

A dramatic sunset over a field of golden wheat. The sky is filled with dark, textured clouds illuminated from below by the setting sun, creating a range of colors from deep orange to bright yellow. The horizon is a straight line, with a single, small tree standing in the middle ground. The foreground is a vast field of golden wheat, stretching to the horizon.

CLOUDS WITHOUT WATER

JUDE 9-16

VERSE 9

“But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you.’”

- Michael’s faithfulness to God stands in stark contrast with the unnaturalness of the rebellion under consideration.
- Even in his lofty state, the archangel leaves judgment up to God. He is totally submissive, rather than “reviling” and “railing”.

VERSE 10

"But these men revile things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed."

- People love to think they are right about everything, experts in ignorance. Even modern pseudo-science will someday look foolish.
- "Instinct" is not always right (James 3:13ff). In fact, notice the way 2 Peter 2:10b-19 fleshes out this thought.

VERSE 11

"Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah."

- Like Cain, they revile truth, dignity, and humility. His example is one of cynicism and bitterness.
- Like Balaam, who prophesied for gold, they have sold themselves out. He was a well-informed, talented individual whose greed overrode God.
- Like Korah, they have carelessly ignored God's clear commands for the sake of their pride.

VERSE 12

"These men are those who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;"

- These evil influences have flash but no substance. They might seem knowledgeable, likeable, but are actually empty, vain.
- They have promise without performance.
- The worst kind of influences.

VERSE 13

"Wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever."

- "Shame like foam" indicates the fomenting of sin in their lives. They parade around a belief or practice that should be shameful, while promoting it as something to be proud of.
- There is a restlessness to people like this. They leave messes wherever they go and wander away once their work is done. Lack of commitment is a sure sign!

VERSES 14-15

"And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.'"

- The repetition of "ungodly" underscores the complete separation from God, from motive to action and all levels in between.

VERSE 16

"These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage."

- On all levels, there is corruption. From the tongue (James 3:1ff) to the heart (Matthew 15). From everything outside to inside.
- Colossians 3:5ff
- "Gaining an advantage"; failure to express true love is only an advantage to Satan (2 Cor. 2:10-11).