

Cutting Straight the Word of the Truth on Jude 12 & 13

Who are the Shining Stars and the Wandering Stars?

Following the release of the article “*Remember, Obey, and Greet the Ones Leading You*” which has sufficiently demonstrated God’s governmental arrangement in the church for saints to obey the elders who are the leading ones of the church, a sister, in further display of disdain and insubordination to the elders and leading ones among the churches, posted an article entitled, “*Shining Stars Versus Wandering Stars*” in her dissenting website on December, 2009.

Her short article, which consists only of excerpts from Brother Lee’s book *Finding Christ by the Living Star*, is subdivided into two sections: *Shining Stars* and *Wandering Stars*. A three-paragraph excerpt from the book was quoted under each section. Although all the excerpts that comprised her article are from Brother Lee’s book, it should be noted that “*Shining Stars versus Wandering Stars*” is neither a subtitle nor the emphasis of his message.

Rather, in his book, Brother Lee devoted over ninety percent of his message on how to find Christ by the living revelation and living guidance of the living star, and how to be shining stars in the church today. Only a small portion of the message warned against the wandering stars in Jude 12 and 13. In that section Brother Lee tells us who and what are the characteristics and manifestations of the wandering stars, which are listed in detail in the excerpts from the ministry at the last part of this article. Brother Lee explicitly points out that the wandering stars are *the false leading ones*, and in particular, *some of the leaders and teachers in today’s Christianity*.

However, whereas Brother Lee’s main burden is on the living star and the shining stars, the sister’s burden is evidently on the wandering stars, as clearly seen from her lone added emphases of “STEADFASTLY” and “YOU MUST LOOK FOR THE FRUIT” under “*Wandering Stars*” of her article. Whereas Brother Lee succinctly mentions who the wandering stars are, the sister chose to hide this by stopping short at “*the false leading ones....*”, while truncating Brother Lee’s identifying of them as “*the leaders and teachers in today’s Christianity*” which is a phrase between paragraphs she quoted in her article. Any perceptive reader can detect her obvious intention: she meant to openly raise questions and doubts regarding the qualifications of the elders who are the stars in Revelation 1-3 and insidiously incite the saints not to follow or emulate them. Although the sister did not explicitly state in her article that she was pertaining to some elders as wandering stars today, her truncation of Brother Lee’s word, her added emphases in a seemingly innocuous article, the scathing remarks regarding the alleged fruitlessness of some elders in a recent letter of her supporters to the elders of the locality where she is serving, and the vitriolic, high-pitched rhetoric of her website’s many articles against leading ones and elders, fully exposed her motive.

It is the burden of this article to review from the ministry of brothers Nee and Lee the shining stars we must follow and the wandering stars we must stay away from. Who are the shining stars? How can we become shining stars? And who are the wandering stars? What are their characteristics and manifestations? Are the elders today the shining stars

or the wandering stars? Are the ones who characteristically do not submit themselves to God's divine ordination shining stars or in fact the wandering stars?

The Shining Stars

This matter of the star is not only in the book of Matthew. All the main things of the Bible, as a rule, begin in the Old Testament and go right through the New Testament to the end of the Bible. With this matter of the star there is no exception. It is mentioned and revealed first in Numbers 24:17, "There shall come a Star out of Jacob." According to the context of that verse, this star that comes out of Jacob is Christ. Christ comes as the star. Then immediately in the very opening of the New Testament, we have the star again. The wise men said: "We saw His star in the east" (Matt. 2:2). They did not say, "We have seen a star," or, "We have seen the star," but, "We have seen His star." No doubt this is the fulfillment of the prophecy in Numbers 24. The star prophesied in the Old Testament now has come and was shown to these wise men. We have seen clearly that the revealing of this star was outside of religion.¹

The star in Matthew 2 is only the beginning of this matter in the New Testament. If we go to the last book, the book of Revelation, we see two things concerning this matter. The first is that the Lord Jesus is the star, not the evening star but the morning star.² Second, we should realize that the shining stars are not those heavenly beings, but the spiritual ones who take the spiritual responsibility in the church—they are the stars. These stars are not in the heavens but in the church today. From the excerpts below we see that they are: (1) the serving ones (angels) of the churches; (2) the messengers of the churches (the spiritual ones); (3) the leading ones in the churches; (4) the responsible ones in the local churches; (5) the elders; (6) the faithful followers of Christ; (7) the overcomers; and (8) everyone who aspires to be shining stars.

According to Daniel 12:3, God's redeemed in the Old Testament, that is, those who turn many to righteousness, who lead people to God, and who do righteousness by God, will shine as stars forever and ever. If the redeemed people of God in the Old Testament can shine as stars, the believers who have received God's grace in the New Testament should shine much more as the heavenly stars in today's dark age. The apostle Paul solemnly charges in Philippians 2:15-16 that we should be children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom we shine as luminaries, reflecting the word of life, the embodiment of Christ. The Lord Jesus also said that we are the light of the world, and He charged us to let our light shine over people (Matt. 5:14-16).³ Matthew 13:43 tells us, "Then the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Today, during the time of the night, we need to function as the stars; but in the coming age of the kingdom those who shine now as the stars will shine forth as the sun. Now we are the shining stars, but in that day we will be as the sun.⁴

The Bible reveals that the serving messengers in the seven local churches are seven stars (Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1). In the darkness of the church's desolation, the responsible ones in every local church should be like stars in the night shining from heaven over the church in darkness.⁵ The messengers who lead the churches should shine as heavenly stars, and all the saints under their leadership should imitate them to shine as stars according to the Lord. We may or may not be responsible ones in the church, yet everyone should aspire to be today's overcomer who radiates the light of life as shining stars in this dark age.

The Wandering Stars

To be clear, let us first look into the original uncut portion of Brother Lee's book *Finding Christ by the Living Star* which the sister quoted in her article:

“There is also a negative aspect to the stars—the wandering stars. Jude 12 and 13 tell us, ‘These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots...wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.’ We should be the stars, but not the wandering stars. These are the false leading ones. So many Christians today are not stars; some, however, are stars, but they are wandering stars. **There are leaders and teachers in today's Christianity who are in this category.**”

Do you know what a wandering star is? I do not know astronomy, but I can tell you a little. A proper star has a certain position and fixed orbit. It continues in its course steadfastly. But there are some stars with no fixed position or orbit: they are wandering stars. It seems that some Christians are stars, it seems that they are shining, but their shining is a deception. They are stars, but they are not the steadfast stars. If you follow them, you will be misled; eventually you will not know where to go. They themselves are wandering: they have no ground, they have no standing, they have no certain way to go on with the Lord. Today they say this, and tomorrow they will say that; they are wandering. Be careful! You can never find Jesus by following a wandering star.

