

## The 'Waterless Cloud' Metaphor

In our lesson text, Jude used five metaphors to teach the church about the dangers of opponents of Contenders of the Faith: **hidden reefs, waterless clouds, fruitless autumn trees, wild waves of sea, and wandering stars.**

In our last lesson, we studied Jude's metaphor of **Hidden Reefs**. We learned that the danger of hidden reefs is that a believer's faith can become shipwrecked by false teachings (1 Tim.1:18-20).

We also learned that Jude attached a **special doctrinal phrase** with each metaphor **except 'waterless cloud'** of today's lesson.

Jude also used the **Greek participle as a grammatical serial marker** to make an internal doctrinal point with each metaphor **except 'wandering stars'**:

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|---------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • <u>hidden reefs</u>           | (caring for themselves)  | [poimaino / p.a.ptc.nplm]        |
| • <u>waterless clouds</u>       | (carried along by winds) | [paraphero/ p.p.ptc.nplf]        |
| • <u>fruitless autumn trees</u> | (dead)                   | [a.a.ptc and uprooted - a.p.ptc] |
| • <u>wild waves of sea</u>      | (casting)                | [p.a.ptc]                        |
| • wandering stars               | (reserved)               | [perf.p.ind].                    |

**Today's lesson will study four aspects of Jude's second metaphor of waterless clouds carried along by winds.**

1. **The danger attached to 'waterless cloud' for the spiritually advancing believer is being carried by every wind of doctrines and tricky of men to join a 'waterless cloud' group.**

Note the internal doctrinal point identified by the serial participle - **"Clouds without water, carried along (paraphero / p.p.ptc.nplf) [grouping] by winds."**

(Eph.4:13-15) "Until we all attain **to** the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a mature man, to** the measure of the stature which belongs **to** the fullness of Christ. **As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about (periphero / p.p.ptc.nplm) by every wind of doctrine, by** the tricky of men, **by** craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, **we are growing up** in all aspects **into Him** who is the head, even **Christ.**"

2. **Another danger attached to 'waterless clouds' is the disruption of the spiritually advancing believer's spiritual growth momentum to maturity and to maximum divine production in his / her 'CWL'**

(Lev.26:4) "Then I shall give you **rains** in their seasons, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear fruit."

"**Waterless clouds** carried along by winds" have the appearance of normal and even picturesque, but their teaching is spiritually non-productive for spiritual growth maturity and maximum divine production in your Christian Way of Life (CWL).

'Waterless clouds' are without the necessary divine resources for spiritual life and growth according to God's Plan (rain from above). "Like clouds and wind **without rain** is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely." (Prov.25:14)

**Note the difference with water cloud:** “Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass and as the showers on the herb.” (Deut.32:2)

(Isa.55:10-11) “For as the **rain** and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; **so shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.**”

**3. The doctrinal difference between ‘water clouds’ verses ‘waterless clouds’ is the principle of the divine growth and production that comes from God sending the early and latter rains.**

This is God’s witness to His faithfulness to His word. The witness is that God gives it to both the righteous and unrighteous (**Day 2 and 3** of creation-restoration)/ **Gen.1:6-13**).

(Matt.5:45b) “He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and **sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.**”

(Deut.11:14) “He (God) will give the **rain** for your land in its season, the early and late rain, **that you may gather** in your grain and your new wine and your oil.”

(Acts 14:17) “And yet **He did not leave Himself without witness**, in that He did good and gave **rains** from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

(Acts 14:8-20; **Rom.1:20; Gen.8:20-22; 9:12-16**)

**4. Which believers are in danger of joining a ‘waterless cloud’ group?**

- (Eph.4:14) Those immature (nepios) children
- (2 Tim.4:3-4) Those with “itching ears”, believers who accumulate teachers in accordance to their own desires.
- (2 Pet.3:17) Those believers who are “easily carried away” by the error of unprincipled men and “fall from their own steadfastness”.

**Don’t let anyone distract you from this doctrinal principle: “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet.3:18)**

These same believers will have a similar problem with ‘**water cloud**’ teachers. Because of carnality [their Old Sin Nature] (OSN) and spiritual immaturity regarding teachers of the Word of God like Paul, Peter, and Apollos, there was quarreling and division regarding which teacher should lead them as pastor-teacher in the Corinthian church. There was even one group who didn’t want any pastor-teacher (1 Cor.1:12/ 1:10-17; 3:1-10/ 4-6). It is never about the man but the message of Categorical Bible Doctrine being taught!

**SHEPHERDS SHOULD KNOW BETTER EVEN WHEN SHEEP DON’T:**

(1 Cor.3:5-9) “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? **Servants** through whom you believed, even **as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.** Now he who plants and the one who waters **are one; but each will receive his own reward** according to his own labor. For **we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.**” (1 Pet.5:1-4).