

**THE EPISTLE
OF
JUDE**

*‘Earnestly Contend
for the
Faith’*

A VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY

PREFACE

Our study of Jude's epistle extended over several months, during which time we became increasingly impressed with the depth of Jude's writing. The student who may find these notes of some assistance might appreciate that he may develop this study further, for we do not claim that the notes presented herewith are in any sense exhaustive.

In the course of our deliberations we found that our most important aid, after the Word of God, was a book published by H.P. Mansfield, entitled "Contenting Earnestly for the Faith" (Logos Publications). We enthusiastically commend that work to the reader, as he will find it of outstanding value in his study of Jude's epistle.

J.U.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

These notes were originally prepared — with limited time available for the task, due to a printing "dead-line" — for a New Zealand Bible School. Permission was sought and granted, some little time afterwards, to publish the Notes in Australia. It is with some reluctance that we have agreed to the publishing of this second edition in Australia. The reason for our mixed feelings is singular. We would have enjoyed the opportunity of once again going over the work. We would have augmented and expanded the original work. However, once again we have found that our Publishers find a predilection and demand for the Notes which does not permit us the opportunity for further magnification of this work, as would have been our choice. Perhaps at some future time, God Willing, it may prove opportune to fulfil our wish in this regard. We have, however, been pleased with the standard of this publication, and have had opportunity to correct some matters of minor importance, particularly in relation to uniformity in the printing of words and expressions, which should prove of some assistance to the Student.

The relatively small epistle of Jude remains of tremendous significance to the Brotherhood of Christ, in view of the times in which we are living, and the many grave challenges facing Christ's brethren and sisters in these closing times of the gentiles.

J.U.

AUTHORSHIP

In addition to Judas Iscariot, another Jude was numbered among the apostles, but we do not believe that he was the author of this epistle.

Jude the apostle remains in the background of the gospel narratives. On only one occasion is he recorded as having spoken; on the night of the betrayal. He proffered a question to the Lord: “Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” (Jno. 14:22).

We believe that the author was Jude (or Judas, or more correctly, Judah) the brother of James, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus (cp. Gal. 1:19; 2:9; Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3).

One “Judas” was certainly among the Lord’s half-brothers.

The Lord’s own family at first supported him (Jno. 2:12); but then, as he became more widely acclaimed, turned against him and tried to restrain him (Mark 3:21). Possibly they feared that his preaching would eventually lead to an uprising by the Jews, leading to a large-scale disaster for all of them. Thus, they “did not believe” (Jno. 7:3-5; cp. Psa. 69:8). It may even be implied that Mary, at one stage, although remaining basically loyal to the Lord, tried to persuade him to pursue another course (Matt. 12:46-50).

The Lord’s resurrection must have provided the convincing proof which became the turning-point for his half-brothers. The Lord appeared to James (1 Cor. 15:7) possibly because he would prove to be the major influence within the family to persuade them to fully embrace the truth. After the resurrection, the Lord’s family kept company with the apostles; some of them rising to prominence among the brethren (Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:5).

James became the leading member of the Jerusalem ecclesia (Acts 12:17; 15:13; Gal. 1:9). Thus, an epistle written by his brother in the flesh would have carried considerable weight among the ecclesias.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Jude wrote concerning “the common salvation” — that is, the principles of faith which may lead to salvation.

The letter is a call to **contention**. The purity of the One True Faith was being openly and consistently undermined by false brethren within the ecclesias. There was an urgent need for the ecclesias to be shaken out of their lethargic state, for it is when the ecclesias are in such a state that false brethren are enabled to pursue their course unchallenged. There may come a time when contention within the ecclesias becomes a matter of necessity (cp. Jas. 3:17), if the Truth is to survive.

Jude's epistle is not simply a letter of warning and rebuke. Three times Jude refers to his readers as "beloved" (agapetos — the same word used by the Father to describe His love for His son — Matt. 3:17. Could anyone exhibit a greater love than this?).

Jude's loyalty to the truth, coupled with the intense love he felt for his brethren, provided the basis for his strong opposition towards those who were undermining the Truth and destroying the Faith within ecclesias.

It is a short letter, but written with a compelling urgency against a background of enormous danger for the ecclesias. The very survival of the Truth was very much at stake.

The epistle is an endorsement of apostolic teaching (v.17); but in particular, stresses strong support for the second epistle of Peter. It is evident that Jude had been a diligent student of Peter's final letter, for he refers to it repeatedly. The similarity between the two epistles is quite striking and unmistakable.

PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

To show that the corruption within the Ecclesias, prophesied earlier by the apostles, had become a reality.

Jude refers extensively to 2 Peter 2 — and quotes 2 Pet. 3:3 (in v.17).

The false and the true were now to be clearly **seen** — and the false were openly **manifesting** themselves (an indication of their growing strength and influence).

- v. 4 *"There are certain men crept in, unawares."*
- v.10 *"These speak evil . . ."*
- v.11 *"They have gone in the way of Cain . . ."*
 "and ran greedily after the error of Balaam . . ."
- v.12 *"These are spots in your feasts . . ."*
- v.16 *"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own
 lusts . . ."*
 "Their mouths speaketh great swelling words . . ."
- v.19 *"These be they who separate themselves . . ."*

That which was at stake was the survival of the Truth. The epistle has its setting within the intimate environment of the ecclesia ("your feasts of love" v.12).

The setting of this epistle is not conflict between the world and the ecclesia, but contention within the ecclesias because the purity of the Truth was under attack. There was a conflict within the ecclesias between the forces of light and darkness.

DEFINITION OF FALSE TEACHERS

These brethren were not gnostics, as is sometimes alleged. The writings of Peter and Jude make that abundantly clear. They considered themselves to be “saved” Christians, and therefore above all Law. As a factional party, they had taken up an extreme position in opposition to the Judaizers — but, in their teaching, they were equally as destructive as the Judaizing elements. (Cp. Rom. 6:1-2; 3:7-8; 2 Pet. 2:3, 18, 20.) Carefully consider 2 Pet. 2:5-10 and note that Peter emphasised these qualities because they were becoming increasingly regarded as unnecessary aspects of life in the Truth. Cp. 3 Jno. v.3 and 4, where the apostle drew attention to the fact that many were not “walking” in the Truth. V.11 shows that the dangers were evident, and very real.

Apostolic teaching had been perverted (Acts 20:30; 2 Pet. 3:16) to try and prove that, because all men are sinners, we should “continue in sin that grace might abound”. False teachers were, in effect, proclaiming that baptism and attendance at meetings would ensure salvation; that God could only exercise “grace” upon sinners, and that therefore sin could be justified upon those grounds.

Thus there was now an urgent need to “contend earnestly for the faith”. We should remember that these destructive philosophies were not now so much a matter of prophecy, but were being openly manifested and proclaimed within the ecclesias, often by influential brethren who had gained prominence and standing among the brethren.

They had carefully perverted the apostolic doctrine: “By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).

That such false brethren would rise to prominence had been the subject of numerous apostolic prophecies (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:3-4; Acts 20:30, etc.).

THREE KEY WORDS DOMINATE THE EPISTLE

1. *“Beloved”* Occurs 3 times. V.1, 17, 20.
2. *“Ungodly”* Occurs 6 times. (The number of flesh!) V.4, 15, 18.
3. *“Preserved”* Occurs 5 times. V.1: rendered “reserved”, V.6, 13; “kept”, V.6; and “keep”, v. 21.

Thus both parties are “reserved” for something in the Divine purpose: the “beloved” will be preserved to inherit the Kingdom; the “ungodly” will be “reserved” for Divine judgment!

JUDE REVEALS

DRAMATIC POINTS OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FALSE AND TRUE BRETHREN

FALSE	TRUE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immorality (v.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contending for the faith (v.3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evil thinking (v.8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembering the purity of the faith (v.5, 17)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evil speaking (v.8, 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building up oneself in the faith (v.20)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypocrisy (v.12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering faithful prayer (v.20)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A religion without real humility before God (v.12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking strength and forgiveness from the Father (v.21)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposition towards those striving to keep the faith (v.16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing compassion to those who will be helped (v.22)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride and arrogance (v.16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejecting the evil of the flesh (v.23)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation by flesh, not by spirit (v.16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking to the future, waiting in hope (v.24)

PART ONE:

THE NEED TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH - Vv.1-16

Vv.1-4 — *Contending for the Faith*

VERSE 1

“*Jude*” — Judah, meaning “praise”. He was not one of the apostles, hence the omission of that title.

“*The*” — The absence of the definite article indicates an attitude of humility on the part of Jude, who could have claimed considerable prominence had he desired to do so. There is a complete absence of any official title. (Note the similarity in the opening words of James’ epistle).

