

For God it is Personal

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[0 : 00] In Jude we read verses 14 and 15. And Enoch also the seventh from Adam prophesied of these saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

And this is the first point that we need to recognize in these verses here. Which we made reference to earlier. That for God the sin against him is personal.

Just as it says, you have all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Now in some cases of course people know that they are willfully sinning against the Lord.

Some people are defiantly thumbing their noses at heaven, shaking their fists at the Lord and saying, well this is what you've commanded so I'm going to do the opposite. And it can seem as though our legislators nowadays are going down exactly that road.

It's almost as though, as somebody has said in the past, somebody looking through the pages of Leviticus, looking to see what God has prohibited just so that they can pass legislation to legalize it that people wouldn't even have imagined or thought of in a normal life.

[1 : 22] Looking for that which will defy God. There is also of course that sense in which people, maybe most people for all we know, are not necessarily defiantly anti-God, not consciously so, but they are just getting on with their own lives, totally self-absorbed and self-centered and they're not even aware or conscious that what they're doing is necessarily sinning against them or against anybody else for that matter.

They're just not thinking about it. Their own thoughtlessness perhaps leads them astray without being conscious that what they are doing is actually against what God himself has commanded. But for God, it is all personal. And for those whom he has made to some extent aware of his grace, it is likewise recognized to be personal.

God talks here through Jude in his word. He talks about Enoch the seventh from Adam. Now of course, Enoch isn't as much the seventh from in the sense of the seventh after Adam. He is the seventh generation.

It begins with Adam. Adam is the first generation. Enoch is the seventh generation. And if you were to go back to Genesis 5, you'd see the sort of descending genealogy.

[2 : 40] Adam, Seth, Enoch, Canaan, Mahalaleel, Jared, and then Enoch. And Enoch, of course, walked with God. And he was not for the Lord took him.

He lived for 365 years. He begat sons and daughters and so on. But he was taken. He did not die. He was taken to be with the Lord straight from life because Enoch walked with God.

But in doing so, he was obviously in contrast, a striking contrast, with the men of his generation. And clearly not just his generation, but all generations.

Enoch, of the seventh from Adam prophesied of these. That is not only of those who are defiantly anti-God, but also part of what the letter of Jude is talking about is about those who were meant to be the Lord's, but have obviously decided either to fall away or to use the worship of God as a cloak for their own sin, a cover for their own wickedness.

And of course, one commentator sort of aptly and succinctly referred to Jude with a subtitle of the Acts of the Apostles, as opposed to the Acts of the Apostles earlier on in the New Testament.

[3 : 59] So, if you look through the book of Jude, it's actually describing those who are outwardly meant to be the Lord's, but are inwardly defiantly sinning against him.

And of course, it's not only those who are meant to be the Lord's, but the world in general and every generation. There are those who are defiantly against the Lord and those who are simply indifferently against the Lord, as well as those who are this.

Now, if you do the arithmetic in Genesis 5 of how soon after the fall Enoch lived, Enoch was born in the 622nd year after the fall.

If we're counting, you know, the number of years of Adam's life and so on, and then you do the arithmetic. Enoch is in the year 622 after the fall. He's born. He lives on before he's taken away to the year 987.

So, you know, it's within the first thousand years, within the first millennia of time, as God has created it, that you've got this depth of depravity throughout mankind.

[5 : 10] Remember that it's only in the 10th generation, three generations after Enoch, that God decides in Noah's day to wipe the earth clean. And to have the flood and just destroy all humanity except for Noah and his family.

That's how bad things have got. That's how far man had fallen that early on in the morning of time. Such is the depravity of fallen man.

So, the seventh man prophesied to thee, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints. And what he is prophesying here is essentially the second coming. It is what, likewise, elsewhere Jesus refers to in Matthew's account of the gospel.

It's very similar to what we have, for example, in Thessalonians, where we read in 1 Thessalonians 4, The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord. If you think also of what the Lord says in Matthew's account of the gospel, in chapter 25, where just before the parable of the sheep of the goats, he says, When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

[6 : 34] So, it's talking about a time of the Lord coming back with all his saints. It says, now saints simply means sanctifying ones. It can refer either to angels or to the redeemed souls who have been the lords on earth.

