***Apostasy among Unbelievers - Jude 7  
  
JD07-02***

We are now studying Jude 7. You remember that Jude is writing about the subject of apostasy. Apostasy is the act of falling away from divine truth or from God's viewpoint. In our society today, this is the real problem. The problem is that we are headed for national discipline because we are an apostate society. Now we have an increasing number of individuals in our day who are moving away from what God thinks, and who are countering what God thinks, and violating the principles of God's viewpoint.

We have had three examples given to us here in the book of Jude concerning apostasy historically. The first was in Jude 5 which had to do with the Exodus generation and its apostasy in the wilderness. The Old Testament records this in Numbers 14. Apostasy brings death to a large segment of the population when it takes over. In the case of the Israelites, it destroyed everybody 20-years-old and up. In Jude 6, we had apostasy demonstrated among angels. This is recorded in Genesis 6 where demons married human women and created a hybrid race, all of which was a systematic attempt to frustrate Genesis 3:15 in the declaration that Jesus Christ would be born of a virgin, and therefore have pure humanity free of an old sin nature.

We are looking at Jude 7 now, which is apostasy among unbelievers. These particular unbelievers were expressing their apostasy (as apostasy always eventually does express itself) in sexual perversion. We have this incident that is referred to in Jude 7 recorded in Genesis 19. We are going to look at the destruction of two very famous cities, along with three others of the ancient world, Sodom and Gomorrah. There is something for us to learn from this historical record. That's why God put it in the Scriptures. Sodom and Gomorrah are classic examples of divine judgment on sin. Ultimately, all unbelievers face civil disaster on earth, and the lake of fire in eternity.

**Sodom and Gomorrah**

Beginning to read in Jude 7: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Sodom and Gomorrah were twin cities in the very fertile Jordan Valley. It was one of the most beautiful spots in all of the ancient world. You remember that when Lot and Abraham found that their herdsmen were contentious with one another, that Abraham said it would be best if we separated our living areas. He offered to Lot the option of choosing any place he wanted to live. Lot looked at this beautiful Jordan Valley where these five cities were located, and Lot elected to separate himself from Abraham and to take up his residence among the people of the Jordan plain.

Genesis 13:10-12 describes the quality, the fertility, and the beauty of this place. Sodom and Gomorrah were actually surrounded by three other major cities: Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar. We read about these in Genesis 14:2. We're talking about something that's over 2,000 years before Christ. It was somewhere around 2065 B.C. when these cities were great metropolitan centers. They had a population that ran up in the total of all these cities someplace perhaps in the matter of a couple of million people. They were located in what is now the southern end of the Dead Sea. Where these cities were located is therefore now under water. But in a few minutes of God's action upon them in divine judgment, He changed this fertile valley where these cities were located into a desert. Genesis 13:10 and 2 Peter 2:6 tell us about that.

So throughout the Old Testament, the prophets have used these cities as illustrations of apostasy. In Hosea 11:8, we have reference to Admah and Zeboiim. In Lamentations 4:6, we have a reference to Admah. In Jeremiah 49:18, we have reference to Zeboiim. Amos 4:11 refers to Zoar. All of these prophets wrote about apostasy. When they thought about illustrations of falling away from God's viewpoint, these cities of the plain were the classic examples.

Now the inhabitants of these cities were Hamites. They were descended from Ham. They formed the Canaanite people. The religion of this valley and of these five cities was based upon three major sexual perversions. One was homosexuality--sex between men; second was lesbianism--sex between women; and third, was bestiality--cohabitation with animals. This was really some place to live. It was a valley of psychotics. Lot chose to take his family; take his children; take himself and his wife; and, set up family life among these people with this kind of a religious expression. There are about as depraved a segment of humanity as you'll ever read about anywhere. They were not sick, like people like to say about society today. They were just plain downright depraved.

The records of secular history of these people, as you read the lifestyle of the people of these plain cities, just reads like a book on pornography. All the way through the historical records, it is one sexual perversion reflected after another in the practice and life of this people. Lot and his two unmarried daughters apparently were the only believers in all of this valley. These wicked cities were destroyed, but they did once have divine viewpoint. God's revelation was at one time known to the inhabitants of this valley, even in Lot's day. The chronologists tell us that there were 450 years between the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. At that time, Shem, one of the sons of Noah, was still alive. As a matter of fact he would have had 50 more years to live before he died. So there was direct contact with the cataclysm of the flood, and all that that told about God, and all the divine viewpoint that that had clarified. There were still people around who were giving out God's viewpoint even up to the time that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Apostasy begins with doubts in the mind, and it ends up inevitably in an expression of degradation.

