

# **Jude**

**A Commentary**  
By: R.F. (Bob) Knox, Jr.

**Jude 1 “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by GOD the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:”**

“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are called, beloved in GOD the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:” (ASV)

Jude (or Judas), the human writer of this epistle (by the direction of the Spirit of GOD), is thought to be the half-brother of Christ. Jesus had four “half-brothers” — James, Judas, Joses, and Simon (Matt. 13:55). Woods points out that there are nine different Judes or Judases in the New Testament (Woods, p. 381).

*“Only one pair of brothers called James and Judas are known in the NT”* (Hamilton, p. 396).

Thus, it cannot be proven positively who the author of this epistle was. Perhaps it is only wishful thinking which causes one to link Jude to the Lord, but if this Jude were one of the Lord’s half-brothers, this epistle shows a wonderful change in his faith.

“Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto Him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If Thou do these things, show Thyself to the world. For neither did His brethren believe in Him” (John 7:2-5).

If His brothers were not mocking Jesus on this occasion, they were very close to it. But, there was a change in the faith of Jesus’ brothers, according to Acts 1:14. They came to believe in Him, being gathered with the other disciples in the upper room, as Jesus had instructed (Luke 24:49). It is not beyond reason, then,

to suppose that Jude had a change of heart after seeing his half-brother resurrected, and wrote this book.

Notice that Jude simply referred to himself as a servant [δουλος – slave — *“in contrast...to the master”* (Arndt/Gingrich, p. 204)] of Christ. If he were one of the apostles, or one of the half-brothers of Jesus, he recognized that the most important relationship one can have is to be a **servant** of the Lord. In the spiritual realm, human relationships offer no advantages. What makes the difference is one’s relationship with Christ. All men need to understand that physical relationships mean nothing in the kingdom of GOD.

“For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in Heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother” (Matthew 12:50).

Jude addressed this letter to the “sanctified,” the “preserved,” the “called.”

“sanctified” — ἁγιάζω — *“To make, render or declare sacred or holy, consecrate”* (Thayer); *“perfect passive participle that can be literally rendered ‘having been sanctified...The perfect tense signifies continuous action.’ Accordingly, they became in the past the beloved of God and are continuing in His love”* (Hamilton, p. 398).

It is fascinating for Christians to be designated as being sanctified, i.e., declared sacred or holy, by the Spirit of GOD. With all of one’s imperfections, when he honestly strives to follow GOD’s will, the Holy Spirit declares him to be sanctified.

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of

GOD. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but **ye are sanctified**, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our GOD" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, emphasis mine, RK).

Jude also stated that Christians are "preserved" in Jesus Christ. The word "preserved" comes from the word τηρέω, which means "*To help: one in that state in which he is*" (Thayer, p. 622). What state is spoken of here? The state to which Jude refers is the sanctified state. When one is in Christ, one is preserved, or kept in that state, so long as he continues to follow GOD's directions.

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:6-7).

"called" How is one called to be sanctified, to be a Christian? Note also the following passage.

"We are bound to give thanks alway to GOD for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because **GOD** hath from the beginning **chosen you** to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto He **called you** by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thessalonians 2:13-15, emphasis mine, RK).

People are **called** by the Gospel to be **sanctified** by GOD the Father and **preserved** by that Gospel in Christ. One should consider that all of mankind is called by the Gospel, but only those who responded by listening and obeying that Gospel are being considered

in this passage. Notice also that one's part in sanctification is outlined: (1) "belief of the truth," (2) "stand fast," and (3) "hold the traditions (Gospel, R.K.) which ye have been taught."

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to GOD for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because GOD hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through **sanctification** of the Spirit and **belief of the truth**: Whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, **stand fast**, and **hold the traditions which ye have been taught**, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thessalonians 2:13-15, emphasis mine, RK).

Also notice First Peter 1:5. We are "**kept by the power of GOD** through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (cf. Romans 10:17, emphasis mine, RK).

### **Jude 2 "Mercy unto you, and peace and love, be multiplied."**

"Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied." (ASV)

*"A literal translation of this verse is 'mercy to you and peace and love may it be multiplied'"* (Hamilton, p. 401).

"Mercy" — eleos — "*Mercy; **kindness or good will** towards the miserable and afflicted, joined with a **desire to relieve them**"* (Thayer, emphasis mine, R.K.); "*Mercy, compassion, active pity*" (Zodhiates).

The mercy extended from GOD to man in this text deals with all that GOD has done so that man can have relief

from the burdens of sin. Such mercy is only felt by those who are sanctified (v. 1). Though it is true that GOD sent His Son into the world for all men, it is also true that all men do not accept and appropriate for themselves what GOD is willing to give them. Jude wished for GOD's mercy to be multiplied upon those to whom he wrote.

“peace” — εἰρήνη — *“To make peace...is to join together that which has been separated”* (Wuest, p. 234). To have peace is to have tranquility, to be without fear. Biblically, the only time man can truly have peace is when he has a right relationship with GOD. When one has peace with GOD, he has nothing to fear.

“Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell” (Matthew 10:28).

In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had peace with GOD, and apparently they communed with one another in the peaceful and beautiful garden (Genesis 3:8-21). But, when Adam and Eve sinned, they caused a separation between GOD and themselves (Genesis 3:22-24). When GOD went to the garden and called out for Adam, both Adam and Eve were afraid (Genesis 3:10). No longer could they joyfully go into the presence of GOD, because they were now fearful of punishment. The perfect peace they had enjoyed was gone, because they had sinned against GOD.

“Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your GOD, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear” (Isaiah 59:1-2).

“love” — The word mentioned here is ἀγάπη, the sacrificial form of love (Young's, p. 622). It is *“the selfless interest in the welfare of another”* (Hamilton, p.

402).

*ἀγάπη, "indicates an intelligent and purposeful love, the love which recognizes its object for what it is; it is the love of consideration and care, the love of good will, and the love which desires to serve and promote the best interests of its object"* (Kelcy, p. 26).

It is a love which endures in spite of the imperfections of the one loved.

This love is illustrated by the GOD of Heaven, who loved a world of created beings, even though it was in rebellion to Him.

"GOD commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

"GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For GOD sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:16-17).

GOD sent His Son to die so that mankind could find salvation and have freedom from the ultimate penalty of sin (Luke 19:10). Man deserved death for his sins, but GOD sent man life.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Thankfully, GOD's Son paid the ransom for man's redemption from sin and its consequences.

"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

"For there is one GOD, and one mediator between

GOD and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

Christians must desire to grow in GOD’s love, so as to feel the way GOD feels toward those who are in rebellion to Him. Christians must also learn to love as GOD loves, so they can love their enemies.

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:44-45; emphasis mine R.K.).

Jude desired for Christians not only to have mercy, peace, and love; but that these attributes might be multiplied in his brethren. “multiplied” — πληθύνω — *“To make full: hence, to multiply, increase”* (Zodhiates); *“be multiplied, grow, increase... may grace and peace be yours in ever greater measure”* (Bauer, p. 674). Jude wished for Christians to cultivate an abundance of these traits.

**Jude 3 “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”**

“Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.” (ASV)

Verse three begins the “meat” of this epistle. What Jude was about to say was very stern, so he began by saying “Beloved.” (This is a lesson for all to consider.)

When someone must be rebuked, the need is to rebuke in such a way that love is expressed for his soul. The one rebuked needs to be able to see that love. The word “Beloved” is a plural adjective, which could be interpreted “*beloved ones.*” Thus, Jude began his exhortation by showing his love for his brethren. Wuest believes this word (“Beloved”) goes beyond “*beloved ones*” to mean “*God’s beloved ones*” (Wuest, p. 235). A true disciple, the faithful servant of GOD, is loved by GOD, as well as being loved by other disciples.

Jude declared that his intention had been to write them about their common salvation. Not only had he planned to write, but he had also given diligence to write them a letter. The word “diligence” implies a careful thought process with regard to the needs of those to whom he wrote. “diligence” (σπουδή), “*Diligence, earnest effort*” (Zodhiates). It should also be noted that this word carries the idea of acting in haste. “*Speed, haste, earnestness, diligence, zeal*” (IBID). Jude was hastily and carefully writing them because of the danger they faced and because of his love for them.

What Jude had intended to write about was the “common salvation” that all shared in Christ. The word “common” should not be thought of in this text as something ordinary, since salvation is the most precious treasure ever given to man.

“common” — κοινός — in its verbal form means,  
“*To lie common or open to all, common or belonging to several, or of which several are partakers*” (Zodhiates).

The idea is a salvation possessed in common with others. Jude had been carefully preparing to write them about some facet of their religion (faith) which they all shared. But his plans were interrupted to the extent

that he was compelled to write about a subject other than the one he originally intended.

“it was needful for me to write unto you”

“needful” — ἀνάγκη — *“necessity imposed either by the external condition of things, or by the law of duty, regard to one’s advantage, custom, argument”* (Thayer).

The word carries the idea of being “*compelled*” to do something. Since “All Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD” (2 Timothy 3:16), it seems logical to assume that Jude’s change in subject matter was insisted upon by the Spirit of GOD (Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:13). Jude was thus “compelled” to exhort (warn or advise) Christians to contend, to stand for, to fight for “the faith.”

*“To ‘contend earnestly,’ is literally, to wrestle, and as here figuratively used, denotes the extreme efforts, which are to characterize the faithful in their defense of the truth, however formidable and numerous its enemies may be”* (Woods, p. 385).

*“What is meant, is that Christians shall vigorously fight for and defend the truth...The defense of the faith may well be a costly thing; but that defense is a duty which falls on every generation of the church”* (Coffman, p. 527).

For what are Christians to “earnestly contend?” The Faith! The phrase “the faith,” as found in this passage, does not refer to the personal faith one exercises in obeying the truth. It is not one’s personal faith which is under consideration. In this context, “the faith,” refers to that body of truth which makes up the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Cf. Romans 1:5; Galatians 3:22-24; 2:20, etc.). *“That which is believed, body of*

*faith or belief, doctrine*" (Bauer, p. 669).

What Jude was therefore teaching Christians was that they must fight, and fight with all their might, anything or anyone, who stands against "the faith." The exhortation is to "earnestly contend for the faith." Christians are to fight for and defend the faith. GOD did not leave Christians without the tools needed to defend "the faith." He provided the armor and weapon to accomplish the task (Ephesians 6:10-20).

Jude further stated that this faith, this body of truth, was "once delivered unto the saints."

"once" — ἄπαξ — "*one (or a single) time (numerically or conclusively): once*" (Coffman, p. 528); "*used of what is so done as to be of perpetual validity and never need repetition*" (Thayer).

It simply means that no other system for producing faith will ever be given. There is "One Lord, **one faith**, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5, emphasis mine, RK).

"delivered" — παραδίδωμι — "*to deliver verbally*" (Thayer).

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Mormons and others declare that there have been new revelations delivered to man down through the centuries. Pointing to Jude three, the argument is then made that Jude declared the system of faith had been given, yet Jude is an inspired book which was written before The Revelation, another inspired book. They then claim that inspiration has continued.

