

Title: **Dead Men Hanging (Part 1)**

Passage: **Jude 5**

Theme: **The Dreadful Estate of False Teachers as a Warning to the Church**

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{Read Passage}

[i] Gibbeting

Gibbeting [*'j' as in 'jam'*] refers to the public display of a criminal who is left to die in a cage or on a gallows and/or the dead body of a criminal left on display as a decomposing corpse to serve as a warning to others

Variants - “live gibbeting” (up to late 17<sup>th</sup> c.) a condemned person was locked inside a metal cage or sim. contraption & left to die of thirst.

Others were put to death first and then gibbeted. Example would be death by hanging while leaving t/body to decompose, sometimes to skeletal remains.

1 source states:

So that the public display might be prolonged, bodies were sometimes coated in tar and/or bound in chains. Sometimes, body-shaped iron cages were used to contain the decomposing corpses. For example, in March 1743 in the town of Rye, East Sussex, Allen Grebell was murdered by John Breads. Breads was imprisoned . . . and then hanged, after which his body was left to rot for more than 20 years in an iron cage . . . . [Wikipedia]

In antiquity it wasn't uncommon for those who were crucified to be left on their cross as a public display.

**[ii] It was all about warning**

The horrific sights & nauseating odors were reminders that would be etched into t/minds of t/witnesses.

Dead Men Hanging was not a pretty sight. Serve to illicit a response: “I never, ever want to end up like that!”

**[iii] As bad as that may be there's something far worse**

The sights, sounds, smells of hell itself.

Matthew 10:28 “And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

There are few who are in a worse state than those that have known the truth about Christ and forsaken it (apostates).

2 Peter 2:20–22 20 For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.<sup>21</sup> For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.<sup>22</sup> It has happened to them according to the true proverb, “A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,” and, “A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”

These words of Jude in vv. 5-16 are a graphic warning. These – he can't even come to name them – “certain men” are spiritual corpses hanging for all to see. Like S. & G. in v. 7. their condemn. is an example. Their judgment isn't complete, but it's as good as done.

[iv] Go back to verse 3 for a moment

**Beloved, although I was making every effort to write to you concerning our common salvation,**

Literally,

**I was eager to write to about our common salvation**

**I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**

The entire epistle can be summed up in this exhortation ==>

**. . . contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**

ἄπαξ something that is unique and unrepeatable ==>

**the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**

Body of truth that we call t/gospel has been once for all, finally, completely handed down. No new rev. // new CH dogma can change the essence of t/G.: JC slain for sinners; a sufficient sacrifice for sin received by faith alone.

Note first word of v. 4 ==>

**FOR certain men have slipped in,**

παρεισδύω “To slip in secretly as by a side entrance.” By stealth.

These certain men face a certain judgment

**For certain men have slipped in, those whose judgment was written about long ago, ungodly [men] who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.** Godless; Licentious; Lordless. As such they will be judged.

[v] Verse 4 is a preview of what follows in verses 5-16

Four descriptive ideas that come out of this verse.

False religionists ==>

1. They have infiltrated the church
2. They cannot escape judgment
3. They are rebels against grace
4. They deny the Lord with their lives

Verses 5-16 unpack those 4 ideas. All 4 ideas are present, but they come in a different order.

***I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)***

**those whose judgment was written about long ago**

***II. Certain Men who are Rebels Against Grace (v. 11)***

**ungodly [men] who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness**

***III. Certain Men who Have Infiltrated the Church (vv. 12-13)***

**For certain men have slipped in**

***IV. Certain Men who Deny the Lord with their Lives (vv. 14-16)***

**and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.**

Back to verse 5 ==>

***I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)***

**Now I wish to remind you, although you know all things,**

If they know all things why do they need to be reminded?

2 Peter 2:12 **Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you concerning these things – although you have come to know them and have been established in the truth which is present with you—**

Three Reasons:

1. Dullness. Sometimes our blades have to go back to t/stone to be sharpened.

Certain truths no longer cut deeply into t/core of our lives. We become unknowing hypocrites.

We know that God's grace is greater than our sin ...

// are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us ...

// it was for freedom that X set us free ...

// forsake selfishness, unforgiveness, tempt. to speak badly about others

// No satisfaction in sin or pursuing those things that have no eternal value.

