



Jude

A Verse-By-Verse Commentary

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THE BOOK OF JUDE; AN INTRODUCTION

The book of Jude is the 65th book of the Bible, and it is comprised of 1 chapter of 25 verses. A verse-per-day evaluation of Jude will take a smidgen less than one month to complete.

The name Jude comes from Judah. In Greek, it would read Ioudas, or Judas. In verse 1, he says he is “a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.” There are a few Judas’ in the Bible. He is obviously not Judas Iscariot, the traitor who was dead at this point. He could be the other apostle named Judas, the son of James noted in Luke 6:16, or he could be Judas, the brother of Jesus. It is generally agreed upon that he is also a brother of Jesus, and this for a couple of reasons.

First, James (the leader of the early church – see Acts 15), who wrote the book of James, was also known to be a brother of Jesus. Secondly, Jude distances himself from the title of “apostle.” Third, it is customary in the Bible for someone to identify himself by his father’s name, not the name of a brother. However, because of James’ position within the church, it makes complete sense that he would so identify himself. Fourth, this identification is supported by Scripture. In Matthew 13:55 it reads –

“Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?”

The understood reference there, and at several other places in the New Testament, that these were both brothers of the Lord demonstrates that there was no need for them to claim that family relationship. Thus, it was a mark of piety that both men subordinate themselves to Christ as His bondservants, rather than claim that they were His brothers (as is seen in James 1:1 and Jude -1).

The authenticity and canonicity of Jude was accepted very early by some while being questioned by others. The main dispute against it is Jude’s citing of non-canonical literature, such as the book of Enoch. However, it is to be understood that just because something is not inspired, it does not mean it does not contain truth. Paul is known to have cited Greek philosophers in this way. They were obviously not inspired, but the statements they made were true, and they are included in Scripture. Thus, for Jude to

cite a well-known Hebrew text, citing something which is obviously true from it, does not negate the inspiration of Jude's writing.

The letter is addressed to "those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ" (verse 1). This sets the tone for the contents of the letter. Jude acknowledges that he intended to write one thing, but he then decided to change the subject matter for necessary reasons which he will explain.

The wording and structure of Jude are very similar to the book of 2 Peter, showing that one was the source for the other. If Jude was the source for 2 Peter, then it obviously would have been written before it. 2 Peter is dated from the mid to late 60s. If Jude is dependent on 2 Peter, then its writing would obviously be dated later.

Unlike most epistles, the intended audience of Jude is not stated. Thus, like John's writings, the audience is certainly inclusive of both Jews and Gentiles. This would fit an overall pattern in Scripture where Paul's epistles come first, showing that the Gentile church age precedes the predominantly Jewish led church of the end times (Hebrews to 2 Peter). Whereas John and Jude harmoniously combine the two into one body.

The main theme of Jude is "Contending for the faith in the last days." Thus, the main purpose of the epistle is "To counter apostasy that was starting to take place." The main presentation of Christ in the epistle is "Jesus Christ, our Advocate."

A short review of the book includes the following –

Author – Jude, The Lord's brother

Date – Late 60s to early 70s

Theme – Contending for the faith in the last days.

Purpose – To counter apostasy that was starting to take place.

Presentation of Christ – Our Advocate

A limited outline of the book would be –

The Book of Jude – Contending for the Faith

Book Superstructure

-The truth of Jesus Christ and His gospel.

Book Structure

-Epistle closed by doxology.

Book Outline

-Exhortation to contend for the faith and warning against false teachers.

Life application: We hope that you will spend the next 25 days of your life learning the book of Jude, one verse at a time. From there, we hope you will apply its truths to your life, molding yourself more each day into being a faithful and wholehearted follower of Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father.

Lord God, how good and pleasant it is to look into your word and to revel in the marvelous truths it presents to us. Though its compilation spans 1600 years, it speaks out one unified message – that You love the world enough to send Your Son to rectify the mess we have gotten ourselves in. How relevant that thought is in our world today. We see wickedness abounding, and yet You still hold out hands of love, appealing for people to turn back to You. Thank You for the promise of life we find in Your word and in the giving of Your Son for us. Amen.

Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,

To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus

Christ: Jude -1

Jude is the last general (or catholic – meaning “universal”) epistle in the Bible. As noted in the introduction, Jude (or Judas) is most probably the brother of Jesus. He is mentioned twice in the Gospels, in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 (both are the same context) –

“Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?” Matthew 13:55

Those who have attempted to say this epistle wasn’t written by Jude are doing so only because of their disapproval of the message it contains, not for any valid historical reason. Because Jude was never a prominent figure in the early church, there is no reason why anyone would claim to be him in a letter.

However, because he cites a couple of non-biblical books in the letter, namely the books of Enoch and the Assumption of Moses, attempts have been made to dismiss the book. Despite this, it is included in the canon of Scripture and it adds greatly to the theology presented in the Bible. Jude begins with, “Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ.”

Rather than claiming his kinship to Jesus, Jude subordinates himself to the Lord, calling himself a *doulos*, or bondservant of Him. It is a term used by Paul and others in relation to Christ. HELPS Word Studies notes concerning this word, “someone who belongs to another; a *bond-slave*, without *any ownership rights* of their own. Ironically, 1401 /*doúlos* (‘bond-slave’) is used with the *highest dignity* in the NT – namely, of believers who *willingly* live under Christ’s authority as His devoted followers.”

Jude next notes, “and brother of James.” This establishes his connection to Jesus. In noting James (who was the leader of the early church and a prominent name that would be recognized by all), it alerts the reader to the otherwise unclaimed relationship. Because, like James, he has not claimed to be an apostle, as others who have written do. Instead, noting that he is James’ brother is what forms the basis for his authority to write the letter.

Jude next states, “To those who are called.” The word “called” in Greek is *klétos*. HELPS word studies defines it as “the call (invitation) He gives to all people, so all can receive His salvation. God desires every person to call out to Him and receive His salvation (1 Tim 2:4,5). ‘Unfortunately, many choose *not* to – but *all can*; all *don’t* but *all can* call out to God for His mercy (*not* just “some”)’ (G.Archer).”

As a note concerning the structure of the verse in the Greek, the word “called” is set apart from the main verse to highlight and emphasize it. The structure of the verse in the Greek reads as follows –

“Jude, of Jesus Christ bondservant, brother then of James. To those in God the Father, having been loved, and Jesus Christ, having been kept – called.”

Next, Jude says, “sanctified by God the Father.” Here some manuscripts have “beloved” instead of “sanctified.” Either way, the word is “in” not “by.” Those who have come to God through Jesus Christ are sanctified in God. They are deemed holy and set apart. When one is in Christ, he is – by default – in God. At the end of the letter, after

discussing all the perils the church was facing because of ungodly people who had crept into it, Jude will say, “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present *you* faultless” (verse 24).

Those words explain what being “sanctified in God” means. For those who have come to God through Christ, they are set apart and kept. Someday, they shall be presented before the throne of God without stain. That is further explained by the words, “and preserved in Jesus Christ.” The thought here is similar to that expressed by Peter –

“...who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:5

Those who are in Christ are kept by Christ. As they are not under law, sin is no longer imputed to them, and they are eternally saved. This is solely because of what Jesus Christ has done, and it comes with an absolute guarantee, the sealing of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13, 14). Jude’s words here, like those of Peter – and indeed all of the apostolic writings – speak of eternal and assured salvation for those who have come to God through Christ.

Life application: The book of Jude has been called the Acts of the Apostates in contrast to the Acts of the Apostles. This is because it highlights apostasy in the church as its main theme.

He is writing his letter to the “called.” In this context, it is referring to those who have followed in God’s path to salvation which is through Jesus Christ. Such people are “sanctified by God the Father” – an indication of eternal salvation. They are also “preserved in Jesus Christ.” Again, this denotes eternal salvation. To assume that one can lose his salvation, with the power of the Father and the Son sanctifying and preserving him, is to serve God in weakness and with an unhealthy view of His great nature.

It also calls into question the truthfulness of God, it diminishes the significance of the cross of Jesus Christ, and it – without a doubt – calls God a liar because God has promised (with a guarantee) that those who come to Him through Christ will be saved. Be careful what teachers you listen to. If they teach that you can lose your salvation,

they may be included in the very list of apostates that Jude will refer to. Such a major point of bad doctrine may be hiding many other dastardly faults as well.

O God! How wonderful it is to look into the words of the New Testament. There we find the fulfillment of the ages in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Open our eyes to see the treasures You have placed there for us, for both our growth and our edification. Help us to properly and carefully handle Your word that we may be approved students of the intent and purpose of the marvelous words You have placed there. Amen.

Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. Jude -2

Jude pronounces a blessing on “those who are called,” whom he mentioned in the previous verse. This is common in most of the epistles, and the exact wording varies from time to time. For example, Paul said to Timothy, “Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Timothy 1:2). On the other hand, Peter said to his audience, “Grace to you and peace be multiplied” (1 Peter 1:2).

Each is based on the mind of the author at the time, and each will often guide the content of the letter itself. Adding in a particular word, or taking out a particular word from another greeting, will often reflect the general sentiment in the letter. In this case, the blessing begins with “mercy.”

The Greek word is *eleos*. It signifies compassion or even pity – either human or divine. Jude certainly included this, based on the content of the letter where he speaks of those who have crept into the church and who were leading people astray. He speaks of their deserved judgment, which is certain to come. For those who receive his letter and apply its content to their hearts, he is petitioning for the mercy of God found in Christ to rest upon them, cleansing them of their transgressions, and any failings which may have resulted from being led astray.

He next says “peace.” It is the Greek word *eiréné*. From a Jewish perspective, it would include peace of mind, health, welfare, and so on. It is a state of wholeness which rests upon a person. Judgment for being unfaithful to the Lord would certainly rob a person of peace, but in the reception of mercy, the peace is then obtainable. Jude knows that those who will receive his letter, take it to heart, and apply his warnings to their lives will receive mercy. In this, they can then find the wholeness implied in the word.

Jude then adds in, “and love.” It is the familiar Greek word *agape*. It signifies benevolence, goodwill, esteem. In this case, it is the divine love of God which follows naturally after mercy and peace.

The three precepts follow logically after the model of the Trinity. The mercy of God is found in Christ, the Son of God. The peace of God is found in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And the love of God is poured out from the Father (1 John 3:1) through the adoption of believers as sons.

This blessing upon his audience is then seen as an exhortation to those who so receive it in verses 20 and 21 of the epistle –

“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

It is a beautifully woven tapestry of the blessing being turned into a real-life application based on the blessing. It is also a marvelously placed hint of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Each of these is then put into a superlative by Jude as he petitions that they “be multiplied to you.” Jude’s intent is probably both “to” and “in.” He desires that these blessings be multiplied from God to his audience, and also within the believers themselves, as they receive them and grow in the admonitions provided in the content of the letter.

Life application: What Jude says in this verse is something that can be linked to a standard biblical greeting in a very specific way. It is a trilogy of blessing, if you will, and it is not at all unique to the Bible. We have already taken a short two-step down the hall of biblical greetings, arriving at similar greetings by Paul and Peter.

Usually, Paul uses a double greeting, such as “grace and peace.” Infrequently, almost no greeting is given, but rather the writer of the book just jumps into his message – such as with Hebrews. As we saw, introductions can often give insights into what the writer will say, simply because the amount of blessing provided. Paul’s triple blessing to Timothy let us know that God’s mercy was certainly needed in addition to His grace and peace. In other words, the content demanded its inclusion. Such is the case with Jude.

Think about your own correspondence. A post on someone's Facebook wall is usually pretty simple. An email may have a more careful and thoughtful tone. But if you were to take the time today to send a card or a letter, it will probably have the most delicately worded greeting.

The brevity of the letter shows us that Jude has exacting points to make without a lot of fluff and so he wishes them mercy, peace, and love. And he then asks that these be multiplied. When we write posts, emails, or letters, let us consider what the content will be, and then add in an initial and a final salutation that corresponds to the general intent of the overall letter. The Bible furnishes the examples, and so we can be confident that in following them, we are honoring the Lord who gave them to us in the first place.

Heavenly Father, surely You are worthy of all praise and glory. Thank You for the abundance of love and joy You've set before us in this life. Thank You for the family, friends, food, and favor you have blessed us with, and which demonstrate Your caring hand towards us. May we rise to praise You, go to bed praising You, and praise You as we walk along life's roads. Yes, praises You, O Lord! Amen.

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. Jude -3

Jude begins the body of his letter as John did in 3 John, stating "Beloved." He is writing to saved believers, and his words are to be taken as such. The warnings he will communicate are to be taken in love. He will repeat this same word two more times before he finishes the letter. Next, he says, "while I was very diligent to write to you."

It is actually a present participle and should say, "in giving all diligence." It was and continued to be upon his heart to write his letter which was "concerning our common salvation." Jude was intending to sit down and write an epistle which focused on the common salvation of all people – both Jew and Gentile, for men and for women, for kings and for common people. There is one gospel and only one gospel, and that one gospel leads to a common salvation for all when it is accepted. In other words, Jude was going to write a note which would dispel the myth that there were separate gospels for separate classes of people, as hyperdispensationalists claim today.

However, that heresy is sufficiently addressed elsewhere when the Bible is taken in its proper context, and so Jude says he “found it necessary to write to you.” Something else was laid upon his heart which was more necessary to write about than the heretical teachings of those who divide the gospel. Being as such, he was then compelled to write this warning out for the instruction of all believers who are a part of this “common salvation.” Understanding this, he continues with, “exhorting you.”