“*Servant of Jesus Christ*” — Gk. **doulos** — “bond-slave”: the same word us used by James at the beginning of his epistle. And Paul; Rom. 1:1; Tit. 1:1; and Peter in his second epistle; 2 Pet. 1:1. See Jno. 12:26.

In humility, Jude does not boast of his fleshly relationship to the Lord. He does not claim any form of equality, but willingly debased himself.

All believers are constituted “bond-slaves” of the Lord (1 Cor. 7:22; Eph. 6:6).

“*Brother of*” — He could have written “son of Joseph and Mary” which would have established a more intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus. Jude did not desire to do this; but it should also be realised that one of his desires would be to establish a link that would be respected by his readers. James had been extremely well-known as the Leader of the early Jerusalem ecclesia (Acts 12:17; 15:13); therefore his general standing, plus the influence which would have resulted from his epistle, would add a force to this letter now penned by Jude. There was thus clearly established a James-Jude “united front” for the preservation of the Truth.

“*James*” — Half-brother of the Lord; writer of the Epistle. Martyred about A.D.62. Peter also would have been martyred (it is believed) about A.D.65.

“*To them that are sanctified*” — Gk. **hagiozo** — “to make holy, to make clean, to sanctify”. This is achieved through the operation of the word of God. The same word occurs in Eph. 5:26. To attain to this state, it is essential for the Believer to separate from the world and dedicate his life to God; it therefore requires the operation of the cleansing and transforming power of the word. Hence, Believers are termed “saints” — which is the word **hagioi**, derived from this word in Jude’s text (cp. 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:15, etc.). We have here also the same word as rendered “hallowed be thy Name” (Matt. 6:9). The implication is therefore quite clear; what Yahweh now is, we are called upon to become! (cp. 1 Pet. 1:14-16). We are to become separated, dedicated, made clean or holy.

Jude's opening words thus constituted a challenge to all Believers, reminding them at the very outset of their responsibilities to God, and the purpose of their call to the truth.

"By God the Father" — Gk. **en** — "in; a being or remaining within, with the primary idea of rest in any place or thing" (Bullinger).

Cp. 1 Thess. 1:1 (use of "Father" is a reminder that Yahweh is the source of all life, spiritual and natural).

"Preserved in Jesus Christ" — Gk. **tereo** — "to watch over, guard, preserve" — a military term.

The verb occurs in 1 Pet. 1:4. Our "inheritance" is "**reserved** in heaven".

This word is not common in Paul's epistles, but occurs more in the final letters; 1 Tim. 5:22; 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:7. However it occurs with marked frequency in the closing epistles of the Scriptures — mostly in 1 John, 2 Peter, and Jude.

The idea thus predominates, of being preserved through Divine power, until Christ's second coming — a preservation which became a more urgent need with the increasing falling-away from the Truth. What a dramatic setting for the usage of this word!

Occurs Jno. 17:11, 12, 15 (also occurs again in Jude, v.6 (twice), 13, 21 — and 4 times in 2 Pet. 2:4, 9, 17; 3:7). Note how Jude returns to this thought — in an exhortatory usage in v.21.

"Called" — Gk. **Kletos** — derived from klesis, which forms part of the word for "ecclesia". It conveys the idea of a call or invitation, or appointment to an office; and also the **welcome** that one receives on such occasions. It is therefore a word which defines the wonderful binding together in love, of the family of God. Note the occurrence of "kletos" in Rom. 1:7, where the phrase is, literally translated "saints by calling" (cp. 2 Tim.1 :9).

Jude has now begun to lay the foundation for the words which will constitute the main core of his message to the ecclesias. This is a direct and dynamic opening, when considering the words which are to follow. These were indeed challenging words for the brethren of Jude's day — and, in fact, for the ecclesia of God in any age. In these opening words, Jude has set forth in clear terms, the basis of our differences with the world of ungodliness which surrounds the ecclesia.

The "call" to the truth involves:

INVITATION
SEPARATION
DEDICATION

Doing the will of the Father and His son would bring Believers into conflict with the world at large — but in Jude’s day many prominent brethren did not wish to see the “differences” emphasised. But Jude argued: “sanctified”, “preserved”, “called”.

That is:

- *Summoned or invited into the Truth;*
- *Welcomed lovingly into the family of God;*
- *Made holy, clean, sanctified;*
- *Separated from the ungodliness of the world;*
- *Dedicated to serving Israel’s God;*
- *Watched over, guarded, preserved by the Lord Jesus.*

Thus in the opening words of his epistle, Jude set forth the dramatic contrast between what the word of God required from Believers, and the attitudes and philosophies which were being widely proclaimed by false teachers.

VERSE 2

“*Mercy unto you*” — If we receive mercy, it indicates that we are in need of it — and it also indicates that the One extending the mercy has the power to implement its principles.

Mercy is a Divine characteristic. Therefore we must implement it ourselves.

“*And peace*” — Note the progression. Mercy comes before peace. We cannot attain to peace without receiving Divine mercy. Mercy is an act of God — peace is that which results. (Whenever these two words occur together, they always follow in this order — except in Gal. 6:16.)

(Similarly, in the apostolic salutations, wherever “grace and mercy” occur, they are always in that order.)

“Peace” is the equivalent of “fellowship”. When there is peace there is unity and oneness and mutual well-being.

This Gk. word, *eirene* means “peace, rest, **in contrast with strife**, and denoting the absence or end of strife” (Bullinger). In its apostolic usage, therefore, it points forward to the end of this age when the spiritual warfare within our own flesh will be ended — and when victory over the flesh will culminate in perfect spiritual and physical union — or fellowship — with the Father and the Son.

“*And love*” — Gk. **agape** — “a profound respect or reverence, based upon knowledge, and manifested by self-denial”. Jude has thus set forth three blessings from Yahweh, without which we would be lost. Jude’s prayer is that these blessings might flow forth to his brethren. But he now proceeds to show that such blessings are dependent upon the faithfulness of Christ’s brethren to the Truth of God.

“*Be multiplied*” — Gk. **plethuno** — “to increase, to make full”.

VERSE 3

“*Beloved*” — Gk. **agapetos** — occurs again v.17, 20. There is only one other occurrence of this word in an introduction to an epistle: 3 Jno. v.2 cp. agapetos, which occurs in Matt. 3:17, to express the Father’s deep love for His son. Could anyone feel greater love than this? Jude had a deep and sincere love for his brethren, and for their eternal welfare. His love was therefore genuine, in contrast to the so-called “love” which had been expressed by his adversaries, the false teachers. They had no real love for the brotherhood, which could be based upon a true understanding of the Word; they were primarily concerned with their own ambition, self-aggrandisement, and material advantage.

“*When I gave all diligence to write unto you*” — “*Though I was using all diligence to be writing unto you concerning our common salvation, yet have I had necessity to write AT ONCE unto you*”, (Rotherham, our emphasis).

It had been Jude’s intention to write a letter, but suddenly the matter became one of the utmost urgency! The circumstances surrounding the need for this letter are once again set forth dramatically.

His original intentions regarding a letter were changed. He had planned a letter of exposition and encouragement — but a letter of warning and rebuke had become a matter of urgency. The Spirit would have guided him to see this necessity and moved him in the composition of the epistle.

Cp. Paul: Rom. 15;15-16; Heb. 13:22; also 2 Pet. 3:1.

(“*diligence*” — Gk. **spoude** — “*earnestness, zeal, and sometimes the haste with which a thing is done*”.)

“*The common salvation*” — Gk. **koines** — somewhat akin to the word for “fellowship” (koinonia). Koines means “belonging to several”. This phrase represents a further reminder to Jude’s readers that the Brotherhood of Christ held the one faith and the hope of salvation in “common”, as a community. The community of Believers must therefore be of one mind on all vital elements of the one faith, and in understanding and honouring the principles of Divine

Truth. See Gal. 3:28; Tit. 1:4. Any breaking down of essential principles either in belief or practice, would result in divided ecclesias.

“It was needful for me to write unto you” — “Needful” — Gk. **ananke** — “a necessity, imposed whether by external circumstances, or inward pressure” (Vine). *“I felt that I must write to you at once”* (Twentieth Century New Testament). Again, there is conveyed a sense of urgency, as the background of rising apostasy within the ecclesias developed at an alarming rate.

“And exhort you” — Gk. **parakaleo** — From “**para**” (“to the side”) and “**kaleo**” (“to call”), thus, “to call to one’s side”. This is an extremely forthright and challenging command. History recorded another classic example of such a call being uttered, also in the face of rising apostasy: See Ex. 32:26. There would be no compromise whatever with Jude, the faithful “servant of Jesus Christ”. He stood firmly on the side of the Lord Jesus and his apostles. And he called upon his brethren to stand fast with him, without compromise. Jude is pointing out that the Truth is too precious to be compromised! Of this word, W.E. Vine adds; “to admonish, exhort, to urge one to pursue some course of conduct, always prospective, looking to the future”.