How may we know the wandering stars? There are some signs. They are trees without fruit, they are the clouds without rain. You must look for the fruit. The Lord Jesus said that we may know a tree by its fruit (Matt. 7:16-20). If we follow the wandering stars, eventually our portion will be the same as theirs—the blackness of darkness forever.”⁶ [*Emphasis Added*]

Comparing this excerpt with the one quoted with ellipsis by the sister in her article, a stark and conspicuous difference can be seen: In warning against the wandering stars—the false leading ones, Brother Lee specifically refers to them as some *leaders and teachers in today's Christianity*. It is possible that the sister, by intentionally truncating their identity as proffered by Brother Lee, either disagrees with Brother Lee, having other groups of persons in mind, or she deliberately wanted to cast doubts on the readers' mind to relate them to the elders and leading ones in the churches. In either case, for one who professes herself to be faithful to the ministry, it is a devious and unfaithful presentation of Brother Lee's teaching which results in readers' misperception of his intended interpretation regarding the wandering stars.

The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that the erratic teachers, the apostates, were not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation but were wandering about among God's star-like people (Dan. 12:3; Rev. 1:20).⁷ From the above-cited excerpts and other portions from the ministry listed at the end of this article, we find the

ten characteristics and indications of wandering stars; they are: (1) the erratic teachers in the apostate church; (2) the false leading ones (particularly some leaders and teachers in today's Christianity); (3) not the steadfast stars; (4) the ones who keep the believers away from the genuine local church and from meeting on the ground of unity; (5) the autumn trees without fruit; (6) the hidden reefs (shepherds who feed themselves); (7) the waterless clouds; (8) the wild waves of the sea; (9) the ones who have no spirit; and (10) the tares.

The term "*wandering stars*" appears only in Jude 13, classified under the subheading "*The Evils of the Apostates and Their Punishment Under the Lord's Judgment*" (vv. 8-19) in the Holy Bible Recovery Version. Under the same section, leading to the mentioning of the wandering stars in verse 13, Jude mentions Michael the archangel and the devil in verse 9, and Cain, Balaam, and Korah in verse 11. The case of Cain depicts the way of religiously serving God according to one's own will devoid of the divine revelation, even as Balaam epitomizes the error in teaching wrong doctrine. The case of Michael the archangel and the devil touches the Lord's heavenly government directly, whereas the incident of Korah's rebellion points to insubordination against God's deputy authority. These could be gleaned from the following four excerpts in the footnotes of the Holy Bible Recovery Version:

Regarding Cain:

11¹ The way of religiously serving God according to one's own will, heretically rejecting the redemption by blood required and ordained by God, **and according to the flesh** envying God's true people because of their faithful testimony to God (Gen. 4:2-8).⁸ [*Emphasis Added*]

Regarding Balaam:

11³ The error of teaching wrong doctrine for reward, while knowing it to be contrary to the truth and against the people of God, and abusively using the influence of certain gifts to lead the people of God astray from the pure worship of the Lord to idolatrous worship (Num. 22:7, 21; 31:16; Rev. 2:14). Coveting for reward will cause the coveting ones to rush headlong into the error of Balaam.⁹ [*Emphasis Added*]

Regarding Michael the archangel and the devil:

9³ See note 11² in 2 Pet. 2. This indicates that in **the Lord's heavenly government** the devil, Satan, was even higher than the archangel Michael. God appointed him and set him so (Ezek. 28:14). In any case, Satan was under the Lord, so Michael said to him, "The Lord rebuke you." Michael kept his position in **the order of divine authority**.¹⁰ [*Emphasis Added*]

Regarding the rebellion of Korah:

11⁵ Lit., contradiction, speaking against. This is rebellion against **God's deputy authority in His government** and against His word spoken by His

deputy (such as Moses). This brings in destruction (Num. 16:1-40).¹¹
[Emphasis Added]

From Cain and Balaam, Michael the archangel and the devil, and the rebellion of Korah, we see four very important negative lessons: serving God by one's own will according to the flesh, erroneous teaching, refusal to keep one's position in the order of divine authority under God's heavenly government, and rebellion against God's deputy authority on earth. In the outline of Holy Bible recovery Version, Brother Lee proscribes them and their works as "*The Evils of the Apostates*" under the same category as the wandering stars. As a matter of fact, immediately after mentioning their names and their works in verses 9-11, Jude directly connects them to the wandering stars with "*These are the...*", referring to the wandering stars and other descriptions of the false leaders and teachers in verses 12 and 13. Hence, by direct contextual inference from the Scriptures we see that the ones who do the work and follow the footsteps of Cain, Balaam, the devil, and Korah are likened to the wandering stars in reality. As a corollary, the wandering stars' misguiding of the believers is primarily due to their serving God according to one's own will, teaching erroneous doctrine, repudiation of God's heavenly government, and insubordination to God's deputy authority on earth. It is therefore a serious matter for anyone, especially a worker, to be a wandering star, as Brother Lee warned:

Regarding serving God according to the flesh:

"If the Lord enlightens us, we will discover that the greatest difficulty encountered by the life of God within us in our natural life, our own being.... If we want to be delivered from this kind of difficulty, the only way of salvation is the cross. Only when we accept the cross to break our natural life shall the life of God be manifested and overflow. Only when we put ourselves to death shall we let the Holy Spirit do the quickening work within us.... Therefore, the experience of the stage of dealing by the cross is a very important crisis. Blessed are they who can experience it in a full and thorough way, for they are close to maturity in their spiritual life, and Christ will grow and be formed in them.

God is determined to remove the flesh. In the Old Testament God did one specific thing to express His attitude toward the flesh—He established circumcision.

The Bible's conclusion of the flesh [in] Romans 8:8 [is], 'They that are in the flesh cannot please God.' The Bible has spoken much about the flesh, and at this point it concludes that the flesh cannot please God. If man belongs to the flesh, minds the flesh, and lives by the flesh, whatever he does, either good or bad, cannot please God.