The idea here is that of urging on. They have all been granted the common salvation found in Christ, but a pressing issue which obviously affects all within the faith must be addressed. Therefore, to review, Jude’s exhortation is –

- To all believers who have been saved by the one true gospel; who share in the common salvation found in Christ.
- Potentially affects all of them in regard to the faith they possess.

He then continues by stating that his exhortation is for them “to contend earnestly for the faith.” The verb he uses is found only here in the New Testament, *epagónizomai*. It is derived from *epi*, or “on,” and *agonizomai*, signifying “to struggle.” It refers to an intense athletic contest, or even of warfare. One can think of an athlete in the Grecian games, struggling to gain the advantage in wrestling. Jude is asking the reader to not just live in the faith, but to wrestle to maintain its purity.

The idea set forth by Jude is similar to that found in Galatians 2. Paul was facing a direct challenge to the gospel by Judaizers who had come in and tried to pervert it (today’s Hebrew Roots movement adherents). When this occurred, he said to those at Galatia –

“And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), ⁵to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” Galatians 2:4, 5

Paul earnestly contended for the faith against the heresy which had been introduced. Jude will warn his audience to stand fast against another group who would come in and attempt to pervert the purity of the gospel. Jude then finishes by stating that it is this faith “which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

Even though Jude decided to write about contending for the faith, and not about the common salvation of believers, he still has written about the common salvation of believers. His words here clearly reflect this. The faith – meaning the means of receiving the gospel and then the new life which that brings to believers – was delivered “once for all.”

The Greek word is *hapax*. It means “once,” but it signifies once and not to be repeated, and thus “once for all.” For example, Hebrews 9:28 says, “so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”

The work of Christ is a one-time and for-all-time event. It is complete in its scope, and the message of what He has done is received in the same way for all who will respond. It is those whom Jude calls “the saints.” The term is all-inclusive. Both Jew and Gentile are included in this one faith which is received by the one gospel.

It is this which Jude will continue to defend, giving concrete examples of those who are to be watched out for.

Life application: In calling his recipients “beloved,” Jude sets the tone that will need to be remembered because of the strong words to come in his short letter. Due to the apostasy going on around him, he changed his direction, even before starting his letter. This tells us that Jude’s letter was intended as a word of encouragement and the shared blessing of salvation in Christ, but the Holy Spirit prompted him to amend his words as a warning for all Christians of how that shared blessing can be lost without diligence.

When a generation of saved believers doesn’t contend for the faith, those around them and those coming after them will be the ones to suffer loss – through never coming to salvation. And so, Jude’s exhortation is that these people “contend earnestly” for the faith.

What Jude says has nothing to do with a loss of salvation for the already saved individual. Instead, it points to those who have never heard the truth and who have received a false version instead. The message of Christ was given at the beginning of the church age and had not come incrementally. Instead, it was a body of knowledge

centered on the work of Jesus and given to us by the apostles. “Once for all” allows no other interpretation in this context.

In other words, when the apostolic age ended, God’s revelation of the work of Christ ended. There are no “prophetic words” from the Lord today, and only perverse and twisted individuals who think too highly of themselves would claim prophetic revelation. We have God’s revealed truth in the Bible, not in continued apostolic authority or in the depraved claims of wayward teachers. Hold fast to what has been since the beginning with no additions, and you will have that which was once delivered for all to the saints.

Heavenly Father, help us to be strong in our reliance on Your word and the truth it reveals about Jesus Christ as Lord. We know that nothing can be added to what You have said or done, so help to open the eyes of Your people to those who falsely claim prophetic revelation today. Keep us on the straight and narrow path recorded in the word You have given. Amen.

For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude -4

Jude just wrote that the purpose of the letter is for his reader “to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” With that main thought now in mind, he explains why this was necessary. As you read, consider that these words have come within the first generation after the Lord completed His work. Jude, being a brother of the Lord, is warning against such things at this early date.

Further, the idea conveyed here is closely aligned with the word of Peter in his second epistle –

“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.”

-2 Peter 2:1

And so, he begins with, “For certain men have crept in unnoticed.”

The verb *pareisduó*, translated as “crept in unnoticed,” is found only here in the Bible. It signifies to enter alongside, meaning secretly or under pretense. One could think of someone joining a party by coming in the side door. Nobody saw him come in, but he is there as if an invited guest. These are the ones who, as Peter says, “secretly bring in destructive heresies.”

Both men are admonishing believers to be on guard, and to watch for those who stealthily come into the church and who start twisting things, perverting that which has been set and established by the word of God. What they teach, however, is so seemingly innocuous that it is almost imperceptible at first. Of this sort, Jude says, “who long ago were marked out for this condemnation.”

The word translated as “long ago” gives the sense of the event having been set beforehand – be it from eternity past, or just an extended period of time. It is an indefinite time, but without further clarification the “when” of the matter is unknown. All that can be discerned is that these people were “marked out” long ago for condemnation.

The word, *prographó*, translated as “marked out,” signifies “written before.” It can signify one of two things: 1) literally written out before in time, or 2) it is an open and public thing, as if on display. The first option is probably what is on Jude’s mind. He has said that it was “long ago.” Therefore, it is probably referring to warnings that had already been noted by others that these sorts of people would creep in. But it was also known that, by their actions, they would be set for condemnation.

The sort of condemnation will be explained in the coming verses as Jude gives several examples of such people from past history, and then he will tell of the judgment that came upon them for their vile conduct. This is what is expected for those who creep into the church with similar conduct.

Of these sort, Jude calls them, “ungodly men.” The word signifies those who are impious, wicked, and ungodly. A sad note concerning this is that Paul, using the same Greek word, says in Romans 5:6 that, “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

The difference here is that these people not only are ungodly, but they purposefully continue in their ungodliness, even when they know what the truth of God in Christ is. They actively come into the church with the intent to destroy it from within. As Jude says of them, “who turn the grace of our God into lewdness.”

Paul noted that Christ died for the ungodly. The ramification of his words is obvious – Christ had to die because of our deeds which are contrary to what God expects. If this is so, then our deeds were an offense to God. Therefore, when we realize this, we are to come to Christ and then turn from those wicked deeds. As Paul says in Romans 6:1-4 –

¹“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ²Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

However, Jude’s words show that these people intentionally will continue on in their ungodliness, even after knowing that it is the very thing that necessitated the cross of Jesus Christ. Because of this, he says they “deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In these words, some manuscripts leave out the word “God.” In 2 Peter 1 (above), there is only the denial of the Lord. If the word “God” is accurately omitted, then the Greek would be more in accord with Peter’s words. Either way, the argument is not changed to a great extent when it is clearly understood that Jesus is God. When one denies Jesus, they also deny God (for example, see 1 John 2:22, 23).

With this understood, Jude’s words signify that Christ died for sins. To continue on in sinning is to then deny Jesus Christ – meaning all that His life and work signify. It is a rejection of Him, and it thus is a rejection of God who sent Him. There can be no hope for a person who knows they are an offense to God, and yet they willfully and purposefully deny that their actions are wrong.

The gospel says that Christ died for our sins. If we deny that our actions are sinful, then we have not received the gospel. Thus, such people have been long ago marked out for

condemnation. This is the idea behind Jude's words. He is not referring to those who struggle with sin, knowing it is sin and receiving Christ's pardon for it. He is speaking of those who ignore the pardon and secretly bring in the heresies that indicate living in a continued state of sin is acceptable.

Life application: A person who creeps into a church as described by Jude is comparable to a thief breaking in. Heretics come in stealthily and set themselves up as if they belong where they are. But their actions are entirely opposed to the truth of Scripture.

They are no different than Judas who betrayed Jesus. In John 13, it says that when Judas went out to betray Jesus "... some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, 'Buy *those things* we need for the feast,' or that he should give something to the poor." In other words, even those who lived and associated with him didn't know the true type of person he was.

This is the trouble with not knowing the Bible properly. If you aren't soundly grounded in Scripture, then a heretic can have complete control over your future theology. This has happened throughout the Christian age and examples from the recent past are enough to fill a swimming pool – Joseph Smith, Ellen G. White, Charles Tazz Russell, David Koresh, James Jones, Gene Robinson, and on and on.

The list of those who are ungodly and who turn the "grace of our God into lewdness" is appallingly long. In the end, they "deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." They don't usually do this with their lips, but rather with their actions.

Be careful who you listen to. Check what you are taught, and be wise in your understanding of God's word.

Heavenly Father, please grant us the wisdom to pursue your word now so that when a false teacher comes along, we will be able to identify him as the stealthy thief he really is. Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. But in the end, he is filled with lies and wickedness. Keep us from such people so that we will always be secure in You. Amen.

But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

Jude -5

Jude now turns to a list of historical events concerning God's judgment in order to show that He is very consistent in taking care of wickedness. Because of this, those mentioned in the previous verse "who were marked out for this condemnation" can expect no less because of their faithless, evil actions. Understanding this, he begins with, "But I want to remind you." He is making a contrast between those he mentioned and those who conduct which is right and proper.

This sets the tone, and it is in line with what he said in verse 3 about it being necessary to exhort his audience to contend for the faith. In reminding them of the past events, they will be prepared to reject those who stray from what is proper, and they will be able to keep themselves in line with the truth as well. With this in mind, he next says, "though you once knew this."

The translation, following the KJV, is entirely incorrect. The intent of his words doesn't mean they knew what he is going to say and that they had forgotten. The verb is a perfect participle, and the word "once" signifies "once for all." It should say something like, "though you know all things once for all." Or more simply stated, "although you already know this." Jude is simply stirring up their memory concerning the events he will present.

From there, he next says, "that the Lord." It is interesting that some manuscripts here say "Jesus." Thus, it is a clear reference to the fact that Jesus was clearly considered to be the incarnation of Yehovah of the Old Testament. As manuscripts vary, this can be argued against, but it is a point that was understood even at the earliest times of the church.

It is He, the Lord, who Jude continues to speak about, saying, "having saved the people out of the land of Egypt." There is no article before "people." It says, "a people," thus signifying the entire body known as Israel. The account is found in the book of Exodus. The Lord fulfilled His promise to Abraham to bring his descendants out of bondage and bring them to the land of Canaan. He faithfully accomplished the first part for them.

However, Jude next reminds his audience that “afterward destroyed those who did not believe.”

The Greek more precisely reads, “in the second place destroyed those who did not believe.” Jude is giving a sequence of events. In the first act, mercy was given to the people, but that was followed with the second action of destroying them. And, as it says, it was upon “those who did not believe.” The people were faithless, and the sin cost them their lives. As the account says –

“Then the Lord said to Moses: ‘How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?’” Numbers 14:11

After that, the sentence was pronounced –

“The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. ³⁰ Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. ³¹ But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. ³² But *as for you*, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness.” Numbers 14:29-32

The people did not believe the Lord, and for their faithlessness, they were destroyed.

It should be noted that Jude will list three sins which bring about God’s judgment. This is the same as 2 Peter 2 where Peter does the same thing. They speak of the same types of things, but in the case of the three judgments Peter mentions, they were chronological in nature – the angels, then the Flood of Noah, and then Sodom and Gomorrah. Jude changes the order and lists them categorically – the wilderness generation of Israel who departed from Egypt, the angels, and then Sodom and Gomorrah. These correspond to unbelief, pride, and sexual immorality.

Understanding this categorical listing will help keep the reader from coming to improper conclusions concerning other passages in the Bible.

Life application: Out of the entire congregation of Israel 20 years old and older, only two people entered the Promised Land because of their lack of faith.

Jude reminds us that we have the word of the Lord in its fullness in the Person and work of Jesus and in the Bible which records His deeds. Therefore, to disbelieve what God has so carefully prepared for us will also lead to eventual destruction. Rather than the “Promised Land” of heaven, there will be the eternal destruction of a self-chosen hell. The consequences for lacking faith are immense.

O God, give us faith to believe the precious word You have blessed us with. Also, give us understanding in what it contains so that our doctrine will be pure and our understanding of Jesus and His workings will be correct. Thank You for all You have done for us. Please keep us forever reminded of those things. This we pray to Your glory. Amen.

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; Jude -6

Jude had just referred to those who were saved out of Egypt, but who were later destroyed through unbelief. He now moves to a second type of example, that of willful pride. He begins with, “And the angels.”

It is speaking of heavenly beings. Jude’s words here follow along with Peter’s words found in 2 Peter 2:4 –

“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.”

It is the same thought now being presented by Jude. Peter did not state precisely what sin was involved, but Jude expands upon it here, saying, “who did not keep their proper domain.” The word translated as “domain” is *arché*. It signifies beginning, as in time, but also the first as in principality or rule. Some translations will choose one option, others the other option. As this is speaking of angels, which are being in a place of authority, it is certainly speaking of the latter. Paul uses it this way in Ephesians 6 –

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.” Ephesians 6:12

These angels departed from their place of rank and authority. It is these angels which today are known as demons, and it is these unholy forces that Paul refers to. Jude next continues with, “but left their own abode.” The word he uses here speaks of a place of habitation; a house. The obvious conclusion is that in leaving their place of rule, they left their place where the rule occurs, meaning heaven.

In heaven, they were in a particular authority where angels were created to minister to man (see Hebrews 1:14). However, rather than ministering to man, the angels wanted to rule over man. This is clearly indicated in Paul’s words of Ephesians 6, but it is also found in Matthew 8, Mark 5, and Luke 8 in regard to the demoniac in the country of the Gergesenes (also known as the Gaderenes).