“That ye should earnestly contend” — Gk. **epagonizomai** (Strg. Bullinger)— “to contend about a thing, as a combatant” (Vine). To “agonise” is part of this word, thus indicating that there is a need, on the part of the faithful, to contend for the faith to the point of personal sacrifice and suffering. Described by some authors as the strongest word in the New Testament, the word literally means “super-agonny”. (“epi”, in this usage, indicating the force and extent of the agony.) In apostolic times the word had particular significance in relation to the Grecian sports, being especially descriptive of the wholehearted, dedicated struggle engaged upon by the athletes to gain the mastery and the victory. Cp. Phil. 1:27; 1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7-8.

Jude, in this dramatic call for loyalty to the Truth, thus pleaded for an undaunted, uncompromising, whole-hearted struggle, that the Truth might survive those attacks being made upon it from within the ecclesias, so that it would continue to shine forth in purity and in power.

“The faith” — The key words in this verse; for this was to be the subject of the contention. “The faith” is not something vague or abstract; nor is it mere theoretic knowledge. It is “the power (English, dynamo) of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16); therefore where would Believers be without it? We will uphold that which we love and prize. And Christ’s brethren must be prepared to continue their struggle to maintain and preserve “the faith”. If we manifest true (agape)

love for the Brotherhood, as did Jude, we will place loyalty to Yahweh, and the eternal salvation of the Brotherhood, above all other considerations.

“The faith” comes by “hearing . . . the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

“*Which was once delivered unto the saints*” — “*once for all*” (R.V., Roth.).

There is a firm finality about this statement. It is in our hands. We are now held responsible for its welfare.

The Gk. adverb (**hapax**) affirms finality 1 Pet. 3:18. See 1 Cor. 15:3.

“Saints” is **Hagios** (cp. “sanctified”, v.1).

VERSE 4

“*Certain men*” — With a dramatic choice of words, Jude now directs attention towards a particular class of brethren within the ecclesias. A careful scrutiny would reveal that these men were different from those who followed the apostles. They spoke and acted differently. They held differing beliefs (not “**the faith**” in its purity); and they had differing goals and ambitions. It appears that up until now they had largely avoided open conflict with followers of the apostles, having expressed desires for love and peace to be manifested — and tolerance. But such an attitude was merely a cloak, from under which they worked for an acceptance of their erroneous beliefs (cp. Rev. 2:19-20).

“*Crept in unawares*” — This phrase is one word in the Greek, **pareisduno** — “to settle in alongside; to lodge stealthily” (Strong); “to slip in, insinuate one’s self, to go or come in by stealth” (Bullinger). The word is derived from “para” (“beside”), and “eis” (“in”).

Cp. Gal. 2:4, where there is a closely related word. Paul wrote of “false brethren, **unawares brought in**”. “False brethren” is the Greek **pseudadelphos** (English, “pseudo-brother” — that is, a sham, but deceptively resembling the true thing). These are they who are referred to in 2 Pet. 2:1, wherein Peter had warned of the development of a faction which had become openly manifested in the days of Jude’s epistle.

How do such men manage to rise to prominence and influence within ecclesias? Because brethren and sisters go to sleep, spiritually! Note the parable of the Lord: Matt. 13:24-25. Cp. Acts 20:29-31; Eph. 5:13-14, etc.

“*Before ordained*” — Gk. **prographe** — from “**pro**” (“before”) and “**graphe**” (“to write”); thus, “to write before.” A reference to earlier apostolic writings which had contained warnings concerning these matters now troubling the

troubling the ecclesias in the days of Jude. The verb, *prographo*, has been translated as “evidently set forth” (Gal. 3:1); a reminder that the existence of these false teachers would have been clearly seen by all who were proficient in their understanding of the apostolic writings. Use of this word thus implies a rebuke by Jude, indicating that his readers should have been sufficiently educated in the Truth to discern true brethren from false.

“*To this condemnation*” — Gk. *krima* — “judgment; the decision resulting from an investigation”. The word of God is the Investigator; and judgment will be according to the requirements of the Word. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jno. 4:1, cp. v.5-6).

“*Ungodly men*” — Gk. *asebes* — “Not merely irreligious, but he who actually practises the opposite of what God demands” (Bullinger). Yet, Jude has stated that such as these had become prominent and influential within the ecclesias! How had such men gained prominence? Because of general apathy within ecclesias (cp. v.17-18; 2 Pet. 3:1-4). The Truth was no longer loved and prized, as in the period of early fervour which had accompanied the activities of the pioneers. The ecclesias had, in far too many instances, “lost their first love” (Rev. 2:4). Love of worldly things and worldly ambition had replaced love of the Truth. When these circumstances develop, brethren no longer really care what happens to the Truth. And whilst many would say that they **do** care, they do not care enough. The preservation of the Truth requires continuing diligent study of the Word, personal self-sacrifice, and a practical application of the principles of the Truth in daily living. Where these evidences of dedication to the Truth are lacking, “the love of many shall wax cold”.

“*Turning the grace of our God*” — Gk. *metatithemi* — (“**meta**” means change; “**tithemi**” is used of laying a corpse in a tomb — Matt. 27:60 — thus conveying the idea of removal).

“*The grace of our God*” = the whole process of the gift of redemption.

“*Into lasciviousness*” — Gk. *aselgeia* — “excess, licentiousness, absence of restraint, wantonness”.

The first of three deviations from the Truth. They turned liberty into license. They claimed a freedom in the Truth which really did not exist. (Cp. Jude’s opening claim concerning himself; “a bond-slave of Jesus Christ”.) They sinned wilfully, that “grace might abound” (Rom. 6:1). Cp. Rom. 3:8, their “damnation is just”, says Paul.

“*And denying the only Lord God*” — *Kurios theos* in some MSS. But in others, “**denying the only Sovereign (Gk. despotes)**” (Diag.).

Despotes denotes One with supreme authority.

Christ is our Sovereign — and we are subject to him: Tit. 1:16.

Second deviation: a disowning of the Truth concerning their relationship with Christ, especially in relation to the doctrine of the atonement. (Cp. 1 Jno. 4:3; 2 Jno. v.17. Especially 2 Pet. 2:1, where the same word “denying” occurs.)

To this type of brother it is “unchristian” to be dogmatic upon the Scriptures; and it is “uncharitable” to condemn apostacy (cp. 2 Jno. v.6).

“And our Lord Jesus Christ” — “Our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ” (R.V., Roth.). Gk. **kurios**. In v.5 **Kurios** is used for Yahweh. The usage here is a reminder that the Lord Jesus was the Word made flesh.

This was the third deviation of the errorists.

Note the relationship of these three doctrines:

- ATONEMENT teaches what flesh really is
- GOD MANIFESTATION shows what we can become
- GRACE or DIVINE FAVOUR shows the means by which we can attain to an eternal inheritance in the kingdom.

These three doctrines having been rejected by the errorists, their whole concept of religion was altered.

They turned liberty into license.

Thus the flesh ruled them, rather than the Spirit-Word.

VERSE 5

“I will therefore put you in remembrance” — Same word as occurs 2 Pet. 1:12. The first essential answer to these tremendous ecclesial problems: **Get your minds absorbed in the word of God!** Jude is now going to remind them of some of the things written in the Word, with powerful lessons to be learned concerning the handling of the present problems.

In the past, blatant deviation from the Truth had brought Divine judgment upon the guilty ones — and, says Jude, the same will surely happen again. He sets forth three examples from the past:

“Though you once knew this” — “although the whole matter is sufficiently familiar to you” (Weymouth). “Once” is the same word as v.3 Lit. “once for all”. He is not suggesting that they had forgotten these things, but that there is now an urgent need for these things to be brought strongly to mind, because of the powerful lessons these examples contain for the present difficulties.

“How that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt” — This verse refers primarily to the judgment recorded in Num. 14. The “Lord” who had saved Israel out of Egypt was Yahweh. The point made here is extremely powerful: it is possible to be placed on the road to salvation (“the Lord . . . saved the people”) and yet meet with destruction (“the Lord . . . afterward destroyed them”). The implication is clear: these brethren to whom Jude wrote were in danger of meeting the same end, if they continued to be influenced by false teachers who would lead them away from the saving power of the Truth (cp. 2 Pet. 2:20-22).



Pharaoh's host is destroyed.