The rightful position of the flesh [is shown in] Galatians 5:24, 'They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.' The rightful position of the flesh is on the cross. The final consequence of the flesh before God is death. God's verdict upon the flesh is that it must be put to death! Only when the flesh is put to death can God have His place and His way in man."¹²

Regarding teaching differently:

“We may not think that this is serious, but actually it is more than serious. It kills people to teach differently. To teach differently tears down God's building and annuls God's entire economy. **We all must realize that even a small amount of teaching in a different way destroys the recovery.**”¹³
[Emphasis Added]

“This pertains to the administration and shepherding of a local church. For this the first thing needed is to terminate the differing teachings of the dissenters, which distract the saints from the central line and ultimate goal of God’s New Testament economy (vv. 4-6). The differing teachings in 1:3-4, 6-7; 6:3-5, 20-21, and the heresies in 4:1-3, are the seed, the source, of the church’s decline, degradation, and deterioration dealt with in the second book.”¹⁴ *[Emphasis Added]*

Regarding God’s authority & administration:

“In the divine governmental ordination, woman is under the headship of man. God created the female in this way (Gen. 2:18-24; 1 Tim. 2:13). According to the nature (v. 14) created by God, woman is subordinate to man.”¹⁵

“Since woman is under the headship of man, she should keep her head covered, not exposed, when she touches the divine administration by praying to God or speaking for God. Otherwise, she disgraces or shames her head, as if her head was shaved, because she denies the divine governmental ordination by exposing her head to the observing angels (v.10) while touching the authority of God.”¹⁶

“In the church, the woman also has to submit to the man. First Corinthians 11:3 says, ‘But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ.’ God appointed man to be the authority as a type of Christ and the woman to submit as a type of the church. For this reason the woman ought to have authority on her head for the sake of the angels.”¹⁷

“The Present age is one characterized by rebellion against God’s authority and His divine administration. The church is called to bear an anti-testimony of submission to God’s throne and to His administrative arrangements. It is an honor and a glory that we have been called by God to be the corporate means through which He establishes His kingdom on the earth (Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 11:15) and will ultimately head up all things in Christ in the new heaven and new earth (Eph. 1:10; Rev. 22:1). May all of the saints in the Lord’s recovery be delivered from the principle of rebellion to enjoy His abounding grace to uphold God’s divine administration for the building up of His Body.”¹⁸

“We should never harbor any satanic principle of rebellion against authority within us while outwardly serving God. If a man has never been

delivered from this satanic principle and if there is still a vestige within him of the principle which led to Satan's enmity against God, the principle which led to Satan's very rebellion, we can never serve God. We can never preach the word of Christ in the principle of Satan. Principle is more important than words. In this universe Satan is not afraid of those who preach Christ's word; he is afraid of those who submit to Christ's authority.... Unless God's authority and our submission are fully manifested, we can make many claims about doing God's work, but we are doing Satan's work in actuality."¹⁹

Regarding God's deputy authority:

"In addition to Christ's direct authority, the Bible further shows that in carrying out His purpose, God exercises His authority through men. The Bible is full of examples of such delegated authorities. For example, in the Old Testament there are Joseph, Moses, Samuel, and David, among many others. In the New Testament there are the apostles in the universal church (Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28 and footnote 2) and the elders in the local churches (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)."²⁰

"God's children must learn to know authority and find out to whom they should submit. Wherever we go, the first thing we should ask is whose authority should we be under.... Therefore, if a man is independent, individualistic, and free from any God-appointed deputy authority, he is an outsider as far as God's administration over the whole universe is concerned. He cannot get along with other children of God, and as such, he cannot accomplish God's work on earth today. God has established deputy authorities in the church; the church is built up and maintained by the authority of God. For this reason every child of God should look for the authority to whom he should submit so that he can coordinate with others in a proper way. Unfortunately, many people have failed in this point."²¹

"First of all, we must submit to the authority of the Head. Then we need to know whose authority we should submit to and who is in authority over us. Although we know that we should submit to the authority of the elders and the older saints, sometimes nothing can force us to submit to them. Our ability to submit to authority depends on the lessons we have learned from the Lord's hand by being torn down by the Lord. If we have not learned many lessons of being broken by the Lord, authority and order are out of the question, and coordination is basically nonexistent."²²

"Brother Nee answered: The authority of the local church is in the hands of the elders, whereas the authority of the work is in the hands of the apostles."²³

"God builds His church upon His authority. He has appointed deputy authority in all human government and institutions. All the brothers and sisters in the church have to learn to submit to the authority of the elders. We obey the elders because they are the Lord's deputy authority in the church."²⁴

“Not only so, we also need much grace to submit to the elders. There is the need to be the elders, and there is the need to submit to the elders.”²⁵

“We obey the elders because we submit to the authority of the Head. We are not submitting to the authority of man but to Christ, the Head of the church, recognizing His authority in the church.”²⁶

“God's government in the universe depends on God's authority. In the same way, the church's government also depends on the church's authority. The New Testament shows us clearly that the authority of the church is entrusted to the elders and is completely in the hands of the elders. Although the elders are appointed by the apostles, God has not entrusted the authority of the church to the hands of the apostles. The Apostle Paul could set up elders in the church, but when the matter of excommunication was to be carried out, Paul did not have the direct authority to excommunicate others. The authority of excommunication was in the hands of the elders in Corinth. The apostles do not have direct authority to deal with matters of the church. All the authority in the church is entrusted to the elders.”²⁷

With a clear and complete view from the ministry concerning the shining stars and the wandering stars, it is plain to see that the co-workers and elders among the churches who have been shining in the darkness to turn people from the wrong way to the right way are shining stars. Conversely, in previous articles, we have seen how the dissenting sister and her supporters seem to fall right under the descriptions of Cain, Balaam, reviling lordships and Korah. First, they have elected to serve in independence and utter disregard of God's ordained way of service in the Body. Second, the sister has a host of articles in her website reeking of eccentric teachings which are different from the apostles' teaching, many of which are outright erroneous and unscriptural.²⁸ Third, it is revealed that the sister's intractable stance opposite to God's divine ordination on headship regarding sister's position in the divine administration is a direct challenge to God's order of authority in His heavenly government.²⁹ Fourth, it is evident from her speaking and writings that the sister is averse to submitting to God's deputy authority in the church and in the work – the brothers who are the elders and leading co-workers – especially to the ones who do not hold the same views as hers in teaching and practice.³⁰ In a feat of irony, the one who insinuates others of being wandering stars herself fits the very description of what she warns against.

Moreover, in the book *Finding Christ by the Living Star*, Brother Lee references the *fruitlessness* of the wandering stars to Matthew 7:16-20 which says, “By their fruits you will recognize them. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so every good tree produces good fruit, but the corrupt tree produces bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, neither can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. So then, by their fruits you will recognize them.”