In these passages, it is seen that having left their heavenly abode, they came to earth, not as ministering spirits for God, but as invaders under Satan. Instead of being servants for the benefit of men, they came as tyrants over men. Of these, Jude says that “He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness.” Peter says that He “delivered *them* into chains of darkness.” The word Peter uses may signify a pit, rather than chains.

The idea is that those that have been imprisoned by God are bound in that state. There are others that are not yet bound, as noted above from both the gospels and Paul, but those that are have been so bound “for the judgment of the great day.”

In other words, there is a judgment not only for men, but for these fallen angels. Until the day of that judgment, they are securely bound by God. Someday they will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity.

What needs to be remembered here is that Jude is speaking in categories – unbelief, pride, and then sexual sin. This is important to understand, because far too many people tie what occurs in this verse with what Jude will describe in the next verse, claiming that these angels were punished for sleeping with humans and creating a human/angelic hybrid. This is a forced reading into Genesis 6. That passage has nothing to do with angels sleeping with human beings.

Angels are spirit beings, and thus they have no matter. They cannot procreate with women. However, they can dwell in humans, as noted in the gospel references above. The proper domain of this verse is not speaking of sexual interactions with men, but abandoning their proper place of principality. Unfortunately, being captivated by single translations of the Bible, which present faulty renderings of what is being conveyed, has led to very poor theology in this particular regard.

Life application: This particular verse doesn't find its overall support elsewhere in the Bible. In other words, this is not speaking of the "sons of God" referenced in Genesis 6. Rather, that verse is speaking of the line of Seth intermarrying with the line of Cain. This verse is either received from an oral tradition or it is referring to the book of Enoch, another non-canonical writing. If this is referring to Enoch, this doesn't make Enoch inspired.

We make such an error at the expense of sound doctrine. Just because a document contains truth doesn't make it wholly true. The Koran says "God is merciful," which is true, but the Koran is overall a false book. If the book of Enoch has information contained in it from a reliable source, such as this verse, then Jude used it despite the soundness of the rest of the book.

Unlike humans, angels have no chance of redemption. We are shown that these fallen angels will remain in outer darkness until their judgment. However, and unlike them, as long as there is breath in our lungs, we have the chance to repent and turn to God. May we not withhold this truth from those around us who will someday find themselves in the same horrifying station as these angels, if they don't come to God through Jesus the Lord.

Lord, as long as it is Day, give us the wisdom to use our time wisely – telling others about the glory of Jesus and the doom that will occur without accepting Him. May our hearts not become calloused and cold toward the pitiful state of the lost, but may they be broken for their condition. Use us, O Lord, to get the message out before it is too late. Amen.

...as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Jude -7

As noted, Jude has discussed two categories of sin which result in the judgment of God. The first was unbelief – Israel in the wilderness. The second was pride – the fallen angels. The third is now introduced, the sexual sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. His words begin with, “as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these.”

The account of Sodom and Gomorrah is found especially in Genesis 18 & 19. However, it is mentioned throughout the rest of Scripture, being used as an example of what is perverse and deserving of God’s judgment.

Understanding this, the word “as” is not tying the sexual sin of Sodom and Gomorrah to the same type of sin being committed by the angels (leaving their proper domain). Rather, it is referring to the punishment that will be noted in this verse, corresponding to the just judgment to be executed upon the angels (verse 6) and the destruction of those who did not believe (verse 5).

The point of what is said in these verses is to highlight the just nature of God’s judgment upon offenders. With the historical record of punishment laid out, those at Jude’s time, and indeed all of the church age, could expect nothing different if they committed such sins. The list of sins now includes sexual immorality, as Jude says, “having given themselves over to sexual immorality.”

As noted, the sins of Sodom are noted in Genesis 18 & 19. In Genesis 18, the Lord said to Abraham that “the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave.” The people had turned to complete wickedness, and the Lord determined to destroy them. Genesis 19 gives exacting details of the particular nature of the sins of the people, specifically highlighting sexual immorality. But in that category, the sin of homosexuality is especially highlighted. As Jude says, “and gone after strange flesh.”

The meaning is that there is a normal order to sexual relationships – they are to be between a man and a woman. However, Sodom and Gomorrah had twisted this, and were engaging in sex between men. It is the perverse sin described in detail by Paul in Romans 1:18-25. Elsewhere, references to the perversion of homosexuality are mentioned as well.

Jude next says of them that they “are set forth as an example.” The verb Jude uses is explained by Vincent’s Word Studies, saying, “The verb means, literally, to lie exposed. Used of meats on the table ready for the guests; of a corpse laid out for burial; of a question under discussion. Thus, the corruption and punishment of the cities of the plain are laid out in plain sight.”

What happened to Sodom and Gomorrah is set before us in the biblical narrative to instruct us. It is plainly laid out so that any who hear of what occurred will be apprised that acting in the same manner will lead to a corresponding punishment for those who are unwilling to turn away from their vile actions.

This is one of the main points of everything that is recorded in Scripture. As Paul says to Timothy –

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

The words of Scripture are intended to instruct us in righteousness and to correct us. If we are unwilling to heed what is written, then whatever occurred to those in the past is what we should expect as well. As Jude says of those in Sodom and Gomorrah, they are “suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

The word “vengeance” is not really appropriate. God is not vengeful. Rather, such sins reflect a violation of His just, righteous, and holy character. The punishment which is brought upon offenders is what they rightfully deserve based on this. Therefore, translating this as “punishment of eternal fire” is much more appropriate.

The example of Sodom and Gomorrah is intended to show us that the destruction by fire that came upon them is what will also come upon those who conduct their lives in such an unholy manner. That takes us back to the words of the earlier clause which said, “in a manner similar to these.” It was referring to the punishment Sodom and Gomorrah suffered.

We have seen in this and the previous two verses that those who fail to believe will be destroyed. Those who are prideful in life will be kept in chains of darkness, reserved for

the judgment of the great day. And those who conduct their lives in unholy sexual immorality will suffer the eternal fires of God's punishment. There is nothing arbitrary or vindictive about what God does. These actions come as a response to our violation of His glorious character. Thus, they are rightly deserved.

Life application: This is the third example of judgment presented by Jude. The first was the *disbelieving* people who came out of Egypt, the second was the *disobedient* angels who left their heavenly station (based on pride), and the third noted here concern the *debauched* and perverted souls who have given themselves over to sexual immorality. All three are common in today's church, but the last noted is especially heinous because it involves the first two sins, disbelieving and disobedience, as well as the third, debauchery. Paul says this about sexual immorality –

“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.” 1 Corinthians 6:18

Jude takes this example and stresses it in an even more poignant way. He specifically cites going “after strange flesh.” This is referring to homosexuality. That this is worthy of “the vengeance of eternal fire” is noted not only in the Law of Moses, but it predates the law, having been cited prior to the giving of the law in the account of Sodom and Gomorrah. Paul, in Romans 1, says that it is universally understood to be perverted and that we must “suppress the truth” in order to commit such an act. The term Jude uses today is *ekporneusasai*. It is a term which intensifies the concept of sexual sin because of its exceptionally perverted nature.

Churches that fragrantly flaunt homosexual behavior are facing self-condemnation right beside the other unregenerate people of the world. What God has ordained in the union of man and woman cannot be shunned because of our own perverted lusts and desires without the expectation of the most severe and eternal punishment.

Heavenly Father, who are we to shake our fists in Your face and upturn that which You have ordained and sanctified concerning intimate relations? But we as humans do, and then we refuse to repent of our actions. Lord, may we turn away from such things and back to what You have revealed concerning what is right and proper. There is that which is in accord with Your word – the loving and blessed relationship of a man and a woman

in marriage – and there is all else. May we wake up to the truth of Your word, applying its morals to our lives before You. Amen.

Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Jude -8

The words here closely parallel 2 Peter 2:10 –

“...and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.” 2 Peter 2:10

Here, referring to those mentioned in verse 4 once again, Jude says, “Likewise also.” The NKJV fails to translate the word *mentoi*, or “yet.” It should say, “Yet likewise also.” In other words, in verse 4, he spoke of the people he is referring to now. Then, in verses 5-7, he gave examples of what people like them deserve because of their unbelief, pride, and/or sexual immorality. However, they ignore this. Therefore, he says, “Yet likewise also...”

Yet – despite what God has previously revealed in judgment.
Likewise – they emulate the corrupt people Scripture warns about
Also – they conduct themselves just like them

Understanding this, he then says, “these dreamers defile the flesh.” This is what he referred to in verse 7 where it noted those in Sodom and Gomorrah had “given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh.” Despite what God has previously revealed in judgment, they emulate the corrupt people Scripture warns about, and they conduct themselves just like them.

Jude next says they “reject authority.” This is what was referred to in verse 6 where the angels “did not keep their proper domain but left their own abode.” Thus, despite what God has previously revealed in judgment, they emulate the corrupt people Scripture warns about, and they conduct themselves just like them.

Finally, Jude finishes the verse with the note that they “speak evil of dignitaries.” This is what was referred to in verse 5 where the Lord “destroyed those who did not believe.”

The Greek word Jude uses, *doxas*, refers to any glory which is revealed, especially the divine quality. This is what the people had done. In Numbers 14 this is only a portion of the evil they spoke against the Moses, against Aaron, and against the Lord –

“And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, ‘If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! ³ Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?’” Numbers 14:2, 3

Thus, despite what God has previously revealed in judgment, they emulate the corrupt people Scripture warns about, and they conduct themselves just like them. The rebellion against Moses and Aaron is akin to the rebellion of the angels leaving their position in heaven.

In this, Jude has formed a chiasmic structure in order to reveal what he is speaking of concerning those who “have crept in unnoticed” that he spoke of in verse 4. To understand this, the following chiasm is laid out for you here –

Jude 1:5 – 1:8 – Likewise Also These Dreamers
The Just Punishment of the Unrighteous (7/14/2020)

- a). the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe (v. 5)
 - b). And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode (v. 6)
 - c). given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh (v.7)
 - x). Likewise also these dreamers (v. 8)
 - c). defile the flesh (v. 8a)
 - b). reject authority (v. 8b)
 - a). speak evil of dignitaries (v. 8c)

Jude’s words show the train of thought concerning what is going on. Interestingly, it dispels the myth that Jude is tying the angels of verse 6 in with sexual immorality in verse 7 in order to justify angels sleeping with humans in Genesis 6. That is an aberrant

ideology not supported anywhere in Scripture, and certainly not from the book of Jude. Rather, the idea of “strange flesh” cannot be equated to angels – which are spirit beings – but rather it speaks only of leaving the natural use between men and women and engaging in either homosexuality or maybe even other strange flesh like bestiality.

Life application: In review of Jude’s words, and how they still apply today, the people he speaks about –

Defile the flesh. The people in the church at Jude’s time, and which are in the church today, act in the same manner. There are perverts who sexually abuse of what God has created. They are defiled and impure.

They reject authority. There are some who cast off those who are trained in proper theology. They dismiss the moral code written upon every heart. And, they reject the word of God as authoritative. Instead, they cling to their own fantasies and the teachings of depraved individuals.

They speak evil of dignitaries. Such people reject not only the positions (authority) but they reject those who fill the positions. But Paul says in 1 Timothy 5:17, “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.” However, in rejecting the word of the Lord, they reject what is contained in the word. They also reject the Lord who gave the word.

Jude warns against these things because the senseless dreamers of religion are prone to each of the aberrant attitudes he mentions. We must be on guard against them, lest we be caught in the same net.

Lord God, Your word doesn’t hold back in its accusation of the immoral and godless – both within the church, and in the world at large. Thus, we shouldn’t either. Rather, give us boldness to stand against the perversion and ungodliness of the world around us and to stand fast in that which is holy, pure, and righteous. Amen.

Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” Jude -9

This verse begins a difficulty with the book of Jude that has called it into question over the years. This is because Jude cites some things that are not recorded in the recognized canon of Scripture. Because of this, they have labeled Jude as spurious. Others have taken what is said here and then turned their conclusions in the opposite direction. By assuming that Jude is inspired, they then take the books where the citations are made and claim they are also inspired. Both of these approaches are unsound. To understand the problem, a short note from Vincent's Words Studies will explain –

“Here we strike a peculiarity of this epistle which caused its authority to be impugned in very early times, viz., the apparent citations of apocryphal writings. The passages are Jde 1:9, Jde 1:14, Jde 1:15. This reference to Michael was said by Origen to be founded on a Jewish work called “The Assumption of Moses,” the first part of which was lately found in an old Latin translation at Milan; and this is the view of Davidson, so far at least as the words “the Lord rebuke thee” are concerned. Others refer it to Zechariah 3:1; but there is nothing there about Moses’ body, or Michael, or a dispute about the body. Others, again, to a rabbinical comment on Deuteronomy 34:6, where Michael is said to have been made guardian of Moses’ grave. Doubtless Jude was referring to some accepted story or tradition, probably based on Deuteronomy 34:6. For a similar reference to tradition compare 2 Timothy 3:8; Acts 7:22.”

For a more detailed analysis of this issue, the commentary by Albert Barnes will give great insights and proposed resolutions to the issue, or refutations of those scholars whose analyses are flawed concerning this.

Vincent's (above) touches on why these problems are not that great. First, to deny that Jude is inspired because it cites none canonical sources is a giant error in thinking. The Bible is filled with such references. Vincent's notes two, but they are found throughout the Old and New Testaments. Books are referenced in the Old Testament that do not exist today, such as the Book of the Wars of the Lord (see Numbers 21:14) and the Book of Jasher (see Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18). (Note: the “Book of Jasher” which is in publication today is a forgery.)