**Jude 7**

So Jude 7 says, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them (these other three cities) in like manner." The punctuation in your Authorized Version is misleading. After the first few words, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah," there is a comma. Scratch out that comma. It's a mistake. The comma should not be there. If you have a newer translation, it probably won't be there. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah (and then there's a comma), and the cities about them in like manner." The impression that you have here is that the cities committed fornication even as Sodom and Gomorrah had. The impression you get here is that the cities are being compared in their fornication to Sodom and Gomorrah and their fornication. That's not what this verse is doing at all. This is not what the Greek is doing. This is what the English leads you to believe.

In other words, you have the impression that Jude 7 is saying this: "Sodom and Gomorrah, who gave themselves over to fornication, and went after strange flesh, and the cities about them, in like manner to Sodom and Gomorrah, who did the same, are set forth by an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." And that's wrong. That is not what the Greek is saying. You get that impression here because "like manner" is grammatically joined to "the cities about them." In English, it looks like that, but that is not the way it is in Greek. The Greek syntax does not present a comparison between the cities and Sodom and Gomorrah. It presents a comparison between Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities on the one side, and the angels of Jude 6 on the other side. This is very clear from the Greek. It is a wonder that there should even be any debate about the fact that these were evil angels cohabiting with human women. That's because there is no possible way to refer the phrase "in like manner" in Jude 7 to anything else but the angels in Jude 6.

Let me show you something. The Greek word for "cities" is "polis," and it is in the nominative case. The words "in like manner" are in the accusative case. In the Greek, we call "in like manner" an adverbial accusative. And adverbial accusatives are not related to the nominative case, which is cities, but to the verbs. They are adverbs, so they modify the verbs of the sentence. Adverbial accusatives always relate to the verbs of the sentence. The words of this sentence are "giving themselves over" and "going after." So we have to read the verse, "In like manner, giving themselves over and going after." That's what "in like manner" is connected with. It is not connected with the cities as if it was comparing what the cities were doing with that Sodom and Gomorrah we're doing.

The translation should read, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them," and that's where the comma should come. It is, "in like manner giving themselves over and going after." In other words, all of these cities together, Sodom, Gomorrah, and the three main cities of the plain, were doing something in like manner to someone else. Our question is, "Who is the someone else in this context, and what was the someone else doing that these cities and the inhabitants of these cities were doing?

Now, there is in the Greek language a word which is left out in your English translation. There is the word "toutois" which means "to these." "Toutois" is a masculine plural pronoun. It isn't even in the English translation in your King James Version. It is translated "to these." Now we pointed out that in the Greek, a pronoun has to agree with the word that it is referring back to, in its gender and in its number. Now "to these" is masculine plural. Where in the context of Jude 6 and 7 can we refer to "to these?" It cannot refer to the cities because they're feminine plural. It cannot refer to Sodom and Gomorrah because they are neuter plural. The only place that we find a masculine plural to which we may refer to "to these" is the word "angels" back up in Jude 6. The word "angels" in Jude 6 is masculine plural. "To these" refers back to those angels. It is the only place it could refer to. There is nothing else in this text that it could refer to. Because we understand Greek grammar, we know what "to these" is referring to.

So the translation demands this: "Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, in like manner to these (angels of verse 6), having given themselves over to fornication and having gone after strange flesh." For this reason, because we know that "to these" is masculine plural, it cannot refer to feminine plural "cities" nor to neuter plural "Sodom and Gomorrah." It can only refer to masculine plural "angels," its antecedent. That's why we know that Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them (their inhabitants) were doing exactly what these angels were doing. And what is it that they were doing? It says, "In like manner giving themselves over." Remember that "in like manner" is an adverbial accusative, and it has to go with a verb. "In like manner (with the verb) giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh." When a people becomes degenerate, they no longer desire normal sex, but they deviate toward perversions. So, Jude stresses the bestiality perversion (going after strange flesh) in Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities because of the analogy that he's making to the angels of Jude 6 who also crossed over to a different category.