This confirms that the reckoning of “*autumn trees without fruit*” in Jude 12 does not necessarily pertain only to the presence or non-presence of fruit but also to *the kind of fruit* the trees bear. In the *Life-Study of Matthew*, under the subheading “*Discerning the False Prophets by Their Fruit*”, Brother Lee relates the fruits in 7:16-20 to *false prophets*

in verse 15. Hence, the wandering stars in Jude 13 are called the false prophets in Matthew 7:15:

“Verse 15 says, ‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but within are ravenous wolves.’ As we are taking the constricted way, we must discern who the false prophets are. This means that on the constricted way we must be alert for any kind of falsehood. The Lord said regarding the false prophets, ‘By their fruits you shall know them’ (v. 16). We know a prophet not by his talk, preaching, or work, but by his fruit. All Christians today are accustomed to being influenced by people’s talk. An eloquent speaker with enticing words is able to seduce many. Do not listen to eloquent speech or to enticing words. Rather, wait and see what kind of fruit is produced. This is the way to discern whether a prophet is true or false.

“The church is going on, and the Lord’s testimony is spreading throughout the world. Because the doors are wide open, some self-appointed prophets may try to come in, claiming that they know certain things and can do certain works. Let them say whatever they will, for we shall look to the Lord to prove them by their fruit. We need to apply this principle to every such case. Do not listen to eloquent speech, but consider the fruit. Every good tree produces goodly fruit, but the corrupt tree produces evil fruit. Every tree that does not produce goodly fruit will be cut down and cast into the fire (7:17-19).”³¹

It is important to look at what the Lord said afterward in the verses that follow. Verses 21-23 says, “Not every one who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, *was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power? And then I will declare to them: I never knew you. Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.*”

As a whole, Matthew 7:15-23 provides us with a clear picture in relation to Jude 12 and 13. The wandering stars, who are the false prophets in Matthew 7:15, are likened to trees which may have even produced much fruits. But inasmuch as they are not the kind of fruit that is produced according to the will of the Father, like Cain’s offering they cannot satisfy the Lord, thus they are counted as “*fruitless*” like the fig tree in Matthew 21:19 and considered “*trees without fruit*” of the wandering stars in Jude 12. According to Matthew 7:22-23 and Jude 14, on the day of the Lord’s return, some workers, although working laboriously and apparently fruitful, will tragically still be called the *workers of lawlessness* based on the kind of fruits they produced. The criterion for approving fruits is not by the amount of fruits borne but by whether or not the work is done according to the Father’s will, which in turn determines their entrance into the kingdom of the heavens. In the Bible, the kingdom is always related to life and also to authority. Brother Lee often said that our living and work today will be our very reward in the coming age. That the false prophets, that is, the workers of lawlessness, will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens which is a reward of one’s work signifies that their work was not in the reality of the kingdom of the heavens, and their living and service was not under the principle of life and authority.

Matthew, being a book on the kingdom, emphasizes the need for us to live and serve as kingdom people. We need to live a life under the heavenly ruling of the divine government and honor God's ordination and arrangement, to enthrone Him as the King. The end does not justify the means. Having much fruit is for His glory, not ours. All our work should be out from, in and through, and unto the Lord. All our labors should be out from, in and through, and unto the Body.

This should serve as a stern warning to us as we serve the Lord today. We need to labor diligently and steadfastly, but as we do so we must take utmost care to work under the reality and ruling of the kingdom according to the Father's will. Brother Lee says in the footnotes of Matthew 7:23 regarding the Father's approval of our work:

23¹ *Knew* here means *approved*. The same word in Rom. 7:15 is translated *acknowledge*. The Lord never approved those who, in His name, prophesied, cast out demons, and did many works of power (v. 22), but did those things not according to the will of the heavenly Father (v. 21). The Lord did not deny that they did those things, but He considered those things lawlessness because they were not done according to the will of the heavenly Father; they were not done in line with the divine will. Thus, those who do such things, even in the Lord's name, will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but will depart from the Lord, that is, be excluded from the manifestation of the kingdom in the coming age.³²

Likewise, may we not be *dreamers* (Jude 8) in serving the Lord, and may there be no *reviling* against God's government or God's deputy authority as we serve the Lord today, as Jude 14 says, "But these revile the things that they do not know, and the things that they understand naturally...." In the footnote Brother Lee says:

10³ Or, instinctively. These dreamers revile what they do not know but should know; and what they understand they understand naturally, instinctively, without reason, like animals of instinct. They do not use reason to exercise man's deeper and higher knowledge, which includes the consciousness of man's conscience. What they practice is shallow and base instinctive understanding, like that of animals, which are without human reason. By behaving in this way, they are being corrupted, or destroyed.³³

Furthermore, in the footnote of Jude 13 in the Holy Bible Recovery Version Brother Lee calls the false prophets and workers of lawlessness of Matthew 7:15 the *erratic teachers* and *apostates*. In the *Life-Study of Jude*, he also calls them *heretics*:

"These heretics are also called 'autumn trees without fruit, having died twice, rooted up.' Autumn is a season for reaping fruit. The self-seeking apostates seem to be fruit trees in season, but they have no fruit to satisfy others. They have died twice, not only outwardly in appearance as most trees do in autumn, but also inwardly in nature. They are thoroughly dead; they should be uprooted."³⁴

Referenced to the wandering stars in Jude 12-13 is the same warning of the apostle Peter who refers to the wandering stars as *heretics, false teachers, and mockers*:

“Heresy’ is an anglicized Greek word, *hairesis*, which means choices of opinion or doctrine different from that usually accepted, ‘self-chosen doctrines alien from the truth’ (Alford), thus causing division and producing sects. This word is also used in Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5, 14; 26:5; 28:22; 1 Corinthians 11:19; Galatians 5:20; and Titus 3:10 in the adjective form, *hairetikon*, heretical. Here it denotes the false and heretical doctrines brought in by the false teachers, the heretics, similar to the doctrines of today’s Modernism.

Heresy involves three matters: opinion, the causing of divisions, and the producing of sects. Therefore, opinion, divisions, and sects are the three constituents of heresy. Heresy, of course, is not constructive. Instead of building up the church, heresy destroys the church. For this reason, Peter speaks of destructive heresies, or heresies of destruction.”³⁵

“In 3:17 and 18 we have the conclusion of this Epistle. In verse 17 Peter says, ‘You, therefore, beloved, knowing these things before, be on your guard lest being carried away by the error of the lawless, you fall from your own steadfastness.’ Here Peter tells us to be on our guard because of the apostasy, the heretical teachings, that may carry us away to destruction by twisting the apostles’ writings or the Scriptures. The Greek word rendered ‘carried away’ here is the same word used in Galatians 2:13 concerning Peter, Barnabas, and other Jewish believers. In verse 17 ‘the lawless’ must refer to the false teachers and mockers (2 Pet. 2:1; 3:3) as the early heretics. Peter is concerned lest the saints fall from their own steadfastness. To fall from our steadfastness is to become unstable.”³⁶

Herein we see the seriousness of being opinionated and teaching differently from the apostles’ teaching in the church, for it will cause divisions and produce sects, much like the works of the heretics. To merely care for the spread of our work is dangerous. It will produce different works to build up different ministries, and division will result.³⁷

May the Lord save us from serving by our own way and according to our own will, and preserve us in serving by the Lord’s way and according to the Father’s will. We should not uplift ourselves by burnishing our credentials and brandishing our “successes” and “fruits” against others, because this is not to keep the portion God has measured to us under His divine administration. May we learn to subject ourselves to God’s deputy authorities on earth to manifest the proper order in the Body as arranged by God.