The people of Israel, having been brought forth out of Egypt, failed to understand the real purpose of their deliverance. Jeremiah said that they were to be unto Yahweh “for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory” (Jer. 13:11) — that is to manifest the attributes of God’s character. “But”, added Jeremiah, “they **would not** hear”. That is to say, they remained largely untouched and unmoved by the power of the Word. The basis of the call of Israel was: “Ye shall therefore **be** holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:45) and the same applies to those who are called to follow Christ (1 Pet. 1:14-16). The fundamental reason for the tragic failure of Israel had been clearly stated: “Our fathers **understood not** thy wonders in Egypt” (Psa. 106:7). That is to say, they did not appreciate the reasons why God was working among them, endeavouring to develop them into a nation of people who would reflect His glory. And Jude’s point here is that there was danger of history repeating itself.

“Afterward” — Gk. **deuteros** — “the second time”. These Israelites had been “**dead** in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1) in Egypt — but had been “quickenened” in their baptism into Moses in the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1-2).

In “baptism”, they experienced the “goodness” of God — in setting them on their way to the kingdom.

In their destruction, they experienced the “severity” of God — as the justice required for their failure to “**do**” the works of faith.

“Destroyed them” — First saved, then destroyed! What an appalling tragedy. Now, Jude’s worst fears were that the same process was happening again (cp. 1 Cor. 15:1-2). Israel of old were destroyed because they “believed not”. But those two words imply that (a) they did not correctly understand the Truth, especially in relation to the doctrine of God-manifestation; (b) they did not obey God’s commands; (c) they lacked faith in Yahweh, because “faith comes by hearing the word of God”. The prophets had set the message before the nation in clear terms: “Every one that is called by my Name . . . I have created **him** for my glory . . .” said Yahweh (Isa. 43:7). Thus, when such a “called” individual failed to respond to that call by manifesting the “glory” of the Creator, he was denying the purpose for which he had been called to the Truth. “Repent, and **do** the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and **remove** thy lampstand out of his place, except thou repent” (Rev. 2:5).

The word rendered “repent” is the Gk. **metanoeo** — “to perceive **afterwards**” (“meta = “after”). The operation of the Word, digested by the mind and acted upon, will bring about a change in the individual.

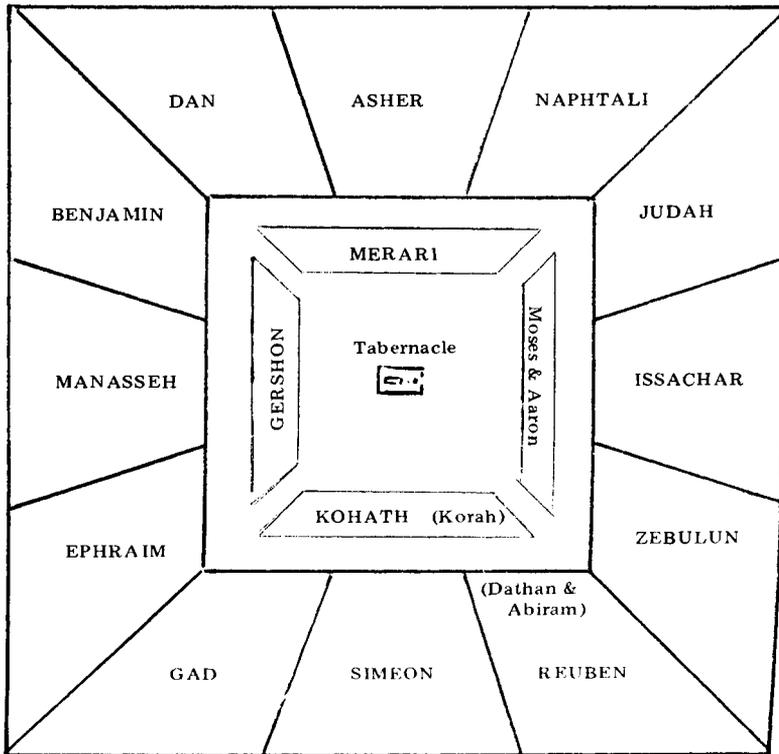
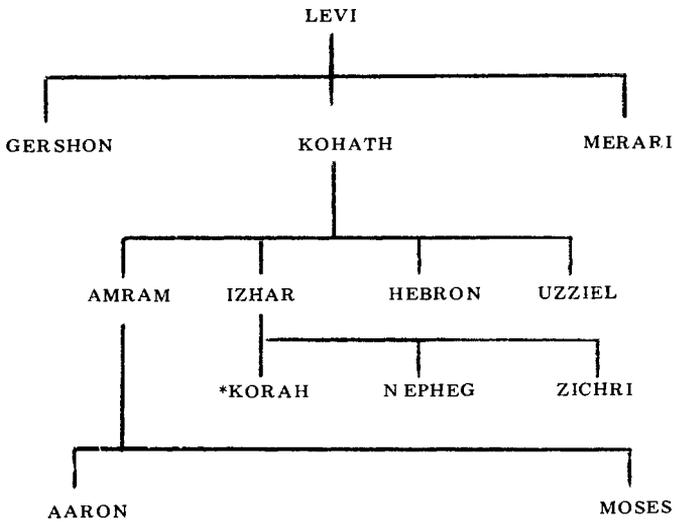
“That believed not” — Gk. **pisteuo** — they were not “persuaded” of the Truth. They had not learned to “rely upon” Yahweh; and therefore it was impossible for them to “trust” in Him (see Bullinger on “**pisteuo**”).

VERSE 6

“And the angels” — Here the reference is to Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Num. 16). Gk. **aggelos** — “a messenger” derived from **aggello**, “to deliver a message”. A term applied to mortal as well as immortal messengers (Rev. 2:1; Luke 7:24; 9:52; James 2:25).

“Which kept not” — Gk. **tereo** — rendered “preserved” (v.1), to “watch over, guard, preserve”. They had a grave responsibility to preserve their positions before Yahweh; to remain true to the faithfulness and integrity which their positions of trust and authority required.

“Their first estate” — “Messengers also, even them who had not kept their own principality” (Roth.). What was their position? Their “first estate” is, in the Gk. arche meaning “a beginning”. The word is found in the phrase “having at the first been spoken” (Heb. 2:3, R.V.); and again, “God chose you from the beginning” (2 Thess. 2:13, R.V.). The A.V. translators, in the margin of Jude v.6 give “principality” — that is, status, or elevated position. These three men, instead of manifesting maturity in the Truth, loyalty to Moses, and humility before Yahweh, manifested three prominent characteristics of the flesh: PRIDE, JEALOUSY, ARROGANCE.



"The Angels which kept not their first estate"

KORAH was a first cousin to Moses and Aaron, and thus of the Levitical tribe (cp. Ex. 6:18, 21; 1 Chron. 6:2-3). Of this man, Josephus wrote: “Corah, an Hebrew of principal account, both by his family and by his wealth, one that was also able to speak well, and one that could easily persuade the people by his speeches”. He began to sow the seeds of discontent, which resulted in disunity in the camp. The fruit of this was rebellion. Together with his two principal associates, he had engineered an ecclesial division, and he did so for no better motive than his own pride. To Moses and Aaron, he said: “Ye take too much upon yourselves, seeing that all the congregation (“ecclesia”, Sept.) are holy, every one of them!” (Num. 16:3). Two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, “men of renown”, joined in the rebellion. Yahweh destroyed the rebels in a most awe-inspiring manner (v.31-35) — but the reaction of the “ecclesia” was nothing less than astonishing; for, instead of being utterly humbled by Yahweh’s display of power in vindicating Moses and Aaron, the next day the people again murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said: “Ye have killed the people of Yahweh!” (v.41). Herein is incredible evidence as to what happens when false teachers win the hearts of the people of God. This is what happens when the ecclesia, insufficiently educated in the principles of truth themselves, fall before the “great swelling words of vanity” (2 Pet. 2:18) which issue forth from false teachers. Three men died; then 250; then a further 14,700. Declension from the faith will always result in disaster in some form or another.

The sons of Korah repudiated the evil of their father, and were not destroyed.

And now Jude found himself faced with a crisis not dissimilar from the rebellion led by Korah. The apostles and true disciples had established the ecclesias upon the foundation of Christ’s teaching, and now false teachers had perverted the Truth, and were blatantly seeking to replace the influence of those faithful brethren, setting forth their own teaching as a “new and better way” (cp. 2 Pet. 3:3-4).

“*Left*” — Gk. (active voice) **apoleipo** — “to leave behind”, i.e., they **left the Truth!** And they did this, whilst still proclaiming that Yahweh was with them! Blinded by pride and personal ambition, they were unappreciative of the enormity of their folly! This shows that we cannot depart from the principles of the Truth, and still be “in” the Truth!

“*Their own habitation*” — “deserted their proper abode” (Wey.). “had forsaken their proper dwelling” (Roth.). They did this!