This writer believes Jude was speaking to the truth that when GOD verbally gave His revelation to man, it

was finished, and never would any new revelation be given after that time. The question then becomes, when was that time? Was it when The Revelation expressed to John was given, or would it include books such as The Book of Mormon?

In First Corinthians chapters twelve through fourteen, the Spirit gave a great lesson on miraculous gifts. Verse ten of chapter thirteen (and its context) declares, “When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” That which is perfect is the revealed will of GOD (in particular the New Testament).

“whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (James 1:25).

What is the “perfect law of liberty?” It cannot be anything except the truth which GOD has given to guide man to an eternal home with Him, i.e., the New Testament, the law of Christ.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

Paul declared that he was “under the law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law” (1 Corinthians 9:21). When GOD’s will was fully given to man (the law of Christ, the New Testament), there would be no more need for the miraculous (“that which is in part”). The miraculous belonged to the infant stage of Christianity (1 Corinthians 13:11). When “that which was perfect” was delivered, there was no more need for that which belonged to the child — miracles.

This one body of truth has been given to “the saints.” “saint” — ἅγιος — “*A set-apart person*” (Young’s, p. 831).

As this writer understands its Biblical use – one who is

set apart for the worship and service of GOD, a believer, a Christian.] Saints are to use the faith against, and protect it from, the enemies of GOD.

*“Divinely – loved ones, when giving all diligence to be writing concerning the salvation possessed in common by all of us, I had constraint laid upon me to write to you, beseeching (you) to contend with intensity and determination for the faith once for all entrusted into the safe-keeping of the saints”* (Wuest’s translation, p. 236).

**Jude 4 “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.”**

“For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our GOD into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” (ASV)

*“For certain persons have sneaked in — their doom was written down long ago — godless persons, who turn the favor of our God into an excuse for licentiousness, and disown our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ”* (Translation by Williams, quoted by Hamilton, p. 413).

Jude commanded his fellow Christians to defend the faith. He told them who was attacking the faith and, consequently, against whom they should stand. These were men who had already “crept in unawares.”

“unawares” — παρεισδύνω — *“to enter secretly, slip in stealthily; to steal in”* (Thayer); *“To get in by the side, to slip in a side-door”* (Vincent as

quoted by Wuest, p. 236).

“And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage” (Gal. 2:4).

In other words, these are not men who openly proclaimed their purpose. They had ulterior motives for what they did. Jesus said the “thief” and “robber” who do not enter through the door, but climb up another way (John 10:1). **The men about whom Jude spoke were trying to steal souls!** It is fair to say that Jude was accusing false brethren of trying to steal the lives and destinies of those to whom he was writing!

Jude also said these men “were before of old ordained to this condemnation.” The Calvinists have long tried to use this passage to assert their false doctrine of predestination, but such usage is impossible.

“condemnation” — κρίμα — *“Judgment, condemnation of wrong, the decision (whether severe or mild) which one passes on the faults of others”* (Thayer).

“ordained,” — προγράφω — *“to write before (of time)...of old set forth or designated beforehand unto this condemnation.”* (Thayer)

Something was written in past time about the condemnation of this kind of men, but what was this something? It was the principle of a judgment which punishes the unrighteous! Jude spoke of a **class of people** — not specific people — of whom condemnation was written. This phrase applies itself to anyone who refuses to recognize and/or faithfully serve

GOD. Further, the Spirit had previously revealed many cases of condemnation for ungodliness in both the Old and New Testaments.

*“The word ‘ordained,’ appearing in the KJV, has properly given way to a more accurate rendering, ‘written of beforehand,’ literally, placarded or set forth (progegrammenoi), compare the word programmed; and this was from of ‘old’ (palai), a word never used of an eternal decree, but always of something occurring in time... The divine law, existing from the beginning, condemned these men and all others who violated it, and no more than this was intended by the inspired writer” (Woods, p. 386-387).*

*“‘Condemnation’ is krima, in this context, ‘judgment;’ in the sense of condemnation of wrong, the decision which passes on the faults of others” (Wuest, p. 237).*

GOD made known His judgment before their actions ever took place. Jude will relate to Christians, and the ungodly, some examples of judgment’s falling on the unrighteous. These also serve as examples of the judgment to come for all who disobey GOD.

“ungodly men” – ἀσεβής – *“destitute of reverential awe towards God, contemning God, impious”* (Thayer, p. 79). Contemning: *“View or treat with contempt”* (Webster, p. 180).

The ungodly are those who do not have reverence or piety toward GOD, i.e., who have no respect for Him or His ways (cf. Romans 1:18-32).

Jude proceeded to say that these men turned the grace of GOD into “lasciviousness.” Two words of importance here are “turning” and “lasciviousness.”

“turning” — μετατίθημι — *“To transpose two things, one of which is put in place of the other”* (Thayer).

Basically they were substituting lasciviousness for godliness and then saying GOD’s grace allowed such. This reminds one of passages like Isaiah 5:20.

“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

These ungodly men also traded the grace of GOD, His unmerited favor in granting salvation to fallen man (Ephesians 2:8-9), for “lasciviousness.”

“lasciviousness” — ἀσέλγεια — *“Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence”* (Thayer); *“is he who in the words of Trench ‘acknowledges no restraints, who does whatever his caprice and wanton petulance may suggest’”* (Wuest, p. 237); *“Licentiousness, debauchery, sensuality”* (Bauer, p. 114).

Petulant: *“Insolent or rude in speech or behavior 2: characterized by temporary or capricious ill humor”* (Webster, p. 632).

In short, evil men substituted their thoughts and carnal desires for the will of GOD.

*“The words of the writer here are similar to those in II Pet. 2:18-19; where the apostle described these teachers as pretending to magnify the grace of God on the basis of Christian liberty, but in reality were living base and licentious lives in positive disobedience to the teaching of all the inspired writers”* (Woods, p. 387).

“denying” — ἀρνέομαι — *“deny, repudiate, disown with accusative someone or something”*

(Arndt/Gingrich, p. 107).

Not only were they presently repudiating GOD and His Son, they were also denying GOD's grace.

The first word "Lord" in this text is not the same in the Greek as the second word "Lord."

*"is not kurios in the Greek text, the usual word for 'Lord,' but despotes, which speaks of one who is the absolute owner, and has controlled power over another"* (Wuest, p. 238).

GOD (the Father) is the absolute owner of all things created, and the Word (His Son) is Master (κύριος) or ruler of all. These men were not much different from those in Romans 1:21-32, and their end is just as predictable.

"For the wrath of GOD is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18).

**Jude 5 "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."**

"Now I desire to put you in remembrance, though ye know all things once for all, that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." (ASV)

This passage begins by stating that Jude is going to bring something back to their memories, to remind them of something they already knew. They had been given all truth ("once delivered"), both the Old and New Testaments.

"GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light

of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of GOD, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:6-7).

They knew this truth, and Jude would encourage them to practice what they knew. Their knowledge of that of which he reminded them was so thorough that Jude would not have to give them the details of these events, but simply mention them. They knew the history of Israel, but they needed to be reminded of the lessons of history, lest they make the same mistakes as the Israelites. (This points out the need for constant reminders to all Christians.)

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in GOD might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (Titus 3:8).

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (2 Peter 3:1-2).

So many people are looking for something new in religion, but there is nothing new. It is not "*new*" teaching that one needs, but the simple repetition, and pondering, of what exists in the Bible (cf. 1 Timothy 4:6). Teachers who are constantly striving to offer something new to their students do them a grave injustice in regard to GOD's Word.

The example offered here is of Israel's being saved out of the bondage of Egypt. But this great nation, this multitude of people once saved from Egyptian slavery,

rebelled against her liberator (GOD) repeatedly and “were overthrown in the wilderness” (1 Corinthians 1:5). *Why?* They “lusted after evil things” (1 Corinthians 1:6); they became “idolaters” (1 Corinthians 1:7), “fornicators” (1 Corinthians 1:8), “tempters” (1 Corinthians 1:9), and “murderers” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

GOD’s patience with Israel should be observed when the people turned against Moses (Exodus 5:20-21); murmured against GOD at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:11-12); murmured against Moses because of a lack of water (Exodus 15:24); murmured because of a lack of food (Exodus 16:2-3); murmured a second time because of lack of water (Exodus 17:1-2); when they worshipped the golden calf at Sinai (Exodus 32). Beware — GOD’s patience had its limits then, and it has its limits today.

One should notice GOD’S patience with the Israelites. Often, men think that because they have not been punished for something quickly, they never will be, and thus become bolder in their transgressions.

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation...The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:3-4, 9-10).

This example should serve as a warning. When the Old

Testament is studied, GOD is found to have given His people many opportunities to repent, but there came a point in time when the punishment they deserved was received. Not only did they lose their physical lives, but they also forfeited the right to enter the promised land — Canaan. There is an assurance that whether there are many or few involved in wrong doing, all who continue in rebellion to GOD will receive the punishment due for their transgressions.

Jude continued with “afterward destroyed them that believed not.” The word “destroyed” does not refer to annihilation, but rather to the fact that they lost their lives. Those to whom Jude wrote were well aware of the fact that those who came out of Egyptian bondage had to be replaced by a new generation which would not constantly rebel against GOD as had its parents.

*“Here the New Testament habit of using ‘belief’ to cover a whole family of related things is clear enough. The Israelites were destroyed for idolatry in worshipping the golden calf, their fornication with the Midianites, their murmuring and complaining, etc.; but all of this is summed up as ‘they believed not’” (Coffman, p. 530).*

It should again be emphasized that they were destroyed because they “believed not.”

*“believed” — ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ — “to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in” (Thayer); “to be convinced of something” (Bauer, p. 666).*

To what event did Jude point which caused these Israelites to be destroyed? Since GOD issued the decree that they would die in the wilderness after the incident of the ten spies, it must have been that event to which he referred. Their unbelief destroyed them —

they were not persuaded that GOD meant what He said.

“in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy GOD bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your GOD, Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day. And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD. Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither. But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it” (Deuteronomy 1:31-38).

Of all the men old enough to fight, only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter the land of promise. Jude was urging his readers to follow the examples of Joshua and Caleb, not the ten spies and those who followed them. He urged them to be convinced completely that GOD meant what He said; otherwise, they would suffer the same consequences of the false teachers which were obviously among them. Remember — those who became false teachers in Joshua’s day were Israelites who no longer believed GOD. The false teachers in Jude’s day were Christians who no longer believed GOD.

“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you

overseers, to shepherd the church of GOD which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:28-30 – NKJV).

**Jude 6** “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

“And angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, He hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (ASV)

This passage is another example of the punishment of the wicked. Angels, like all others who exist, are created beings.

“first estate” — ἀρχή — *“The word means first of all, beginning:...the second meaning of arche is derived from the first, namely, ‘sovereignty, dominion, magistracy,’ the beginning or first place of power... The word is translated ‘principalities’ in Ephesians 6:12, and refers to demons there. Thus, this meaning of arche teaches that these angels left their original dignity and high positions”* (Wuest, p. 239-240); *“the first place, principality, rule, magistracy”* (Thayer).