**Frustration**

Now the people of these five cities were obviously in a state of great frustration. The reason they were experiencing frustration was because they were negative to God's views. Their frustration was evident in lack of physical satisfaction. So they went from normal expression to bestial expressions. This is not entirely unusual. You remember the way that God has constructed us in our minds. We have a mind. It has a side for learning, and it has a side for directing. This directive mind is the side that we're interested in--not the perceptive mind. The directive of mind is what directs our actions. It's the Word of God fed up into this mind that gives guidance for our actions. If the Word of God is blanked out by the individual going negative toward the Word, the thing that gradually happens is that this part of our mentality begins to blank out more and more, until suddenly it's gone. The directive side of your mind is just, in effect, cut out. It's no longer functioning.

Now here's what happens: When that happens, the individual changes into an animal. This is the thing that distinguishes you from the animals. It is the capacity to have a mind that is responsive to God's directions. You have God consciousness, but you only have it through one side of your mentality. When you blank that out with sin more and more, there are calluses built up on a soul so that you cannot express and respond to God, and the time comes when you are an animal. So it is not unusual that a human being, who has now become an animal, should reach down here to a real animal, and the two get together. What you have, in effect, are two animals, one human and one bestial, cohabiting. Frustrated people move toward that kind of degeneracy. Frustration is a major sign that a society is in an era of apostasy.

When the scene becomes maximum frustration, then you have the condition for maximum degeneracy. Social frustration, when it arises, has one bad thing about it (among other things). Here is God's divine viewpoint, and here is frustration. Frustration always moves away from God's viewpoint. When people become frustrated because of sin, they're disoriented, and nothing satisfies. They're always looking for something; always reaching out for something that you can't get hold of; and, always trying to find some satisfaction that never materializes or that never shapes up. So the result is that the society has to turn to something for that frustration. So what do we have today? We have drugs; we have alcoholism; we have wife swapping; and, we have pornography in literature and movies. You have all of these expressions that are attempts for man to meet his frustration. He has to somehow cope with the fact that he cannot find satisfaction in life. When you're trying to find satisfaction in life apart from God, and you're always moving away from His viewpoint, if you go far enough, you go into degeneracy every time.

So the final end of frustration in our society are the perverts; the psychotics; the neurotics; the addicts; the alcoholics; and, the kooks right down the line. One of the greatest expressions of frustration is the hippie culture. Everything that the hippie culture stands for is a violation of God's point of view. The hippie culture is the expression par excellence of people who are trying to find satisfaction and moving away from God, and trying to cope with their frustrations. It expresses itself in everything that you see going on today including the violence.

That's why it is really fantastic and tells something about our society when you look out and you see people mimicking the hippie culture. It is almost unbelievable that you see people taking on the lifestyles of the hippie world. You see people in prominence. Sometimes you haven't seen them for a while. Then suddenly you see them on TV and you can't recognize them because they look like a beautiful handsome girl by the kind of hair they've started to grow. What is he doing? Here is somebody with some influence and he's mimicking the hippie lifestyle. All of this are the little signals that you and I can begin to pick up that say that degeneracy is what we're moving toward. We are in a status of apostasy. We are living surrounded by people who are frustrated. They don't know where the answers are. They're reaching out for something they can't find.

Well that's what you had back here in Jude in the people who lived in these cities. In like manner, as the angels in their frustration, they are stepping across the line into a degenerate expression of living. They are, "Giving themselves over to fornication." "Giving themselves over" is the Greek word "ekporneuo." It's made up of two words. "Porneuo" means illicit sex--to fornicate. "Ek" means outside. What this word is indicating when the Scriptures say, "Giving themselves over to fornication," is that they were giving themselves over to the kind of sex that was outside of God's province. It was outside of their own species.

Here in the case of the people of the plain, it was bestiality. It's in the aorist tense, and it's a participle which means it precedes the action of the main verb. The action of the main verb is these people being set forth as an example to us. The reason they are an example to us today of where apostasy leads is because they did these things first. It's in the active voice which means that they deliberately chose by their own volition to move in this direction. It is not just normal fornication that they have stepped out to, but of the bestial type.

**Strange Flesh**

Now this was going after strange flesh. This is how we know that animals are involved here. It says that they gave themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh. The word "strange" is that Greek word that we have seen before: "heteros." "Heteros" means of a different kind. This is another flesh of a different kind. That is that these people were human beings who were going after animal kind. This of course, we have already seen in Scripture, was forbidden. Leviticus 18:23 and Leviticus 20:15-16 forbids this to happen. Of course God, when He had Moses write the laws, was well aware of what the human heart was like. That's why these laws were put there. Sooner or later somebody was going to think of this. Sooner or later somebody was going to have to have a divine principle explained to him that this is forbidden, and that God brings judgment upon the act of bestiality.

