

Biblical Insight

Verse 5

- Verses 5-10 give three examples of the punishment that comes to men such as the **certain men** of v. 4, men who turn **the grace of our God into lasciviousness**.
- **Having saved...afterward destroyed**
 - Before one makes a determination that a person can lose their salvation, he/she should ask, "What kind of salvation did the Lord give to **the people out of the land of Egypt?**"
 - Since that "salvation" was not an eternal-life salvation, one should not make a comparison with the eternal-life salvation we experience by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - The lesson here, for these Jewish believers, is that God has judged spiritual sins with physical curses in His past dealings with Israel.
 - Compare 1 Cor. 10:1-11 for complete insight.

Verse 6

- As in the first example, these angels were once in their wonderful heavenly home, but **left their own habitation** and today are **reserved in everlasting chains**.
 - **Kept not** is in the negative while **reserved** later in the verse is the same word, in the positive.
 - **He hath reserved** - The tense of this verb is the perfect active indicative.
 - Perfect means it began at a point in time and its effects remain perpetually.
 - Active means that the subject (*he*) is doing the action.
 - Indicative means that this is a statement of fact.
 - Of course, this begs the question of the identity of these angels.
 - First, the angels could be the fallen angels who aligned with Satan.
 - The problem with this view is that, presumably, the demons are not currently kept in **everlasting chains**.
 - Second, the angels could be the "sons of God" in Genesis 6 who created the Nephilim.
 - Compare 2 Peter 2:4.
 - In my opinion, this is the better of the two interpretations.
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Verse 7

- **The cities about them** - The other known "cities of the plain" were Admah and Zeboim. These, along with Sodom, Gomorrah and Bela (Zoar) made up the "Battle of the five Kings" in Genesis 14 and all but Bela are mentioned as destroyed by God in Deut. 29:23, and Genesis 19:20-23 says that Lot begged to escape to Bela because it was just a little city, and the name of Bela was changed to Zoar (which means "little"). Concerning Israel, the Lord cries, "How shall I make thee as Admah...as Zeboim?" in Hosea 11:8.
- **In like manner...after strange flesh** - The citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah are compared to the **angels which kept not their first estate** in that both were **going after strange flesh** for **fornication**.
- The word for **strange** is ἕτερος [heteros], used 99 times in the New Testament and only here translated **strange**. It is literally "other" but specifically, "other of a different kind." The question is, "How can the citizens of Sodom be described by the word *heteros* in regard to their sexuality?" I believe that this speaks specifically of the incident

with Lot when he was visited by angels and the men of the city desired sexual relations with those angels, who were a *heteros* kind of flesh. It seems that the angels first came to have relations with **strange flesh** and then the men of the city followed suit.

- **Suffering also...eternal fire** - Even as **the angels** of v. 6 are kept in **everlasting chains**, the cities are kept in **eternal fire**. This emphasizes the nature of those who **believed not** in v. 5, even though they had crept into the assembly.

Verse 8

- **Filthy dreamers** - Jude makes clear that the previous comparisons with the unbelievers of the wilderness, the sinful angels, and the destroyed cities are to be associated with the **filthy dreamers** who are the **certain men** of v. 4.
 - Note: On the use of "filthy," this is one of the rare instances in which KJV translators have blatantly inserted their own feelings (interpretations) into the text. However, before rushing to condemnation, recognize that many modern translations do this and do not italicize their own insertions.
- **Despise dominion** - The words for **despise dominion** are literally to "reject government" (as in 2 Peter 2:10). The word for **dominion** is **κυριότης** [kuriotes] which is "the one who possesses lordship." That is, these men despise any kind of leadership.
- **Speak evil of dignities** - The Greek is literally, "blaspheme glories."

Translation Comparison

Verse 5

- **them that believed not** - While the text clearly uses the word "believe," the NLT changes "believed not" to "those who did not remain faithful." *The Message* says "he destroyed those who defected." These changes are problematic because they imply that those destroyed were at one time faithful but now abandoned that faith. Jude is, however, speaking of people who only *feigned faith*.

Verse 6

- **first estate** –
 - NKJV changes **first estate** to "proper domain."
 - GNB, NLT, ESV and HCSB change **estate** to *position of authority* (or similar). Such is not in the text, but an extended interpretation.

Verse 7

- **fornication** - NASB changes **fornication** to "gross immorality," removing the ability of the reader to know with certainty that the immorality is sexual in nature.
- **strange flesh** - Several translations (NIV, GNB, NLT, HCSB) simplify this to "perversions," which is an accurate interpretation but fails to have the accuracy of the text. Similarly, ESV says "pursued unnatural desire."

Verse 8

- **filthy dreamers** - NIV and NLT say "on the strength of their dreams" or "on the authority of their dreams," though the text doesn't mention the dreams as foundational to action, but simply as descriptive of the men.
- **Speak evil of dignities** - Most of the modern translations make the assumption that **dignities** are angelic beings. NKJV changes to "dignitaries," NASB to "angelic majesties," ESV to "glorious ones," etc. It is better to leave this, as in the KJV, that these men speak evil of all-things glorious.