



WOE unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. ¹² These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; ¹³ Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. (Jude 1:11-13)

When I wrote a devotion on this subject a few years back, the condition of the Church was becoming a shamble. I need not tell the faithful believer today that the Church has reached the perfect definition of the word 'shamble.' Churches have today, without excuse as in a few years back, completely cast the admonition of Holy Scripture aside and gone into the deep waters of wickedness and abhorrent sin. No longer is the Water of Life offered in sermons across American and, instead, the poisoned waters of the Rivers of Babylon.

Jude gives us a serious look at the lackluster Christian and deceiving prophets of our own day in these few verses. There are subtle references to a congregational form of democracy against which Moses stood in the gain-saying of Korah. I believe it is for this reason that the Church, from the first century, has observed an Episcopal form of government and not a congregational form. God's will is not decided by a majority vote. Of course, we see that the Episcopal form of church government is itself capable of great error and wickedness if the head is rotten – i.e. the Episcopal Church USA. Ministers who preach for reward, as did the wicked Balaam, are categorized with Korah and Cain – I certainly would not want to find myself in that company! *And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.* (Ex 16:2) When the murmuring begins in the congregation, there will always be found usurpers standing by the wayside ready to take the congregation away from God for their own profit. Korah is the perfect type of those deceitful ministers who await every expression of dissatisfaction of the people to take them away from the truth.

Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too

much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. (Num 16:1-5) It is always possible to find some souls in the congregation that do not desire to hear truth preached. As they complain, the men such as Korah is, step into the void to work mischief. These are the Core's of today and the spots in the feasts of the Church. The problem is not small, but an accelerating one today. Look around at the churches! They have turned to the filth and error of the world over the everlasting truth and hope of God!

Such deceitful men, and their followers, are as the clouds that build in late afternoon on the desert horizon – too late to produce droplets of rain, and only offering a false hope of it. They are blown about by every conceivable wind of doctrine. Paul describes it this way: *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* (Eph 4:14) Is doctrine important? Yes, certainly, doctrine is important, but it is the steadfast and immovable doctrine revealed in God's Word that is important and not those alternating and paltry doctrines of men. The fruit of any doctrinal tree that is not well-watered by the Word of God will wither and perish.

Here we see a beautifully illustrative verse: *Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.* The waves of the sea rage and foam at the tidal limits, but their bluster will not grant them a greater boundary for their seas. God has already set the limits at Eden. One of the most eloquent of artful word pictures, to me, is that which the Lord calls, *Wandering Stars*. What, pray tell, are Wandering Stars?

The Wandering Stars to which Jude refers are not unlike the meteor, or even the comet. The meteor is defined by Mr. Webster's dictionary as *the luminous phenomenon observed when a meteoroid is heated by its entry into the earth's atmosphere: also called FALLING STAR*. A comet, on the other hand is a conglomeration of gases and dust particles that produce a long tail that points AWAY from the sun as it passes near it. Both of these objects are wandering stars. Surely the blustery gases of the false prophet point away from the Sun of Righteousness!

The meteor has no fixed place or orbit in the heavens. It wanders from one end of the galaxies to the other. It generates no light for it has no fuel by which light may be produced. Its only light comes as the friction of atmospheric layers begin to heat it up to a glow as it falls from the heavens. Its only destiny is to perish in utter darkness as it either is consumed in its own flames, or is buried in the surface of the earth or some other planet. Too many pulpit 90-day wonders fit the description of these 'wandering stars.' They burn brightly for a moment and disintegrate in the heat of God's judgment taking many deceived souls with them.

How many ministers have we read about, and perhaps even know, who fit perfectly that description in a spiritual sense? They have no fixed position on anything for they are 'crowd pleasers' as was Korah. They do not remain in the orbit of God's Word, but are mavericks, wandering off into the darkness without a compass or a chart. They have their end in scandals revealed for all the world to see as they fall in flames from their pedestals. Their great grandfather, Lucifer, also was a Falling Star. He was cast out of heaven and drew a quarter of all the Angels of God with him. *1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and*

behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. (Rev 12:1-4)

The Great Red Dragon (Lucifer, or Satan) was cast out of Heaven with no place reserved but the darkness of the earth which he coveted. *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev 12:7-9)* I believe this gives the old practice of wishing upon a star a new name. I would far prefer to hope upon the Bright and Morning Star that is so completely dependable in its generations than to wish upon a falling star whose end is flames and darkness.

So, the Wandering Stars of Jude are those 'professing' Christians who will believe anything and stand for nothing. They are the false ministers who have no light and whose preaching is darkness. But Christ has given us an Anchor of the Soul. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Heb 6:18-20)* We are not to drift aimlessly from one end of heaven to another. We are held in orbit by that Strong Anchor of the Soul that is Christ Jesus and His Word. That Great Anchor, and the Chain of the Holy Ghost, will never let loose or give way. The Anchor holds mightily, and the Chain of the Holy Ghost prevents drift out of the place of safety. Is your soul equipped with that Anchor, or are you a Wandering Star?