## 2. Forgetfulness.

Listening alone – 5%

Reading – 10%

Listening with visual aids – 20%

Discussing with others – 50%

Practicing – 75%

Teaching Others 90%

Statistically, what I do on Sunday mornings has a 95% failure rate. Good thing I don't believe stats. Raw statistics may be true in that regard, but I have another factor: HS whom I must trust will take those things I say & apply them to fertile hearts.

Some time ago I came across a statement by JE (G8 early Amer. theol) who said that he focuses more on what he can do in t/moment while preaching rather than worrying about what his hearers will retain.

We're like batteries that need constant charging. I have no hope if I think that 1 or 2 sermons are going to stay with you forever. In a wk or 2 you will totally forget just about everything I've said so far this AM.

Like a balance scale, we want to weigh heavier and heavier on the side of growing in the grace & knowledge of Christ. Each time I teach, preach, counsel, shepherd, encourage - it's like I have added a small grain of sand on the scale, always fighting against the counterweight of indwelling sin and depravity.

We need constant reinforcement of truth. It's an ongoing battle. There's no Manhattan Project that's going to drop a single bomb that will end t/war. I'm no Robert Oppenheimer. T/Xn life is about being in t/trenches, getting dirty, storming t/front again and again and again so that when our Commander calls we will be lean, sharp, honed instruments in His hands.

1. *Dullness.*

2. *Forgetfulness.*

3. *Faintheartedness.*

Times we are tired, discouraged, fearful, fainthearted. v. 22.

1 Thess 5:14 . . . **encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all . . .**

What Xn during times of faintheartedness doesn't need to hear that ==>

God is sovereign; He loves you and is orchestrating all things within your life – as within t/CH – for your good and His glory.

// sweet music of t/hope of t/Gospel ...

Alexander McLaren ==>

Oh, when we are journeying through the murky night and the dark woods of affliction and sorrow, it is something to find here and there a spray broken, or a leafy stem bent down with the tread of His foot and the brush of His hand as He passed; and to remember that the path He trod He has hallowed, and thus to find lingering fragrance and hidden strength in the remembrance of Him as "in all points tempted like as we are," bearing grief for us, bearing grief with us, bearing grief like us. [Alexander MacLaren]

Lot's wife looked back and perished.

Jesus warned us that no one, after having put his hand to t/plow and looks back, is fit for t/KD.

Paul said, **I forget what lies behind & reach forward to what lies ahead**

But there are times when it's approp. to look back, to be reminded of God's enduring faithfulness.

In t/words of Joshua 23:14 “ . . . you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.”

Entire book of Deut. consists primarily of reminders.

I look at my ministry as being one of constant reminder.

2 Timothy 2:14 **Remind them of these things . . .**

Titus 3:1 **Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,**

We need to be reminded

1. *Dullness.*

2. *Forgetfulness.*

3. *Faintheartedness.*

This passage is book-ended with encouragements to remember

**Now I wish to remind you, although you know all things,**

17 **But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

## **I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)**

### **A. Three Reminders from History (vv. 5-7)**

Jude, as a Jew, goes back into the history of Israel for 3 OT examples.

#### **1. Reminder #1: Israel After Exodus (v. 5)**

**a. Destroyed by God for their Unbelief**

#### **2. Reminder #2: Immoral Angels (v. 6)**

**a. Imprisoned Awaiting final Judgment**

#### **3. Reminder #3: Immolated Cities (7)**

*[to kill or destroy by fire]*

**a. Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed**

Very common in Jewish circles to cite 3 examples. Mishnah (part of t/Talmud commenting on Jewish law) says there is no portion in the world to come for the flood generation, Sodom, and the wilderness generation (m. Sanh. 10:3) . . . .

Back to ==>

#### **1. Reminder #1: Israel After Exodus (v. 5)**

**Now I wish to remind you, although you know all things, that the Lord having once saved a people out of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.**



a(1). Two textual matters that I must mention at this point

(some u lv. it when I talk TC)

NASB Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.

ESV 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.

(1) First issue: Is word Jude used Ἰησοῦς (Jesus) or κύριος (Lord)?

(2) Second issue is: where is the word “once” - or “once for all” go?

This is t/same word we saw in v. 3 [ἅπαξ] “once for all” {cite}

\*Some ancient MSS assoc. this word ἅπαξ with t/word “know”

\*Other MSS w/the word “Lord/Jesus”

NASB Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all . . .