A statement with tremendous meaning:

The rebels were of the tribes of Levi and Reuben. Reuben, together with the sons of Kohath, were camped on the south side of the tabernacle (Num. 2:10-16; 3:29). But, on the eastern side, was the camp of Moses and Aaron (Num. 3:38) — and the rebels believed that **they** should occupy the highest areas of honour — on the east side of the Tabernacle!

“*He hath reserved*” — Gk. **tereo**.

“*In everlasting chains*” — “*in perpetual bonds*” (Roth.). Gk. **aidios** — “a continuing period of time”.

“chains” is **desmos** — “bonds or means of restraint” cp. Num. 16:30-31.

(2 Pet. 2:4 has **seira** — “to fasten, or bind”).

They cannot escape the coming judgment. It is inevitable. (And what of ourselves? “Every one of us shall give account of himself” says Paul — Rom. 14:10.)

“*Under darkness*” — Their present darkness is contrasted with the “great day” when they shall be raised up, and brought forth to the light of day — and to face the judgment.

“*Judgment*” — Gk. **krisis** — and what a “crisis” it will be for them.

What a mighty lesson for the Ecclesia in every generation. The Gk. word denotes the **process** of judgment.

- First** the careful assessment and separation of the evidence;
- Second** the passing of judgment;
- Third** the execution of the judgment (as in Rev. 16:7, “true and righteous are thy judgments! (krisis)”. We must not look at these events from the standpoint of flesh — but according to the righteousness of Yahweh).

These rebels are amenable to judgment, and will stand with us before the Lord Jesus. Is it any wonder that Jude used this powerful illustration to warn the brethren of his day (and ours) of the enormity of the crimes that were then being perpetrated in the Name of Christ — and where these crimes would eventually lead. Not only for the ring-leaders, but for all those misguided brethren and sisters who would be led away from the Truth.

VERSE 7

“*Sodom and Gomorrah*” — The third illustration from the past.

The first illustration (v.5) showed us the sin of faithlessness, and a lack of understanding of the doctrine of God-manifestation.

The second illustration demonstrated the sin of human pride; and unwillingness to be humbled before Divine authority.

The third illustration from the past, now shows us where these first two deviations from the Truth will lead; to unrestrained self-indulgence, and even depravity (that is, a permissive society).



See 2 Pet. 2:6-9, and consider the following notes thereon:

VERSE 6

“*Sodom and Gomorrah*” — Cp. Gen. 13 to 19. Cities noted for corruption and immorality of the vilest sort (Gen. 13:13; Isa. 3:9; Jer. 23:14; Ezek. 16:49). The appalling godlessness of Sodom and Gomorrah was a type of the state of the world just prior to the second coming of Christ (Luke 17:28-33). Such conditions are now rapidly and devastatingly spreading throughout the earth on a scale which, even a few years ago, would have been thought preposterous. Let all Christ’s brethren be fully warned concerning the days in which we are living.

“*Turning into ashes*” — An expression denoting the utter futility and inevitable finality of such civilizations. The word occurs only here in the N.T. Scriptures (cp. Mal. 4:3).

“*Condemned*” — Gk. **katakrimo** — “to give judgment against”.

“*Overthrow*” — Gk. **katastrophe** — Lit., “a turning down”. Occurs in Sept. of Gen. 19:29.

“*Making them an ensample*” — Gk. “having made”. **hupodeigna** — “a figure, a copy”. Occurs Heb. 8:5; 9:23 (where rendered “pattern”). See James 5:10.

“After should live” — An example for those who would have come afterwards; but too late for those sons and daughters of God who had been in Sodom before the destruction! They had departed from the Truth, and were therefore destroyed in the judgments upon Sodom (cp. Gen. 18:23-32). Sodom and Gomorrah were to be continually held up by Yahweh’s servants, as an example for all generations.

“Ungodly” — **asebeo** — Occurs only here and in Jude 15, = impiously; wickedly.

VERSE 7

“Delivered” — **rhumai** — “to draw or snatch from danger” (Bullinger). Occurs Rom. 11:26; see Gen. 19:16; 1 Cor. 10:13-14; Ezek. 9:4-6.

“Just Lot” — “just” is **dikaiois** — “that which is right, a right state”. Abraham had prayed for the righteous in Sodom (Gen. 18:23-33; cp. 15:6). Thus God administered justice and mercy.

“Vexed” — Gk. **kataponeo** — “to wear down by hard labour” (Bullinger). Note the only other occurrence of this word, Acts 7:24, where it has been rendered “oppress”. Lot’s “labour” was threefold:

- (1) striving to preserve his own integrity;
- (2) trying to save his own family;
- (3) opposing the godlessness and immorality of his contemporaries (Gen. 13:13).

But he was not even successful in saving his own family. And Lot’s experiences are to be understood as a sobering type of events taking place upon earth at Christ’s return (Luke 17:28-30). Thus, in v.7-8 Lot is three times declared “righteous”. The word rendered “just”, in the Greek is the same as “righteous”.

“Filthy conversation of the wicked” — *“the lewd conduct of the lawless”* (Diag.) “Filthy” is **aselgeia**, elsewhere rendered only as lasciviousness, wantonness. It had been Lot’s own choice to live among these people. Did he prosper materially? Probably. But at what price? His misery and distress was very great.

VERSE 8

“That” — “the”.

“Dwelling among them” — In Genesis observe the six steps in Lot’s decline:

1. Strife between Abram’s and Lot’s herdsmen (Gen. 13:7).
2. He beheld the plain of Jordan and saw that it was desirable, as with Eve and the tree of knowledge (13:10).
3. He “chose” the plain of Jordan, thus separating himself from Abram (13:11).
4. He pitched his tent “toward” Sodom — as though suggesting to himself that he would get near to it without being inside it (Gen. 13:12).
5. Ultimately, he entered Sodom (14:12).
6. He eventually came to “sit in the gate of Sodom” — an honoured position, with rulers and judges (19:1). Cp. 1 John 2:16.

This form of compromise led to tremendous trials for Lot, and disaster for all those associated with him, with the exception of two daughters.

Whilst Lot settled in Sodom, Abraham remained a “stranger and pilgrim” (Heb. 11:13).

“Seeing and hearing” — Lot lived in such an appalling environment; but he was not indifferent to it, and refused to bow before the pressures of it. It is most important for us today that we do not come to accept, as normal, the evil and godless ways of the world, particularly as wickedness in every form becomes increasingly prevalent in what is acknowledged as a “permissive society”. Like Lot of old, our integrity before Yahweh must be maintained (cp. Psa. 119:53, 136, 158; Acts 17:16).

“Vexed his soul from day to day” — Not the same word rendered “vexed” in v.7. Here — **basanizo** — “to examine or scrutinise, then to torture, afflict with pain” (Bullinger). No doubt he was also afflicted with feelings of guilt. But he did not become contaminated. He experienced these feelings “daily”. True piety is not spasmodic. It is constant and steady (Prov. 28:4).

“Unlawful deeds” — Gk. **anomos** — “lawless” (adj.). The noun, **anomia**, occ. 1 John 3:4. From this word we have the English “animosity”.

VERSE 9

“The Lord knoweth” — Gk. **oida** — “to perceive, see”. Occurs Matt. 25:12. Cp. 1 Pet. 3:12; Psa. 34:15, 19; Psa. 33:18.

“How to deliver the godly” — Established examples have just been given: the sons of Korah; Noah and family; and Lot and his two daughters. Of our own generation, who will survive? Our ecclesia? Our families? Ourselves? We need to carefully ponder this question. The word “deliver” is the same as in v.7. Note that Peter says the Lord knows “how to deliver” which reminds us that Yahweh has the power to do so! And He uses ways and means which we may not be able to discern. There is enormous comfort in this for the faithful! (Psa. 4:3; 32:6-7).

“Out of temptations” — Gk. **peirasmos** — it can mean both to test and to tempt (Bullinger). God will put us to the test, but we will also face temptation (Matt. 6:13). Yahweh will provide the strength by which we may come through both testing and temptation (Phil. 4:13; 1 Cor. 10:13). Flesh is weak and prone to evil; we are thus totally dependent upon Yahweh.

“To reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment” Rom. 2:6-16; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jude v.14-15.

VERSE 7

“The cities about them, in like manner” — Once permissiveness becomes the open accepted norm, perversions and immorality spread very quickly. In our own civilization, we have only to look back ten years, or even five years, to see how quickly standards of behaviour and morality will deteriorate, once the barriers are lowered. The saints of God must be ever watchful to maintain their standards in all these matters.

“Giving themselves over to fornication” — Gk. **Porneuo** — a stronger form of porneuo; it means excessive indulgence in fornication, hence “gross immorality” (Weymouth) This is the only occurrence of this word.

“Going after strange flesh” — “other kind of flesh” (Roth.). “other” (A.V. margin). Every form of sexual perversion was practised (cp. Rom. 1:27).

