

# SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

## LESSON 5



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

## THE FALLEN ANGELS

*Scripture Text: Jude 6*

This verse has generated much confusion in the religious realm. Some believe the word *angels* refers to celestial beings. They make reference to **Genesis 6:2** and claim that this is where angelic beings fell away. Others say **Jude 6** refers to the supposed revolt in Heaven, spoken of in **Isaiah 14:12**: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer.” However, **Isaiah 14:16** lets us know that Lucifer was a man, not an angelic being. If the word *angels* do not always represent celestial creatures, what *angels* did Jude mean then when he wrote **verse 6**?

**MEMORY VERSE:** *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*

*—Ephesians 4:1*

### The Nature of This Epistle

Many commentators believe **verse 6** must have an Old Testament literal fulfillment since **verse 5** speaks of old Israel and **verse 7** speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, it is necessary to understand the two-part teaching style of this epistle. It is known as parallelism. In **verse 4**, Jude wrote of men who fostered apostasy in his day, the first century. In **verse 5**, he used an example from the Old Testament. In **verse 6**, when he spoke of *angels*, he was again referring to ones in the first century.

Notice the pattern: starting again in **verse 7** and continuing through **verse 16**, every other reference goes from the Old Testament example to the New Testament reality to show similarities or differences. In **verse 6**, he was dealing with the New Testament reality.

### Are There Sinning Angels?

**The angels which kept not their first estate.** When Peter dealt with this same truth, he said, “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell” (**2 Peter 2:4**). These words are confusing to people in false religion because they do not properly understand sin. There must be a power of choice to sin. **James 4:17** says, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” The phrase “doeth it not” portrays a power of choice, and the Scriptures do not teach that heavenly angelic beings have the power of choice.

**James 1:14** says that “every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.” Where does “lust,” or desire, come from? **1 John 2:16** tells us: “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” Before one can sin, there must be temptation. Temptation requires a fleshly, human nature. Celestial beings cannot be tempted to sin because they do not have human natures. Therefore, these *angels* were not celestial beings.

The Greek word for *angels* is *aggelos*. It means “a messenger, a minister, or a pastor.” Jesus said in **Revelation 1:20**, “The seven stars are the angels [*aggelos*] of the seven churches.” This text is dealing with ministers or pastors who became instruments of apostasy, *not* celestial beings.

Jude and Peter were both speaking of a ministry that was angelic in the sense that it had been exalted “in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (**Ephesians 2:6**). However, something happened. They *kept not their first estate*. The Amplified Bible says that they “did not keep (care for, guard and hold to) their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place.” What was “their proper dwelling place”? **Psalms 90:1** says, “LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.” They left their proper abode when they left the truth.

# SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

## LESSON 5

### A Fallen Ministry

**Left their own habitation.** When Jesus inspired the letter that represents the time period of A.D. 33-270, He said, “Thou hast left thy first love” (**Revelation 2:4**). How did those ministers leave their “first love”? According to **Revelation 2:1-7**, they were zealously practicing religion, but they had let it become a “form of godliness” (**2 Timothy 3:5**). They failed to keep their experiences clear and sinned by substituting “the commandments of men” for truth (**Matthew 15:9**).

When ones apostatize, they leave the church. The church is the “habitation of God through the Spirit” (**Ephesians 2:22**). When they continue to practice religion, they become part of spiritual Babylon, “the habitation of devils” (**Revelation 18:2**). They are then called “the angels that sinned” (**2 Peter 2:4**). If God did not spare Judas Iscariot, Demas, Hymenaeus, and Philetus, we need not think He will spare us from judgment if we deviate from truth. “God is no respecter of persons” (**Acts 10:34**).

### Chains Unto Judgment

**He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.** These *chains* are not literal. They typify the binding spiritual state that men go into. **John 12:35** says to “walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” **Matthew 6:23** declares, “How great is that darkness!” There is no greater *darkness* than that which comes upon ones who have had light and refused to walk in it. This is why we should “walk as children of light” (**Ephesians 5:8**).

### JUST A THOUGHT

**If you are headed the wrong way,  
God allows U-turns.**