

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 9



Contend
for the faith
which was
once delivered
to the saints
Jude 1:3

THE BRUTE BEASTS

Scripture Text: Jude 10

Jude has again changed the topic back to the time in which he was writing and used another term that has caused much confusion in religious organizations: the word *beasts*. In this lesson, we will identify who these *beasts* are, then many other Scriptures will become understandable as well.

MEMORY VERSE: *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

—1 John 2:3

Blasphemous Words

But these speak evil. This phrase begins with the conjunction *But*, meaning the truths in this verse are connected with the previous verses, especially **verses 4, 6, and 8**. The “certain men [who] crept in unawares,” the “ungodly men,” the “angels which kept not their first estate,” and the “filthy dreamers” are the ones who *speak evil*. Jude was still dealing with the agents of apostasy; and a predominant characteristic of apostates is their talk.

When apostates *speak evil*, what does it actually mean? The Greek translation reads, “These blaspheme.” The Greek word used for *speak evil* is the same Greek word used in **Revelation 13:6**, in speaking of the beast that “opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.” Apostates speak blasphemy!

Why They Knew Not

Things which they know not. The word *know* implies more in Greek than in English. In English, it appears twice in **verse 10**, but in the Greek language two different words are used. In the phrase *know not*, the word *know* comes from the Greek word *oida*, meaning “a deeper knowledge, a divine knowledge.” Why did they *know not*? **1 Corinthians 2:14** says, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

Why is the speech of apostates considered so blasphemous? **2 Peter 2:12** parallels **Jude 10**: “But these, as natural brute beasts . . . speak evil of the things that they understand [or know] not.” Apostates “have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray” (**2 Peter 2:15**). Their evil words are much worse than those of unbelievers because they once had a divine revelation of truth and submitted to its authority, but now they *know not*.

Perception by the Senses

They know naturally. Throughout the Scriptures, the King James Version uses the word *beasts*. Paul said in **1 Corinthians 15:32**, “I have fought with beasts at Ephesus.” The Revelation refers repeatedly to *beasts*. In **Revelation 13:1**, John saw “a beast rise up out of the sea.” In **verse 11**, he saw a “beast coming up out of the earth.” Were these hideous literal animals? No. What were the Scripture writers symbolizing then? This question brings us to the second time the word *know* is used in **verse 10**.

In the phrase *know naturally*, the word *know* comes from the Greek word *epistad*, which refers to perception by the animal faculties. Apostates lose all spiritual perception of truths they once had and can only understand what is revealed to their natural senses. The word *naturally* comes from the Greek word *physikos*, meaning “to be governed by mere natural instincts.” Together, the words *know naturally* give us a better understanding of

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people who have apostatized. They did have an understanding of truth and the church, but their knowledge has been reduced to the level of human thinking.

The Beasts as Symbols

As brute beasts. In the phrase *brute beasts*, the word *brute* is derived from the Greek word *alogos*. It means “irrational or unreasonable.” The Amplified Bible translates this part of **verse 10** to read, “whatever they do understand physically . . . like irrational beasts.” The word *beasts*, in this verse, comes from the Greek word *zoon*, which is derived from the word *zoe*, meaning physical life. So, these *beasts* were not animals, as some think, but men whose reasoning had been reduced to the human, instinctive, animal level by apostasy.

These men (*beasts*) continued to feed their depraved natures until they became irrational and unreasonable concerning spiritual truths. They actually began to think that they could devise a spiritual organization—they thought they could build a church! It is completely unreasonable to think that unregenerate men can build a dwelling place for regenerate men. Disobedient leaders *cannot* create a place where God will dwell. God only resides where there is obedience.

However, those men with depraved natures did go ahead and form the systems represented by the animals in The Revelation. (Papalism and Protestantism are products of this.) Today these religious systems are still in spiritual darkness, because they came from the minds of men that once understood truth but failed to walk in it!

They Work Against Truth

In those things they corrupt themselves. Here the word *corrupt* means “spoil or ruin.” It depicts the awful condition of people who once knew truth. These individuals have completely given themselves over to be spoiled by the spirit of apostasy and have been ruined for the purpose that God had intended for them. They continue to speak and profess. Some even teach and preach, but in doing these things, *they corrupt themselves*. Every time they speak or attempt a religious work, it is a credit to the enemy. Their work is against truth rather than for it. May God help us to “believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (**1 John 4:1**).

JUST A THOUGHT

**Words are like feathers:
they are easily carried by the wind
and impossible to completely recapture.**