In the New Testament, Vincent's noted 2 Timothy 3:8 and Acts 7:22. But Paul also cites non-Jewish literature including the writings of Greek poets, proclaiming they are true statements (for example, see Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12). Therefore, the thinking that Jude cannot be inspired based on this is flawed.

Secondly, to claim that the cited sources of Jude's words are inspired because they are in his letter is equally flawed thinking. Here, Jude cites The Assumption of Moses. He will also cite the Book of Enoch. Both are pseudepigraphal writings (false writings), but because he cites them, many hold to the Book of Enoch as authoritative. It is not, nor was it ever considered to be such. The Book of Jasher (cited above) and the Greek Poets (cited above) were never considered as inspired, but they were cited. To hold to the inspiration of the Book of Enoch simply because it is cited by Jude is bad theology and it is harmful.

Understanding this, Jude is writing under inspiration. Because he is, what he cites is inspired, even if the source is not (as with the references above). And so, he begins with, "Yet Michael the archangel." For a quick understanding of the words, we turn again to Vincent's Word Studies –

"Angels are described in scripture as forming a society with different orders and dignities. This conception is developed in the books written during and after the exile, especially Daniel and Zechariah. Michael (Who is like God?) is one of the seven archangels, and was regarded as the special protector of the Hebrew nation. He is mentioned three times in the Old Testament (Daniel 10:13, Daniel 10:21; Daniel 12:1), and twice in the New Testament (Jude 1:9; Revelation 12:7). He is adored as a saint in the Romish Church."

Michael, designated here as "the archangel," continues to be referred to by Jude, saying, "in contending with the devil." Satan is a fallen angel and what he does is to harm man and attempts to thwart both the overall plan of redemption, and to either thwart the salvation of humans or to destroy their effectiveness as the people of God. In Jude's words, we see there is a judicial contest between Michael and Satan. Specifically, it is "when he disputed about the body of Moses."

Deuteronomy 34 details the death and burial of Moses –

"So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. ⁶ And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day."

-Deuteronomy 34:5, 6

What appears to be the case is that though no man knew where the Lord buried him, both Michael and Satan were aware of it. With this being the case, Satan had an objective in desiring to have control over the body of Moses. Why would this be so? The answer is found in the words of Deuteronomy – “but no one knows his grave to this day.”

It is obvious that the Lord did not want the burial place of Moses revealed. If so, one must ask, “Why?” The obvious answer is that it would hinder the plan of redemption. To know the location, or to have control of the body of Moses, would lead to improper idolatry of the body or the spot (just as Roman Catholics do to the bodies, or body parts, or graves of their “saints”).

Further, the premise of Moses dying and being buried outside of the Promised Land is that the law has no part in the inheritance of righteousness by faith (see Galatians 2:21, 3:18, etc. for example). But if Satan could either gain control of the body of Moses (before it returned to dust), or if he could identify the location of the grave, he could then affect the typological picture made of the law remaining outside of the inheritance (symbolized by Moses remaining outside of the promise).

And this, at least in spirit, is what Jews, Judaizers, and Hebrew Root Movement people have done all along. They have attempted to take Moses’ body (in their warped theology) as a means of obtaining the inheritance. The main theme of Jude’s epistle is “contending for the faith.” But the law is not of faith. Therefore, Satan is disputing over Moses’ body in an attempt to thwart those who are “contending for the faith.”

Having control over the body (be it his body, or his grave) is a far more serious matter than it may seem on the surface. In the Bible, typology is of extreme importance because it is given to then reveal what Christ would accomplish. If the typology was disrupted, the understanding of Christ would be marred. The point of Jude’s words, however, continues on another line, saying that Michael “dared not bring against him a reviling accusation.”

The reason for saying this is found in the previous verse where Jude wrote about the dreamers who “speak evil of dignitaries.” In this, Jude is showing that if even a fallen angel is not reviled against by one of God’s archangels, how much more severe is the

offense when people speak evil against the dignitaries of both God's heavenly and earthly stations. It is a warning that our tongues should be kept in check in such regard.

However, Jude shows how and where a proper rebuke is to be made with the final words of the verse. Michael brought no reviling accusation, "but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'" This is what occurs in Zechariah 3 as well –

"Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. ² And the Lord said to Satan, 'The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?'" Zechariah 3:1, 2

The lesson is that when certain rebukes need to be made, we are to elevate them to the Lord. If the Lord chooses to rebuke, He will do so (as noted above in Zechariah 3). If we are wrong in our disagreement, then He will withhold His rebuke. Jude's intent was that in Michael rebuking Satan, he would be assuming an authority which rightly belonged to the Lord. Michael understood this, and he spoke accordingly.

Life application: As noted, the account in this verse is not a part of the Old Testament. Rather, it is from the pseudepigraphal book The Assumption of Moses. However, Jude shows us that the account is true, and it was probably an oral tradition which was used by the writer of The Assumption of Moses.

The name Michael means "Who is Like God?" It is important to relate here that Michael is the archangel, not Jesus. There are several cults – such as the Jehovah's Witnesses – that claim Jesus and Michael are one and the same. Only a poor analysis of the Bible could come to such a conclusion. Michael has the roles of defending Israel and opposing Satan elsewhere in the Bible.

As we saw, Michael says, "The Lord rebuke you," elevating the rebuke to the Lord. However, in Zechariah, the Lord says, "The Lord rebuke you," to Satan. He is the Lord, and He makes the proclamation. Therefore, it is clear that Michael is not the Lord.

In that case, the LORD (Jehovah) Himself is rebuking Satan as is proper. In our rebukes of others, we should likewise take care in how we do so, considering God's authority and the hierarchies He has established.

Lord God, give us wisdom as to when we should rebuke another and when it is improper. Also, give us wisdom as we strive to maintain proper doctrine, especially when we should warn against those who lack it and abuse Your word. May we carefully handle Your word, and may we be used as instruments of conveying it and the truths it contains. Amen.

But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. Jude -10

The word “but” connects the reader back to the preceding verses that refer to speaking evil of dignitaries and when the Archangel Michael would not bring a reviling accusation against Satan but rather said, “the Lord rebuke you.” With that in mind, Jude says, “But these speak evil of whatever they do not know.” “These” refers to those “dreamers” of verse 8 who “defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.”

Of them, Jude notes that in their evil speaking, they do so in what they do not know. What they speak of is completely beyond their ability to grasp. This is contrasted to Michael who knew very well that Satan was a fallen angel, that he was guilty before God, and that he had no right to Moses’ body. And yet, with all of that known information, he still withheld any reviling accusation. He is setting an absolute contrast between the two. From there, he continues his thoughts about these vile people by saying, “and whatever they know naturally.”

The translation, following the KJV, is a bit unfortunate. Two different words are translated as “know.” The first speaks of mental comprehension or knowledge. The second of knowledge by prolonged acquaintance. One observes and then understands. Thus, their understanding is based on their own limited observance and instinct. Hence, what they know naturally is “like brute beasts.”

The word *phusikós*, translated as “naturally,” is found only here. It signifies “by instinct.” In other words, there is no clarity of thought, no reasoning of the mind, no elevating of the person to live beyond the most basic of animal instincts.

It is interesting how different translators describe them – brute beasts, irrational animals, unthinking animals, unreasoning animals, senseless animals, wild animals, creatures without reason, dumb animals, creatures of instinct, dumb beasts, irrational

beasts, and so on. Each is an excellent way to biblically define such people. They have the minds of mere animals – unreasoning, sensuous, unclear in thought, and directed to only that which is base and shallow. Jude then finishes with, “in these things they corrupt themselves.”

The idea of these words is that the longer they go without clearly thinking things through, the more debauched they become. Eventually, there is only the instincts of perversion, senseless waste, blind obedience (if a follower of such people), and so on. In the end, there is only a corrupted person not fit for life in a properly functioning society.

It is the state of the people of Jerusalem as described by the prophet Zephaniah –

Woe to her who is rebellious and polluted,
To the oppressing city!

²She has not obeyed *His* voice,
She has not received correction;
She has not trusted in the Lord,
She has not drawn near to her God.

³Her princes in her midst *are* roaring lions;
Her judges *are* evening wolves
That leave not a bone till morning.

⁴Her prophets are insolent, treacherous people;
Her priests have polluted the sanctuary,
They have done violence to the law.

⁵The Lord *is* righteous in her midst,
He will do no unrighteousness.
Every morning He brings His justice to light;
He never fails,
But the unjust knows no shame.

⁶“I have cut off nations,
Their fortresses are devastated;
I have made their streets desolate,
With none passing by.
Their cities are destroyed;
There is no one, no inhabitant.

⁷I said, ‘Surely you will fear Me,

You will receive instruction'—
So that her dwelling would not be cut off,
Despite everything for which I punished her.
But they rose early and corrupted all their deeds. Zephaniah 3:1-7

The roaring lions and the evening wolves of the city, unclear in their thinking and brutal in their actions, led the people astray. The prophets and the priests were treacherous and defiled. In the end, all of the people became corrupted, without shame, and failed to honor the God who established them as a people.

Life application: The people described by Jude are the type that diminish the absolute reliability of God's word, even when they have no idea of the depth and intricacy of the riches it contains. They may be intelligent by the world's standards, but they have no concept of the true knowledge which comes from God.

Many modern churches are full of such people. They promote tolerance, inclusion, and perversion. At the same time, they diminish morality, godliness, and holiness. The things they rely on for their doctrine come from the flesh and from humanistic viewpoints. They are like "brute beasts."

This wouldn't be so sad if it only referred to those coming off the streets, but by infiltrating the churches and moving into the hierarchy, such people take along precious souls in their corruption. By doing so, they remove the very chance for salvation that these people originally came looking for. Jesus spoke of this type –

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in *yourselves*, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in." Matthew 23:13

Lord God, how sad it is to think that so much wickedness pervades Your church in this day and age. There is a rejection of your word. In place of it, there is a tolerance for that which is unholy and grotesque. Open the eyes of those who come looking for You that they may see the disgusting and twisted attitude of such people. Help us to keep our eyes on Jesus, our hearts tender toward what is proper, and our lives pure and spotless as we live in Your presence. Amen.

Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. Jude -11

Jude continues to speak about the “dreamers” of verse 8. In order to explain what they are like, he will reach back to some concrete examples from the Old Testament Scriptures. First, he begins with, “Woe to them.” The word “woe” is a primary expression of grief which is used many times by Jesus in the three synoptic gospels. It is used once by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:16. However, it is in the noun form there when he says, “Woe is me.” It is used by Jude this one time, and then it is found 14 times in Revelation. Jude is using it as it is normally used, which is as an imprecation.

From there, he says, “For they have gone in the way of Cain.” Cain, the first person ever recorded as being born to humanity, killed his younger brother because God accepted the offering made by Abel but not his. Why? Hebrews 11:4 tells us it is because Abel’s offering came through faith, something Cain’s lacked. But, Hebrews 11:6 then says that without faith, it is impossible to please God.

These people are like Cain. They are faithless, treacherous people. The obvious thought about them is that they would be willing to kill their own sibling in order to gratify themselves. Anyone lacking faith in God will also lack a fear of God. In this, anything goes – even to the slaying of another.

Next, Jude says they “have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit.” The word Jude uses literally means “to pour out.” The Douay-Rheims Bible follows this literal translation, saying, “and after the error of Balaam they have for reward poured out themselves.” It is as if they have spent all their energy, riotously running ahead in order to make a profit. There is no restraint in their conduct, but they rather shamefully press forward for the sake of earthly treasures and earthly pleasures.

Balaam was hired to curse Israel as they prepared to enter the Promised Land. His attempts failed and he was left without a reward by the king who hired him. In an attempt to regain his lost wages, he offered a plan to bring Israel to ruin through sexual immorality and idolatry. Those Jude refers to now are no different. The sphere in which they live is one defiled by the lust of greed, and they will seek new ways in order to fill their desires.

Jude then finishes the thought with, “and perished in the rebellion of Korah.” Here, the word translated as “rebellion” signifies a contradiction, dispute, contention, and so on. During the wildness wanderings of Israel, Korah attempted to usurp the duly established authority of Moses and the High Priest Aaron.

The obvious idea Jude is conveying is that there are scriptural rules of authority that have been established. Christ is the Head, His word has been given through chosen apostles and men of God, and the church is to be obedient to what has been put forth within those parameters as laid out in Scripture. And yet, these people have set out to usurp that line of authority.

As Christ is risen and in heaven, and as all of the authors of the Bible have died, the only remaining authority we have at this time is the word of God, the Bible. But this sacred word is resisted with contradiction and dispute. The authority of the word of God is diminished in order to elevate their own supposed authority. In this dismissal of the word of God, they will perish.

Life application: Concerning the morally twisted people Jude has been discussing – Woe to them! They are self-condemned and doomed. In his words, Jude has cited three Old Testament accounts to express the types of people he is dealing with.

Taken together, we see a trilogy of wickedness – Cain demonstrates unrighteousness; Balaam represents a covetous and deceitful spirit; and Korah reflects a rejection of duly established lines of authority. Individually, or in any combination, these examples demonstrate those in the church who really don’t belong there. Why? Because all three of these examples ultimately lack the necessary faith of the believer. From faith to faith, we are established in Jesus Christ. So, when faith is lacking, a spirit of wickedness and deceit will naturally follow. Hold fast to your faith, which is more precious than gold which perishes.