Conclusion

In the Bible the stars not only signify Christ but also the overcomers among God’s redeemed people. The star portrays how Christ shines over the earth, which is permeated by darkness, in the age of the dark night. As the Star out of Jacob, He came to the land of Judah in His first coming. As the bright morning star, He will appear in the darkest hour, after midnight and prior to the dawn. This means that while people are sleeping soundly in the night, He will secretly give Himself as the morning star to the overcomers, those who love Him and who are watching, preparing, and waiting for Him, that they may have the priority to taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence. Furthermore, He will rise as the morning star in the hearts of those who love His

appearing to shine in the darkness of apostasy where they are today, before His actual appearing as the bright morning star. Since God's redeemed people have received His perfect redemption, they belong to Christ and are of the same kind as Christ. Hence, they also become bright stars shining as luminaries in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation to reflect the word of life, the embodiment of Christ.³⁸ Both the stars and the lampstands are for the night. In the day we do not need the stars or the lampstands. But it is still night time during the church age. The day is not here until the Lord comes back.³⁹

At the beginning of the New Testament the star was outside of religion, but at the end of the New Testament the star is within the church.⁴⁰ In the beginning of the New Testament there was only one star in the heavens, but in the end of the New Testament there are seven stars in seven local churches. In every local church there is a star; in every local church there is something shining, leading people to the right way. Today we are not in the age of Matthew 1 and 2, but in the age of the Book of Revelation, in the local churches. Today the star is in the local churches. The Bible ends with this word: "And I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, come" (Rev. 22:16-17). Today the star is with the Spirit and with the Bride. Where the Spirit is, there is the star; where the Bride, the church, is, there is the star.⁴¹

However, we should not take a word such as Revelation 1:16 and 20 concerning the shining stars to subvert God's administration in the church. It is significant that Paul's word in Philippians 2:15 concerning shining as luminaries in the world follows his recounting of the pattern of submission which the Lord established for us in verses 5-8. Working out of our salvation in verse 12 requires our obedience to the inner operating God in verse 13. Murmurings and reasonings in verse 14 are a sign of our disobedience. Being blameless and guileless and shining as luminaries are an issue of our obedience. This means that we can shine only if we take the way of submission to the authorities God placed over us. Thus, the shining stars in Revelation 1 are not those who try to overthrow the proper order in the church, but those who live within the restrictions of God's governmental administration by the supply of the inner operating God to shine forth Christ."⁴²

We should not be carried away by the devices of those who seek to overthrow God's authority in the church and draw a following for themselves through winds of teachings that result to a system of error. In studying this topic, it is important to bring readers back to the very focus and burden of Brother Lee when he spoke of wandering stars through the following excerpts:

"If we have seen a clear vision of God's economy and know what the recovery is, we shall be willing to forget our disposition, to deny our taste, and to care only for the Lord's recovery. The recovery is not based on any practice; it is based on Christ who is our peace, our foundation, our cornerstone, and our everything. The vision of God's economy must control us, direct us, and restrict us. Such a vision will surely cause us to stand on Christ as the unique foundation. Then instead of being wandering stars (Jude 13), we shall be those who can be built up with others. We shall be eternally settled in God's economy. Those who have seen this vision and are governed by it can be built up with others on the unique foundation of the all-inclusive Christ..."⁴³

“Jude exhorted the believers also to build up themselves in their most holy faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, and keep themselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life (v. 20). This shows that in such a situation of apostasy, the best way for us is to exhort the believers in the positive way that Jude did.”⁴⁴

Finally, we enjoin readers to be at peace and go on positively in the local churches under the ministry of the co-workers and the service of the elders as we leave you with the concluding paragraphs of *Finding Christ by the Living Star*, spoken by Brother Lee right after his short warning about wandering stars:

“We must follow the shining stars, those with a definite standing and a certain course. These are the stable stars, the steadfast ones. If anyone comes to you without a definite standing and certain course, avoid him. **The proper standing is the local church, and the right course is to go on in the Spirit in the local church. Never be a wandering star, and never follow a wandering star. Take the proper standing, and get yourself in the right course. If you are wandering, you are wasting your time.** If you would go to a certain place, get out your map, get on the right road and in the right lane; and as you drive, you will reach your destination.

“I am not speaking these things lightly. You are aware of today's confusion. Oh, the dead things! Oh, the frustrations, the distractions of the wandering ones! **Anyone who keeps us from the genuine local church and from meeting on the ground of unity with the Lord's people is a wandering star. The true stars are those who turn many to righteousness, those who do not lead people astray, but turn them to the right way. Today the only way for you and me and for anyone to find Christ is to see the living star. Hallelujah! Today the star is not far from us—it is with the local churches. Among all the local churches there are some living stars. You just have to contact them; you just have to keep company with them. They will lead you to the place where Jesus is.**

“The Lord be merciful to us that we may always be kept in the right way to meet the Lord, to worship Him, and to offer our love to Him. May the Lord make us all like those wise men, following the star to find Christ. **Today the living star and the living stars are in the local churches. Let us follow them and let us be one of them.**”⁴⁵ [*Emphases Added*]

Excerpts from the Ministry

The Shining Stars

The Angels of the Churches are Shining Stars

“The star in Matthew 2 is only the beginning of this matter in the New Testament. If we go to the last book, the book of Revelation, we see two things concerning this matter. The first is that the Lord Jesus is the star, not the evening star but the morning star; second, we see that **all the angels of the churches are stars**. Here we should realize that the angels are not those heavenly beings, but **the spiritual people who take the spiritual responsibility in the church—they are the stars.**” (W. Lee, *The New Testament Service, Chapter 6, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“In the book of Revelation **stars are the shining ones in the churches who are the serving ones (angels) of the churches, responsible for the testimony of Jesus** (Rev. 1:20, 2, 9).” (W. Lee, *The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 099-113), Chapter 15, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“The **leading ones in the churches in Revelation are not called elders, but angels. These angels are the shining stars in the Lord’s hand**. There is no position; they are just the shining ones. But in today’s Christianity there are all kinds of positions. In the church life we do not need positions; we need the shining ones burning with the sevenfold Spirit.” (W. Lee, *The Wonderful Christ in the Canon of the New Testament, Chapter 18, Section 4, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Second Peter 1:19 tells us to take heed to the sure Word until the morning star, which is Christ, arises within us. Revelation 1:20 not only tells us that the churches are the lampstands shining with the Spirit, but also that **the angels, the leading ones or the messengers in the churches, are the shining stars.**” (W. Lee, *Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 5, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Messengers of the Churches (the Spiritual Ones) are Shining Stars

