



9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. 10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. 11 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. (Jude 1:8-11)

In the Book of Jude there is a warning to two widely diverse groups of people – those who profess Christ only with their lips, and those who know Him truly by faith in their hearts. The former are warned for the sake of awakening them from apostasy; the latter are presented with the consequences of insidious compromise and error. Being always watchful is the first duty of a soldier in the profession of arms – and the necessity of the spiritual watch is even more keenly essential in things spiritual than in matters of combat at arms. The true people of faith can draw strength from Jude because “to be forewarned is to be fore-armed.” The merely professing Christian and false preachers can take the warning of Jude as a dreadful alarm that must be responded to by repentance or tragic peril of soul. Those of faith can take note of that which is to be avoided and watched out for.

Verses 9-11 begin a reminder of the dangers of arrogant mal-appropriation of authority even in fighting evil. Once more, Jude brings to our remembrance those things that have been, but also that shall come to be. 9 **“Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”** Here we are introduced to a most important and mysterious Personage by the name of Michael, the Archangel. He is considered by many to be the Guardian Angel of the People of God – both ancient and contemporary Israel (that includes believing Christians and the New Testament Church). Though Michael is of a majestic and august disposition, he restrains himself from accusing a former rebellious Prince of Angels, Satan, and remands his judgment and condemnation to its rightful Authority – GOD. Neither the church, nor any of its ministers or laity have authority to condemn. Though the Christian, and the

Church, can exercise judgment based on God's Word and Authority, condemnation is reserved solely to the Lord. We read of Michael in both Daniel and the Book of Revelation.

Another angel, in his visitation of Daniel, said to him: **"Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."** (Dan 10:12-13) The Archangel Michael is prophesied by Daniel to have a leading role in future trials and tribulations of the People of God, and their final delivery: **"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."** (Dan 12:1)

The role of Michael is enlarged upon in Revelation for vanquishing Satan and his rebellious angels from Heaven. He seems to exercise the role Captain of the Host of Heaven, at least on this particular occasion. **"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 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)

If so exalted a Personage as the Archangel Michael avoided railing accusations against the Devil, I suppose the lesson to us would be a like mind in avoiding a constant and petty murmuring against the constituted authority of the Church. The sword cuts both ways in that a church leader should never resort to forceful leadership, but leading out of love – not imposing changes to worship formats to which the people have become accustomed in the nonessentials. Another point of Jude is to inform us that heavenly powers are constantly observing both our thoughts and actions.

In the same paragraph, Jude turns from Satan and his fallen angels (demons) to address false preachers in the same vain: **10 "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves."** The false prophets preach from their own selfish interest and nothing of interest in Christ. They have fallen to the depths of even questioning the commonly received text of the Bible and the Person of Christ as only Begotten Son of God. With nasalized Oxford accents (no offense to that prestigious institution), they question every word, line, and paragraph of Scripture and account themselves worthy to question God. They call not upon the deep and hidden chambers of a heart filled with the wisdom and knowledge of God, but upon their own animal instincts of self-assertion. Manton describes them this way: "Man is in part an angel, in part a beast; in his reason and upper part of the soul he resembleth an angel, and in his appetite and senses a beast."

Manton, Thomas: The Complete Works of Thomas Manton 5: P265. Too many 'professed' clergy preach for filthy lucre, prestige, or pride and not in a humble desire to reach souls for the Lord Jesus Christ.

11 "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." Jude's

narrative continues along the same lines of rebelliousness described in the above verses. Cain was the prototype of the desperate sinner. He attempted to appear to serve God, but he did so in his own way and not that which was commanded. His disobedience led to murder of Abel – the first prophet. We may read in Numbers 16 of Korah's rebellion (along with 250 followers) against God's chosen leader, Moses. **"And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods."** (Num 16:31-32) Such a fate awaits all who love not God. They are all, as was the rich man in the story of Lazarus, destined to be buried in the earth and from thence posted to the fires of Hell. **"O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters."** (Jer 17:13) So, quite fitting that Jude uses this account of Korah to describe the fate of false preachers and professors.

The beauty of the metaphorical references of verses 12-13 require such scrutiny and spiritual discernment as to dictate their relegation to another devotion following today's.