HCSB Now I want to remind you, though you know all these things: The Lord first saved a people out of Egypt . . .

NIV ἅπαξ is left untranslated!

(3) Textual evidence is mixed

As far as where you put the ἅπαξ I think t/verse makes more sense if you put the idea of “once” with God's deliverance.

Little difficult to understand ==>

NASB Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all . . .

Compare ==>

HCSB Now I want to remind you, though you know all these things:  
The Lord first saved a people out of Egypt . . .

**Now I wish to remind you, although you know all things, that the Lord having once saved a people out of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.**

As for Jesus vs. Lord – you can make the case that t/evidence favors t/title “Jesus” over that of “Lord” (which may be same pers. anyway)

Textual scholar Philip Comfort feels Ἰησοῦς is more accurate reading:  
“In other words, from Jude's perspective it was Jesus, the I AM (see John 8:58) who was present with the Israelites and operative in their deliverance from Egypt. . . .”

Remarkable! To say that it was “Jesus” who delivered t/Jews from bondage to Egypt. Tie JC to t/Exodus and the Passover.

Idea that JC makes preexistent appearances in t/OT not w/o precedent.

\* Angel of the Lord . . .

\* NT passages like 1 Corinthians 10:4 where TAP states that X was t/rock that led / provided H2O for t/Israelites during their wandering in t/desert (Ex. 17).

\* TAJ who IDs JC w/the Lord/YHWH of Isaiah 6.

Back to the verse ==>

**Now I wish to remind you, although you know all things, that the Lord having once saved a people out of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.**

## ***I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)***

### **1. Reminder #1: Israel After Exodus (v. 5)**

Remember - this is Dead Men Hanging. Jude is giving his readers examples from history of the fact that God is not to be rejected; disbelieved; misrepresented.

Reminder of the fact that most Israelites who left Egypt were not faithful. An entire generation perished in the wilderness because of their unbelief.

**Lord once for all saved a people out of Egypt,**

v. 3 - There is a “once for all” faith of t/CH (gospel).

Delivering t/Jews is a nonrevocable act.

The truth of the Gospel is nonrevocable truth.

**. . . the Lord having once saved a people out of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.**

How much time passed between point 1 (saved) & point 2 (destroyed)?  
A single gen. / about 40 yrs.

#### **a. How do we go from Exodus to Numbers chapter 14?**

\* 10 Plagues against Egypt (plagues centered on their pagan deities).

Last plague – death t/o t/land of Egypt.

\* Passover – Jews who applied t/blood of t/lamb to their doorways were spared and lived.

\* Exodus – 1 million m, w., ch. who leave Egypt, come to t/Red S. and God opens t/way so that they pass on dry ground.

\* Destruction of t/pursuing E.

### (1) Chapter 15 – Song of Moses and the people:

Exodus 15:1,2,11,13 1 THEN Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, “I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. 2 “The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will extol Him. 11 “Who is like Thee among the gods, O LORD? Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders? 13 “In Thy lovingkindness Thou hast led the people whom Thou hast redeemed . . .

### (2) Then, in a short time we go to Numbers 14:11-12?!

11 And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?12 “I will smite them with pestilence and dispossess them, and I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they.”

### (3) How does that happen?

#### (a) Doesn't happen all at once - Stops along the way

##### i. Exodus 15:22 – 17:7 - Grumbling and Complaining

Exodus 15:22–24 22 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah. 24 *So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”*

Exodus 16:2–3 2 And the whole congregation of the sons of Israel *grumbled against Moses and Aaron* in the wilderness. 3 And the sons of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the LORD’S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

Exodus 17:1–3 1c there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore *the people quarreled with Moses* and said, “Give us water that we may drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” 3 But the people thirsted there for water; *and they grumbled against Moses* and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”

ii. Then in chapter 32 you have Israel's blatant idolatry in constructing a calf made of gold calling in YHWH

God's anger burns against them & He says to Moses: 10 “Now then let Me alone . . . that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation.” 11 Then Moses entreated the LORD his God, and said, “O LORD, why doth Thine anger burn against Thy people whom Thou hast brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

Moses, more concerned about God's honor and reputation than himself intercedes on t/ppl's behalf and God spares them.