“All these signs are the main scenes on this divine television screen of Revelation. The telecast begins with seven lampstands, signifying the churches; then follow **seven shining stars, signifying the messengers of all the churches....**” (W. Lee, *The Basic Revelation in the Holy Scriptures, Chapter 9, Section 5, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Revelation 1:16 says...[that] ‘He had in His right hand seven stars.’ **These seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches**. Christ holds them in His right hand. This means that Christ has authority over them. In the Bible, the right hand signifies authority and exaltation (Psa. 17:7; 18:35; Acts 2:33). These messengers are in the Lord’s hand. They are the faithful ones, and their duty is to shine as stars. They are safe in the Lord’s hand, yet their responsibility is great. (W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 2) Vol. 34: The Glorious Church, Chapter 10, Section 5, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“In the first chapter of Genesis the believers are typified by the stars (v. 16c). Daniel 12:3 says that those who turn many to righteousness shine like stars. In Revelation, **the messengers of the churches, the spiritual ones who bear the responsibility of the testimony of Jesus, are the shining stars** (1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1).” (W. Lee, *The New Testament Service, Chapter 6, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Christ is the Holder of the messengers of the churches. Revelation 1:16 says, ‘He had in His right hand seven stars,’ and, as verse 20 makes clear, **‘the seven stars are messengers of the seven churches.’** **These messengers are the spiritual ones in the churches bearing the responsibility of the testimony of Jesus.** Like stars, they should be of the heavenly nature and in a heavenly position. In the Acts and the Epistles the elders were the leading ones in the operation of the local churches (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5).... In the dark night of the church’s degradation there is the need of the shining both of the collective churches and of the individual messengers....” (W. Lee, *The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 050-062), Chapter 10, Section 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Revelation 1:20 says, **‘The seven stars are messengers of the seven churches.’** These messengers are the spiritual ones in the churches. They may not be responsible for the affairs of the church, but they are responsible for bearing the testimony of Jesus. As stars, they should be of the heavenly nature and in a heavenly position.” (W. Lee, *The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 099-113), Chapter 15, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Revelation 2:1 says, ‘To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.’ Each of these seven epistles begins with a description of the speaker. Before the Lord says anything to the churches, He declares who He is. In the first epistle, the Lord declares that He is the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand and who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. These two items prove that the Lord is so normal, genuine, and proper. He cares for the churches by holding the leading ones in His right hand and by walking among all the churches. **The messengers of the churches, the spiritual ones, signified by the shining stars,** who bear the responsibility of the testimony of Jesus, are held in the right hand of the Lord, and the Lord is walking in the midst of the churches, signified by the seven golden lampstands.” (W. Lee, *Life-Study of Revelation, Chapter 10, Section 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“In the book of Revelation, not only is Christ shining, but **all the messengers,** His servants in the churches, and even the churches themselves are shining. The churches are the lampstands, and the messengers of the churches are shining stars.... In the Lord’s recovery today in the churches, position means nothing. What we can do and how much we can accomplish also mean nothing. It all depends upon how much we are shining and how bright we are. This is what it means to be **a messenger of the Lord in the churches** today. The night is so evil and dark. There is absolutely no light. But here are some **shining stars in the churches.** Hallelujah! Their presence in the church means very much. When they are here, everything is in light.” (W. Lee, *The Wonderful Christ in the Canon of the New Testament, Chapter 21, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Leading Ones in the Churches are Shining Stars

“Daniel 12:3 also indicates that the heavenly descendants of Abraham will be like the shining stars. The mentioning of the stars in Revelation 1 is a consummation indicating that **all the messengers, the leading ones, of the churches should be altogether in the heavens.** The stars are not only heavenly, but they are also in the

heavens. This again is a consummation.” (W. Lee, *Elders' Training, Book 02: The Vision of the Lord's Recovery, Chapter 10, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Both the church and the leading ones in the churches must shine. **All the leading ones should be stars shining in this dark and evil age.** If we would be shining stars in the church, we need to realize that in ourselves we have no light. Christ is our light. We need to look unto Him with an unveiled face so that we may reflect His glory (2 Cor. 3:18). This causes us to become the stars, the messengers, held by the Lord Jesus.” (W. Lee, *The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 050-062), Chapter 10, Section 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“In the Acts and the Epistles the leading ones were called elders or bishops, but in the last book of the Bible they are the stars. Now it is not a matter of title or position, but a matter of shining. **All the leading ones of the local churches should be shining stars.**” (W. Lee, *The New Testament Service, Chapter 6, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“If we examine the situation of Protestant Christianity today, we shall see that it lacks the seven Spirits. Their deadness is due to the lack of the seven Spirits. Because of their organization, they also need the shining stars. This is all they need—the intensified Spirit and the shining stars.... This is what dead Protestantism needs today. It also needs the shining stars, not the positions or the organization. **Their leading ones must be shining ones.**” (W. Lee, *Life-Study of Revelation, Chapter 14, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Responsible Ones in the Local Churches are Shining Stars

“The Bible reveals that the serving messengers in the seven local churches are seven stars (Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1).... Today in the darkness of the church's desolation, **the responsible ones in every local church should be like stars in the night shining from heaven over the church in darkness,** and all the saints under their leadership should imitate them to shine as stars according to the Lord.” (W. Lee, *Truth Lessons, Level 3, Vol. 2, Chapter 20, Section 4, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Elders are the Shining Stars