Sodom and Gomorrah, for this reason, have been set forth as examples. Going after strange flesh, they are set forth for an example. They are an example. This is the main verb. This is the main thing. They are constantly set forth to us as an example for our benefit and for our instruction. The word that is used here in the Greek is a rather significant word, "prokeimai." "Prokeimai" has two distinct meanings. One is in the idea of setting something forth. It's used, for example, of putting food on a table. When you set the food on the table, you would use this word "prokeimai." It is set forth in that way. Here is something that is set forth, ready for us to come and to enter into. Apostasy is a past example for us to feed on. That's the idea here.

Here was Sodom and Gomorrah. What happened to these people in their frustration? They were moving away from God's Word; moving away from divine principles; and, the farther they moved away, the more frustrated they became. The more frustrated they became, the more downhill they went into degeneracy. The farther they went into degeneracy, the closer they came to perversion. God is saying, "I'm laying this out to in very strong language." As a matter of fact, you'll find it very difficult to have this explained to God's people. Most people try to steer away from explaining something as vivid and as startling as the Word of God lays out here. However, it's something that you better know because it explains what's going on all around us today. God says, "I'm laying this out just as if I were setting a table for you because I want you to feed on this, and to learn."

This word also has another use. This is what the man in the funeral business does. The mortician would use this word "prokeimai" relative to the corpse that he laid out. This is how he described what he did to this dead person. The idea here is that the unbelievers of Sodom and Gomorrah are laid out for us as an example of spiritual death to which we are all destined. Mind you, these people in Jude 7 have something very much in common with the angels of Jude 6. Both of them crossed over their species into cohabiting outside of their species. Therefore, both of them had the same destiny before them. They are both going to end up in the lake of fire.

I think it is important that we should pause at this point and point out to you that if you are not a Christian, where are you going to find yourself someday after you die and you go out into eternity and you face God? It is in that lake of fire. In that lake of fire and in that place of agony and torment, you may find yourself standing right next to one of these characters back from Sodom and Gomorrah. You may find yourself standing next to one of these angels who entered the perversion of Genesis 6. So we must caution you that God, in His mercy, has made it possible for you not to have that experience. God has sent the Lord Jesus Christ in order to pay even for such degraded sins such as the Scriptures reflect concerning Sodom and Gomorrah, and that we read about historically. Our God has covered the worst.

There are probably not many people who have sunk to as low a level as these people did with their animal relationships. It doesn't matter what the extent of your sin is. The point is that all have sinned and all are spiritually dead. Unless you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior (which is God's provision for you--He died for you spiritually), there will be no hope for you. You may be a good moral person, and you probably are. You may do all the right things relative to what a good member of the community would be expected to do, and you probably do. But none of this stands with God. This is what the Bible calls your human good. This comes out of that old sin nature and God rejects it. So beware lest you should reject God's provision and say, "I'll stand on my own." That won't hold up when it comes to meeting your Creator.

Now what's going to happen to these people and these angels is described as justice. The end of Jude 7 says, "Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." The word "vengeance" is not a good translation. It's the Greek word "dike." "Dike" does not mean vengeance, which sounds as if God is trying to get even with somebody. The word "dike" means "justice." Whenever anyone is connected with the eternal fires of the lake of fire in the Bible, there is justice in the context. A person goes to hell because of the justice of God. I must remind you that he does not go there because of his degeneracy. A person doesn't go to hell because of his immorality. He doesn't go to hell because of his bestiality. He goes there because of the one thing that God says He will never forgive. That is to turn your back upon His Son Jesus Christ. There is nobody good enough to make his way into heaven or to deserve what God has done for us. But what we deserve when we reject that Savior is described in the Bible as justice. It is fair all the way.

Sodom and Gomorrah met the justice, as you will remember, of a literal fire from heaven. One day they woke up; they were going about their business; and, they were living it up just as much as they ever had. Then suddenly the sky broke open and out of it poured fire and brimstone from the hand of God, and everybody in that city died. Now Lot, in the mercy of God, was given a chance to go out. Lot and his two daughters and his wife left. However, his wife, because she was an unbeliever, simply couldn't go positive toward God. When God said, "Don't look back," Lot's wife had to look back. You may say, "I wonder why she did that." Why didn't she take God seriously?