I don't think we need to necessarily make a distinction of what it doesn't mean angels, or does it mean people who have been redeemed, because I think they'll probably be a mix. There'll be the angelic hosts coming, and the redeemed will be coming with them.

These certainly are described together in the letter of the Hebrews, in chapter 12, verse 22. To ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

So, you've got the spirits of the just made perfect, you've got the angels, you've got God, the judge of all. It's all in there, and it's all here as well, in what Jude is saying that Enoch prophesied way back in the seventh generation, from the beginning of time.

He prophesied and he said, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment. The judge of all the earth upon all. Now, of course, we will all be judged by the Lord.

[7 : 56] Paul writes this to the 2 Corinthians, chapter 5, verse 10. Being a believer does not mean that you escape judgment.

It means that you escape condemnation. It means that when we are judged, the Lord judges righteously because he sees in his redeemed the righteousness of Christ.

Because if we are washed in his blood, and our nakedness is clothed in his righteousness, then the judge of all the earth looks to us, and he sees the righteousness of Christ.

And so we are acquitted. And we might say, well, where then does our sins stand? He has already looked in our sin and found it on the cross. And then upon the cross, that sin has been put to death by the sacrifice of his son.

There is that glorious exchange. That Christ takes our sin upon himself, and we are given his righteousness in exchange. Behold the goodness and severity of God.

[8 : 58] This is the wondrous exchange the Lord gives. So this is what he says. Enoch the seventh man prophesied in these, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince, that doesn't just mean convince, but also convict, but to convince them in their own minds, all that are ungodly among them.

Now notice that little glimmer of hope. That it's not to condemn, it's said to judge all, but it's not to condemn all, but to convince all that are ungodly among them.

So among the all who are judged, there are the ungodly, and there are the redeemed. So all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed. So it's not just that they are themselves ungodly, but the things that they have done, they've done in an ungodly way, they've ungodly committed. The ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against them. Everything about what they have done, and who they are, is being conducted. Now we're used to the phrase ungodly, as though it's a kind of common nature word. Think of what it literally means. [10:11] Without God. Ungodly. Without God. How they have lived, what they have done, they have done so without reference to God.

All that they have committed, they have committed without reference to God's righteousness, just doing their own thing, going their own way. They are ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed.

The deeds themselves, are outside of God's law and commandments. They were against them.

The way they have done it, is against God's law and commandments. Outside of God.

Without God. And of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners, have spoken against him. To be without God, God takes personally.

And the reason he takes it personally, is because he himself, entreats and invites sinners, to come and be saved. But if they will not, then it is a personal slight against him.

[11:12] It is rather like, if you say you are a youngster, a teenager, whatever, and you ask someone out, and they say no. Now you might say, okay, fine enough, I am no worse off than I was before, we are not going out before, and we are not going out afterwards.

But no, in between, there has been that personal invitation, that personal invite, you take a bit of a risk, maybe, with your heart, or your pride, or whatever you ask, and they say no, and that is their perfect right, to do so.

But now, everything is not the same, between you, as it was before. Now there has been that personal slight. Now there has been that rejection. It is not just, that you are going along, your own separate ways.

Now there has been an invitation, that has been rejected. It is like that with God, only infinitely greater. For a sinner to be, outside of God, it is not because, God has not invited, it is because the sinner, decides not to.

Now of course, there are those instances, of people who have, never heard of the Lord, who have never had, the opportunity perhaps, to hear, and to be saved.

[12:15] They won't be saved either, tragically, which is one reason, why there is such an urgency, about the good news, of salvation, going around the world, and going to all nations, and to all peoples, because all must hear, that all might at least, have opportunity, because we cannot be saved, by anyone other than Christ.

Salvation is personal, to God, just as the affront, of sin, is personal, to God. So this prophecy, has been given, from way back.

Now, there's, if we look back again, to Genesis, we see that, Enoch, as it says, is the seventh generation, from Adam. And of course, there was another, as well as Seth's, covenant line, from which, Enoch himself came, Adam, Seth, Enoch, Enoch, Enoch, Enoch, Enoch, Enoch, Enoch, and so on, and so on, down to Noah.