“**The elders need to be the Lord's messengers as shining stars** (Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14). A messenger is one that brings a message from the Lord to His people. Every elder should be one that always speaks for the Lord and brings some word, some message, from the Lord. The elders also should be the shining stars.... An elder must be apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). To be apt to teach is to bring a word, a message, from the Lord to His people. One who does this is a messenger. Such a one is not simply speaking with his mouth, but also shining by what he does and what he is. The messenger himself is a star. A star simply shines. On the one hand, we need to be messengers, and on the other hand, we need to be the shining stars.” (W. Lee, *Elders' Training, Book 11: The Eldership and the God-Ordained Way (3), Chapter 1, Section 5, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“The second sign is the seven stars, which accompany the lampstands. The seven stars are the messengers or angels of the churches (1:20). In every church there are some

brothers who are stars in spirituality. They are shining stars. In Daniel 12:3 they that turn many to righteousness will shine as stars. In Matthew 13:43 the Lord says the righteous will shine forth in the coming kingdom as the sun. But the church messengers do not need to wait until the coming age to shine. They are shining right now. **I hope that all the elders in the churches are shining stars.** When people go to them, they should come into light. (*W. Lee, The Basic Revelation in the Holy Scriptures, Chapter 9, Section 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Faithful Followers of Christ are Stars

“In this book we have Christ as the morning star and **those faithful followers of Christ in the churches as the stars.** Now where is the star? It is so clear that the star today is in the church.... Not only is Christ Himself the star, but also His followers, the shining ones in the churches, are stars.” (*W. Lee, The New Testament Service, Chapter 6, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“During the time of the degradation of the church, **the faithful ones need to be filled with the sevenfold Spirit so that they may be shining stars bearing the living testimony of Jesus.**” (*W. Lee, The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 099-113), Chapter 15, Section 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“The stars may or may not be elders. It is certain that **they are the faithful ones, the genuinely spiritual ones, the overcoming ones among the saints in the church. In the sight of God such ones are shining stars.**” (*W. Lee, The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 99-113), Chapter 15, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Overcomers are the Shining Stars

“The stars are Christ and the saints. Although Christ is the real sun, He does not appear as the sun during this age of night. He shines as a star, as the bright and morning star (Rev. 22:16b). Christ Himself is a star. **All the overcoming saints are also stars.**” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 5, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“In the Bible **the stars not only signify Christ but also the overcomers among God’s redeemed people.** The star portrays how Christ shines over the earth, which is permeated by darkness, in the age of the dark night. As the Star out of Jacob, He came to the land of Judah in His first coming. As the bright morning star, He will appear in the darkest hour, after midnight and prior to the dawn. This means that while people are sleeping soundly in the night, He will secretly give Himself as the morning star to the overcomers, those who love Him and who are watching, preparing, and waiting for Him, that they may have the priority to taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence.” (*W. Lee, Truth Lessons, Level 3, Vol. 2, Chapter 20, Section 4, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“We not only have the sun, the moon, but also the stars: not only Christ, the church, but also **all the overcoming saints.** Daniel 12:3 says that those who turn many to righteousness shine like the stars. If we are going to help people to be saved, if we are going to turn people from darkness to light, if we are going to recover all the backsliders,

we must be the shining stars. Revelation 1:20 tells us that the churches are the lampstands shining in the darkness and that the angels (the living ones in the churches) are the shining stars. The Lord said that the saints are ‘the light of the world’ (Matt. 5:14), and Paul said that the saints shine ‘as lights in the world’ (Phil. 2:15).” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 4, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

Everyone Can Be a Shining Star

“Daniel 12:3 says that those who turn many from the wrong way unto righteousness will shine as stars. Matthew 5:14 says that the believers today are the light of the world and Philippians 2:15 says, ‘among whom you shine as lights in the world.’ All these verses show that **the saints who are in the proper way and have the proper standing are stars.**” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 5, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“After the third day, there were the sun, the moon, and the stars on the fourth day. After we have been regenerated, we have Christ as the sun shining within us to make us as the moon reflecting the light of the sun and **to make us the shining stars.**” (*W. Lee, The Central Thought of God, Chapter 1, Section 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“**We all should be the stars—not only the leaders in the local churches, but all of us should be stars.** If we read Revelation chapters two and three again in this light, we will realize that eventually all those in the local churches should be the stars. What the Lord wrote to the seven angels was what He wrote to the whole church. It is not a matter of teaching, knowledge, title, or position; it is a matter of shining. We need to be the shining stars that people may find Christ through us. Where is Christ? Come and see! Simply follow the star! And where is the star? Hallelujah, the star is in the local churches. Brothers and sisters, are we really shining? We need to shine in our homes, on our jobs, in our neighborhoods, in the schools, on the campuses. We do not need to teach people so much, and we do not need to do so much preaching. What we need is the shining! **The local churches should be full of shining stars.**” (*W. Lee, The New Testament Service, Chapter 6, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“When there is a problem with the church, that is the time for the stars to shine. **Many of us have to be the shining stars.** We need to contact Christ, we need to contact the church, and we also need to contact the shining saints. We must contact so many good saints. When you come to a living brother or a living sister, don't you sense an amount of light, that when you enter their presence you are under a certain kind of shining? This is light. This light will help us to grow in life.” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 4, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“**All believers should aspire to be stars.** Do not aspire to have a position—desire to be a shining star. **We all, not only the leading ones in the local churches, must be stars.** What the Lord Jesus wrote to the messengers, the stars, in Revelation 2 and 3 was what He wrote to the whole church. This indicates that **we all can be stars.** This is not a matter of title or position; it is absolutely a matter of shining. We all need to be shining stars bearing the testimony of Jesus.” (*W. Lee, The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 099-113), Chapter 15, Section 1, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“Today is the age of the Book of Revelation. In this age the sevenfold, intensified Spirit of God is versus religion. Let us look to the Lord desperately that we all may be fully taken out of religion and religion fully taken out of us. **May we only be the seven shining stars in the seven burning lampstands** with the sevenfold, intensified Spirit. O Lord! Amen!” (*W. Lee, Christ versus Religion, Chapter 13, Section 5, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

The Wandering Stars

They are the Erratic Teachers in the Apostate Church

“The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that **the erratic teachers, the apostates, were not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation but were wandering** about among God's starlike people (Dan. 12:3; Rev. 1:20). Their destiny is the gloom of darkness, which has been kept for them for eternity. The erratic apostates are wandering stars today, but they will be imprisoned in the gloom of darkness.” (*Holy Bible, Recovery Version, Jude 13, fn 2, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are the False Leading Ones – Some Leaders and Teachers in Today's Christianity

“There is also a negative aspect to the stars—the wandering stars. Jude 12 and 13 tell us, ‘These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots....wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.’ We should be the stars, but not the wandering stars. These are the false leading ones. So many Christians today are not stars; some, however, are stars, but **they are wandering stars. There are leaders and teachers in today's Christianity** who are in this category.” (*W. Lee, Finding Christ by the Living Star, Chapter 1, Section 11, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are Not the Steadfast Stars