Well, why don't you take God seriously when we tell you what will happen if you don't receive Christ as your Savior? You don't think it's all that bad. You don't think it will really work that way. And she didn't think. Perhaps the thing that motivated her was that she loved the place. She loved the lifestyle of the hippies of Sodom and Gomorrah, and she hated to leave her beads and all the other accoutrements of that life. So she looked back once more--just one more look. That was her last look. She never left that spot, as God in judgment turned her into a pillar of salt. Now that was justice. God, who is a God of love, says, "Here are the rules. Here are the governing principles by which I operate. If you go positive toward that, then grace will shower it's blessings upon you."

As Sodom and Gomorrah entered a literal fire, so the ungodly are going to enter a literal fire. All of the ungodly do enter a literal fire after death. Luke 16:19-31 tells us about that. The suffering that is described here of the vengeance of eternal fire--this is the lake of fire of the justice of eternal fire. This suffering is in the present tense, and it's continual. The people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah are experiencing that pain right now. They are waiting for the Great White Throne judgment when they will be brought out of Hades and put into the lake of fire.

**Today**

There is a lesson from Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord Jesus Christ predicted that the last days of the age, the days in which we probably are living today, are to be compared to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord said, "Just before I return, things are going to be just like they were down on the cities on the plain." Luke 17:28 says, "Also, as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat; they drank; they bought; they sold; they planted; and, they built, but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all."

Today is a time of great sexual perversion of immorality. Perversion and immorality stem from this negative attitude toward the Word of God. Romans 1:18-32 will tell you how God gradually gives up negative people so that they move toward uncleanness and perversion. Sodom and Gomorrah proves that that's exactly how it goes. It will be true today, and increasingly so as we near the rapture. In effect, what Jude is saying to us in this verse is to remember Sodom. God's longsuffering will lead some people to harden their hearts against Him (Ecclesiastes 8:11). Lot's wife, who had tasted deliverance, looked back and sealed her doom. She wasn't given another chance.

Hebrews 10:38-39 describe for us the tragedy of that woman on that plain. That passage describes God's dealing with those who turned back from faith: "Now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Lot's wife drew back, and it sealed her doom.

Sodom illustrates the result of neglecting and resisting the Word of God just a little too long. When you go so far, a spiritual blindness overtakes you. When Grace is abused, here's what happens: The sins that we once abhorred then become acceptable to us. Lot chose to live a borderline life in Sodom and Gomorrah. He was right on the border of the Canaanite culture (Genesis 10:19, 2 Peter 2:6-8). The Bible says it all started when Lot "lifted up his eyes." What did he lift his eyes up to see? Genesis 13:10 tells us that he looked up and saw how that plain appealed to him. The problem with Lot was that he did not have a mastery of the details of life. The material prosperity filled his eyes, and he was drawn to it. It made no difference to him what he was leaving in the spiritual life that he knew, as long as he went to a better job. You may have a little impatience when you hear me stressing that people should not move from one place to another just because of economic reasons or just because of a better job. We should take into account the spiritual things we are leaving behind and those that we are going to. Lot did not do this. He lifted up his eyes; he beheld; and, it appealed to him.

The second thing was that he chose to live on this plain which meant separating himself from godly Abraham (Genesis 13:11). Then the third thing he did was to pitch his tent toward Sodom (Genesis 13:12). What does that mean? It means he settled down as a member of this community. He became one of these people, and he identified himself with them. As a matter of fact, Genesis 19:1 indicates that Lot became well-known. He became an accepted man in the life of the corrupt city of Sodom. His stand for righteousness in Genesis 19:9 is held with contempt. There are always Christians who think that if they can just associate with unbelievers and if they can just be out there interrelated with the unbelievers, then the unbelievers will begin to respect the things of the Lord. Genesis 19:9: "They said, 'Stand back.' They said again, 'This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge. Now we will deal worse with you than with them.' And they pressed hard against the man, even Lot, and came near to break his door."

Lot had these men who had come to visit him. Lot appealed to them to not abuse these men as they wanted to do. Instead, they laughed at Lot, and they said they will take care of him as well as these men. So he lost his spiritual influence. He lost it with his family. Genesis 19:14 says, "And Lot went out, and he spoke unto his sons-in-law who married his daughters, and he said, 'Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city.' But he seemed as one that mocked onto his sons-in-law." He came to them, and said, "Leave. Get out." But the sons-in-law made fun of him. He had no influence with the family. Lot's wife perished over the city, as we've indicated. He had reared his teenage daughters there. You know the sin that they entered later with their father. The last view that we have of Lot is rather interesting in Genesis 19:30. The last view that you have of Lot is living in a cave. He was living in a cave like an animal.