Heavenly Father, we have all seen people in churches and in our daily lives who lack faith in You, who run greedily after profit, and who resist authority at every turn. For those who have wormed their way into churches, we would ask that You would highlight their deeds so that they may be exposed for who they truly are. Remove them from the lives of Your faithful so that we may be established, kept safe, and become strong in our doctrine. Amen.

These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; Jude -12

Jude now turns from biblical examples of comparison about the perverted people he has been discussing, and he now makes comparisons to them from nature. In this verse, he will use three of them – spots, clouds without water, and late autumn trees without fruit. And so, he begins by saying, “They are spots in your love feasts.”

This is actually an unfortunate rendering which follows the error of the KJV. In a comparable passage found in 2 Peter 2:13, it says, “They are blots and blemishes.” There, he uses the Greek word *spiloi*. One can think of spilling something on clothes. That is an entirely different word than is used here. Rather, the Greek word *spilades* is used. It means “reefs” or “sunken rocks.”

What Jude is saying is that these people are like underwater obstructions that tear easily through a moving ship, causing it to be rent and destroyed. The symbolism is clear – a congregation which isn’t on guard against these types is doomed to share in their same fate.

As Jude ties them in with the “love feasts,” he is certainly saying that their conduct, during the time of fellowship and communion directed by the Lord (see Luke 22:14-22 and 1 Corinthians 11:17-26) will turn into an unholy gathering. They sneak into the congregation and turn this sacred time into a time of drinking and other perversion. This was evident at the time of Jude, and it is now found in countless major denominations and local churches today.

Jude then says this is all done “while they feast with you without fear.” They enter into the love feasts, they treat the entire occasion without any fear of God, and they introduce unholiness and ungodly practices into the rites of the church. There is no shame in their conduct, no care about what is passed down in Scripture, and no fear of the God who deemed it necessary to send Christ to die for sin, indicating that He is truly angry at sin.

Jude next says, “serving *only* themselves.” The word translated as “serving” signifies “shepherding.” In other words, there is no care for the flock, but rather they feed

themselves, provide drink for themselves, and they ignore the others as they enter into debauchery and illicit conduct. They do not have the shepherding heart of the Lord, and they have no heart for the Lord as well.

Jude then says, “They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds.” In the arid regions of the world, or in any place that has sustained a long drought, this is easily understood. Long times of rainless skies cause the land to crack and moan for water and shade. Along come the highest wispy cirrus clouds which tempt the poor souls below with the prospect of shade and maybe even rain. But they provide neither. Instead, like these clouds, these unholy people look as if they will provide spiritual increase, but instead they are useless mirages, blown easily by the wind. They change their doctrine to suit their unstable souls, they have no substance, and they deprive those they instruct of any true spiritual invigoration.

Jude then calls them “late autumn trees without fruit.” Late autumn is when the trees are expected to bear fruit and yet they have none. Instead, they are barren of anything nourishing. Just as one tree will look like another, these people come in and appear to be bearers of fruit. But eventually, when it is too late for those who listen to them to find another source, it is discovered that nothing of value has been produced by them.

In this state, Jude then adds on another descriptor. When inspected more closely, it is determined that they are “twice dead” because their roots are already decayed. Any leaves were simply left over as the tree itself died away. After the autumn harvest, it is expected that the trees will lose their leaves and appear dead until spring comes again. But these people had no life in them all along. They aren’t just appearing “dead” after a fruitful harvest, they are already dead, and thus the final state of such a tree is to be “pulled up by the roots.”

It is a rejected plant that will burn in the fire because even its wood has suffered the decay of rot. Such will be the case with the refuse of sexually immoral, unrepentant souls who never believed the truth in Christ. They invade and corrupt the church of the Living God. Hell is their final destination.

Life application: In today’s world, saying words such as Jude has used would be considered “offensive.” Calling out sin results in the one who does so being called a bigot, a homophobe, or some other term intended to shut him up. But Jude sets the

example here. He is direct and explicit in his condemnation of such people. As this is what the Bible conveys, it is what we are to also convey when faced with such people.

If a teacher is teaching immorality, heresy, or that which diminishes the reliability of the word of God, he is to be called out – even by name if necessary. This is not simply a matter of holding fast to the integrity of the church and the word for the sake of harmonious conduct. It is a matter of saving souls from the grasp of wolves. The people in such a congregation, if not alerted to the false nature of what is being presented to them, may never come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. It is the duty and responsibility of those who see such conduct to call it out when the circumstances permit.

May we never be timid in our words when it comes to such things. Pray in advance for the internal strength to speak out, for wisdom in what to say, and then open your mouth and speak when the time is right.

O God, Your word presents a clear and unambiguous reminder that You will not tolerate sexual immorality in Your church. Those who sneak in and proclaim that they are free from the moral underpinnings of Your character are deceivers. Please alert us to such people who creep into the fellowship and attempt to infect the congregation with their immorality. May they be kept away from where we attend so that we can live holy and pure lives to You. Amen.

...raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. Jude -13

Jude continues the metaphors he began in the previous verse to describe the “dreamers” of verse 8. So far, he has not been very friendly in his descriptions of such people. We will see if he lightens up on them a bit in this verse. He continues his words beginning with, “raging waves of the sea.”

Some versions translate this, “wild waves of the sea.” In this, it describes the class of the wave rather than its action. There are waves that can be immense and terrifying, but they are normal waves. These, however, are waves which are “foaming up their own shame.” In other words, the waves are out of character, like a tsunami. They bring to the surface many useless and dangerous items such as seaweed, logs, rocks, and other

rubbish. They then cast them on the shore. The false teachers and lewd living people in the church are like this. They spew forth vulgarities and their lives produce nothing but that which is both dangerous and unsightly.

The idea of “foaming up their own shame” is that what they speak is shameful, but there is no care. Further, the word “shame” is plural. It isn’t an isolated thing they say that identifies them. Rather, they spew forth their shames in a constant stream of unholiness. The word Jude uses, which is translated as “foaming,” is found only here. It signifies to foam out at the mouth. Thus, the things they say are vulgar, unholy, and contrary to the excellence of speech which is expected of Christians.

When shame is no longer shameful, there is no remedy for that person. When a church is led by such vile people, eventually shame will be lost by the congregation altogether. And once that occurs, there is no longer a remedy for them as well. Unless sin can be identified as sin, and thus seen to be shameful, there is no restraint. Such people then foam up their shame for all to see. Jude was probably thinking of Isaiah 57:20 when he wrote this –

“But the wicked are like the troubled sea,
When it cannot rest,
Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.”

Jude then says they are “wandering stars.” The word translated as “wandering” is *planétés*, and it is found only here. It signifies a wanderer, but it is akin to the word “planet,” because planets wander through the stars in a fashion different to the eye than the otherwise “fixed” stars. Jude just used a nautical term, and he is probably continuing with that thought now while referring to comets.

When comets are seen, they are of no value at all to the navigators of a vessel. Attempting to follow their paths is useless and they cannot be depended on to safely guide anyone. The same is true with those he is describing. The words they speak, the actions they employ, and the direction they take are useless to guide anyone to a safe haven. Of them, Jude finishes with, “for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.” The Greek says, “the darkness.” He is referring back to the darkness he mentioned in verse 1:6.

The words are similar to 2 Peter 2:17, where he says, “for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.” The Greek word translated as “blackness” gives a sense of gloom. It is a murkiness which hangs as a pall for those who are caught in it.

It speaks of a darkness which was considered an understood condition of the regions of hell. There is no light, and the gloom of the place will leave the soul yearning for any hint of relief, but it will never come. Jesus spoke of this darkness three separate times in Matthew, such as in Matthew 8:12 –

“But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The darkness, then, is a place of separation. As God is the source of light, and the light is called good – even at the very beginning of the Bible – one can see that it is a place where no good exists. The source of all that is good, of light, and of that which provides joy and abundance will be lacking. Such is the place where these false teachers have a forever-home reserved. And, sadly, those who follow after them will be there as well.

Life application: Jude didn’t lighten up from his previous attack upon these people. There is no room for tolerance for the wicked. This is especially so when the wicked infiltrate churches. All must be on constant guard for such people. They must be spoken against, and the words we use are to be firm, accurate, and convicting.

Jesus had no tolerance for such people, the apostles had no tolerance for such people, and we are to have no tolerance for such people. Stand fast and hold to the word. When the word is spoken against, we are to call out those who do so, quickly and unambiguously.

Glorious heavenly Father, you know that we all have walked in darkness and in untruth in our lives. But because of Your great love and tender mercies, you have led us into new lives that can glorify You. Thank You, Lord. And, help us to be proper examples to others who have yet to turn to You. May Your praise cover the earth like the waters cover the seas. Amen.

Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, Jude -14

Jude now introduces a second apocryphal account into his letter, the first being that concerning Michael the archangel. He begins this next one with, “Now Enoch.”

Little is recorded in Scripture about Enoch. In fact, the Old Testament references to him total six nondescript verses and one which is somewhat vague. In the New Testament, apart from this verse from Jude, he is mentioned in Hebrews 11 – “By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, *‘and was not found, because God had taken him’*; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

Knowing this, we can determine that the reference in Jude’s words is a non-biblical one. Instead, it is similar to references in the Book of Enoch – a non-canonical book. From that book, we read –

“Behold he comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon them, and to destroy the wicked, and to strive (at law) with all the carnal for everything which the sinful and ungodly have done and committed against him.”

Jude next says, “the seventh from Adam.” That is easily determined from Genesis 5:1-18 where the narrative records the generations of Adam. In those verses, it lists them in the following order: Adam, Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch. Thus, Enoch is the seventh from Adam.

Of this person, Jude says he “prophesied about these men also.” Jude notes that Enoch “prophesied.” As noted in the introductory comments to Jude, just because Jude cites the book of Enoch, it does not mean it is inspired. Others (such as Paul citing Greek philosophers) cite non-canonical references, and that does not mean they were inspired either.

With this understanding, the words, “these men,” are still referring to the dreamers noted in verse 8. Jude says that the prophecy about these men is true. Thus, it will certainly come to pass. Jude next conveys the words of prophecy “saying, ‘Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints.’”

Here the Greek reads, “Behold, the Lord has come in His holy myriads.” It is similar in thought to Deuteronomy 33:2 –

“The Lord came from Sinai,
And dawned on them from Seir;
He shone forth from Mount Paran,
And He came with ten thousands of saints.”

Again, it is also similar to Zechariah 14:5 –

“Thus the Lord my God will come,
And all the saints with You.”

Taking this verse in proper context, it reveals that it will occur at the Second Coming of Jesus.

The Greek term *murias*, or “myriads,” once denoted a group of 10,000 soldiers, but it can also be an indefinitely large number. Whatever the exact number, it will be whopping. The “saints” are most probably those who departed at the rapture and are returning with Christ at the end of the tribulation period, although angels could be included too. However, this seems unlikely because the Bible is about the redemption of man, not angels, and the Son of Man is returning with those He has purchased with His blood.

Life application: Only two people are recorded in all of human history who didn’t die but were instead taken directly to heaven. The first is Enoch, the seventh man from Adam. The other is Elijah the great prophet of Israel.

Although the Bible doesn’t specifically say this, it is a good analysis that these are the two who serve the Lord as is recorded in Zechariah 4 – “These *are* the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.” They would therefore be the two witnesses of Revelation 11. Several key verses clue the reader into this fact.

However, the fact that they were taken directly to heaven without dying means that there is a precedent for such an event already recorded in Scripture. As it is so, there is no reason to then dismiss the “rapture” verses laid out by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. In fact, to do so is a rather poor way of interpreting what is said there. The words are clear, precise, and really don’t leave any other option available to the reader.

In the end, those saved believers who deny the rapture will not be left behind, but they will be a bit more surprised at the event than those who long for the coming of the Lord. We will be taken out, we will be spared from the wrath to come, and we will be returning with the Lord to execute judgment on an unrepentant world. It will be an awesome experience for those who have called on Jesus!

What a glorious day it will be, Lord Jesus, when you come for us at the rapture and again when we return with You at the second coming. Surely You have done great things for Your people. Great things indeed! How awesome and splendid You are! Amen.

...to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” Jude -15

Jude places a heavy stress on the idea of ungodliness here. In doing so, he makes a play on words using the adjective form twice and both the noun and the verb form once. The final time, he places the words “ungodly sinners” at the end of the verse, thus emphasizing them. A literal reading to see the structure of the sentence would be –

“...to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all the works of ungodliness of them which they have done in an ungodly way and concerning the harsh (things) that have spoken against him sinners ungodly.”

The context of Jude’s words is that of the coming of the Lord with His saints (from the previous verse). This coming will be “to execute judgment on all.” The world by the time of the coming of the Lord will be an utter ruin, both morally and literally. The rapture will have taken place, the peace deal with Israel will have been signed and broken, and Israel will finally call out to the Lord Jesus – “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”

At that time, the Lord will return to rescue them, and he will come to execute judgment. In doing so, it will be “to convict all who are ungodly.” By this time, very few believers will be left who were not executed for their faith in Christ – meaning those who received Jesus after the rapture. Those who do not receive Christ will have a bloodthirst for those who do. It is these people who will be convicted “of all their ungodly deeds.”

The Lord will judge all nations and all people. Those who received the mark of the beast will be destroyed for their allegiance to the antichrist and to the world system which was set up against God. Everything people will do during that period will be deeds “which they have committed in an ungodly way.” There will be no true religion in them, no spark of caring about Christ or what He did. Instead, everything they do will be aligned against what the Bible proclaims as right, just, and moral.