“which kept not” — τηρέω — *“To guard”* (Thayer); *“To keep an eye on, watch, and hence to guard, keep, obey”* (Zodhiates).

These angels had a responsibility to maintain their position, their rank, and their estate. But they failed to maintain carefully that position, and the result was “everlasting bonds” and the approach of the coming judgment.

The angels had a sphere of influence, as do Christians. The angels were assigned this sphere, and Christians are assigned their sphere when they obey the Gospel. It is the place to which both groups belong and thus should be guarded with all diligence, lest it be lost. Both groups (angels and Christians) could/can abandon their positions and lose their home in Heaven for eternity. One should keep in mind that the angels who rebelled against GOD voluntarily did so. Like the angels, Christians cannot be forced to rebel against GOD; but if they do, like the angels of this passage, they do so voluntarily.

These angels “left their own habitation.”

οικητήριον), “*a dwelling place, habitation*”

(Thayer); “*their proper habitation*” (ASV).

GOD had given them their proper place, which was in Heaven serving Him.

“In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of GOD in Heaven” (Matthew 22:30).

“For if GOD spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment” (2 Peter 2:4).

When the angels sinned, they forfeited the right to remain in their “first dwelling place,” so GOD “cast them down to hell” (Tartarus in the Hadean world).

The “chains” are not literal here (δεσμώω δεσμός – “*a band or bond*” – Thayer), but signify an everlasting,

never-ending custody or detention. There will be no escape for those consigned to this “darkness” (Cf. Luke 16:26), and there is no escape from that “great day” which is coming.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

This same expression is found in Revelation 6:17 and is synonymous with John’s “last day” or **the judgment** (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48).

Be forewarned — if GOD would not spare the angels from the punishment they deserved for their rebellion, will He spare these men who “crept in unawares?” Their punishment (and the punishment of all who are rebellious to GOD) is certain – even the angels were not spared!

(Anyone interested in the false theory that the angels’ sin was fornication with human beings should read Guy N. Woods’ comments in the Gospel Advocate Commentary series, Peter, John and Jude, pages 390-391. Brother Woods easily refuted this false theory.)

**Jude 7 “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”**

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire.” (ASV)

*“This verse begins with hos (ὥς), an adverb of comparison having the meaning of ‘in the same*

*manner as, after the fashion of, as just as”*  
(Wuest, p. 241).

The meaning is that, just as the angels were punished for their evil deeds, so also were Sodom and Gomorrah for their evil practices.

There were originally five cities, of the plains, including Sodom and Gomorrah slated for destruction (Deuteronomy 29:25). Of these, only one was possibly spared by the entreaty of Lot (Genesis 19:20-21). It is not known positively, but it would seem that Zoar was destroyed after Lot and his daughters fled. These cities were destroyed by the decree of GOD (Genesis 18-19) for their sin of “fornication.”

“fornication” — ἐκπορνεύω — “*εκ seems to indicate a lust that gluts itself, satisfies itself completely*” (Thayer); “*illicit sexual intercourse*” (Vine, p. 125).

Their specific sin was homosexuality — **Take heed, America, as you increasingly condone the sins of homosexuality and lesbianism!** Where are these cities today? It is this writer’s belief that they are at the bottom of the southern end of the Dead Sea.

The next phrase is interesting in the original: “and going after strange flesh.”

“going” — ἀπέρχομαι — “*To go away in order to follow any one, go after him figuratively, i.e. to follow his party, follow him as a leader:...used also of those who seek any one for vile purposes*” (Thayer).

“after” — ὀπίσω — “*To run after a thing which one lusts for*” (Thayer).

It can be seen that the Sodomites were active in pursuing their goal, which was their own unlawful

desire. Their sin took the name of the city – Sodomy! (Sodomites are no different today than they were then. They actively seek to recruit anyone and everyone to their sinful lifestyle. Further, they ask for special privileges and laws to help them promote their ungodly lifestyle.) It might also be considered that the men of Sodom were violent, in that they sought to rape the angels they thought were men. There are many accounts given today of that same behavior when men or children refuse the initial advances of homosexuals.

“strange” — ἕτερος — *“To quality; another i.e. one not of the same nature, form class, kind; different”* (Thayer); *“Of another kind, another, different, in another form...In the sense of foreign, strange”* (Zodhiates).

“flesh” — σάρξ — *“Flesh (the soft substance of the living body which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both men and beasts:...is used of those who are on the search for persons with whom they can gratify their lusts”* (Thayer).

The quality of what the people of Sodom sought was not even close to being as good as GOD had intended them to have. GOD intended for one man to have one woman as his mate, and therefore his sexual partner, for life (Matthew 19:3-9; Genesis chapters 1-2). What these people were doing was against the natural use of their bodies, and therefore against GOD’s will. They did this in order to satisfy **their** lusts, apparently being “addicted” to their desire. Sin is seductive, like a drug, until it eventually gains control of that person. He then comes to believe he must have it to be happy, even to live — they were addicted.

Speaking of the Gentiles in Romans 1:26-27, these words are found which remind one of the sins of Sodom.

“For this cause GOD gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.”

Their sins were set forth as an example to all who would flaunt themselves in the face of a just GOD, as a warning of impending destruction.

“set forth” — πρόκειμαι — *“To be placed before the eyes, to lie in sight; to stand forth”* (Thayer); *“To lie before, to be laid or set before someone”* (Zodhiates); *“Vincent says, ‘The participle (prokema) is present, indicating that they are suffering to this day the punishment which came upon them in Lot’s time’* (Wuest, p. 243).

“example” — δειγμα — *“Thing shown, a specimen of any thing, example, pattern: set forth as a warning”* (Thayer); *“An example, specimen, sample, a display of things sold, occurring only in Jude 1:7 making the suffering of Sodom and Gomorrah an example of the future suffering of God’s judgment (cf. 2 Pet. 2:6)”* (Zodhiates).

The people of Sodom and Gomorrah are suffering the vengeance of GOD right now! Since the cities themselves were completely destroyed (so utterly that the ruins cannot be found), the punishment refers to the people of that city. They are now suffering in the same

way as the rich man of Luke 16:22-24 is now suffering. They are suffering the vengeance of GOD.

*“not vengeance for the gratification of private and personal feeling, but like that which a magistrate appoints for the maintenance of the laws; such as justice demands”* (Barnes, p. 392).

Their immediate punishment of fire was a type of the punishment which may be expected by all those who are rebellious to GOD. Unlike the physical world, where fire quickly destroys and the agony is quickly over, eternal punishment never ends.

“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 26:45).

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2).

**Jude 8 “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.”**

“Yet in like manner these also in their dreamings defile the flesh, and set at naught dominion, and rail at dignities.” (ASV)

From the examples of GOD’s punishing the wicked in the past, Jude came back to those who were troubling GOD’s people in the present. Jude had used a triad of examples from the past to show them that punishment was certain. Now when speaking of the present, he uses a triad to describe present evil actions (“defile the flesh,” “set at naught dominion,” and “rail at dignities”). Perhaps each of these relates individually to

one of the wicked examples he had just used.

The present troublers are described as “dreamers.” “dreamers” — ἐνυπνιάζομαι — “to dream...to be beguiled with sensual images and carried away to an impious course of conduct” (Thayer); “Dreamers, meaning ones holding vain and empty opinions, deceivers” (Zodhiates); “Their doctrines were the fruits of mere imagination, foolish vagaries and fancies” (Barnes, p. 393).

Were they dreaming about the wrongs they intended to do? Compare this with Second Timothy 4:3-4.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

When people turn away from GOD’s instructions, there is only one course left to follow — **an impious course of conduct** (Cf. Romans 1:18-32). Is it possible they claimed that what they dreamed about was actually from GOD? When looking at the following descriptions of these men, it is found that they are all in the present active indicative. This indicates that they were actively doing these things at that time.

“defile the flesh” – The word “flesh” is the same word found in verse seven above, and it means man’s human flesh. This suggests that the present troublers’ sin was licentiousness.

“defile” — μιάινω — “To defile, pollute, sully, contaminate, soil...in a physical and moral sense” (Thayer); “To stain with color as the staining of glass, to tinge, pollute, defile” (Zodhiates).

Their teaching was contaminating the soil of their hearts

as well as their flesh.

“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18).

“despise dominion” This statement, being general in nature, leads to the conclusion the troublers hated any kind of authority, whether Divine or human.

“despise” — ἄθετέω — *“To thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate”* (Thayer); *“To displace, to abrogate, abolish, get rid of... To deny, despise, condemn”* (Zodhiates); *“To do away with something laid down, prescribed, established”* (Wuest, p. 244); *“To look down on with contempt or aversion”* (Webster, p. 225).

From Jude’s use of ἄθετέω, it appears that the troublers would go beyond simply opposing authority; they would actually try to tear down or destroy that authority!

“dominion” — κυριότης — *“Dominion, power, lordship; in the N.T. one who possesses dominion”* (Thayer); *“Lord, mighty one. Dominion, civil power, authority or magistracy”* (Zodhiates).

What was the authority which they were attempting to break down?

“Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18).

“speak evil” — βλασφημέω — *“To be evil spoken of, reviled, railed at... Specifically of those who by contemptuous speech intentionally come short of the reverence due to God or to sacred things”*

(Thayer, p. 102); *“To speak reproachfully of, rail at, revile, calumniate”* (Wuest, p. 245).

“dignities” — δόξα — speaking of angels *“as being spiritual beings of pre-eminent dignity”* (Thayer, p. 156); *“Splendor, brightness, dignity, pre-eminence, magnificence, excellence”* (Wuest, p. 245).

Who were these “dignities?”

*“There are three basic views: angels, human authorities, or the glories belonging to Christ”* (Hamilton, p. 446).

Another view is put forth by Warden, who believes they are *“Christ’s representatives, in particular, the apostles”* (p. 487).

One must consider men such as these to be the boldest of sinners. They were much like the Pharisees, who saw the mighty works of Jesus and yet set out to murder Him (John 10:31, 39; etc.).

**Jude 9 “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”**

*“But Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”* (ASV)

*“Yet,” “is a postpositive conjunction. It is commonly used as an adversative particle, when it is translatable but, however, yet, on the other hand, etc.”* (Dana/Mantey, p. 244).

The name Michael means *“who is like God”* (Young’s, p. 657). In this passage, Michael is referred

to as an “archangel.” In Daniel 10:13, he is referred to as “one of the chief princes,” and in Daniel 10:21, he is referred to as “your prince.” In Daniel 12:1, he is called the “great prince.” All of these passages seem to show Michael as the champion of Israel. (Also note Revelation 12:7-9.)

The Scriptures say that Michael is an archangel. This word is only found here and in First Thessalonians 4:16.

ἀρχάγγελος — *“chief of the angels, or one of the princes and leaders of the angels”* (Thayer), or *“first in rank, chief of the angels”* (Wuest, p. 246).