(b) Then it all falls apart in Numbers 13

i. Israel is camped at Kadesh Barnea at t/doorway to the Promised Land

12 men are sent out to check out the land. They come back with a report – 10 of t/12 give a bad report (unbelief).

Numbers 14:1–2 1 THEN all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.2 And all the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!

*Interesting . . . Jude 16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts . . .*

ii. What follows for these disbelieving Jews in the wilderness?

**judgment**

Numbers 14:26–35 26 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,27 “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me.28 “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you;29 your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.30 ‘Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.31 ‘Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey—I will bring them in, and they shall know the land which you have rejected.32 ‘But as for you, your corpses shall fall in this wilderness.33 ‘And your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they shall suffer for your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness.34 ‘According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you shall know My opposition.35 ‘I, the LORD, have spoken, surely this I will do to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be destroyed, and there they shall die.’”

Why were they destroyed?

**b. Destroyed by God for their Unbelief**

**. . . the Lord having once saved a people out of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.**

Clear that destroyed in this context = eternally lost.

*(3) How does that happen?*

*(a) Doesn't happen all at once - Stops along the way*

No one forsakes the faith all at once. I remember reading t/account of a man I knew, he was a pastor & a scholar. By his own account he writes of t/time he was preaching one Sunday and a voice thundered in his heart, "You don't believe this."

That same man went on to reject t/faith & not only that, he became hostile to it and tried to destroy it. But in t/end, God destroyed him. Seemingly in good health and rather young God said, "I will no longer be mocked" and pulled t/plug from his life and the men dropped dead 'just like that.'

**c. What's the point? Why do dead men hang for all to see?**

Thomas Schreiner, NT scholar who teaches at Southern Seminary:

The main point Jude made is clear. No person in the believing community can presume on God's grace, thinking that an initial decision to follow Christ or baptism ensures their future salvation regardless of how they respond to the intruders. Israel's apostasy stands as a warning to all those who think that an initial commitment secures their future destiny without ongoing obedience. Those who are God's people demonstrate the genuineness of their salvation by responding to the warning given. The warnings are one of the means by which God preserves his people until the end. Those who ignore

such warnings neglect the very means God has appointed for obtaining eschatological salvation. Nor should such a perspective be considered a form of works righteousness. Jude pinpointed the fundamental reason Israel was judged. They failed to "believe" in God. The call to perseverance is not a summons to something above and beyond faith. God summons his people to believe in his promises to the very end of their lives. Christians never get beyond the need to believe and trust, and all apostasy stems from a failure to trust in God's saving promises in Christ, just as the wilderness generation disbelieved that God would truly bring them into the land of Canaan, thinking instead that he had maliciously doomed them to die in the wilderness. [Schreiner, 446]

Luther: "This example he gives to warn and terrify them, as if he would say, let those be on their guard who are called Christians and under this name turn the grace of God into wantonness lest it go with themselves as it did here with the Israelites." [Luther, 292-93]

John Gill: God sometimes makes severe examples of mere nominal professors; nor must false teachers, deniers of Christ, and perverters of his Gospel, expect to go free: moreover, it may be observed, that God may do great things for persons, and yet after all destroy them; great riches and honours may be conferred on some, great natural gifts on others; some may seem as if they had the grace of God, and were brought out of spiritual Egypt, and enjoy great mercies and favours, and have many deliverances wrought for them, and yet at last perish.

This mean true, born again believers can lose their salvation & be eternally lost? Does this mean that our salvation is based upon works?

No – But they are relevant warnings to t/CH.



Dead men hanging are one way God keeps those who are His persevering in t/faith. Warnings are there for us to make our calling & election sure.

Warnings are also there for those who are lost/wayward.  
Means of evangelism.

Beyond that, these are descriptive statements that reflect t/awesome holiness of God, t/devastating conseq. of sin, t/greatness of grace.

Beware unbelieving heart. (turn to Hebrews 3:13–4:3)

13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.<sup>14</sup> For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end;<sup>15</sup> while it is said, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME.” <sup>16</sup> For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?<sup>17</sup> And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?<sup>18</sup> And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?<sup>19</sup> And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. **1 THEREFORE**, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it.<sup>2</sup> For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. **3** For we who have believed enter that rest . . .

Imagine being part of the Exodus generation . . .

Imagine having your sins forgiven (“Amazing Grace”).