Even their words will be abusive of Him. As Jude says to finish the thought, “and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” As noted above, the words “ungodly sinners” complete the thought. Jude stresses this. They not only act in ungodly ways, but they spend their time railing against God in every word they speak. So defiant will be their hearts that there will be no room for even the slightest fear of God. There will be no reverence and no thankfulness directed toward Him. In this, the only anticipation for them is to be cast away from His presence for all eternity.

Life application: Far too often in Christianity, Christ’s followers commit their entire theology to the Sermon on the Mount and the other passages which speak of Jesus’ love and tenderness. Modern churches often stay away from anything controversial or judgmental, even in the gospels, and they hardly bring in Paul or the other apostles at all.

The book of Jude is almost never mentioned and when Revelation is taught, it focuses not on the point of the book – God’s wrath on an unrepentant world. Rather, they focus on spiritual applications which diminish the fierceness of God’s hatred of sin. However, God’s anger at sin will be directed to a world that has all but disregarded His offer of peace. This will come to an amazing culmination when Jesus Himself will come back and execute judgment on the entire world.

This won’t be a demonstration of the loving, tender Jesus of the first advent, but of the conquering King who is returning to destroy the nations of the world who come against Israel and who work iniquity. It is sad that so many people refuse to take the whole counsel of God into their theology. All this does is lead to a watered-down gospel of weakness, hopes of earthly prosperity, and a nod to licentious living and ungodliness.

The first point of the gospel is that Christ died for our sins. If He had to do this, then it means that God truly is angry at our sins. We cannot escape the wrath of God without

the covering of Christ's perfect atonement. Be sure that when you convey the gospel message to others that you don't water down the gospel. Sin must be dealt with. It will either be in Christ's cross, or in an eternal swim in the Lake of Fire.

Heavenly Father, please open the eyes of those who follow a weak and ineffective gospel that tolerates sin and rebellion against You. Judgment is coming, and all people need to be aware of sin's consequences before they too are lost in Your great Day of Judgment. Turn those hearts now to the message concerning the offering of peace that came through Jesus' glorious cross. Amen.

These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. Jude -16

Jude continues to refer to the "dreamers" of verse 8. So far, he has heaped verse after verse of negative comments upon them. He continues with that now, beginning with, "These are grumblers." It is a word found only here in the Bible, *goggustés*, or "murmurers." It comes from *goggýzō*, or grumble, which is found elsewhere in the New Testament. It is an onomatopoeic expression derived from the sound of doves cooing. In other words, these people drone on in low and constant grumbles, just as a flock of doves seems to do.

Jude next calls them, "complainers." It is another word found only here, *mempsimoiros*. It comes from a word meaning "a portioned amount," and thus it signifies those who moan about their allotted portion. Instead of striving to better and improve themselves, they grumble, moan, and complain. They blame God for their station instead of being grateful for the lives they have been given. When they are sick, they complain that they are not healthy. But when they are healthy, they complain that they have to go to work. When they don't have, they complain about those that do. But when they have, they complain because it is not enough. They are never satisfied, but they rather drone on about their state. They are whiners.

Next, Jude says of these, they are "walking according to their own lusts." The people Jude describes reject the holiness and sanctity found in Scripture that asks us to forsake immorality and to conduct our lives in a manner worthy of the honor of being followers of Christ. Instead, they follow after their own unholy appetites, bringing their vile

behavior into the church and promoting every other form of wickedness that is introduced. The only thing that cannot be tolerated is holiness and morality.

Jude continues with, “and they mouth great swelling *words*.” The word translated as “great swelling” is only found elsewhere in 2 Peter 2:18. It speaks of the oratory skills of these people being exceptional. They may have flawless presentation in their words. And their delivery may be without a stutter or a slur. However, the words they speak, despite being so perfectly stated and placed, are intended for “flattering people to gain advantage.”

Here, the word “flattering” comes from a word signifying “to marvel” or “to astonish.” The word translated as “people” literally means “faces.” It speaks of a person’s countenance. One can see that Jude is speaking of a person who speaks so boastfully of others that he could flatter them into submission, gaining advantage over them. This would obviously be geared toward each individual and how he could be manipulated for full advantage.

To the rich, the words would be to gain favor from his wealth. To the politician, it would be to gain favor from his position. To the electrician, it would be to gain favor from his skill. The idea of gaining for self, by the flattering of others, is the intent of Jude’s words here.

Life application: As we go through a short recap of these three categories, think on those you may have encountered who are like them. This will help you to be on guard against such types as you meet them in your daily walk –

They are grumblers. This is reflected in the same way as those who grumbled in the wilderness wanderings. They mummer below their breath and are overly dissatisfied with every good thing God has given them. They walk in continual ungratefulness.

They are complainers. They find fault in everyone and everything around them. These are the whiners of the world who want everything their way and wouldn’t be happy with the biggest banana in the bunch because it was the one without the label on it...selfish to a T.

They walk according to their own lusts. The Bible prohibits sexual immorality, it prohibits licentiousness, and it prohibits greed – among other things. But these people are full of any or all of these prohibitions, and they act out their desires without a care for God’s sure hand of judgment. They are self-condemned.

They mouth great swelling words. They are bombastic and pompous in the words which proceed from their mouths, but their words are empty and contain no redeeming value. What they say is meant to flatter others in order to gain control and advantage over their hearers – “Look at me, fawn over me, hand your money...to me.”

Unfortunately, you can find these types of people all over churches today, and you can find them almost anytime you turn on Christian TV as well. Be careful who you trust, and always evaluate people based on the Bible, not on their showy presentation.

Lord, there are so many in Your church who are only there to take advantage of others. Sometimes we may have been lured in by their smoothness, but then we found out later that they were seeking glory only for themselves. Such is the ability of some people to deceive. And so, Lord, we ask You to please keep us from being seduced by such corrupt people as we pursue You with all of our hearts. Amen.

But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: Jude -17

Of verses 17 and 18, Albert Barnes notes –

“There is a striking similarity between these two verses and 2 Peter 3:1-3. It occurs in the same connection, following the description of the false and dangerous teachers against whom the apostle would guard them, and couched almost in the same words.”

The parallels between 2 Peter and Jude show that one was relying on the work of the other, and it helps explain Jude’s words of verse 3. There, he had originally intended to write about the common salvation, but decided instead to write to contend for the faith. Both apostles found it necessary to do so, and one probably used the letter of the other as a template to build upon.

For now, Jude says, “But you, beloved.” Unfortunately, the KJV – without any textual support at all – simply says, “But, beloved.” Arbitrarily leaving off the word “you” destroys the emphatic nature of the contrast that Jude is conveying. He has just spent the past nine verses highlighting the depraved nature of the “dreamers” he referred to in verse 8. Now, in order to completely contrast his readers to them, he says, “But you, beloved.”

With that complete contrast highlighted, he then says, “remember the words which were spoken before.” These words, being so close to what Peter says, show that Jude was probably written based on 2 Peter, not the other way around. There, Peter says –

“Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), ² that you 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 Savior, ³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts...” 2 Peter 1:1-3

A few things should be considered:

First, it is only supposition that Jude is writing his letter after Peter and using Peter’s letter as a guide, but it is a good one. The fact that Jude cites “the apostles,” and says “spoken,” could simply mean that the words of prophecy were consistent, and that he is building upon their spoken words. Being under inspiration, it would be natural for his words to be consistent with Peter’s (and the other apostles).

Secondly, Jude is not excluding himself as an apostle, even if he was not reckoned among the original twelve. The fact that he will, in the next verse, say, “they told you,” and not “they told us,” shows that he could be considered an apostle (just as Barnabas is noted as one in Acts 14:14).

Thirdly, it is evident that Jude’s audience had, in fact, heard the words of the other apostles because he says, “remember the words which were spoken before,” and then he completes the thought with, “by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.” If the first two points cannot be dogmatically argued one way or another, this point is completely certain. Jude’s letter is a reminder of what had already been passed on.

The apostles of Jesus Christ carried a unified message concerning what Jude will next say, and it is thus a warning that needs to be carefully heeded by all. Unfortunately, the very people Jude will describe (and that he has been warning about) literally fill the churches of the world today. The guards were let down, and the unholy have flooded in.

Life application: This verse sets a clear marker showing that Jude is going to move from what he has been talking about – the ungodly that creep into the churches with their destructive lifestyles and teachings – and contrast them with sound instruction.

In stating, “you beloved,” it indicates that they are saved and faithful Christians who are residing in the fellowship of Christ and not merely heretics who proclaim such. The next word, “remember,” is the first command that he has given in the letter. After 17 painful verses of apostasy and woe, he can now start his directives.

In not directly quoting any of the earlier apostolic writings, he is authenticating their words as an overall body of law. What he says conveys concepts found throughout other writings, such as those given by Luke, Paul, Peter, and John. It is also implicitly understood that it is these writings, and any others by the apostles, that are authoritative.

Once the apostolic era ended, the Bible was sealed, and God’s revelation was complete. We no longer have the apostolic word coming from God – regardless of what some claim. We can be completely and absolutely sure that nothing else is to be placed on the same level as Scripture. This includes the writings from church bodies, the writings of supposed prophets, or the unstable claims of those who stand in the pulpit and claim a “word” from the Lord.

Rather, we have the word of the Lord, and it is recorded for all believers to conduct their lives in a manner prescribed by God Himself. Stand firm on the doctrine of the Bible, and don’t be led astray by anything else.

Heavenly Father, we do believe the Holy Bible is Your word. Help us to have faith that it stands alone as all that we need to conduct our lives in holiness and propriety. Keep us away from the careless and false claims of those who say they have some special prophetic or authoritative word from You. What more do we need than what You have

given us in Your wonderful and precious word! Thank You for this marvelous treasure of wisdom and love. Amen.

...how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. Jude -18

Jude finishes the thought that he introduced in the previous verse. Taken together, they read –

“But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸ how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.”

Jude had been describing these vile people (the “dreamers” of verse 8) for many verses, and then introduced words that called to memory what the apostles had previously warned them. With that stated, he continues the thought now, saying, “how they told you.”

First, Jude excludes himself from this, saying, “told you.” Thus, it indicates a possibility that Jude was considered as an apostle. Or, it simply could be that Jude is warning those who had been told. Either way, it speaks of whatever way this message was conveyed to them. It could be in writing as in some of the epistles, or it could be spoken directly to them during an apostolic visit. Whichever way they heard, they had been told the same consistent message.

A spoken example of this, from Paul to those in the Ephesian church, is recorded in Acts 20:29 –

“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.”

A written example is 2 Peter 3:3, if that epistle was written before Jude. What is clear is that the message was conveyed, and Jude is stirring up their memories concerning the truth “that there would be mockers.”

Here is a word that is only found in this verse and in 2 Peter 3:3. It signifies a mocker or a scoffer. Thus, by implication, it speaks of false teachers. The warning was that they were coming. Jude now, unfortunately, says they have come. That was seen in verse 4, where he said, “For certain men have crept in unnoticed.” Jude says the warning of the apostles was that these people would come “in the last time.”

Jude is using this term in the same manner as Paul does in 2 Timothy 3 when he said, “in the last days.” It speaks of the entire church age, right up until the new age is ushered in at Christ’s return. This is certain because Jude says these people have already crept in. This isn’t merely speaking of a time just before Christ’s return, but the entire time before Christ’s return – because Christ’s return could come at any time. Thus, the church was being warned to be on guard at all times. However, the guard had been let down, and Jude was providing his warning in this epistle that it was so.

Understanding this, Jude then reminds them – yet again – what these people are like, saying, “who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.” Here, the Greek uses two nouns, saying, “lusts of ungodliness.” The people Jude is referring to conducted their lives not according to the apostolic word that had been conveyed, but in a manner completely contrary to it.

The word of the apostles was inspired by God. The conduct of these people was from their own twisted thinking and lusts. In this perverse mindset, they followed their lusts of ungodliness. Jude will next continue to describe these people.

Life application: As noted earlier, the “last time” is the time before Christ’s return. Because Christ could come at any time after His ascension, it covers the entire Church Age, including Jude’s time. What Jude has been saying clearly shows that these mockers were already at work with their despicable life and behavior.

The term which is used for “mockers” refers to those who laugh at and deride God’s word. At the time of Jude, it was the Old Testament, any writings of the New Testament which had been compiled, and the authoritative teachings of the apostles. People were mocking what was revealed to them and also surely mocking those who followed the Christian lifestyle. Today nothing has changed.

The Presbyterian Church, USA, the Episcopal Church, and many other denominations now ordain homosexual ministers. Other denominations are considering following this same unholy path. This is in direct defiance to the words of the Bible. Those who conduct the ordinations and those who are ordained are clearly “mocking” the word of God.

This is just one example of the unholy practices that are filling churches around the world. By their actions, they are also mocking those who adhere to the word of God, claiming they have a new way which is better. But the word of God will be vindicated in the end. What God has prescribed for His church stands despite the mocking and belligerence of these wicked, self-serving people.

Well Lord, despite the way of the world and the high-handed attitude of the disbelievers, we shall stand with You – on Your side and on Your truth. May our lives be examples of those who are willing to suffer mocking, derision, prison, torture, and death, if necessary, to bring You the honor You are rightly due. May we never compromise the truth of Your word. Amen.

These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. Jude -19

Jude continues describing the people he has been describing for quite a few verses. Here, he says, “They are sensual persons.” The word signifies something natural, as in the natural body of man. To understand the most likely intent of what Jude is saying, the NIV says they “follow mere natural instincts.”