Some believe that there is more than one archangel [e.g. Gabriel — *“man of God”* or *“God is mighty”* (Hamilton, p. 448)]. If there is indeed more than one, the Scriptures are silent as to the exact number. Yet, the implication of Daniel 10:21 may indeed mean more than one. If Gabriel was not an archangel, he was very prominent. He was sent to Daniel (8 & 9) and both to Elizabeth and Mary to announce their upcoming children’s births (Luke 1).

There are those who claim that Michael is Jesus, but consider a thought concerning this idea. The Scriptures affirm that Michael is an archangel, but nevertheless an angelic being. In referring to Jesus, GOD declared, “let all the angels of GOD worship Him” (Hebrews 1:6). Since Michael is an angel, he must worship the Son, as must all other angels of GOD. Therefore, Michael and Jesus cannot be the same being.

“contending” — διακρίνω — *“To converse, discourse with one, argue, discuss”* (Thayer); *“To separate oneself from, i.e., to contend with. In the NT used metaphorically....To contend or strive with, dispute with”* (Zodhiates); “To

*dispute*” (Wuest, p. 246).

“disputed”— διαλέγομαι — **“To separate one’s self in a hostile spirit, to oppose, strive with, dispute, contend”** (Thayer); *“To speak back and forth or alternately, to converse with, reason, present intelligent discourse.... Of an argument meaning to dispute, discuss”* (Zodhiates).

“durst” — τολμάω — *“To dare, having daring”* (Young’s, p. 220). *“To have courage, boldness, confidence to do something, to venture, dare”* (Zodhiates).

“railing” — βλασφημία — *“Railing, reviling, slander, detraction, speech injurious to another’s good name”* (Thayer); *“Blasphemy, verbal abuse against someone which denotes the very worst type of slander... wounding someone’s reputation by evil reports, evil speaking”* (Zodhiates).

“accusation” — κρίσις — *“A separating, sundering, separation; a trial, contest...selection...judgment; i.e. opinion or decision given concerning anything, esp. concerning justice and injustice, right and wrong”* (Thayer); *“Separation, figuratively division, dissension, decision, crisis, turn of affairs, judgment”* (Zodhiates).

“rebuke” — ἐπιτιμάω — *“To rebuke – in order to curb one’s ferocity or violence (hence many formerly gave the word the meaning to*

**restrain)**" (Thayer); *"To punish, rebuke, charge"* (Zodhiates).

This is the only account of this incident between Michael and the Devil; and then, at best, the record is sketchy. Therefore, to speculate as to when, where, and other particulars regarding the incident is unproductive. The incident is recorded in order to teach a lesson about the corrupt men about whom Jude was writing. Apparently, they were doing what an archangel would not dare to do. Michael and the Devil are the antithesis of good and evil.

They were arguing, disputing, and striving with each other about the body of Moses. The particulars of which they argued are not revealed. This writer would like to consider something here. No matter what the Devil was arguing for or against, it could not have been good. Further, it would have probably been something which he could have used against man. Considering the way the Jews felt about Moses, this writer would venture the **guess** that it may have dealt with the possession of Moses' body. What is known is that GOD buried Moses, and no man knows where his body was buried (Deuteronomy 34:6). There is no doubt in this writer's mind that if Moses' burial place was known, a shrine would mark the spot, and he would be worshipped to this day. In this dispute, Michael did not dare bring a railing accusation against his opponent, even though the opponent was Satan himself! Michael did not fear Satan. It simply was not his place to rebuke him, and so he said, "The Lord rebuke thee." Notice a similar example from the apostle Paul.

"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works" (2 Timothy 4:14).

Thus, all men need to be careful how they speak to others — even those who are extremely evil. GOD will take care of these matters. Hamilton made the observation that Satan was a “created being,” and thus only GOD had the right to rebuke him (p. 452). The example of Paul above indicates the same thing.

Notice that part of the meaning of the word “accusation” is “*a trial, contest.*” It is the Lord who brings final judgment, and not even an angel can do this. *Who then are Christians, who would presume to make a railing accusation against another or even the Devil himself?*

*“If the archangel dared not censure or tax with fault a fallen angel in relation to whom he was far superior in rank to indicate a punishment due, then certainly men should not presume to behave as do the false teachers”* (Hamilton, p. 454).

It is interesting to notice the word “rebuke” (see above). It does not quite carry the idea one normally associates with it, but goes beyond to the idea of holding back or restraining someone. Wuest has an interesting comment on this word.

*“To rebuke another without any effect upon the person rebuked, the latter not being convicted of any wrongdoing on his part nor brought to the conviction or confession, and for either one of the two reasons; either the person is innocent, or he is incorrigible, that is, his heart is so hard that he refuses to be convicted of his sin or to confess it”* (Wuest, p. 247).

The lesson seems obvious. These men of whom Jude spoke did not seem to hesitate at making all kinds of accusations against dignities, accusations not even

an archangel would make against Satan. They were therefore putting themselves above the angelic order. One cannot help wondering if these men were not of the same stripe as the false apostles of Second Corinthians eleven.

*“If one of the highest beings in the angelic world restrained himself from the use of railing judgment against the devil, how much more unjustified was it for these teachers to disregard the dignity of those against whom they spoke”* (Woods, p. 393)?

**Jude 10 “But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.”**

“But these rail at whatsoever things they know not: and what they understand naturally, like the creatures without reason, in these things are they destroyed.” (ASV)

It was the false teachers who railed against things of which they had no understanding.

*“The present tense indicates that they are continuing in this behavior. The idea here is that they reproach, revile, or defame the angels, as in verse eight”* (Hamilton, p. 455).

The contrast was between spiritual things and natural or purely physical things. They claimed to be spiritual; yet they spoke evil about “those things which they know not.”

“know” — εἶδω — *“To know...it is well known, acknowledged...to know i.e. get knowledge of, understand, perceive...to know how”* (Thayer).  
*“mental comprehension and knowledge, and referring to the whole range of invisible things”*

(Vincent as quoted by Wuest, p. 247).

It was not that they could not understand the things against which they spoke; but because of their character, the kind of people they were, it thus became impossible for them to understand. Granted enough time, diligent study, and prayer for wisdom, all can understand what has been revealed to mankind in the Bible.

“By revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)” (Ephesians 3:3-4).

The kind of people about whom Jude spoke only knew the natural, and acted more like beasts than human beings. It is interesting to observe the second word “know” in this text, because it is a different Greek word from the first word “know” in this verse.

“know” — ἐπίσταμαι — *“To turn one’s self or one’s mind to, put one’s thought upon a thing; to be acquainted with”* (Thayer); *“it was originally used of skill in handicraft, and refers to palpable things, objects of sense, the circumstances of sensual enjoyment”* (Wuest, p. 247); *“To fix one’s mind upon, to understand, know how”* (Zodhiates).

The idea is that they understood only what animals (creatures without the ability to reason) understood. Only sensual pleasures meant anything to them: the scratching of an itch, the filling of the belly, et cetera. They lived on a functional level. (They would fit in very well with those in American society who advocate, *“If it feels good, do it.”*)

*“What they do understand are the fleshly instincts which they share with the brute beasts.*

*Their way of life is to allow these instincts to have their way; their values are fleshly values. Jude describes men who have lost all awareness of spiritual things and for whom the things demanded by the animal instincts are the only standards”* (Barclay, p. 188).

By indulging in these sensual things, they were corrupting, or destroying, themselves.

“corrupt” — φθείρω — *“to be destroyed, to perish”* (Thayer); *“It is passive in voice, thus, ‘by these things they are being brought to ruin’”* (Wuest, p. 248). *“To corrupt, spoil, vitiate, in a moral or spiritual sense”* (Zodhiates).

As long as this kind of person’s physical being was satisfied, as long as his physical needs were gratified, he had no desire for anything else. He lived to satisfy himself, and he never grew beyond the physical sphere to the spiritual. Because he did not grow in the spiritual realm, he was perishing. The present tense of phtheiro indicates that his ruin was taking place while he lived, but does it not include his future state as well? If he is in ruin now, and continues in that ruin until his death, his future state will be no different!

**Jude 11 “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.”**

“Woe unto them! For they went in the way of Cain, and ran riotously in the error of Balaam for hire, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.” (ASV)

This passage begins with a “Woe,” which probably speaks of that which is to come, since it is directed toward the false teachers addressed by Jude.

As was pointed out earlier in this study, Jude seems to deal in triads. He had just related three examples of group apostasy (Israelites, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the angels). Now he records three examples of individuals who were involved in apostasy because they sought the sensual over the spiritual.

Jude's use of these three *"might have been lodged in the spectacular punishments they received. Cain was cursed of God; Balaam was found dead with God's enemies fighting against Israel; and Korah was swallowed up by an earthquake that split open the earth"* (Coffman, p. 536).

It appears that Jude must have been writing to Jewish Christians (could have been a mix of Jew and Gentile), since no effort is made to elaborate on the accounts of these three men. The earlier readers must have been thoroughly familiar with these examples.

The first character mentioned is Cain. (For details of his sins, see Genesis 4:3-15.) These false teachers were like Cain, because they had openly shown their rebellion and disobedience to GOD. Cain did not try to hide his sacrifices, but openly substituted his will for GOD's commands on sacrifice. Cain was punished for his sins, and so will the false teachers who troubled the brethren. Notice some of the comments made by other writers.

*"Cain is cited because he was regarded as one of the most outstanding examples of Old Testament characters who became wicked, one who defiled the simplest and most obvious laws of God; and who, in addition, followed his own natural instinct rather than the will of the Lord in determining the nature of his offering"* (Woods,

p. 394).

*“Like Cain, they (false teachers, R.K.) were innovators with a fierce hatred of any who rejected their ideas”* (Coffman, p. 536).

Zerr says the way of Cain is a *“life of wicked selfishness”* (Zerr, p. 293).

Cain’s *“conduct exhibits rebellion to God, selfishness, and malicious ill-will against one whose conduct condemns his”* (Mamilton, p. 459).

The second character mentioned is Balaam. (For details of his sins, see Numbers 22-24.) Jude says the false teachers “ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.” There are three words which need examination here — “ran greedily after,” “error,” and “reward.”

“ran greedily after” — ἐκχέω ἐκχύνω — *“The verb is the passive voice here. Thayer says that in this voice the verb ‘is used of those who give themselves up to a thing, rush headlong into it.’ Vincent says, ‘A strong expression, indicating a reckless, abandoned devotion of energies”* (Wuest, p. 248); *“In the NT, spoken metaphorically of a passion or direction of the mind, to rush into, give oneself up to”* (Zodhiates).

“error” — πλάνη — *“A wandering, a straying about, whereby one, led astray from the right way, roams hither and thither. In the N.T. metaph. mental straying, i.e. error, wrong opinion*

*relative to morals or religion*” (Thayer); “*A wandering out of the right way. In the NT, used only figuratively meaning error*” (Zodhiates).

“reward” — μισθός — “*Dues paid for work; wages, hire*” (Thayer, p. 415); “*Wages, hire, reward*” (Zodhiates).

*“The idea here is, that all restraint was relaxed, and that they rushed on tumultuously to any course of life that promised gain”* (Barnes, p. 397).