“Do you know what a wandering star is? I do not know astronomy, but I can tell you a little. A proper star has a certain position and fixed orbit. It continues in its course steadfastly. But **there are some stars with no fixed position or orbit: they are wandering stars**. It seems that some Christians are stars, it seems that they are shining, but their shining is a deception. **They are stars, but they are not the steadfast stars**. If you follow them, you will be misled; eventually you will not know where to go. They themselves are wandering: they have no ground, they have no standing, they have no certain way to go on with the Lord. Today they say this, and tomorrow they will say that; they are wandering. Be careful! You can never find Jesus by following a wandering star.” (*W. Lee, Finding Christ by the Living Star, Chapter 1, Section 11, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are the Ones Who Keep the Believers Away from the Genuine Local Church and from Meeting on the Ground of Unity

“I am not speaking these things lightly. You are aware of today's confusion. Oh, the dead things! Oh, the frustrations, the distractions of the wandering ones! **Anyone who keeps us from the genuine local church and from meeting on the ground of unity with the Lord's people is a wandering star.** The true stars are those who turn many to righteousness, those who do not lead people astray, but turn them to the right way. Today the only way for you and me and for anyone to find Christ is to see the living star.” (*W. Lee, Finding Christ by the Living Star, Chapter 1, Section 11, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are Autumn Trees without Fruit

“How may we know the wandering stars? There are some signs. **They are trees without fruit,** they are the clouds without rain. You must look for the fruit. The Lord Jesus said that we may know a tree by its fruit (Matt. 7:16-20). If we follow the wandering stars, eventually our portion will be the same as theirs—the blackness of darkness forever.” (*W. Lee, Finding Christ by the Living Star, Chapter 1, Section 11, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

“**These heretics are also called ‘autumn trees without fruit,** having died twice, rooted up.’ Autumn is a season for reaping fruit. **The self-seeking apostates seem to be fruit trees in season, but they have no fruit to satisfy others.** They have died twice, not only outwardly in appearance as most trees do in autumn, but also inwardly in nature. They are thoroughly dead; they should be uprooted.” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Chapter 46, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are Hidden Reefs – Shepherds Who Feed Themselves

“In verse 12 Jude goes on to say, ‘These are hidden reefs in your love feasts, feasting together with you without fear, shepherds that feed themselves, waterless clouds, carried along by winds, autumn trees without fruit, having died twice, rooted up; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames, wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness has been kept for eternity.’ The Greek word translated ‘hidden reefs,’ *spilades*, originally meant a rock. It may allude here to a sunken rock with the sea over it (Darby); hence, hidden rocks. The Greek word *spiloi* for ‘spots’ in 2 Peter 2:13 is very close to *spilades*; hence, some translations render this spots. Actually, these two words refer to two different things. The spots are defects on the surface of precious stones; the hidden rocks are at the bottom of the water. The early heretics were not only spots on the surface but also hidden rocks at the bottom, both of which were a damage to the believers in Christ.... **Jude calls the apostates ‘shepherds that feed themselves.’ The pleasure-seeking heretics (2 Pet. 2:13) pretend to be shepherds, but at the love feasts they only fed themselves, having no concern for others.**” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Chapter 46, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are Waterless Clouds

“To others, **they [the pleasure-seeking heretics] were waterless clouds, having no life supply to render.**” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Chapter 46, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are Wild Waves of the Sea

“In verse 13 Jude goes on to speak of the heretics as ‘wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames, wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness has been kept for eternity.’ Shepherds, clouds, trees, and stars are positive figures in biblical metaphor, but hidden reefs, waves, and the sea are negative. These apostates are false shepherds, empty clouds, dead trees, and wandering stars. **They are hidden reefs and wild, raging waves of the sea, foaming out, without restraint, their own shame.**” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Chapter 46, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are the Ones who Have No Spirit

“In verse 19 Jude speaks of the apostates as ‘not having spirit.’ This is the human spirit, not the Spirit of God. **The apostates are devoid of spirit.** They ‘have not indeed ceased to have a spirit, as a part of their own tripartite nature (1 Thes. 5:23), but they have ceased to possess it in any worthy sense: it is degraded beneath and under the power of the *psyche* (soul), the personal life, so as to have no real vitality of its own’ (Alford). They do not care for their spirit or use it. They do not contact God by their spirit in communion with the Spirit of God; neither do they live and walk in their spirit. They have been drawn downward by their flesh and have become fleshy, so that they have lost the consciousness of their conscience and become animals without reason (Jude 10).” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Chapter 46, Section 3, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

They are Tares

“The book of Jude also develops the seed of the tares. In verse 4 it says, ‘For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Here the word ‘crept’ is used. Certain men crept in. Today it is the same. Some creep into the church life with the intention of damaging the church. Surely these are the false ones.... Then let us continue in Jude with verses 8-16.... Surely **all of these are tares**, and according to the prophecy of Enoch, the Lord will first deal with them.” (*W. Lee, The Kingdom, Chapter 44, Section 4, LSM*) [Emphasis Added]

January 27, 2010

¹ *W. Lee, The New Testament Service, Chapter 6, Section 1, LSM*

² *ibid*

³ *W. Lee, Truth Lessons, Level 3, Vol. 2, Chapter 20, Section 4, LSM*

⁴ *W. Lee, Finding Christ by the Living Star, Chapter 1, Section 7, LSM*

⁵ *W. Lee, Truth Lessons, Level 3, Vol. 2, Chapter 20, Section 4, LSM*

⁶ *W. Lee, Finding Christ by the Living Star, Chapter 1, Section 11, LSM*

⁷ *Holy Bible Recovery Version, footnote 2, Jude 13, LSM*

⁸ *Ibid, footnote 1, Jude 11, LSM*

⁹ *Ibid, footnote 3, Jude 11, LSM*

¹⁰ *ibid, footnote 3, Jude 9, LSM*

¹¹ *ibid, footnote 5, Jude 11, LSM*

¹² *W. Lee, The Experience of Life, Chapter 9, LSM*

¹³ *Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision, p. 43, LSM*

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- ¹⁴ W. Lee, *Life-Study of 1 Timothy, Message 1, Section 4, LSM*
- ¹⁵ *Holy Bible Recovery Version, footnote 3, 1 Cor. 11:3, LSM*
- ¹⁶ *Holy Bible, Recovery Version, I Cor. 11:5, Footnote 5¹, LSM*
- ¹⁷ W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Vol. 47, pp. 160-161, LSM*
- ¹⁸ Bill Buntain & Dan Sady, *Women in the Divine Administration, p. 7, DCP*
- ¹⁹ W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Vol. 59, pp. 98-99, LSM*
- ²⁰ *A Faithful Word, Book 7, Properly Discerning Spiritual Authority to Rightly Follow the Lord, p. 14, DCP*
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