In other words, they follow instinct more like brute beasts or unreasoning animals than they follow the higher spiritual life in emulation of God. They are on the level of farm animals – conducting their lives by outward senses and not thinking through the consequences of the lusts they act upon. Of these, Jude then says, “who cause divisions.”

He uses a word found only here in Scripture, *apodiorizó*. It is a combination of *apo* (away), and *horizó* (to mark off by a boundary). Therefore, it signifies separation. They cause unnecessary division – either themselves from others, or in setting up an “us against them” mentality within the church.

In order to elevate themselves and their treacherous lifestyles, they point at faithful believers who hold to the whole counsel of God and accuse them of being the ones who are wrong. Today's common phrase which is used by such people is "intolerant." When they accuse believers of being intolerant, they attempt to make it appear that they are on the right side of the Lord, who is loving and merciful. However, in order to do this, they have to dismiss the very nature of God who is truly loving, but who is also just, righteous, and holy. In their divisions, there is not the unity of fellowship that is supposed to exist within the church.

Jude then says, "not having the Spirit." There is no article before "Spirit" in the Greek. Because of this, it can be argued that he is not referring to the Holy Spirit. Further, the fact that he refers to *Pneumati Hagīō*, or "Holy Spirit," in the next verse indicates that in this verse he is not speaking of the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, if he is referring to the Holy Spirit, he would be making a determination that such a person never believed the gospel. If this is so, it is making a claim that only the Lord actually can make. What seems more likely is that he is making a comparison to what he just noted about them being "sensual persons."

Because they follow natural instincts, they are, as the Weymouth Version states it, "wholly unspiritual." Thus, "not spirit having" (as the Greek reads) would not be speaking of the Holy Spirit, but not possessing the higher spiritual life in emulation of God. The two thoughts are complementary then, one supporting the other.

The difference in the two approaches to this final clause are of the greatest importance. There are those who are referred to in Scripture who are clearly presented as saved, and yet they are living their lives in a carnal or apostate manner. Yet their salvation is never questioned. On the other hand, it is assumed.

For Jude to state that certain people do not have the Spirit in a general manner, as he has, would then allow anyone to question anyone's salvation based on improper conduct – something not seen in Scripture. Therefore, the conservative view of saying such people are "wholly unspiritual" is probably the correct view. We can easily say that of people who have fallen away from the truth without questioning their salvation. This is especially important because we actually have no idea if they are saved or not. Only the Lord will make that determination.

Life application: In the end, we all have choices to make concerning Jesus Christ. Will we be obedient to Him, or will we follow our natural instincts and lusts? If a person who acts this way was never saved, he will continue his course all the way to the Lake of Fire. If he was saved, but has fallen from what is right and proper, he will continue his course right to the judgment seat of Christ, where he will lose the many rewards he could have heaped up in a life of righteousness and faithful observance to the word of God.

Heavenly Father, when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, Your word says that we were saved at that time. As Your word indicates that we cannot lose our salvation, but that we can depart from faithful living in our salvation, help us to live the holy and respectable Christian lives that You desire for us. May we conduct ourselves in holiness, and may we bring You great honor and glory in doing so. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, Jude -20

In verse 17, Jude set a contrast to the people he was referring to by saying, “But you, beloved.” He now does this again. He just further described the same depraved people in verses 18 and 19. To again contrast his reader with them, he says, “But you, beloved.”

He is speaking to any and all who are willing to read and apply his words. In the previous verse, referring to the mockers, he said that they are “sensual persons, who cause divisions.” In contrast to that, he says to his readers, “building yourselves up.” Instead of dividing, there should be a united effort to build. When something is built, a cohesive unit is the anticipated result. Therefore, “building yourselves up” is expected to produce such a cohesive unit. Each person builds himself up and together each person becomes an effective part of the whole.

Jude then says that this act of building up is “on your most holy faith.” The “faith” here can be referring to either the faith that establishes a person in Christ (e.g. you are saved by grace through faith), or it can be proper observance in the doctrine of faith as followers of Christ (e.g. you are to walk properly in the faith, holding to sound doctrine).

If the former, it would align with the words of 2 Peter 1:5-9 –

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

If the latter, it would then align with conduct within the faith as outlined by Paul in Ephesians 4:11-16 –

“And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head— Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

Both refer to actions that build up. The first is personal and inward faith, building up the individual. The second is a unifying and interconnected faith that builds up the body. Either way, Jude finishes his thought with, “praying in the Holy Spirit.” This is set in contrast to those in the previous verse who are “not having the Spirit.”

As noted, then, that was probably not referring to the Holy Spirit, but to someone being wholly unspiritual, but who is rather sensual. This can, and often does, describe Christians who are living in the flesh. Therefore, Jude is saying, “instead of living in the flesh, you are encouraged to be praying in the Holy Spirit.”

If one is praying in the Holy Spirit, he will have his mind directed to that which is holy, godly, and proper. When not praying in the Holy Spirit, the mind gets distracted from those things and begins to move to that which is worldly, ungodly, and sensual. This is

the battle believers must be engaged in at all times because there are forces set in opposition to properly directed faith which will constantly come against us as we live out our lives.

Life application: If the “most holy faith” is referring to the truth of Jesus Christ as is established by the apostles and as is contained in His word, rather than the act of faith which establishes the believer, we must remember that nothing can be added to it without corrupting the message given. The word is our manual, and the Spirit is the One to guide us into a right understanding and right application of it.

In order to understand and fellowship in this faith, we don’t need a certain secret knowledge, nor do we need a specific religion (such as Catholicism, Adventism, etc). What we need is to maintain our doctrine. This comes through study, meditation on our studies, and praying in the Holy Spirit. Praying in the Holy Spirit then is not an emotional event meant to raise our heart levels, improve our appreciation of music, or sweep us into an ecstatic state. Rather, it is an act of our will to be combined with the will of God – both in knowledge and in purpose.

Unfortunately, in today’s world, the concept of living in the Spirit and praying in the Spirit has degraded into mere emotional states and misusing or total neglect of Scripture. It is often expressed this way by church leaders so that they may gain personally. Teaching doctrine correctly is hard work, but it leads to mature Christians. Making stuff up is easy and it leads to easily manipulated sheeple.

Prayers and requests for immediate blessings of healing, prosperity, and comfort fill our churches, but a desire to know and adhere to God’s word is almost entirely lacking in many denominations and churches. Let us turn our hearts from the superficial and emotional to a personal and intimate knowledge of God’s will for our lives. Let us turn our hearts to Jesus and His will for us as is revealed in His word.

Lord, it is true that far too often we hear people claim prosperity, abundance, and contentment when they don’t even have a superficial knowledge of Your word. It is heartbreaking that this is so. We ask that You help lead us to effective teachers and right instructors of the truth of the Bible. This we pray in Jesus’ name, Amen.

...keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Jude -21

Jude just gave a couple of exhortations to which he adds on a couple more, beginning with, “keep yourselves in the love of God.”

There are two ways of viewing these words –

- God’s love toward us, or
- Our love toward God.

On the surface, it would appear the latter is what Jude is speaking of. We can keep our love toward God, but how can we keep God’s love toward us. However, that isn’t really a valid argument because it isn’t speaking of active love. Instead, it refers to the state – “in” the love. God is love. It defines Him. We move in relation to Him, not the other way around. He is fixed and unchanging. Therefore, it is actually just as likely that this is speaking of our existence in the sphere of God’s love.

This is because the previous clause said, “praying in the Holy Spirit.” In our drawing near to Him in such a way, it would then keep us close to Him and in His sphere of love. A counterargument, however, is that each of the four exhortations in this verse is a duty of the individual – building yourselves up, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves, looking for.

But, again, there is the tense of each verb. Three are present participles, but this one, “keep,” is an aorist imperative verb. And so, again, it appears that this is speaking of the duty to keep oneself in God’s love toward us. Either way, the exhortation comes down to the thought that we are to maintain a relationship with God which is based on love. One thing is for sure, if we love God, we will attempt to actively remain in His love. Both directions are implied in Jesus’ words of John 15 –

“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” John 15:9, 10

Jude next says, “looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.” As noted earlier, the verb here is a present participle. It applies to every believer in the church age. We are to

be “looking for the mercy.” In other words, this is probably referring to Christ’s coming for His people. It would then reflect Paul’s words of Titus 2 –

“...looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13

At that time, the mercy which first began to be revealed at the cross of Calvary will finally be realized in its fulness for God’s people. Just as we are saved, and yet awaiting the completion of our salvation, we have also received mercy, but are awaiting the completion of that mercy which is “unto eternal life.”

Again, at this time we have been granted eternal life, but we are awaiting the realization of that by faith. We watch fellow Christians die, but we believe they will be raised again. We face our own mortality, but we believe we too shall be raised. The word speaks of faith, and so we are to look ahead with faith.

Life application: We can organize this thought thus – “By praying in the Holy Spirit, you will build yourselves up in the most holy faith and keep yourselves in the love of God.” As believers, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit the very moment we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This action is permanent, and the believer is eternally saved. However, living in the Spirit involves continual action.

A believer can never get more of the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit can get more of the believer. This occurs as we yield ourselves to God through continual prayer. This doesn’t have to be “on the knees in the closet” prayer. Rather, it is a state of life where we talk to the Lord every moment – thanking Him for each blessing received, petitioning Him for each desire as it comes, and acknowledging His hand in each event that occurs. This is how we keep ourselves in the love of God and how we build up our most holy faith.

In this ongoing mindset, we are always expectant of the “mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ” to take us “unto eternal life.” This then is the goal of our salvation. We live it out with the prayer in our breath, and we look forward to it as we would anticipate the feeling of a cooling rain on the horizon as we stand in a dry land watching it approach. The anticipation of Christ’s return, and the mercy it will bring from this walk of woes, should be our very heart’s desire.

Lord Jesus, turn our hearts to become continuously and permanently in tune with Your will and with Your presence in our lives. May we always remember the words of Paul as he spoke to the Athenians – “...in Him we live and move and have our being.” As this is so, keep reminding us of this fact so that You will be in our hearts and on our lips always. Amen.

And on some have compassion, making a distinction; Jude -22

For the past two verses, Jude has focused on the individual and what he is to do for himself. Today he changes track and brings in the state of others. The Greek in this particular phrase is difficult and source texts vary in what is said. Even when the same source text is used, there are variations in how to properly translate what is given.

Young’s Literal Translation, using the same text as the NKJV, says, “...and to some be kind, judging thoroughly.”

The NIV, using a text with a variant reading says, “Be merciful to those who doubt.” This seems to make more sense as a stand-alone thought, whereas the quote from the NKJV above needs verse -23 to be understood fully. Either way, the focus is on us as believers to look to others who have doubts about the faith and deal with them compassionately.

Sticking with the text which forms the basis for the NKJV, it reads, “And on some have compassion.” This certainly does not mean to not have compassion on some. It is the obligation of believers to pray for and evangelize even the vilest of offenders (even if it is awful hard to do). What it means is that particular compassion is to be addressed towards those who are lost in bad doctrine, but who obviously want to know the truth (and similar situations). This is certain based on the next verse to come where Jude speaks of pulling them out of the fire.

We are to be attentive to the situation of people and respond accordingly. Some people love the pit of false doctrine they are in. They benefit from it, they have control of others because it, they may have fame and fortune tossed in their direction as a result of it. Jude is calling for discernment in where we focus our attention. When a person who needs specific compassion is identified, he is to be given it. In this, we are “making a distinction.”

This is comparable to the “judging thoroughly” of the YLT noted above. There is little point wasting one’s time on someone who revels in their perversion, unsound doctrine, heretical viewpoints, and so on. To call them out on it, or to even show compassion for them because of it, actually only boosts their desire to double down and promote what they teach even more. They are like the charmed snake that bites at the charmer or the dog that turns and bites the one who feeds it. Therefore, believers are to judge each situation, make a right distinction, and focus their attention on those who are reachable and who may be willing to turn to the truth. Jesus speaks of such discernment in Matthew 7:6, saying, “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.”

Life application: There is a giant difference between those who are belligerent and those who simply question out of real doubt. Belligerent people are looking for an argument and will often come to the table acting innocently – “I just want to know...” However, they have already made up their minds and are actually just setting a trap for those who are willing to supposedly guide them. Their innocence turns to attack after attack about the veracity of the Bible, its reliability, etc. True doubters will respond with gratitude and hopeful contemplation, but the argumentative type simply become more bull-headed in their challenges.

This is a very common way of getting people to begin to doubt their own understanding of difficult verses, and so Christians need to be aware of this type of shenanigan. The true doubters may or may not come to Christ, but they will at least maintain a spirit of fellowship and dignity during the seeking process. So, when you talk to others about the Bible, make a distinction between a true doubter and a perverse contrarian.

There is a point where arguing a point no longer serves any function except to waste time and idle away one’s ability to help others who are truly wanting answers. However, it is also good to be careful and not misjudge the one who is truly looking to understand what is presented and who comes back, again and again, looking for an answer. This may be perceived as being argumentative, but this may not be the intent at all. Patience is needed, something that can be hard to provide when valuable time is short. So, be attentive to such things and be ready to make reconciliation when division over misperceived intent arises.

Glorious God, we have faced perverse people who love to challenge the truth of Your word while disguising their challenge as honest seekers with legitimate doubts. We may have wasted time and effort in the process. This is frustrating. And so, we would ask You to keep these people at arm's length from us so that we can focus on what is truly important – honest seekers with real questions. Amen.