Woods reminds one that Balaam sought to seduce Israel for his own personal gain (p. 395). Balaam did not really care about what happened to Israel (GOD’s people), as long as he benefitted financially. So it is with the majority of false teachers today, who care only about their own wallets or positions of power.

“I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication” (Revelation 2:14).

The third character Jude mentioned was Korah. (For details of his sins, see Numbers 16:1-30.) His sin is called “gainsaying.”

“gainsaying” — ἀντιλογία — “*To speak against, gainsay, contradict*” (Thayer).

Korah, and those like him, were said to have perished because of gainsaying, or the words of contradiction which they uttered.

“perished” — ἀπόλλυμι — “*To perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed*” (Thayer).

What was it Korah contradicted? It was the authority by

which Moses spoke; it was the authority of GOD Himself who spoke through Moses. It is not necessarily wrong to speak against authority, for there are those who wield evil authority. It was not wrong for Micaiah (I Kings 22) or Elijah (I Kings 18) to speak against the wicked Ahab. But Korah spoke against the authority which GOD had given Moses, and it is always wrong to speak against the authority given by GOD! It might be remembered here what happened to Aaron and Miriam when they spoke against their brother Moses (Numbers 12:ff). The same is true today of the teachings of the apostles and the other inspired writers of the Bible. Their message came from GOD, and to speak against such is to speak against GOD and thus suffer destruction.

*“The ‘way of Cain’ was the way of disobedience, hate, murder and ruin; the ‘error of Balaam’ was in seeking to seduce Israel for personal gain; and the ‘gainsaying of Korah’ was rebellion against divinely constituted authority” (Woods, p. 395).*

#### **Jude — Verse Eleven Supplement**

#### **Cain (Genesis 4:3-15)**

Cain was the firstborn of Adam and Eve. He was a farmer (tiller of the ground). It is obvious that GOD had commanded the first people as to how to worship Him in an acceptable manner, but Cain chose to offer sacrifices his way (Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17). His offering of the fruit of the ground was rejected by GOD, while his brother’s blood offering was accepted. This angered Cain, who then vented his anger on his brother

to the point of murdering him in the fields. He probably felt, as do many today, that no one would know about his sin; but GOD knows all, even if no other human being knows about one's transgressions (Hebrews 4:13). When Cain was approached by GOD, he attempted to excuse himself by claiming he was not responsible for his brother's well being. This lack of concern for others sounds very much like those today who refuse to correct a fallen brother or who take no interest in reaching the lost souls of those around them. GOD then cursed Cain and pronounced judgment upon him. Cain was to be a "fugitive" and a "vagabond," a wanderer upon the face of the earth for all of his years. He reaped the consequences of his actions.

### **Balaam (Numbers 22-24)**

It is obvious that Balaam was a prophet of GOD (Numbers 22:8-9). It was said that if Balaam blessed a people, it would be blessed; and if he cursed it, it would be cursed (Numbers 22:6). Balak, king of the Moabites, knew about Balaam and sent for him to come and curse the Israelites. At first Balaam refused to go, because he listened to GOD. (Or is it possible he was trying to bargain with GOD?) Later, because of Balaam's greed and desire, GOD allowed him to go, although his going did not please GOD. The reader will remember that Balaam's ass saved him from the angel of the Lord (Numbers 22:22-31). From that point on, Balaam could only speak what GOD wanted him to say with regard to Israel. However, also notice that GOD did not control all his speech. Every time Balak wanted Balaam to curse Israel, all Balaam could do was bless them. Balak became quite angry over Balaam's continual

blessings of Israel and told him GOD was keeping good things from Balaam (Numbers 24:11). At this point, Balaam returned to his home, but he had already committed his great trespass (Numbers 31:16). He gave advice which caused Israel to sin (probably the whoredom with the daughters of Moab – Numbers 25:1) and brought about his own death as well (Numbers 31:8). Why did he come to such ruin? Because he loved physical things (Cf. 2 Timothy 4:10); he ran after the physical, even though he knew this was displeasing to GOD.

### **Korah (Numbers 16:1-35)**

Korah, along with two others (Dathan and Abiram), seemed to be the ring leaders in this rebellion against the authority of Moses. GOD destroyed them and their followers by opening the ground which swallowed them. A fire was also sent to consume the two hundred and fifty princes who had offered incense. Thus, GOD showed in a very dramatic way that He had spoken through Moses, and He would not tolerate Israel's rebellion. The message is the same today. One must listen only to those through whom GOD has spoken: the writers of the New Testament (I John 4:6; cf. Luke 10:16).

*“The thing that holds all three of Jude’s examples together is their arrogant willingness to follow their own way rather than the way of GOD. Pride, arrogance, and self-will characterized the false teachers just as they had Cain, Balaam, and Korah” (Warden, p. 494).*

**Jude 12 “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;”**

“These are they who are hidden rocks in your love-feasts when they feast with you, shepherds that without fear feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn leaves without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;” (ASV)

“These are spots in your feasts of charity,”  
“spots” — σπιλάς — *“a rock in the sea, ledge or reef...hidden rocks”* (Thayer); *“A rock by or in the sea, a cliff or sandbank on which vessels are shipwrecked. Figuratively of false teachers who, as hidden reefs, cause others to make shipwreck of their faith”* (Zodhiates).

This kind of rock is extremely dangerous to ships, and many an unwary sailor has suddenly found the bottom of his ship ripped open and himself sinking. The teachers to whom Jude referred were like the hidden rocks in the sea. The waters of their teachings appeared calm and safe, but did not reveal the dangers hidden beneath the surface until it was too late. The result of their teaching was a shipwrecked faith. Paul wrote of people like this.

“Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme” (1 Timothy 1:19-20).

When considering the illustration used by the Spirit here, it is seen just how dangerous these stealthy invaders were. If a navigator approached a danger which was clearly seen, he would steer his vessel away

from it, lest it be shipwrecked. These sneaky invaders were hiding their true intentions like a reef in the sea.

The “feasts of charity” are believed to be “love feasts” (ASV, NKJV).

*“a fellowship meal eaten by the Christians when they came together for worship. It was eaten at the local church, which in the first century always was in a person’s home”* (Wuest, p. 249).

Even though Wuest has the wrong concept of “church,” he does point out that the early church ate in the buildings or places where they gathered for worship services. Those who think of the building as a “*holy*” place where only worship may take place would do well to study the early church and her love feasts (The condemnation of First Corinthians eleven was not the eating in the building but the abuse of not sharing and acting as brethren.). Woods believes these feasts had their origin when wealthier members of the congregation provided the food for the entire congregation, symbolizing the brotherhood of all in a common meal (Woods, p. 395).

Jude states that the false teachers had no fear of joining the faithful during these feasts. That is probably because the brethren were not adhering to the admonition of First Corinthians 5:11, not to eat with those who were disobedient to GOD and would not repent.

“feeding” — ποιμαίνω — *“To feed, to tend a flock, keep sheep...to furnish pasturage of food; to nourish: to cherish one’s body, to serve the body”* (Thayer); *“to feed or cherish oneself, to take care of oneself at the expense of others;”* (Zodhiates); *“shepherds that feed themselves... to further their own schemes and lusts instead of*

*tending the flock of God”* (Wuest, p. 249).

These men were out to take and not give; they sought to fill their own bellies, caring little for the needs of those around them. No doubt these men would use these feasts and assemblies to spread the poison of their false doctrines among the brethren.

“The word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them” (Ezekiel 34:1-6).

Outwardly, these men may have appeared to be religious. They may even have appeared to be religious leaders, but they were empty and useless to the people in such matters. One should notice the warning of Acts 20:28-31, which Paul gave the elders of Ephesus.

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of GOD, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in

among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

Jude next proceeds to give images which show just how worthless and dangerous these men were.

He began by saying they were “clouds without water.” In the East, where the land is often dry and parched, the citizens rejoice over clouds, which offer the hope of rain. But if these clouds do not release the moisture needed by the farmer, if they are simply blown away by the winds which blow first one way and then another, what good are they to those who need the moisture contained in them? They were all show and no substance; they did not deliver what they promised.

“without water” — ἄνυδρος — “*without water...which promise rain but yield none*” (Thayer). “*Without water, dry....clouds, fountains or clouds that promise much water but deceive those who rely on them*” (Zodhiates).

There may also be an allusion here to those who simply “*flow with the tide,*” moving with any popular opinion, just as clouds move with the air currents. The apostle Paul warned about this kind of personal policy.

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14).

The phrase “trees whose fruit withereth” is translated in the ASV as “*autumn trees without fruit.*”

“autumn” — φθινοπωρινός — “*Autumn trees, i.e., trees such as they are at the close of*

*autumn, dry, leafless and without fruit” (Thayer).*

“without fruit” — ἄκαρπος — *“Without fruit, barren” (Thayer). “Unfruitful, bearing no fruit” (Zodhiates).*

These false teachers are like trees which have no fruit, worthless to their students. They are like the fig tree which promised fruit, but gave none to Jesus and His disciples (Mark 11:13-21; Matthew 21:19-20; Luke 13:6-7). What did Jesus do with the barren fig tree? He caused it to wither and die.

The term “twice dead” emphasizes the absolute worthlessness of these men. As teachers of religion, they had no value and needed to be “plucked up by the roots.”

“plucked up” — ἐκριζόω — *“To root out, pluck up by the roots” (Thayer); “pluck up by the root” (Strong).*

A fruit tree which does not produce fruit simply occupies space (cf. John 15:1-8), because it is not fulfilling its intended purpose. Jesus warned His disciples of the false teachers, comparing such to trees which brought forth evil or worthless fruit (Matthew 7:15-20). Christians are to be the light of the world and the salt which saves, as well as examples to the world (Matthew 5:13-16). If Christians do not provide (by teaching and example) what the world needs to be saved, then they are like the tree which promises refreshing fruit but gives nothing — absolutely worthless!

A tree which is plucked up by the roots is permanently removed from the scene. These false teachers should have been removed from among the brethren, so that they could not contaminate them. Once removed, the brethren would have had the pure

Gospel to nourish them.

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

**Jude 13 “Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”**

“Wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved forever.” (ASV)

“Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.” Two ideas are evident in connection with the waves of the sea. First, these false teachers, these dangerous men who had crept in among them, were like the sea or ocean waves which rise up in great swells of water and noise, but all they produce is foam.

“Raging” — ἄγριος — “*wild, raging*” (Strong); “*in a moral sense, wild savage, fierce*” (Thayer); “*Wild, turbulent, tempestuous*” (Zodhiates).

These sneaky, side-door men are being compared to wild, savage, and turbulent waves of the sea. Thus, destructive waves. The soul that is not anchored securely by the teaching of Jesus can easily be shipwrecked by such teachers.

Second, with regard to these raging waves, a storm-tossed sea results. A storm-tossed sea is erratic, flowing one way then another, driven by the winds. Raging waves are unpredictable, thus cannot be depended on for direction. Such waves pounding away at one’s soul can become discouraging and hindering,

rather than encouraging one to be godly. Brethren tossed about by every doctrine will only cause storms of controversy and destruction in the church. What does the stormy sea produce? It cast out foam upon the beach, which is described as “shame.”