“Sodom” is a term used to describe the systems of gentilism, which will be in evidence upon earth at the time of the Lord’s coming (Rev. 11:8; 14:10; 18:4, 8).

“Set forth as an example” — Set forth as an example to men and women of all succeeding generations; not hidden away. It is possible to visit the area wherein Sodom and Gomorrah flourished, and to witness at first hand the enormity and fulness of the judgment Yahweh brought against them. The word translated “example” is **deigma**, a specimen or example. Thus Jude implies that we should thoroughly “get the message” from Sodom and Gomorrah.

“Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” — “Vengeance” is the Greek **ekdikesis**, “that which proceeds out of justice”; thus the word conveys far more than mere revenge or punishment. The Divine character is echoed in the use of this word. If the evidence is carefully weighed, and a verdict presented, justice will require that the judgment be carried out. This is the process of Divine judgment.

VERSE 8

“Likewise” — “Yet, in the very same way, these men, too, cherishing vain dreams . . .” (Twentieth Century New Testament).

In effect, this verse provides a summary of the detail expounded in verses 5 to 7. In this verse there is summarised the true character of these false teachers.

They:

1. *“defile the flesh”* (Sodom and Gomorrah)
2. *“despise dominion”* (Korah, etc.)
3. *“speak evil of dignities”* (Israel’s rejection of Moses and Aaron).

These three major characteristics were manifested in:

1. Immorality and permissiveness
2. Pride and arrogance
3. Revolt against the Word, and Divinely appointed leaders.

“These filthy dreamers” — “filthy” is not in the original text, and should be omitted. “even these, in their dreamings” (Roth.). The verb, GK. **enupniazo**, occurs here. Both the noun and the verb occur in Acts 2:17, “Your old men shall dream dreams . . .”. These false Leaders, with whom Jude was contending, claimed to speak with the voice of Divine authority, as the ancient prophets, or those of the first century ecclesias who spoke under spirit guidance. The Mosaic Law insisted that any such claims should be thoroughly tested (Deut. 13:1-5); and if such a person was found to be teaching contrary to the Word, he was to

not simply rejected, but put to death! (cp. Jer. 23:22-27). Jude had to contend with men of a similar disposition to those who were opposed by Jeremiah. Contending “earnestly for the faith” was not an attitude restricted to the days of Jude, but has been necessary in every age, when the purity of the Truth is attacked and undermined.

“*Defile the flesh*” — cp. 1 Cor. 3:16-17, they “defiled the Temple” of God, in violation of this important principle (cp. John 2:19, “destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” — because his body had been the abiding place of the Spirit-Word of God!). Contrast **the sin of Sodom**.

“*Despise dominion*” — “set authority at nought” (Wey.); “Lordship they set aside” (Roth.). There was a rejection of Divine authority which had been invested in God’s chosen servants. If a man stands for the Truth, as revealed in God’s word, those who oppose him to undermine his teaching are, in reality, opposing the Divine authority which has been invested in the Word of God. The members of the Body with whom Jude contended were busy undermining the teaching and authority of the ecclesial Pioneers. This was the sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. The Greek word here, **kuriotes**, refers to mastery, rulers, lordship, or authority. Note the vital exhortations found in 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7.

“*Speak evil of dignities*” — Gk. **blasphemeo doxas** — “blaspheme glories”. The identical expression occurs in 2 Pet. 2:10, the only other occurrence. This appears to be a clear reference to Peter’s warning. The “glory” of Yahweh is associated with God-manifestation, and with the Word of God. So they blasphemed the doctrine of God-manifestation, and rejected the teaching of the Word upon the subject.

VERSE 9

“*Yet*” — Gk. **de** — “whereas” (Roth.). “But” (Wey.). That which now follows will contrast the conduct of these false teachers, with the angel of Yahweh.

“*Michael the archangel*” — This verse is drawing attention to the incident described in Zechariah 3:1-2, which was related to the historical events described in Ezra 4 and 5. “Michael” means “who is like Ail”.

A name used here to describe one of the most prominent of the Angels. Gabriel, speaking to Daniel, referred to “Michael, your prince” (Dan. 10:21) and termed him “one of the chief princes” (Dan. 10:13). Probably he also appears in the

narrative of Josh. 5:14-15 as the “captain of the army of Yahweh”. He was probably also the Angel mentioned in Ex. 23:20-23, as the one who bore the Name of Yahweh, and was placed in charge of the affairs of Israel during the wilderness wanderings. Here was Yahweh’s personal representative.

NOTES ON ZECHARIAH 3:1-2

VERSE 1

“*Joshua*” — He was the high priest. Ezra was associated with him in the work of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 4:1-6) — and in this work they were strongly opposed by the “satan”, the Samaritans. By exercising strong pressure, the “satan” eventually caused the work to cease (v.24).

“*Standing before the angel of Yahweh*” — Cp. Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43. The angels were present to strengthen Christ — so they were present to assist in the work of restoration, under Zerubbabel and Joshua. The angels are “public-serving spirits” who are “sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14 Diag.).

“*Satan standing at his right hand*” — The Samaritans (Ezra 4:1-5). Cp. Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, who fulfilled the anti-type, in the days of Christ.

“*To resist him*” — From the same root as “satan”. A trial to the faith of Joshua.

VERSE 2

“*And Yahweh said*” — This is a most interesting comment. Jude has stated that it was “Michael” who spoke in this matter, but Zechariah says it was Yahweh. Yet, both are correct; for Michael was a manifestation of Yahweh, and therefore when he spoke it could be truthfully said that Yahweh spoke. God-manifestation is the principle involved (cp. Ex. 23:21: “for my Name is in him . . .”).

“*Yahweh rebuke thee, O satan*” — This came to pass (Ezra 6:7). Darius ordered the adversaries to cease their activities — and the work of

rebuilding to continue . . . (A powerful example of the way in which “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men . . .” Dan. 4:17).

“Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire” — The affairs of Israel at this time appeared to be facing disaster — but, through Divine intervention, the cause of Joshua and Israel was “plucked out of the fire” — i.e., saved from what appeared to be inevitable failure.

Jude’s reference to this incident, as recorded in Zechariah, is to emphasise the attitude of the faithful Joshua and Michael. Joshua had been prepared to quietly wait for Yahweh to judge his cause, and to see that right prevailed. Likewise, the Angel Michael did not descend to the abusive, demoralising tactics of the “satan” (the Samaritans) who “blasphemed” by falsely accusing Joshua and his fellow-workers. Faithful endurance is a necessary attitude in the Truth.

But these false brethren, whom Jude was now accusing, compared very favourably in the light of this example from the past: They openly proclaimed blasphemous teachings, in contrast to the teachings of the ecclesial pioneers; and they openly opposed the sound brethren, who would have guided the ecclesias in the way of Truth.

“Archangel” — Lit. “Chief-messenger” (Roth.).

“Contending with the devil” — “contending” is not the same as v.3. Here it is **diakrino** — “to separate the evidence; weigh the evidence; make a decision or judgment . . .”

“Devil” is **diabolos** — “false accuser, slanderer”.

It is interesting to note that in Zechariah the term used to define the adversary is Satan; but here is termed diabolos. The Samaritans were thus both adversaries and false accusers (Ezra 5:3-5).

“He disputed” — The verb, Gk. **dialegomai** (Strg; Yg; Bull.)— (English “dialogue”), “to reason, or discuss, or dispute about a thing”.

The parties concerned in the incident were: the Israelites, the Samaritans, the Persians. Michael did not personally intervene in the discussions — but as “the eye of God” (Ezra 5:5) he saw that the events were controlled in accordance with Yahweh’s purpose.

(Cp. similar language in a similar incident: Dan. 10:13).

“*The body of Moses*” — “Body” is the Gk. **soma** — simply, a body whether living (Matt. 6:22) or dead (Matt. 27:52). But it certainly does not have to mean a **dead** body.

The phrase represents the “ecclesia in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38). The present ecclesia is termed “the **BODY** of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:27) — and similar language is used by the apostle in at least six other places. So that the “ecclesia in the wilderness” is quite Scripturally defined by Jude as “the body of Moses”. (The “dispute” was between the Jews and Samaritans — Ezra 4-5.)

“*Durst not*” — “did not dare” (Wey.).

“*A railing accusation*” — Gk. **blasphemia krisis**. Literally “a blasphemous judgment”. Cp. the word “**blasphemo**” (verb) in v.8, where it is rendered “speak evil”. And cp. “**krisis**” in v.6, where it is rendered “judgment”.

There will be a time for the “krisis” — at the return of Christ. These matters will be in his hands; even the false teachers should have acknowledged this principle. But Michael did not return the same type of “blasphemous judgment” upon the Samaritans as they had delivered upon the Jews (Ezra 4:13).