This is the covenant line, they weren't all saints, by any means. I mean, most of them, were wiped out as well, in the flood too. So just being of the covenant line, it's not enough, like the Jews would say later, to have Abraham, to our father.

You know, it's not enough to say, oh, Adam was a godly man, or Noah was a godly man. We have to have this relationship, with the Lord ourselves, or it's not enough. But also, if you think, remember, there's Cain, and his line.

[13:35] Cain, who murdered his brother Abel. And that sin, that darkness, tends to reproduce itself. Remember that Enoch, is the seventh generation.

And we have a parallel, seventh generation as well, in the line of Cain. If we go back to Genesis 4, we read, Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and became Enoch. Now remember, Cain is generation number two.

So Enoch, that different Enoch altogether, there Enoch, that's the Cain's Enoch, generation number three. Now to Enoch was born, Irad, generation number four.

Irada begat Mehujiel, generation number five. Mehujiel begat Methusiel, generation six. Methusiel begat Ramech, generation seven. Enoch is the covenant line, generation seven.

Lamech is Cain's line, generation seven. Lamech took unto him two wives. So now we've got this defiant polygamy, right early on, in the seventh generation, from the fall here.

[14:37] Cain himself, for all that he was a murderer, doesn't take two wives, and we're not told that he does. But Lamech here, takes two wives. And this can only be, from a covetousness, lust, or simply defiance, of God's original holy institution.

The name of the one was Ada, the name of the other Zillah. And Lamech said unto his wives, Ada and Zillah, hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech. For I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly, Lamech seventy and sevenfold. Now, this is, in its original Hebrew, it is put in poetic form.

So, some have speculated, maybe it is a confession. Maybe it is meant as, oh, I shouldn't have done this, it's terrible, I didn't mean to do it, it's my wounding now, a young man to my wounding, to my hurt, that I've done this terrible, evil thing.

But that's not really the sense of it here, is it? That's not really the tone that comes through, despite it being in poetic terms.

[15:42] Far more likely, given the darkness of this line of Cain's descent, and also the fact that he's already broken God's law with a high hand, being a polygamist, now he's committed either murder, or at least killing in self-defense, where it says, a young man to my wounding, a young man to my hurt, it might mean, that the other man struck the first blow.

It might mean, that he was simply defending himself, but probably, he didn't need to actually kill, the other man. Cain, of course, is a murderer. Lamech may or may not be a murderer, but certainly he's a killer.

Certainly he's a killer, and a polygamist, and as we can see here, he's not too bothered about it. He's saying, if Cain is avenged sevenfold, Lamech shall be avenged seventy and sevenfold.

There is defiance here. There is this kind of law-breaking defiance, defiance against the Lord, defiance against all that he holds sacred, and it is here in the seventh generation.

Just as Enoch in the seventh generation, in the covenant line, is so much one who walks with God, that the Lord takes him to be with him, without him having to go through death.

[17:00] Lamech and the other line, the parallel Cain's line, is in such darkness, that murder or killing, polygamy, all the other acts of defiance against God, mean nothing to him.

He is defiant about it. The depths to which humanity is sinking. Okay. This is the extent in which God comes to judge it all.

To God, it is personal. And to those who are the Lord's, they recognize that sin, which they feel when they commit it, they are conscious of it, they are conscious that it is personal to God.

If you think about Psalm 51, of course, we all know the circumstances of Psalm 51. David has lustfully looked on Bathsheba, another man's wife. He has slept with her, adulterously.

And then when she is with child, he thinks, oh well, I have to get rid of the husband. Initially, he tries to get the husband to come home and sleep with his wife, to cover over David's sin. When husband won't cooperate, David sends him off to the front line to make sure that he gets killed.

[18:05] It is effectively murder by the hands of the Amalekites or the Ammonites or whoever it is that David's fighting at the time. So he is guilty of adultery, he's guilty of murder, and then there is the child that is born and then falls sick and then dies, and David then pens Psalm 51.

And what is he saying? Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in my sight. That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest.