“shame” — αἰσχύνω — *“shame or disgrace”* (Strong); *“a thing to be ashamed of”* (Thayer); *“Subjectively meaning a sense of shame resulting from exposure of one’s weaknesses or sins”* (Zodhiates).

*“The foam is symbolic of their disgraces, baseness, ignominy in relation to their deeds”* (Hamilton, p. 472).

*“These men with their ‘great swelling words of vanity’ (II Pet. 2:18) were like the great waves...that break in foam and leave the beach littered with tangled and worthless refuse”* (Woods, p. 397).

The Bible teaches us **not to be** as “children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14).

One should be reminded that their evil deeds have already been described as being “lasciviousness” (v. 4). Ungodly men will always produce that which is evil and destructive to the soul.

Those who had crept in among the brethren were next referred to as “wandering stars.”

“wandering” — πλανήτης — *“a rover (“planet”) that is (figuratively) an erratic teacher”* (Strong); *“One who wanders about, a wanderer, from which is derived the Eng. “planet.”* In the NT,

attributed to a star, a wandering star, planet; figuratively of a false teacher” (Zodhiates).

What if the stars of heaven wandered around with no set pattern? What good would they be to man? Man could not depend on them for navigation, et cetera. In other words, these false teachers of religion were like stars which had no steady course and thus could not guide anyone’s spiritual journey. If the former is the idea of the verse, then the “blackness (gloom) of darkness” represents the “outer darkness” into which all those who refuse to obey GOD will ultimately be cast.

“darkness” — σκότος — *“shadiness that is obscurity – darkness”* (Strong); *“metaphor of ignorance respecting things and human duties, and the accompanying ungodliness and immorality, together with their misery in hell...persons in whom darkness becomes visible and holds sway”* (Thayer); *“Darkness...Spiritual darkness, implying ignorance or error”* (Zodhiates).

Looking at Thayer’s definition, it would seem that Jude may be saying that, if one carefully observes these teachers, their ungodliness and immorality can easily be observed like the foam of the sea and like a shooting star.

“Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 25:30).

A companion idea may be that of “shooting stars” or meteorites, *“which blaze a moment in the night sky and then fall into darkness for ever...Those evil men who troubled the church were just like ‘shooting stars’ that shine for a moment and then plunge to doom and darkness”* (Coffman, p. 538-539).

These teachers may have seemed to be “great ones;” they may have seemed to be great spiritual leaders with a great deal of scholarship; but they will have their just reward. This reminds one of Simon the sorcerer in Acts chapter eight. Simon bewitched the people, “giving out that himself was some great one.” But when Philip came preaching the truly Great One, i.e., the Christ, Simon was put in his place, and the people no longer thought of him as a great one.

How long will these teachers’ implied destruction last?

“for ever” — αἰών — “for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity” (Thayer).

*“Much of the impact of this passage derives from its imaginative force. Many of Jude’s readers no doubt found the false teachers impressive and persuasive, and part of Jude’s task must be to shift their whole imaginative perception of the false teachers and show the false teachers in a whole different light. With this aim he provides a series of imaginatively powerful images which will influence the range of mental associations with which his readers perceive the false teachers” (Bauckham, p. 92).*

**Jude 14 “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints,”**

“And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones,” (ASV)

The Bible does not record this prophecy of Enoch in any other place, but the fact that Jude was an inspired

man makes it the truth.

“prophesied” — προφητεύω — *“to foretell events divine, speak under inspiration”* (Strong); *“to prophesy, to be a prophet, speak forth by divine inspiration, to predict...to utter forth, declare, a thing which can only be known by divine revelation”* (Thayer).

The Bible has very little to say about Enoch, but what it does say about his character is quite revealing. Enoch “walked with GOD” to the extent he did not have to die as other men do (with the exception of Elijah – 2 Kings 2). GOD took him (Genesis 5:18-24). Also, by stating that Enoch was the seventh from Adam, Jude verified the genealogy of Genesis chapter five.

Enoch’s name is found in two other verses in the New Testament besides this context.

“Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan” (Luke 3:37).

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because GOD had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased GOD” (Heb. 11:5).

In a very real sense, the prophecy which Enoch gave is repeated in various ways throughout the Scriptures. It is a prophecy of judgment which will come upon mankind, specifically that which will come upon the wicked.

“The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to His works” (Matthew 16:27).

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only

he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:7-8).

The word "saints" in this passage does not carry the common use of this word.

"saints" — ἅγιος — *"properly reverend, worthy of veneration; as for example, apostles Eph. 3:5; angels I Thess. 3:13; Matt. 25:31; Rev. 14:10; Jude 14; prophets, Acts 3:21; Luke 1:70"* (Thayer).

In this text, the primary application of this word deals with those who were coming with the Lord when He comes to judge man. While this would include the saved, it primarily deals with the angels who maintained their holiness.

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not GOD, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8).

Jude was warning these brethren, and these erring ones, that a judgment was going to take place.

"we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

But this should not be thought of as only a warning. Remember that the saints under the altar were looking forward to this judgment of GOD as a vindication of their fitness (Revelation 6:9-11). As a warning, what Jude said can and should be a very frightening thing to the ungodly; but it should also be a source of comfort to

GOD's faithful servants.

There are those who claim that Jude was quoting from an uninspired book called 1<sup>st</sup> Enoch.

*"It is important that we affirm the following: (1) All the documents of the New Testament are inspired by God. Hence, all of them are authoritative for the church of Christ. (2) Whatever Jude wrote is inspired by God. Hence it is true. (3) Christians are to understand inspiration according to the way Scripture presents itself, not according to a preconceived notion of what inspiration means. (4) Jude cited Enoch by inspiration in order to make a point that God wanted Jude's first readers and all subsequent readers to understand. (5) Jude's point is that the false teachers who have troubled the church he addressed, and by implication, all other false teachers, will be called to judgment by God when Christ returns"* (Warden, p. 501).

On one occasion, the apostle Paul was told by the Spirit to refer to uninspired poets.

"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring" (Acts 17:28).

In both of these incidents, it does not matter if the writers were quoting something from an uninspired source or not. The Spirit of GOD said to write it; thus, the text is GOD's inspired word.

**Jude 15 "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.”**

“to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” (ASV)

The prophecy of Enoch continues and banishes the idea that the patriarchs had no understanding of the intentions of GOD. They clearly understood that there was going to be a final judgment.

Enoch said that when the time of which he prophesied came, the Lord would come with His angels to accomplish two things: (1) “execute judgment” and (2) “convince” the ungodly.

“execute” — *“To perform; to inflict; as, to execute judgment or vengeance...to carry into effect; as, to execute law or justice... To perform the proper office; to produce an effect.”* (Webster 1828, p. 76).

When the Lord comes again in fulfillment of Enoch’s prophecy, it will not be to set up a kingdom. It will be to perform the office of Judge.

“For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man” (John 5:26-27).

He will render not only just judgment, but will also assign a verdict for each and every person who has ever lived.

“convince” — *“To persuade or satisfy the mind by evidence; to subdue the opposition of the mind to truth, or to what is alleged, and compel it to yield its consent; as, to convince a man of his errors; or to convince him of the truth...To convict; to prove guilty; to constrain one to admit*

*or acknowledge himself to be guilty.”* (Webster 1828, p. 51)

Who will be caused to understand their guilt and admit that they deserve to have judgment rendered against them? Who will be forced by the evidence to admit that they deserve the punishment consigned to them? It is those who have made themselves ungodly people.

Enoch’s prophecy dealt with two aspects of these ungodly men — their “deeds” and their “hard speeches.” All they have done to fulfill the “lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16) will of necessity make up these deeds. Paul listed some of those deeds which will condemn men.

“Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like” (Galatians 5:19-21).

The above passage concludes by warning those who do such things that they cannot enter Heaven (v. 21).

“of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” These are obviously speeches against GOD Himself. Note that Jude had already said these evil men are those who “speak evil of those things which they know not” (v. 10), and they are those who “speak evil of dignities” (v. 8). There is no way one can begin to summarize all of the evil things which ungodly men have uttered against GOD.

*“Train loads of books pour out of the great publishing houses every month, being directed in a large part, against God, against the Bible, against Christianity, against all truth and righteousness”* (Coffman, p. 542).

Notice some of the evil things which were spoken

against Christ while He walked among men. They called Him Beelzebub and a sinner (Matthew 10:25; John 9:24). They said He had a demon and was an evil doer (John 7:20; 18:30; Matthew 27:63). They accused Him of perverting the nation (Luke 23:2) and said He had an unclean spirit (Mark 3:30).

**Jude 16 “These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.”**

“These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts (and their mouth speaketh great swelling words), showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage.” (ASV)

Jude continued adding to the description of the kind of men about whom Enoch prophesied. He said they were “murmurers.”

“*One who discontentedly complains (against God)*” (Thayer); “*To grumble, murmur*” (Zodhiates).

Jude used γογγυστής, which seems to be used with regard to murmuring which is aimed particularly at GOD.

“*The sense is that of repining or complaining under the allotments of providence, or finding fault with God's plans, and purposes, and doings*” (Barnes, p. 401).

“*They were murmurers (goggustai), individuals who rebelled at their lot in life, and argued that providence was unkind. Being complainers, they were evermore expressing dissatisfaction with all that which was about them, and perhaps, with*

even God Himself” (Woods, p. 400).

*“Whenever a man gets out of touch with God he is likely to begin complaining about something. To grumble and moan is one of the distinguishing marks of man without God (cf. Phil. 2:14)”* (Green, p. 178).

One should also consider the accounts in Exodus, with regard to the people’s murmuring against Moses — they were actually murmuring against GOD.

“complainers” — μεμψίμοιρος — *“complaining of one’s lot, querulous, discontented”* (Thayer); *“A discontented, complaining person, one who finds fault with his life”* (Zodhiates); *“One who complains, or expresses grief; one who laments; one who finds fault; a murmurer”* (Webster 1828, Vol. 1, p. 44).

These are those who find fault with their lot in life, complain of other’s good fortune, and sometimes blame GOD because their circumstances are not better. This kind of person does not enjoy life and does not want anyone else to either — *“I am miserable, and I want you to be as well.”* They were malcontents.

*“The poor complain that they are not rich like others; the sick that they are not well; the enslaved that they are not free; the bereaved that they are deprived of friends; the ugly that they are not beautiful; those in humble life that their lot was not cast among the great and gay. The virtue that is opposed to this is **contentment** — a virtue of inestimable value”* (Barnes, p. 401).  
*“godliness with contentment is great gain”* (1 Timothy 6:6).

What is the difference between a murmurer and a

complainer? A murmurer seems to keep his discontent (more or less) to himself, while a complainer is quite vocal about his discontent.

“walking after their own lusts” The murmurers and complainers are those who walk after their own desires, and who would give unlimited indulgence to their cravings if possible.

“lusts” — ἐπιθυμία — “*desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust*” (Thayer); “*To desire greatly. Strong desire, longing, lust*” (Zodhiates).