**Application**

So here are some lessons about Sodom and Gomorrah and our society today. Sodom and Gomorrah was an attractive place for people who were obsessed with the details of life (Genesis 13:10-11). That's Satan's world all over today. In periods of apostasy, sinfulness sinks to the level of degeneracy (Genesis 13:13, Genesis 19:4-5). Degeneracy begins with these mental sins, and gradually it destroys the directive side of our mind. It turns a human being into an animal, and we go from morality to degeneracy. People think that you just suddenly are a moral person, and then all of a sudden you go bad, but that's never true.

The way this happens is that you start off with certain ideas of the mind. You start off with mental sins, and gradually the indulgence in mental sins begins to break down the spiritual caliber that has been built up through your own spiritual maturity structure. The result is that gradually your directive mind blanks out; you turn into an animal; and, you begin to move toward degeneracy. Now anybody can do this. The believers did it in the Exodus generation; the angels did it; and certainly unbelievers can do this. But you go gradually from morality to this position of degeneracy.

Now when you get to a maximum level of degeneracy in society, it leads to national disaster. Throughout the Old Testament, we have described what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah as a nation because of where they had come relative to their moral qualities. So if you are inclined to mimic the hippie styles today, just remember that they are the epitome of degeneracy, and this is what ultimately seals the doom of a nation. Now God may deliver believers from divine judgment and from national degeneracy. He did this for Lot. However, unbelievers have no hope whatsoever (Romans 9:29). The unbeliever will be judged. There is no escape for him. Periodically, God therefore has gone through history and He destroys segments of people--segments of a society.

I'll tell you another thing about degeneracy today. This business of no capital punishment is another expression of how far our nation has gone off toward degeneracy. God has regularly used this as the means for removing what is the contaminating influence that's destructive to society itself. It is fantastic how people who do not want to destroy degeneracy in some segment of society because they don't want to face killing, yet find that that segment of society kills and destroys infinitely more than would have been destroyed had that infection been removed in the first place. God always, through history, has removed degeneracy. Incidentally, that's why you sit there right now and you're able to study the Word of God. You have freedom to go to church; to leave; to study; or, not to study. The reason this is possible is because God has removed and destroyed degenerate segments of society.

So Jude 7 gives us a very solemn warning of where we may hope to end up nationally. People who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah couldn't believe that such a splendid city and such a splendid civilization would ever come to an end. They laughed in the face of a godly Lot. But Lot, who associated himself as one of them, had no voice whatsoever. Ultimately, Lot paid the price with his own family. He ended up living in a cave. God says that when you start moving away from what He thinks, you start turning toward the direction of yourself becoming an animal. How are you going to have what God thinks? Only in one way, and that's through His Word. So maybe you get tired of listening to the admonition to stay with the Word; to listen to the Word; to study the Word; and, to seek out what God has to say.

This is especially true particularly if you're young. You've been to Sunday school since you were a child; you pretty well know all those stories; the people you listen to don't know everything; and, you have questions and doubts, so you set yourself on a course of action that begins undermining the very thing that would give you God's stabilizing influence in your life. Don't ever place in less esteem, and don't ever hold in any place but the highest esteem, what the Word of God has to teach. That's the greatest thing in your life.

Every one of you is going to have to make arrangements for taking this in. It's going to have to be on a daily basis of feeding just as you feed the physical body. You are your own priest. Those of you who are children under your parents care, your parents are responsible to see that you're taking in the Word of God. When you are grown, you are your own responsibility. In the family, it is the father's responsibility to see that that family is open to the Word of God. Ultimately, even parents can't make moves for their children. The time ultimately comes when the information has been given and a son or a daughter may go negative. Those of you who stay away from prayer meeting, especially young people, are playing a very dangerous game. Degeneracy always starts in a little way, and there are certain things that provide strength to our spiritual lives. The Word of God is supreme. The fellowship of the saints is next in importance. That fellowship is important in every aspect: service; giving; prayer; and, so on.

So we sell ourselves very very short if we think that we are better than other people, and that what happened to these terrible people who went out and got together with animals like they did, that that can't happen to you and me. It can. The same immoralities of which these people were capable, in time you can be capable of. The only protection is God's Word.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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