God comes to judge all, to execute judgment upon all. Verse 15. That thou mayest be clear when thou judgest, David said. He sinned against Bathsheba, he sinned against Uriah and Hittite, he sinned against their family, he sinned against the honour of Israel, but he says against thee, thee only have I sinned.

Ultimately, all sin is against God. It is personal to God. God takes it personally. Because if it is not redeemed, it is a personal slight and rejection of God, or at the very least, indifference to God.

And if it is redeemed, it is redeemed at the ultimate cost of his only beloved son upon the cross.

Every sin that you and I are guilty of, if we have repented of it, if we are saved from it, then we are only saved because of the suffering and agony and death of Christ upon the cross.

[19 : 39] God's only beloved son. It is personal to him. And in the same way, Joseph, when he is in Egypt, when he is tempted by Potiphar's wife, and he says, there is none greater, Genesis 39, verse 9, none greater in this house than I, now that he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife.

How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? He doesn't say against Potiphar. He doesn't say against you, Potiphar's wife, by committing adultery, against myself for my own honor. No. How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? The Lord's people, Joseph, David, the apostles, all down through the generations, they know that sin is personal against God. And they are sorry for it. They mourn it. They fear it. They loathe it. They need forgiveness from it. Those who are steeped in sin probably, most probably don't think it's personal against God. Some do. I'm delighted in that. But to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them, there is the godly and there is the ungodly, those who are with the Lord and those who are without the Lord.

[21 : 04] That's who is to be without God, which of course is to be without hope. Among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

very few people consciously make a tirade against the Lord in heaven. Sometimes they do, of course.

Sometimes, particularly if things go badly for them, they're all ready to blame someone. So they blame God. Blame the God that they've never believed in all the rest of their lives. They've never worshipped or honoured or acknowledged in any way except when they want to say, how could God possibly do this?

How could a God of love ever do this? There can't possibly be such a God of love or who would never do this to me. Exactly why is unclear? Is it meant to be because I'm so good?

Because I'm so nice? Because I haven't done bad things that merit this? How could it possibly be that I deserve this? And they shake their fists at God. So it is not unknown in these circumstances for people to have their hard speeches spoken against him, but usually, other than in blasphemy and profanity and taking the Lord's name in vain, of which most of the population are, yes, guilty of, most people don't direct their enmity personally against God.

[22 : 27] It's just that they don't care. It's just that they're not bothered. But still, their sin is taken by God as being against them. It is personal to them.

Whether it is a matter of redemption or whether it is a matter of judgment, it is personal. In Malachi chapter 3, verse 13, it says, Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord.

Yet ye say, what have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, it is vain to serve God. And what profit is it that we have kept this ordinance and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?

Your words have been stout against me, but whether it's of condemnation and rebellion or whether it's of grace, it is personal to the Lord. In Zechariah chapter 2, reading at verse 8, he says, Thus saith the Lord of hosts after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoil you.

For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. Do my priests and my prophets no harm. That which pertains to me, you touch the apple of my eye.

[23 : 36] In Jeremiah, you read chapter 33, verse 8, I will cleanse them from all their iniquity which they have sinned against me. And I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned and whereby they have transgressed against me.

Sin is personal to God just as salvation is personal to God. Now, Enoch, as we say, is early on in the history of humanity.

Seventh generation. Adam is the first, Enoch is the seventh. There is the parallel descent in Cain's family where the rebellion against God is just getting darker and darker and darker.

Most people are not in the blackness of polygamy and murder and all the rest of it. Most people are just ordinary. They're the shade of grey between black and pure white.

We wouldn't claim to be pure white. But the bad news is that if we're going to stand in the presence of the Lord and survive we have to be pure white. We cannot stand before the Lord with even one smidgen of sin.