They are the kind of people who will do anything they think they can get away with. They are noisy boasters (“great swelling words”), whose every move is made in order to get gain. Their arrogance is manifested in their words and actions. All they do or say is calculated to promote themselves and to gain advantage for themselves. They are the kind of people who show respect of persons for their own gain and welfare.

“There is no respect of persons with GOD” (Romans 2:11).

“Ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in Heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him” (Ephesians 6:9).

“But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons” (Colossians 3:25).

“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor

man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts” (James 2:1-4)?

The only guideline these men have is fulfilling their own lusts. They are what are sometimes referred to as libertines.

Before leaving this passage, let us consider the word “lust.” Is “lust” always something evil? Let us notice a few passages where the same original word is found.

“With ἐπιθυμία I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15).

“I am in a strait betwixt two, having a ἐπιθυμία to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Philippians 1:23).

“And the fruits that thy soul ἐπιθυμία after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all” (The Revelation 18:14).

It is obvious from the above verses and their contexts that the original word for “lust” in Jude 16 does not always indicate that which is evil. Our English Bibles define the word used in the first two verses above as “desire.” The third verse in The Revelation translates the same word as “lusted.” Would one say that Jesus was wrong to use this original word, or that the Spirit was wrong? Consider another passage in Romans 1:11, where the Spirit had the apostle write of the strong desire he had to see the brethren in Rome.

“I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some

spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.”

“long” — ἐπιποθέω — “*to dote upon, that is, intensely crave possession (lawfully or wrongfully): (earnestly) desire, (greatly) long (after) lust*” (Strong).

The word is not the same as that found in Jude, but note the definition of the word. Are they not parallel? Why point this out? Because there is the DANGER that, in ignorance, one may assume that the word used in one place always means the same in another, and refuse to see the truth. Such practice will lead one to a deeply flawed reasoning and will cause him to adopt a false belief.

**Jude 17-18 “But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.”**

“But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; That they said to you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts.” (ASV)

From these verses, one learns that those to whom Jude wrote had heard some of the apostles in person. This also indicates that Jude was not an apostle.

Hamilton says the word “remember” is “*an aorist passive imperative that conveys the sense of decisiveness and urgency*” (p. 17). Note what it was that they were to remember. It was not how entertaining the speaker was, or how pleasant and kind he appeared. What they were to remember were the **words** spoken by the apostles, the **words** of Jesus.

This reminds this writer of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man wanted a “show” put on for his brothers. He thought this would cause them to change their lives, so that they did not end up where he was. Abraham responded by saying, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:31). This writer has heard people criticize preachers for being too dry in their presentations having some habit of speech they do not like. Friends, it is the words the speaker uses which should be considered — not his personality.

“brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of GOD. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Corinthians 2:1, 4).

They had been warned previously about the type of men who were now in their midst. Some of them had heard the apostles warn of “grievous wolves” entering in among their ranks (Acts 20:29). They had heard about those who would depart from the faith, “Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:2).

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:1-2).

They had been warned about those who did not want the truth, but would rather have fables taught to them.

“I charge thee therefore before GOD, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke,

exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:1-4).

They had been faithfully warned to test the teachers which came among them.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of GOD: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

The text says these imposters were “mockers.” “mockers” — ἐμπαίκτης — “*A derider, i.e., (by implication) a false teacher: mocker, scoffer*” (Strong); “*A mocker, scoffer, spoken of imposters, false prophets*” (Zodhiates); “*One who insults, scoffs, or heaps ridicule on another*” (Vine).

*“A mocker is one who makes fun of that which he cannot meet otherwise”* (Zerr, Vol. 6, p.293).

In Second Peter 3:3, this same word is rendered “scoffers.”

*“When reason and truth fail, mockery is a ready club in the hands of the impious. Mockery, clever retorts, and sly inferences have an appeal to those who are inclined to the ways of the worldly wise”* (Warden, p. 507).

These are those who would make fun of the truth and of those who proclaim the truth. These are men who scoff at the miracles of the Bible.

*“They are committed to godlessness in their personnel lives, who made light of all authority,*

*who foamed out their own shame, and spoke blasphemously and contemptuously of heavenly persons – Such as they, would naturally laugh at the idea of a judgment to come” (Coffman, p. 543).*

The mocker is one who cannot answer the arguments of another, settling for ridiculing that person instead of logically answering his argumentation.

It is highly possible that Jude referred to the same kind of people to whom Peter referred in Second Peter 3:3-4.

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”

Jude quoted from Enoch regarding the coming judgment (vs. 14-15), then launched into his description of ungodly men. Peter described the “scoffers” as those who questioned whether or not the Lord was coming back, then spoke of the judgment brought on the world in the time of Noah, as proof that there will be a judgment.

When was it predicted that these scoffers would appear on the scene? Does this speak of a time yet future or some other time frame? The term “last time” speaks of the Christian dispensation, as long as that time may last. The apostle John spoke of that time.

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (1 John 2:18).

John stated that this time could be identified by the appearance of “antichrists” which had already made their appearance.

“who should walk after their own ungodly lusts” Their interest was in serving their own sensual appetites, fulfilling those desires regardless of what GOD said. They sought to be loosed from any controlling influence. They did not believe they were bound by law — whether it be political or spiritual.

**Jude 19 “These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”**

“These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit.” (ASV)

“These be they who separate themselves,” “who make separations” (ASV), “who cause divisions” (NKJV), “setting themselves apart” (YLT).

“separate” — ἀποδιορίζω — “*By drawing boundaries to disjoin, part, separate from another*” (Thayer).

*“The word translated ‘make separation’ is a rare one in the sacred writings, and means to cause divisions, parties, factions in the church. It is a compound word, made up of the prepositions apo, from; dia, through; and the noun oros, a section line. As here figuratively used, it designates one who draws a line through the church and sets one part over against another. It is a vivid and impressive picture of the action of church dividers, factionists, troublers of the people of God” (Woods, p. 403).*

Coffman says this word indicates those who separate themselves from the true church and induce others to join them. This is exactly how denominationalism arose.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17).

“If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother” (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).

“sensual” — ψυχικός — *“Governed by the ψυχη, i.e., the sensuous nature with its subjection to appetite and passion (as though made up of nothing but psuche)”* (Thayer, p. 678).

They were guided only by their lusts and passions, and they attempted to guide others to join them in fulfilling their own desires.

*“They draw to themselves a clique that assumes with them an arrogant, elitist view of themselves in relation to others”* (Hamilton, p. 19).

There seems little doubt that these men were claiming to be spiritual, but Jude states they are not spiritual but sensual. Note what Jesus said of such men.

“Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matthew 15:14).

These of whom Jude spoke were blinded by their lusts and passions, seeking to lead others into their blindness. The end of such people is clearly detailed by our Lord — “both shall fall into the ditch.”

The original word for “sensual” is found six times in the New Testament: First Corinthians 2:14 (“natural”), Twice in First Corinthians 15:44 (“natural”), First Corinthians 15:46 (“natural”), James 3:15 (“sensual”), and Jude 19 (“sensual”). A study of these texts in

conjunction with that of Jude is revealing.

“having not the Spirit” Being not interested in true spiritual things, it is said they have not the Spirit. They were so absorbed in fulfilling their sensual appetites that they could not appreciate the spiritual. It was not the Spirit of GOD which they carried with them, but rather an attitude which was base and carnal in nature.

**Jude 20 “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,”**

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,” (ASV)

A contrast is now shown between the “sensual” man and the “beloved” of GOD. Those who would please GOD are those who build on the faith which had been “once delivered unto the saints.” For those who teach that there is nothing one can do in order to be saved and that works play no part in salvation, this passage and others like it truly deal death blows to such ideas. As Coffman pointed out, there is a “*kernel of truth*” in such salvation by “grace” ideas. One cannot merit or earn salvation by the works which one does, but neither may one enter into the joys of Heaven without doing one’s part [works (Matthew 7:21)]. The concept of “building up yourselves” is an individual responsibility. It is one’s personal responsibility which no one else can do for him.

“beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the

knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:5-8).

“brethren, I commend you to GOD, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

Men who promote “*grace only*” ideas need to consider that GOD has, from the very beginning, given man work to do. GOD placed man in the garden of Eden “to dress it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15). Furthermore, Adam was told not to eat from “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Genesis 2:17). These were things Adam was told to do, and not to do. If there is something one can do which will bring GOD’s displeasure, then it must be true that there is something he can do which will bring GOD’s blessings. Would it have pleased GOD if Adam had said, “*I really do not see any need to dress the garden*” and had just lain around all day doing nothing except relying on the grace of GOD? Conversely, when Adam **did** that which did not please GOD, he was punished by expulsion from the beautiful garden and from the very presence of GOD. In doing GOD’s will, man does not short-circuit grace, nor does one merit (or earn) one’s way into Heaven.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of GOD: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which GOD hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10).

“For the grace of GOD that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,

righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Titus 2:11-15).

“Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it” (Matthew 7:21-27).

Without obedience to the commands of GOD, no one can have GOD’s grace extended to him.

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Hebrews 5:8-9).

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace

with GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of GOD” (Romans 5:1-2).

Obedience is a prerequisite to grace. (An example of a prerequisite would be that one is not allowed to take Algebra Two without first taking the prerequisite of Algebra One.)

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

On Pentecost, Peter said, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation” (Acts 2:40). Notice the word “stand” in Ephesians 6:11. Christians are to stand “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Who can look at such passages and deny that GOD has given man a part to fulfill in his salvation?

*“If they refuse to comply with the instructions upon which GOD’S grace is to be appropriated, their failure to comply is a forfeiture of the grace. The need on the part of humans to obey God’s teaching is in no manner incompatible with the conception that no man can earn salvation. Of course he cannot; but neither can the wilfully disobedient enter heaven. When one thinks of it, what possible use could God have for any soul that refuses to do the things God commanded” (Coffman, p. 545)?*

“praying in the Holy Ghost” The word “praying” is from προσεύχομαι, a present middle participle. The word is always used to indicate prayer to GOD that is done on a continual basis. Prayer is an extremely

important aspect of Christianity. It is by this means that Christians express themselves to GOD, offer up praise to His High and Holy name, and petition Him with regard to the needs of others and self.

“And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto GOD. And the peace of GOD, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

Consider prayer from the standpoint of its being a Christian’s **security**. The more one prays (proper, acceptable prayer) and learns to pray, the more secure one becomes in the love of GOD and assurance in approaching His throne (Hebrews 4:16). Prayer often shows a person’s desires, and those things which one truly desires are the things one will work hardest toward attaining. Further, one who does not pray to GOD hardly has a desire to be with Him for eternity.

Christians are to pray “in the Holy Ghost” (or Spirit). Notice other passages which deal with this thought.

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:18).