... but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. Jude -23

The previous verse stated, “And on some have compassion, making a distinction.” That same thought now continues with, “but others save with fear.” The Greek reads, “in fear.” The idea is that we are to be in fear, and thus watchful, of being stained by their infection while rescuing them. Without such an attitude of care, we ourselves could be brought into whatever has infected them. With this understood, Jude next says, “pulling *them* out of the fire.”

In his words here and just ahead, Jude is certainly drawing on Old Testament parallels. This one looks back to Zechariah 3 –

“Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. ² And the Lord said to Satan, ‘The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! *Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?*’” Zechariah 3:1, 2

Another possibility is that of Lot who was literally pulled back inside his house by the angels and then later forced from Sodom in order to flee the destruction which was to come. This is certainly likely based on what it says in Amos 4:11 –

“I overthrew *some* of you,
As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,
And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning;
Yet you have not returned to Me,
Says the Lord.”

The Greek word translated as “pulling,” is *harpazó*, is referring to yanking someone with force, such as if you were to yank someone back from an oncoming car. It is the word

Paul uses in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 to describe what will occur at the rapture. The idea here is that one is to be careful to not get burned while pulling another out of the fire. Something that is so easy to do while evangelizing those caught in sin.

Jude next says, “hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.” The idea of the garments “defiled by the flesh” goes all the way back to the Law of Moses. The specific “garment” described today is a *chitón*. It is the inner garment, closest to the body.

The book of Leviticus describes how to handle the effects of leprosy. One of the effects of this disease is that the garment itself could become a carrier and therefore was to be burned in order to prevent its infectious spread (Leviticus 13). Further, to touch any person, or any article touched by a person with a bodily discharge would render the one touching him or it unclean (Leviticus 15, etc.).

This is the symbolism that Jude is using. We are to “save others with [in] fear,” being on guard not to let their infection spread to us while we are involved in their conversion. When it says, “pulling them out of the fire,” it is certainly speaking of the anticipated effects of their life if they remain unconverted – Hell and the Lake of Fire.

As a side note, to understand the New Testament meaning behind the Levitical laws mentioned above – all which point to Christ, His work, or how it applies to us – be sure to watch the Leviticus sermons on YouTube from the Superior Word. What Israel was commanded in their earthly lives points to spiritual truths in our life in Christ. The entire book is a fascinating study into understanding what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.

Life application: In the verse today, we are taught truths that we need to apply to our lives in how we deal with such people. As Christians, we are to –

1. Work actively to work to bring about a change in the people around us.
2. Make every effort to divert them from the reckless path which leads to hell.
3. While doing so, keep free from being entangled in the very sins these people are engaged in.

This verse is a profound call to the Christian to actively engage in battle while being constantly on guard that the battle doesn't consume us in the process.

Jesus, help us to determine to work daily in bringing about an understanding in others concerning Your holiness and their need to be brought out of the defiled state they are in. We acknowledge our own weakness toward sin, and our dependence on You for protection when we do so. As we tell others about Your salvation in Christ throughout this lost world, please keep us from being entangled in the very sins that we are warning against. Thank You for being with us through this battle. Amen.

**Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, Jude -24**

Jude finishes his epistle with two resounding verses which form a doxology and a benediction comparable in the New Testament to Romans 16:25 and 1 Timothy 6:14-16. His words here begin with a connection to what he just said in the previous verse, “but others save with fear.” While working to bring the light of the truth to others, we are to not allow ourselves to get caught up in the same sins we are trying to rescue others from. As Jude continued saying, “pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.”

As noted, one can get burned by fire when pulling out another, and one can contract the same infection that defiled another’s garments. Jude’s warning was to be cautious while conducting one’s affairs lest we get caught up in other’s sins. With this understood, Jude begins his marvelous doxology by saying, “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling.”

Some translations say “falling” rather than “stumbling.” This is incorrect. A fall implies permanency. To stumble means to get misdirected or tripped up, but it is not considered permanent. This was the point of Paul’s words concerning Israel in Romans 11 –

“I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles.”

-Romans 11:11

Jude uses the same word here, *ptaió*, with a negative prefix attached to it, *aptaistos*. In the five uses of the word *ptaió*, each consistently refers to a stumble, but not a fall. The

salvation of the person is not in question. Jude says that the Lord is able to keep us from stumbling. The word translated as “keep” signifies “to guard.” In this, if we are willing to rely on the Lord and His word, we will be guarded from any stumbling.

However, and while understanding this, he continues with, “And to present *you* faultless.” Even if a believer stumbles, we have the surety that we will be presented “faultless.” The word signifies “without spot,” or “without blemish.” Thus, “faultless,” “blameless,” and other such words are suitable to convey the meaning. The idea here is that for those in Christ, they are purified by Him, and they will be presented in this manner before God. This is possible because we are not only purified by His cleansing blood of atonement, but we are covered by it from that point on. When God sees us, He does not see our misdeeds, but Christ’s perfection. Our sin – past, present, and future – is under the blood. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5 –

“Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19

God has forgiven past sin in Christ, and no sin is imputed under the New Covenant. As sin is what separates us from God, and as sin is no longer imputed, we can never again be separated from God. This is the idea that is conveyed in Jude’s words. From there, he continues with, “Before the presence of His glory.”

It is Christ who presents those who have come to Him before the presence of God. Christ Jesus is both fully man and fully God. Thus, He purifies us, He keeps us from stumbling, and He presents us faultless before the glory of the Triune God.

The word Jude uses, translated as “present,” is *histémi*. It means “to make one stand.” Two verses from the psalms will help us understand what Jude is referring to here –

“Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?
Or who may stand in His holy place?” Psalm 24:3

“If You, Lord, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?” Psalm 130:3

Jude says that it is the Lord who will make us stand before God. The psalmist wondered who could stand before the Lord if He marked our iniquities. The answer is “none.” No person whose sin is imputed to Him can do so. But for those in Christ, we may (and we indeed will) be made to stand before the presence of His glory.

In fact, it impossible that it could be otherwise. What Christ has done is fully capable, finished, and forever. Once it is received, it is sealed with God’s guarantee (Ephesians 1:13, 14), and it will come to pass. And, as Jude notes as he finishes this verse, it is “with exceeding joy.” The Greek reads, “in exceeding joy.”

It is a state which we will be in at that moment, and it will continue for all eternity. The word translated as “exceeding joy” signifies ecstatic joy, exaltation, or gladness. What occurs as we come before God will be the highest form of joy that we could possibly imagine – and more so. We will be presented before God without sin, we will understand that this state will be eternal, and we will have the knowledge that God Himself did this for us in Christ. At that time, the love of God for us will be understood in a way that we can only begin to sense while in these fallen bodies.

Life application: Jesus is able to guard us against stumbling in the sense that we could never lose God’s favor once we are saved. This then is speaking of eternal salvation. Just as we may stumble slightly when climbing a mountain (comparable to intermittent sins in this life), Jesus is keeping us from falling over the precipice completely.

Nothing in creation can keep the saved believer from this final good end. It is a promise, a guarantee, and in God’s mind it is already accomplished. The Greek word for “faultless” (noted above) is used in 1 Peter 1:19 when speaking of Jesus – “but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Thus, this doesn’t mean we are faultless in and of ourselves then, but because of Christ’s imputed righteousness. When we accept Jesus as Lord, His perfect life is transferred to us so that we are completely innocent before God.

If you attend a church, or follow a teacher on the internet, that teaches you can lose your salvation, you are being instructed by a person who does not know his theology very well. This is a basic point of doctrine. God does not save His people unto eternal insecurity. He saves us despite ourselves.

To say that what Christ has done for us is insufficient to save us and to continue to save us is to –

- Diminish the glory of what He has done for us.
- Say that we actually are responsible for our salvation.
- Indicate that our salvation was never by grace through faith.

Such a doctrine can be termed an “after the fact false gospel.” When the gospel is presented, the idea that one can lose his salvation is normally not even entertained. The gospel is given, the salvation is (hopefully) received by faith, and the person is saved unto eternal life – deal done.

Nothing false may have been introduced into the gospel. However, once the person is saved and believes in Christ, if he is then taught that he can lose his salvation and he must perform or perish, a false (but after the fact) gospel has been introduced. That person will remain saved, but his walk will – from that time on – be a sad walk of mistrust in the very blood that saved him in the first place.

Understanding this, you may consider finding a new church to attend, or you might stop watching the teacher who teaches this really bad doctrine. It can only negatively affect your own walk with the Lord. And more, if he cannot get this simple point of doctrine right, how much else has he gotten wrong on the more complicated issues of theology?

Lord Jesus, surely You have done great and mighty things for us. And your word promises that these wonderful works will continue to transfer to us until the day we stand holy, blameless, and without the stain of sin – in Your glorious presence. How can we do anything but praise You?! Hallelujah to the perfect Lamb of God! Amen.

**To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever.
Amen. Jude -25**

This final verse of Jude varies considerably in various Greek texts. Putting the two major texts side by side will reveal this –

To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever.
Amen.

...to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Sticking with the text of the NKJV for consistency, Jude begins with, “To God our Savior.” Seven times in the New Testament God is said to be our “Savior.” Likewise, almost 20 times Jesus’ is given the title of Savior. In the Old Testament, it was the Lord (Yehovah) who is called the Savior –

“Tell and bring forth *your case*; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? *Who* has told it from that time? *Have* not I, the Lord? And *there is* no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; *There is* none besides Me.” Isaiah 45:21

This clearly demonstrates that the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ belongs not to the invention of the church, but to God who authored Scripture. God is not confused, Scripture is not contradictory, and Jesus is God.

In Jude saying, “To God our Savior,” it is an acknowledgment of that. Jesus is fully human and fully God. It is God who authored the plan of redemption. It is He who united with flesh in the incarnation, and it is through the humanity of Christ that the process of salvation was then effected. All of what occurred demonstrates wisdom, purpose, and intent that has been worked out in the stream of time. For this reason, Jude next says of God, “Who alone is wise.”

The simple statement is expanded upon by Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians –

“Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Corinthians 1:20-25

Again, the words are also reflected in Paul’s letter to Timothy –

“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Timothy 1:17

The words of Paul continue to closely match Jude’s words when he next says, “*Be* glory and majesty.” The word *doxa*, or glory, conveys the idea of God’s infinite intrinsic worth. The word translated as “glory” in the Hebrew language gives the sense of weight or heaviness. Thus, there is the idea of the substance or essence of God which the mind contemplates and then assigns infinite value to what is considered.

The word translated as “majesty” signifies greatness. In the case of God, it is an infinite and majestic greatness because He possesses “Dominion and power,” and which Jude ascribes to Him. Of these words, Albert Barnes states –

“With the expression of such a desire it was not inappropriate that this Epistle should be closed – and it is not inappropriate that this volume should be closed with the utterance of the same wish. In all our affections and aspirations, may God be supreme; in all the sin and woe which prevail here below, may we look forward with strong desire to the time when his dominion shall be set up over all the earth; in all our own sins and sorrows, be it ours to look onward to the time when in a purer and happier world his reign may be set up over our own souls, and when we may cast every crown at his feet and say, ‘Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. – Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God,’ Revelation 4:11; Revelation 19:1.”

To ascribe “dominion and power” to God, as Jude and others do in Scripture, is to proclaim that God’s rule stands far above the broken existence we now experience, and that what we now know will be forever eclipsed by a state of existence that we actually cannot comprehend at this time. It is a statement of faith in the promises of God for His redeemed.

Jude then acknowledges that this dominion and power stands “Both now and forever.” The Greek reads, “both now and unto all the ages.” Jude acknowledges that God’s dominion and power exist right now, even if we do not perceive it because of the wickedness and rebellion all around us. And when those things are removed from His presence, His unchanging kingdom will continue on forever and ever. The ages will come and go, but God’s kingdom will remain.

With this magnificent doxology complete, Jude finishes the epistle with, “Amen.” It signifies “Truth” or “So be it.” The words are words of faith. As we walk through this world, seeing all that is harmful, vile, and opposed to God, and when we proclaim Amen to the glory of God, we are demonstrating faith that He transcends what we now experience. It is thus the acknowledgment of our hope in what He has promised to us.

God has set forth a plan, He has worked in the stream of human existence to execute it for His people, and He has done it through the Person of Jesus Christ. May we never fail to proclaim the praises of God who has done this for us. Amen.

Life application: To recap the highlight of Jude’s words, we will note that the wisdom of God is evident in His creation and also in the glorious plan of redemption that He alone controls as the Savior. Jude ascribed four honorific words –

- 1) Glory – the manifestation of God’s attributes such as His radiance, splendor, brilliance, and so forth.
- 2) Majesty – a word ascribed to kings, thus signifying His authoritative reign.
- 3) Dominion – God’s kingship extends to the entire spectrum of the created order, from one end of the universe to the other. It also transcends the created order, expanding into a realm we will never – even for all eternity – be able to fully perceive.
- 4) Power – God created and even now sustains the universe. Every aspect of the created order is under control of His mighty hand.

God, being the author of time, space, and matter is outside of our sphere of existence, and He is therefore eternally existent; His glory has no end. Despite the words of woe and caution in his epistle, Jude means for us to be confident that God's plan is being worked out and that He will satisfactorily lead His redeemed to the new heavens and the new earth that are promised in the book coming up next, Revelation.

Let us hold confidently to the truth that God is in control, and that because of Jesus Christ, we are assured eternity in His presence, reveling in His glory.

Thank You, heavenly Father, for Your precious word. It is good and right to be reminded throughout the pages of Scripture that we are to be constantly on guard against the deceitfulness of man and to rely solely on You and Your word for our life, our doctrine, and our hope. Thank You for our Hope – Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.