(This same phrase occurs in 2 Pet. 2:11, from which Jude appears to be quoting; Jude cites Zech. 3:2, in support of the principle set down by Peter).

“*But said, the Lord rebuke thee*” — Quoted from Zech. 3. The Angel acknowledged that all true judgment emanated from the mind of the One Eternal Spirit (cp. Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19; Psa. 7:11).

Note the contrast in attitudes: the irreverent, unbridled speech of the false teachers — contrasted with the disciplined and restrained speech of the Angel. Another means is set before the brethren, by which they might discern between the true and the false.

VERSE 10

“*But these*” — The false teachers; those who had “crept in unawares”, now contrasted once again with the integrity of the faithful.

“*Speak evil of those things which they know not*” — “Speak evil” is Gk. **blasphemo** — the same word having occurred in v.8. “know” is Gk. **oida**— knowledge in a general sense.

On the question of basic understanding of the Truth, Jude’s opponents failed on three major counts:

- (1) They did not understand the doctrine of God-manifestation.
- (2) They did not believe the true doctrine of the atonement.
- (3) They did not practice or preach the true meaning of "liberty in Christ".

Therefore, in their ignorance and folly, they presumed to speak with authority ("great swelling words of vanity" — 2 Pet. 2:18) about things which they did not correctly understand, thus demonstrating that they were, in effect, the offspring of the serpent. Notice the wording of the next phrase; these terms precisely define the serpent-characteristics!

"But what they know naturally, as brute beasts" — "in things which, like the brute, they do understand instinctively" (Wey.). They tried to interpret Divine things in terms of fleshly reasonings.

No wonder Jude found himself faced with such a disastrous situation. Where would the ecclesias be, if influenced according to these standards of "logic"?



*"but what they know naturally,
as BRUTE BEASTS, in those
things they corrupt themselves"*

"Brute beasts" is the Greek, **zoon alogos**. A most interesting expression. We are familiar with the word "logos", one of its primary meanings being "to reason". But when, in the Greek, a word is prefixed with the letter "a" the word becomes the negative; thus in this case, alogos signifies "**without** reason"! Why did they try to rationalise according to the flesh? Because of human pride — the greatest of all human failings! "Flesh must be wise", says the flesh. But the things of God can only be understood by the mind of the spirit: Jer. 9:23-24; Psa. 139:14; cp. Matt. 18:3; 1 Cor. 2:12-16.

"In those things" — i.e. those things produced in their own carnal minds, but given a cloak of respectability in the name of "religion".

"They corrupt themselves" — "bringing themselves to ruin" (Rotherham). Gk. **ptheiro**, literally "to destroy by means of corrupting".

This is the **natural** process of the flesh; hence its application to spiritual things. Cp. use of this word in 2 Cor. 11:3.

See also Gen. 6:12, (where the Hebrew means, "decay, causing ruin . . .").

Peter used the word in an almost identical context: 2 Pet. 2:12. This verse in Jude (v.10) appears to be a further direct reference to Peter's second epistle.

What is the end result for those who embrace false doctrine, or wrong practice? Corruption!

Whilst the verb ("corrupt" Gk. **phthairo**) occurs here, the noun (Gk. **phthora**) occurs in Gal. 6:8, "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption . . ." Reaping must inevitably follow the sowing.

See Rom. 1:21-22.

Jude has already graphically illustrated three basic errors propounded by false teachers:

- The error of turning liberty into license (*as with Israel in the wilderness*).
- The error of failing to correctly understand the doctrine of the atonement, and utter dependence upon God's saving grace. (*As with Korah, Dathan and Abiram*).
- The error of failing to understand the purpose of human existence, which is to manifest the principles of Godliness rather than being ruled by the flesh. (*As with Sodom and Gomorrah*).

Now, in v.11, **Cain**, **Balaam** and **Korah** are given as examples of the types of characters against whom his brethren should be warned. Thus, in drawing attention to three men, rather than three incidents we are warned not merely against the **acts** of error with which these men were associated, but of the types of characters through which such errors are manifested.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Cain | claimed to be a worshipper of God, but was only prepared to do so on his own terms. |
| Balaam | moued the words of God, but was intent upon his own self-glorification, not Yahweh's; and whilst speaking God's words, he pursued his own material advantage. |
| Korah | refused to be humbled before Divine authority. He was dominated by fleshly pride, and rejected those who had been set in authority over the ecclesia. |

VERSE 11

"*Woe unto them*" — This is the same word used for the "three woes" of the

Apocalypse. And the same word used by Christ eight times, in his denunciation of the Pharisees (Matt. 23). Gk. **ouai** — an exclamation of grief and indignation. And remember, this is not merely Jude's assessment of the fate in store for these brethren; for Jude wrote as he was moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21) and Jude therefore pronounced God's judgment upon them.

"For they have gone" — The crisis brought about by these brethren was no longer a matter of prophecy; it had become a reality. Jude writes in the past tense, "they **have** gone . . ." in other words, they had lost the Truth, and were not even aware of it!

"In the way of Cain" — "way" is the Gk. **hodos** — "a road, a path". Thus, these false teachers followed in the foot-steps of Cain, on the road to spiritual corruption and disaster. (Contrast the true "way" in Christ, John 14:6 and Heb. 10:19-20, where, in both cases, the word is also **hodos**.)



"Cain" means "gain". He was a man who set out to gain the things of the flesh. But he was not irreligious. He did not believe he had turned his back upon God. He considered himself to be a worshipper of the Creator, but he did so on his own terms. See Gen. 4:3-5, wherein is the first recorded account of men offering sacrifices to Yahweh. One of the first principles of Divine worship which is conveyed in these verses is that God looks approvingly upon the sacrifice, if the offerer himself is acceptable. ("Yahweh had respect **unto Abel** and his offering . . . but **unto Cain** and to his offering He had not respect . . ."). A love for the Creator and His Truth was not in Cain's heart.

It appears that the offering which was required from Cain and Abel was that which later became known as the Burnt Offering. The word "offering" in these verses is always the Heb. **minchah**, which, in the Law of Moses, was also applied to the meal offering. The meal offering was compulsorily offered with the burnt offering and the peace offering. The offering required in Gen. 4 could hardly be the peace offering, as that came at the end of the sacrificial code. It is far more likely that the principle of **dedication** was being taught, which was the

principle of the burnt offering. Abel offered the animal sacrifice (a ram, under the Mosaic Law) and also the **minchah**.

But Cain offered only the **minchah**. Not only is this evident in the Genesis account, but is strongly inferred in the literal Greek of Heb. 11:4, where Rotherham translates: "By faith, a fuller sacrifice did Abel offer unto God than Cain . . .". Cain did not appreciate or acknowledge that the shedding of blood was a necessary principle of worship; thus, Cain did not correctly understand the doctrine of the atonement! The very charge that Jude laid against his opponents.

Cain's folly led to a terrible tragedy: he committed murder, and then found himself sent into exile and alienated from God. And the same end was in store for Jude's adversaries, unless they turned from "the way of Cain" (cp. 1 John 3:12-15).

"Ran greedily" — "ran riotously" (R.V.), "rushed on headlong" (Wey.). Complete lack of restraint is implied, in their pursuit of fleshly ideals.

"After the error of Balaam" — His name means "wasting of the people". Thus, men who displayed the character of Balaam would bring about the spiritual wasting, and eventual corruption, of the people of God. Balaam turned "the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (v.4). It was on his advice that the women of Moab were displayed before the men of Israel, resulting in their seduction. The type is clear (see Rev. 3:14). Balaam is a symbol of ecclesial leadership which encourages the breaking-down of the barriers of separation between the ecclesia and the world. Such leaders perhaps surreptitiously, will encourage union between the ecclesia and the world, (see Num. 25; 31:16; cp. James 4:4; 1 John 2:15), and will bring worldly ideas and philosophies into the ecclesia. The inevitable results of such conduct will be the corrupting of the Truth and the corruption of those who should bear the Truth in its basic purity.



See 2 Pet. 2:15-16. Once again, it is evident that Jude is referring to Peter's second epistle. Peter's comments, in the light of Jude's reference are most illuminating.

"For reward" — They could not keep the question of their own material advantage out of their spiritual thinking. Like Balaam of old, material gain was high on their list of priorities. Although they preached concerning the coming kingdom of God, their ambition indicated that they wanted their reward in material well-being and the pleasures of this life. But contrast the attitude of Jude and his faithful brethren. Christ has said: "My reward is with me" (i.e., at

his coming, Rev. 22:12). The faithful ones will patiently wait for their reward until that time, when Christ will bestow a reward far greater than flesh can give in this present evil age; for, the reward he will bring for his brethren of faith will be eternal life.

