doctrines of men over-and-over again, pounding their falsehood on the shores of humanity.

These are teachers whose mind and conscience are defiled for they profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.<sup>7</sup> These teachers are lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power. They are always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.<sup>8</sup>

And when we look beyond the position, the power, the authority, the platform, the disgusting foam that spews from their lives is evident for it is strewn all over the lives of those who listen to their incessant pounding of words. In their follower’s lives this disgusting foam looks like powerless religion, striving to be good, striving to do it right, striving to stop sinning, striving for love, striving for forgiveness, striving for penance, striving for acceptance by others, striving for validation, and doing that over-and-over-and-over-and-over again.

“But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt.” In contrast, the truly spiritual man brings up good treasures from the deep.<sup>9</sup>

*Wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.*

In the third phrase in **Triad 13**, the Spirit says they are like “*wandering stars*,” But take note, both “stars” and “wandering” are nouns, so it does not speak of an action but defines an existence. This

<sup>7</sup> **Titus 1:15-16**

<sup>8</sup> **See 2 Timothy 3:1-8**

<sup>9</sup> **Isaiah 57:20; Matthew 12:35**

statement has many allusions, and we get some of our understanding by the reference, *“for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.”*

On the surface, it seems that Spirit is referring to meteors. Planets, stars, and asteroids all have fixed orbits, but meteors wander about and seem to appear and then disappear back into the darkness as quickly as they came. They are like flashes of light which get swallowed by the darkness.

Now, the beauty of fixed orbits is that man can look to them to guide their paths during the night, since they are predictable and steady. However, the light that shines and then disappears into darkness is unreliable and cannot be followed. If you try to set your path by such flashes of light, you will spend most of your time wandering aimlessly through darkness.

That apply describes some of our time wandering around in the darkness of the religion of Christianity as we have followed various “flashes of light,” and it describes the life of anyone who has unwittingly fell into the deceptions of an apostate and attempted to follow them in their wandering ways.

Let us take this allusion to another level. In referring to the black darkness that has been reserved forever, the Spirit goes back to the judgment which God inflicted on the angels who abandon their proper abode (**Jude 6**) and uses that horror to illustrate the judgment which awaits the apostates, i.e., the darkness that has been reserved for them.

This language is not unlike the many references Jesus made about the kingdom, for instance: the tares that were sown alongside the seed, the fish brought in by the dragnet of the kingdom of God, those within His own household who are not dressed in wedding clothes, those foolish and evil servants, the foolish virgins who ran out of oil for their lamps, and those who ate and drank in His presence, who called to Him, “Lord, Lord” and prophesied in His name, cast out demons in His name, and in His name performed many miracles. They will all be tossed into outer darkness, in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **For many are called, but few chosen.**<sup>10</sup>

The Spirit is pleading with us to wake up and smell the roses and no longer follow those who walk in the way of Cain, or those who have abandon themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error, or those who follow in Korah's rebellious footsteps. They are on a path to destruction, *“for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.”*<sup>11</sup>

It is clear, the Spirit is telling us that we have been tolerant and have turned a blind eye for far too long in the name of Christianity. Therefore, no matter what you have been taught about being a “good” Christian, it is time to get in line with the Spirit and no longer allow these people to wreak havoc and destruction within your life or in the body of Christ.

Now, for the time being, we are going to jump over **Jude 14** and **15** which deals with an ancient prophesy attributed to Enoch, and move on to **Jude 16**, as it completes our **Triads** connected to the description of these apostates and it emphasizes once again how dangerous they are as their whole mode of operation is to take advantage and use other people. We will return to **Jude 14** and **15** in our next podcast.

<sup>10</sup> **Matthew 7:21-23, 8:10-12, 13:37-42, 47-50, 22:1-14, 24:45-51, 25:14-30; Luke 13:22-30**

<sup>11</sup> **Matthew 7:13**

**Jude 16**

These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

**Triad 14: “grumblers,” “malcontents,” “loud-mouth boasters.”**

Simply said, “these people” are out to please themselves to gain advantage of others for their own benefit—to satisfy their own sinful desires and to promote their own agenda of social and religious advancement. They are ministry builders who use others, in the name of God, to build their platform of achievement.

Here is how it works. Despite the image they present, they are grumblers, malcontents, and, just like Korah, they secretly influence others to be dissatisfied with their lives or with their present situation. Then from that place of dissatisfaction, these teachers attempt to steal others away and incite them to join in their (these leaders) pursuit of ministry, all to increase their own power and authority.

They are malcontents and love to find fault and point the finger of blame at those who are leading, as clearly the problems, disappointments, and calamities of life would change and improve if only there was a new leader. They truly hate it when they are not in the position of authority, the one calling the shots. Hence, like Korah, they will infect others with their grumbling and complaints against leadership (or whoever), all the while hoping others will join them in demanding that things must change. And it is amazing how fast grumbling and discontent can move through a body of “believers” and divide it over-and-over again until it is impotent and devastated. The Spirit addresses this dynamic head on when James wrote:

**James 3:5-12**

See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can saltwater produce fresh.

And the Spirit similarly warns us, “*But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.*”<sup>12</sup>

We must remember that the regardless of the position, platform, or authority a person holds, the fruits (or the deeds) of the *flesh* include, among many other things: enmities, strife, jealousy, disputes,

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<sup>12</sup> **Galatians 5:15**

dissensions, slander, gossip, arrogances, disturbances, and factions and those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God, regardless of how many times they said the sinner's prayer and, like Esau, sought repentance with tears.<sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup> As the Spirit says:

**James 3:14-16**

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

With their loudmouth boasting, they tell others what they can do, what they know, how smart they are, what they can provide, and how others would be better off following them as they have the knowledge, calling, and ability to create among other things, a vibrant growing ministry, and so on. And everyone wants to be a part of a vibrant growing ministry.