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual

house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to GOD by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

**Jude 21 "Keep yourselves in the love of GOD, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."**

"keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (ASV)

The phrase, "love of GOD," can signify two thoughts. It refers either to GOD's love toward Christians, or a Christian's love toward GOD. Woods thinks the phrase refers to GOD's love for Christians. There is a sense in which one would have to agree, because GOD's love is expressed toward all men, even though those being loved may never come to love Him. This could be called GOD's universal love for mankind (John 3:16). This writer does not believe that GOD's universal love is primarily under consideration in this text. The love spoken of here is "saving love." GOD indeed loves all of mankind, but His love does not transcend justice. Jude was writing to brethren and was telling them to keep themselves in a relationship which would allow GOD's saving love to continue to work in and for them.

Note: Jude said **they could do this**. Can anyone honestly deny that Jude was telling them they had work to do in order to maintain their relationship with GOD? But how do Christians "keep" themselves "in the love of GOD?"

“As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. **If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love**; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love” (John 15:9-10; emphasis mine, RK).

One **can** “continue” in GOD’S love through obedience to His commands.

“For this is the love of GOD, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

*“In admonishing his readers to keep themselves in the love of God, human agency in salvation is thus clearly indicated by the inspired writer. While God provides the sphere of salvation — His love — it is man’s function to keep himself, through faithfulness, in that sphere; and a failure to do so is to exclude one from the provisions of salvation”* (Woods, p. 405).

Consider the following passages which relate to love and GOD.

“the Lord direct your hearts into the love of GOD, and into the patient waiting for Christ” (2 Thess. 3:5).

“whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of GOD perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him” (1 John 2:5).

“Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of GOD, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39).

“this is the love of GOD, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

“we have known and believed the love that GOD hath to us. GOD is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in GOD, and GOD in him” (1 John 4:16).

The concept of “mercy” was discussed above at verse two, but look at another thought on it here. Jude said, “looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” This passage clearly points to the fact that man has an obligation to do all he can to “keep ourselves in the love of GOD.” The verse also teaches that one cannot earn his salvation, because he still needs the mercy of Christ for eternal life. To be eternally saved, one must do all GOD has required of him, while in the end relying on His mercy (cf. Romans 4).

**Jude 22-23 “And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”**

“And on some have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” (ASV)

A major thought which should be considered here is that all Christians have a responsibility to all Christians.

“exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Hebrews 3:13).

All need encouragement at times to hold on, to maintain their faith, to resist the temptations faced in this world. The attempt to save all souls must never be abandoned, but especially is this true with regard to brethren who fall into error.

Two distinct classes of people are under

consideration here. First, those who do not have enough knowledge to know the errors being taught. Second, those who in all honesty are misled by false teachers, which should be reproached *“in the gentlest manner, appealing to them by such words as love would prompt”* (Barnes, p. 402).

Notice that the first group is to be treated differently from the second. Such “making a difference” is not respect of persons, nor is it saying that this group is a little easier to work with, or closer to salvation than the other mentioned in the latter part of the verse. It is not saying the teacher should give that one a “break.” Christians must desire the salvation of both classes of people mentioned. The “difference” being discussed is the manner in which the groups are approached in their mutually lost conditions. As Barnes clearly and correctly observed, *“The young, the tender, the delicate, the refined, need a different kind of treatment from the rough, the uncultivated, the hardened”* (Barnes, p. 403).

The second class under consideration is made up of those more advanced in error. These are to be “snatched.”

“pulling” — ἄρπάζω — *“To seize, carry off by force...proverbial, to rescue from the danger of destruction”* (Thayer); *“catch (away up), pluck, pull, take (by force)”* (Strong).

One is to make the same kind of effort with the second group that he would make if someone were caught in a burning building.

“fear” — φόβος — *“with anxious heed lest ye be defiled by the wickedness of those whom ye are rescuing”* (Thayer).

The warning is quite clear. One should make every effort, every attempt, to save those individuals. At the

same time, he must not allow himself to be contaminated with their sin(s). Christians must maintain purity while attempting to save souls. Could it be that Jesus sent the disciples out by “two’s” (in part) so they could help each other maintain purity? This writer knows of preachers, elders and deacons who would have been wise to heed Jesus’ advice. There have been those in this generation of the church who have allowed themselves to be polluted by sin, because they believed the insidious lie that one cannot save the world without being like the world. It has never been, nor will it ever be, right to do wrong in order to “accomplish good.” The ends desired do not justify the means used, if those means are not in accordance with GOD’s will. If one will use the power GOD has given, the desired results will occur in honest hearts.

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of GOD unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

Let one examine the concept of honesty in conversion for a moment. In the parable which is often called the “parable of the sower” or “parable of the seed” in Luke 8:4-15, the seed is the word of GOD, and the different types of ground it is sown upon are the different kinds of hearts men have. One should notice the Lord’s description of the good heart in verse fifteen.

“The good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”

One should particularly notice that the good heart is an **honest** heart. One does not like to think of those who will not obey the Gospel as being dishonest; yet, the

fact remains that the heart which brings forth fruit is the honest heart. The honest heart is the one which will deal openly with GOD's word. Honest hearts will not try to slip around the side of truth or pervert it. Instead, an honest heart will see the Gospel as it is, the word of GOD, and will simply accept it as such. Why were the Bereans considered more noble than those of Thessalonica?

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few” (Acts 17:11-12).

They were not noble because they read the Scriptures. They were noble because they readily received them and believed them. They were noble because they compared what was said with the Scriptures they had. They were noble because they chose truth over error.

**Jude 24 “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,”**

“Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy,” (ASV)

Jude twenty-four and twenty-five are often called the benediction of Jude's letter — simple and direct, yet meaningful to Christians who view these passages as having profound application to their lives.

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling” The epistle has exposed evil men and the dangers of following them. Now Jude reminds Christians of that blessed One who can keep them from falling. The

danger of succumbing to teachers with smooth tongues is always present in every generation. And so it is that these words of Jude may help one to rely upon THAT STRENGTH WHICH IS PROVIDED BY THE GODHEAD through the Scriptures.

*“Spiritual security is directly related to one’s response to the sovereign power and will of God” (Hamilton, p. 508).*

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

“falling” — ἄπταιστος — *“not stumbling, standing firm, exempt from falling” (Thayer); “Free from stumbling, blameless” (Zodhiates); “sure footed as a horse that does not stumble’ (Xenophon), and thus a good man” (Wuest, p. 258).*

It is Christ who is able to keep, or guard, Christians from stumbling. If Christians will do their part (v. 21), they know that Christ will do His part, and thus they are guarded from falling.

*“If Christians heed the instructions of their Lord and walk in the light as He is in the light, they will not stumble; and, for those who thus walk, the Lord indeed can and does guard them from stumbling” (Coffman, p. 548).*

*“The word ‘guard’ indicates the protection which the Lord extends to His saints who ‘keep themselves’ in His love (v. 21), a protection which extends even to **stumbling**, an act to be distinguished from **falling**, since it is possible for one to stumble, and not necessarily to fall. To stumble is a step short of falling, and a condition*

*precedent to it. It follows, therefore, that if one never stumbles, he will never fall*" (Woods, p. 407).

In essence, GOD is declaring that He is perfectly capable of saving His faithful children.

Does this mean "once saved, always saved," i.e., that saints cannot fall from the grace of GOD? The whole context indicates that a person may indeed fall, else it were foolish for the Spirit to cause Jude to write this epistle in the first place. Further, it should be remembered that Jude had just told them they must "keep yourselves in the love of GOD." The only ones GOD will guard from falling are those who take advantage of the provisions GOD has given man to keep him from falling.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but GOD is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:12-13).

Looking at the definition of the word "falling," one should also notice Ephesians 6:10-18.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of GOD, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod

with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of GOD: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”

Christians are to stand firm in the faith against all who would pervert GOD’s word and lead them to destruction. Christians must stand firm against all who are GOD’s enemies.

“and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”

“faultless” — ἄμωμος — *“ethically, without blemish, faultless, unblameable”* (Thayer); *“Spotless, without blemish. In Class. Gr., used as a technical word to designate the absence of something amiss in a sacrifice or something which would render it unworthy to be offered”* (Zodhiates).

It is the same word which is translated “unblameable” in Colossians 1:22-23.

“In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.”

In speaking to the Gentiles, Paul said they were sometimes “alienated and enemies” by their “wicked works,” but now they were in the body of Christ. While in this life, they were capable of being presented “holy and unblameable and unprovable” in the sight of

GOD. The sense seems to indicate that if judgment were to come at that very moment, they could be presented in a holy light. But notice the condition placed upon them. They may be presented “holy and unblameable” at judgment **“IF YE CONTINUE IN THE FAITH GROUNDED AND SETTLED.”**

*“In short, that means **if they do not quit the church!** ‘Faith’ in this passage is not subjective, but objective, meaning ‘the Christian religion’”*  
(Coffman, p. 365).

There is a judgment day coming, and Christians need to live so that no blame can be laid at their feet when it comes.

The command of GOD, for man to reach for perfection, has never been repealed.

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

One must have this “perfection” or completeness which is only found in Christ. This completeness is to be one’s constant goal.

“For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:9-10).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of GOD, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Paul recognized a new identity in his relationship to Christ because of his obedience to Him as part of His pure bride. When one is in Christ, one is a new creature.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all

things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3-4).

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of GOD” (Galatians 6:15).

As long as Christians “keep ourselves” in Him, and are “kept” by Him, then one’s presentation to Him will be with “exceeding joy.”

“exceeding joy” – ἀγαλλίασις – *“Exultation, extreme joy”* (Thayer); *“Exultation, exuberant joy. Not found in Gr. writers but often meaning joy, exultation”* (Zodhiates).

This joy will come from the knowledge that one has been delivered from sin and its consequences, that one has eternity to enjoy one’s saved condition and one’s eternal dwelling with GOD.

“His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:23).

*“Man cannot be saved without God, and without man’s cooperation, God will not save man”* (Hamilton, p. 509).

**Jude 25 “To the only wise GOD our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now**

**and for ever. Amen.”**

“to the only GOD our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. Amen.” (ASV)

GOD is the ultimate! Jude addressed His final remarks, his final exhortation to his readers, to look to GOD who is man’s Savior through Jesus Christ. It is through Christ that man can reach the Father, and it is through Christ that the Father reaches down to man.

“And all things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that GOD was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though GOD did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to GOD” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

GOD deserves praise and adoration because He is the ultimate in glory (grandeur, beauty), majesty (greatness, respect), dominion (domain), and power (authority).

In the ASV, the end of this passage reads, “*before all time, and now, and for evermore,*” meaning GOD has always been deserving of these honors and always will be, because He is the eternal One.

“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

*“Fearlessly Jude had rebuked the deceitful workers threatening the peace and security of the church; with scathing denunciation he had condemned those who corrupted the faith and*

*sought to lead the saints astray; and now, with tenderness and faith he commits his readers to the source of all good – ‘to the only GOD our Savior’ – their Protector, Defender, and Lord”* (Woods, p. 408).

**“AMEN” “So it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled”** (Thayer).

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**Bibles:**

KJV — King James Version

ASV — American Standard Version

NKJV — New King James Version

YLT — Young's Literal Translation

ESB — English Study Bible (Harold Littrell)