[24 : 45] With one iota of sin. The Lord is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. It just won't get in. Just like those who may have been hammering on the door of the ark as the rain was coming down

and the floods coming up and saying let us in let us in it's not that Noah is saying no go away you horrible people it's just that they're not getting in and because they're not getting in they perish and if we are not getting in to God's inner presence to his glorious kingdom if we are not to be permitted to his throne room and his grace then we perish not because God zaps us each individually with individual damnation or whatever it's just that we perish in that damnation because we couldn't get in like the ark if you don't get in you perish if you don't get into heaven you perish and we won't get into heaven if we have so much as one solitary sin to condemn us we may not be as black as Cain's descendants we may not be murderers or adulterers at least physically we may not be drug dealers or traffickers or all these evil people you hear about or terrorists or people who behead innocent

Christians or whatever we may be we're not as bad as these people no but we're not as good as we need to be what we need to be is divinely perfect what we need to be is spotless what we need to be is pure and we cannot be that in and of ourselves every single one of us will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and by the time he comes back as the Lord says in Matthew 25 there when the Son of Man shall come with all his holy angels and he'll sit on the throne of his glory by then it is a throne of glory at the moment it is still so far a throne of grace at the moment there is still opportunity to come to him and to plead mercy by the time he comes in judgment there will be no longer any opportunity for that this has been the state of mankind in every generation since the fall when sin comes into the world mankind gets darker and darker and darker and as early as Enoch there is this prophecy that when the Lord comes back he will judge all iniquity and ungodliness and he will judge everyone regardless whether they are redeemed or whether they are not and he will execute judgment now we tend to think of this word judgment as always being a negative but as some of you

I'm sure will remember particularly in the Old Testament where judgment is used it is a word that means righteousness justice you know God talks about doing judgment for the widows and for the fatherless he doesn't mean condemning them he doesn't mean sort of destroying their lives because how dare they be widowed how dare they be orphans but rather it means these who were so often oppressed by others because they were economically vulnerable God will give them justice God will give them righteousness he will be the husband they don't have he will be the father they didn't have he will be the judge who speaks for them and not against them he will do judgment for his people now in that sense in the Old Testament for the weak for the oppressed for those who have nowhere else to turn judgment is something to be welcomed judgment is that which that righteousness that can only be better than the misery they are in just now and it is when we begin to see with the eye of reality just how dark and sinful and hopeless our lives are without the Lord when we are in an ungodly state that we begin to appreciate that judgment righteousness goodness that's what we desire that's what we long for we long for things to be put right we long to be justified we long to be saved to be redeemed but we can't do it ourselves any more than the widows or the fatherless could do it in the Old Testament we don't have the strength we don't have the power we don't have the time we don't have the number of lives we've only got this one and it's already been sinned away for so many of the years that we've had how do we ever put it right we don't God can salvation is personal to him salvation is personal because he himself has come from heaven down to this fallen earth he himself has been born and taken on human flesh precisely so that he could die because the Godhead could not die of itself and manhood could not of itself be strong enough to endure the price that would be needed to redeem all those who would be saved it is why you must have Godhead and manhood united in one person so that whilst the Godhead does not die the man who is God does and the price which is a divine price is paid upon the cross but without that price there is no price that you and I can pay without that price there will always be the smirching of our souls there will always be the staining of our lives the judgment upon all verse 15 will include those who are redeemed but when they are judged they will be pronounced righteous because God the Father will look upon the righteousness of God the Son and it is personal to him he will take pleasure he will take delight in his Son Jesus and all who are washed in his blood and clothed in his righteousness he will delight in them because they are theirs that is why they will be saved because they are theirs that is why they will be redeemed because he has shed his blood for them that is why they will be with the Lord in glory because they will walk before him in white because their sin has all been taken away by this personal Son of God salvation is personal to God sin is personal to God whatever we are guilty of whatever we have done we have done against him and whatever we have done that is not

redeemed by the blood of Christ it is as though we ourselves have driven the nails through his hands and feet and we ourselves have put him to death on a cross and said yeah that's right that's fine in fact not only is it right and fine but I don't care about it

[32 : 15] I am indifferent the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross is that which will be regarded as either having been done for us or done by us and will either be redeemed by it or we will be condemned by it Christ has died once and for all it is personal to God and our salvation or lack of it will depend on our response to that event and to that individual for the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints it has been prophesied from the seventh generation of time from the seventh generation of mankind Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied of the saints behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment against God that can be good and free and justice or it can be condemn maker of judgment it all depends on where we stand before God or under cover of whom we stand before God to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him and that day they will see and know how right

God's judgment is they will be convinced they will see and they will know that it wasn't about them it was about God for him it is always personal