And what is weird is that there is something so busted within our humanity that many are captivated by such behavior and attitudes. You would think we would be completely repulsed and grossed out by such self-promotion; but we are not, we are drawn to it. It is sick, but people love to follow anyone who seems important, powerful, influential, and who promises they can lead us to places that are important, powerful, and influential.

Moreover, they gain advantage over others through favoritism and flattery, it is all a part of their seduction. We saw that with Korah and how he promised 250 men that they could burn the incense, i.e., hold a place of visible and extreme importance amongst the masses. Hence, they complement others, speak highly of them in front of others, always mentioning their amazing talent and giftedness. They even gloat over those they have targeted for their purposes making mention of their sincerity, faithfulness, loyalty, service, giving, and of course commitment to the Lord. It is just pure manipulation, and sadly that is now many ministries get the work done.

But we are complicit. The darkness of our *flesh* feeds on a powerful person lifting us up, making us feel important, and their wanting us. Do you understand? We are a big part of the problem as we are the ones who make it all possible for them. We give them their power in our lives as well as their platform of ministry because, like them, we lust for more and are not content with where God has us in our lives. Yes, we want more! The Spirit is **WARNING** us, however, that if we take the bait, these people will take and take and take from us until there is little to nothing left to give.

We are to be in such close fellowship with the Father that we do not fall prey to flattery but care only about the honor that comes from God, and not that which comes from man. In fact, the desire to honor man, specifically our religious leaders, is one of the reason Jesus says that we do not believe in Him.<sup>15</sup> Instead, we are to always be seeking God so that we might know **WHAT** He wants us to do **WHEN** He wants us to do it. Just because we have a gift does not mean that we are to always use that gift. It is

<sup>13</sup> **Galatians 5:19-21**

<sup>14</sup> See **2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:19-20; Hebrews 12:16-17**

<sup>15</sup> **John 5:44**

reserved for **Yahweh** and His timing.

**JESUS ALWAYS LIVED BY THE APPOINTMENTS WHICH HIS FATHER  
ESTABLISHED FOR HIM, AND NOT BY OPPORTUNITY OR BY NEED.**

Jesus lived by what His Father wanted Him to do when He wanted Him to do it, and not by what others wanted Him or expected Him to do.<sup>16</sup> For example, Jesus went to Samaria because He was literally bound by His Father to go. Jesus went to the pool of Bethesda and healed only one man among the masses of sick and dying people. In fact, He probably had to walk over many of them just to get to the one. Can you imagine? That is how we are to live; in fact, the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.<sup>17</sup>

In giving us these examples (unreasoning animals, Cain, Balaam, Korah, hidden reefs, clouds without water carried about by winds, autumn trees without fruit—doubly dead uprooted, wild waves of the sea, and wondering stars, grumblers, malcontents, and loudmouth boasters), **the Spirit is putting the onus on us to identify heresy and apostasy within the church and to give it no room in our lives.** He wants us to see what He sees and never be caught off guard by the obvious. He wants us to strip off our lenses of “good” Christianity and see clearly so we can have His discernment, His judgment, and His wisdom. This is how we will be protected from the damage of those who seek to destroy from within. The Spirit warns us to stay alert and remember that we are to only trust ourselves to Jesus as He lives in and through those who let Him.

### Summary of Jude 16

The Holy Spirit turned His lens of attention from the apostates to true believers. He did this because the only reason “these people” get leverage in the church is because true believers: 1) are not aware; 2) are not watching out for each other; and 3) are playing according to religious rules of “tolerance” and so called “love” instead of following the example which Jesus set for us, which is to oppose the lie and always, always stand for the truth.<sup>18</sup> Sadly, true believers have enabled these apostates to work their destruction and have given them their power, their platform, and their position.

And worse than simply enabling their destructive ways, true believers have adopted the instinctual religious wisdom of these apostates. But this is not the will of **Yahweh**. The Spirit urges us to reject the instinctual religious wisdom that we have been taught and to stop chasing after clouds that have no rain, stop running to doubly dead trees seeking the food that we are convinced we need, and to stop trusting ourselves to those who are given to tearing down others while indulging in self-promotion and boasting. They may act as if they are safe and that we are important and they need us, but they will shipwreck our lives.

This letter of **Jude** is for the bondservants of **Yahweh**. The apostates will not listen to it anyways. Those

<sup>16</sup> **John 4:4** (“had to” is rendered in the *imperfect active indicative* indicating it was a firm established appointment which He had to fulfill), **5:1-23, 30, 6:38**

<sup>17</sup> **1 John 2:6**

<sup>18</sup> See **2 Corinthians 13:8**

stuck in the religion of Christianity will also likely not listen to it, as far too many are committed to these types of leaders. This is not for them; it is for those who have ears to hear what the Spirit is now saying to the churches, so they can walk in truth and guard and protect the body of Christ from the evil plans of the enemy.

**THE SPIRIT IS PUTTING THE ONUS ON US TO IDENTIFY HERESY AND APOSTASY WITHIN  
THE CHURCH AND TO GIVE IT NO ROOM IN OUR LIVES.**