“And perished” — Gk. **apollumi** — “to destroy fully”. They ensured their own complete and utter destruction. It is as though Jude sees the corrupters of the Truth in his own day, plunging down into the depths of the earth together with Korah and his fellow rebels. Their end is equally as certain.

“In the gainsaying of Korah” — Gk. **antilogia** — appears to be a combination of **“anti”** (against; as in anti-christos) and **“logos”** (reason). The prefix “log” is almost exclusively associated with some aspect of reasoning, speaking, thinking. Thus Weymouth translates: “in the rebellion of Korah”.

He showed no humility for either Moses or the Word of God — and the deviationists of Jude’s day were of an identical frame of mind.

Of the characters manifested by these three men, one feature which they all had in common, and which stands out starkly is: the display of characteristics which destroyed the unity of the Spirit within the ecclesias.

Because of their conduct, and the philosophies they preached, those who would remain faithful to the Truth were forced to oppose them.

Yet, those who rebelled against the Truth then accused the true brethren of causing disunity, and failure to practise love among the brethren.

Look at their characters carefully — and this is the common characteristic which stands out clearly: the destruction of the unity of the Spirit within the ecclesias.

The characters reveal a two-fold enormity:

1. **Defiance** of God and
2. **Destruction** of man.

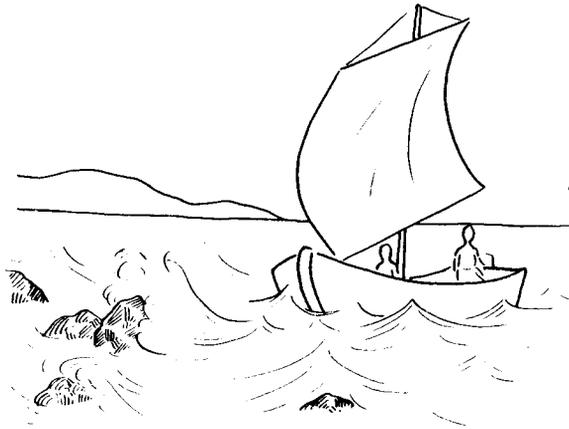
VERSE 12

“These” — Jude unflinchingly identifies the characters which were in opposition to the Truth. He does so without compromise, and without fear or favour.

“Are spots” — Jude now introduces six figures of speech to illustrate the true character of “these” men. Gk. **spilas** — a hidden rock or reef. Rendered “hidden rocks” (R.V., Roth.), “sunken rocks” (Wey.).

On the surface, they cannot be seen, but they represent grievous danger to the unwary. They will “make shipwreck” of your faith, if you permit it (1 Tim.

1:19-20). In this figure of speech, what is the answer to the problem? Be a well-trained sailor! Know your ship; be familiar with the seas through which you must sail. Study your charts (the Word) to know the **true path**, and where **dangers lurk**.



*‘These are spots (hidden rocks)
in your feasts of love, when
they feast with you,
feeding themselves
without fear’*

And: if those on watch do not **sound a warning**, the ship may founder, and go down “with all hands”.

“In your feasts of charity” — Gk. one word: **agapais** — (plural) — rendered “love feasts” (R.V., Roth., Wey., Diag.).

A communal meal of fellowship, held prior to having the bread and wine of remembrance. (Mark 14:22; Matt. 26:26).

These feasts eventually departed from the principles of brotherly love and fellowship (see 1 Cor. 11:20-22). Luxury and disparity replaced simplicity and equality. In some cases these meals were degenerating into little more than drunken orgies. No wonder Paul intimated that such activities should no longer be held.

“When they feast with you” — Gk. **suneuchoeo** — “to entertain sumptuously” from “sun” (together) and “euchia” (good cheer).

“They fare sumptuously together” (Roth.).

“They have no qualms about carousing in your midsts” (Moff.).

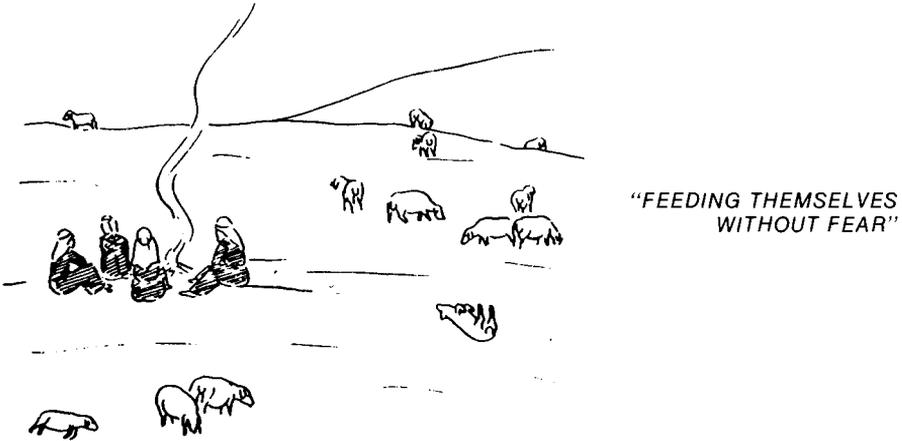
The Greek does not indicate that this profligate type of companionship was necessarily general among all the brethren — but was practised by the ones Jude is indicating.

“Feeding themselves without fear” — Gk. **poimanio**.

Bullinger: “to exercise the whole office of a shepherd, which involves not merely the feeding on grass, but the entire leading, guiding, guarding, and folding the flock”.

This is the second figure of speech.

What an indictment upon **these** “shepherds”! Were they concerned for the eternal well-being of the flock? Not at all. They wanted a good following. But they did not feed the flock on the pure, unadulterated Word of God. Thus, they fed themselves, not the flock.



This is the stronger of the two words the Lord used to Peter, when he told that apostle: “Feed my sheep . . .” What a contrast between Peter and **“these”**! “By their fruits ye shall know them”! (Matt. 7:20).

Cp. the terrible accusation levelled against the shepherds of Israel in Ezekiel 34 and Isaiah 56:11. Shepherds who had no real care or love for the flock of God; but served their own interests continually.

See Peter’s beautiful exhortation to shepherds in 1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Contrast Psa. 78:29-31; Luke 21:34; Phil. 3:18-19.

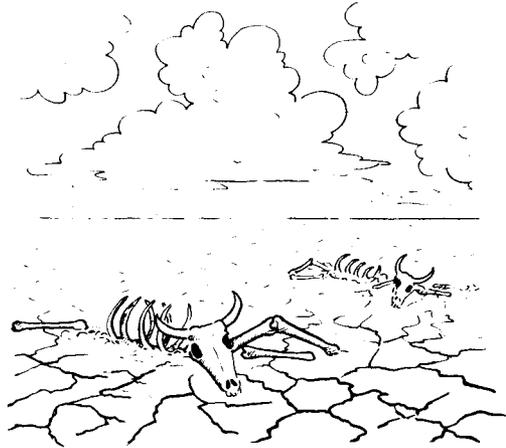
“without fear” (Gk. **aphobos**) — indicates that they experienced no qualms of conscience concerning their actions.

They remained unmoved at any suggestion that they would have to give account of their stewardship.

“Clouds they are without water” — The third figure of speech to describe the character of these false brethren.

They have the appearance of bringing refreshment to the dry, under-nourished earth — but, perfidiously, they fail to provide that which has been promised. The analogy is that of the farmer, surveying his dry, arid fields, and scanning the horizon for signs of rain. He sees the clouds gathering in the distance. He hopes against hope. The clouds are driven nearer and nearer, by the winds — then they pass away aimlessly, having failed to deliver rain. On the part of the farmer, there is frustration and bitter disappointment.

*"clouds they are
without water,
carried about
of winds"*



Spiritually, pure doctrine is likened to descending rain (Deut. 32:2). But these teachers did not have it.

Why do they not bring rain? Because they are **empty!**

They may be very impressive, and may be excellent orators — but all that they present is summarised by Peter: “great swelling words of **vanity!**”

“Carried about of winds” — “driven before the winds” (Twentieth Century New Testament): “swept along by the wind” (Moffat). Having no real depth or stability based upon the unchanging Word of God, these false teachers were “carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14).

“Trees whose fruit withereth” — The fourth metaphor. “fruitless trees in late autumn” (R.S.V.) “trees in autumn, fruitless” (Weymouth). These renderings are virtually literal, i.e., trees which have gone through the four seasons of the year; and yet, by the late autumn have **still** not fulfilled their earlier appearance of bringing forth **fruit**.

In spite of much apparent growth, no fruit ever developed.

The idea conveyed in this expression is not only of unfruitfulness, but **uselessness**. Even if they were not undermining the Truth, what good could such teachers accomplish, to strengthen the ecclesias?

Contrast Psa. 1:3.



“Twice dead” — Such trees had “died” the previous winter, when the leaves had fallen, leaving the trees bare, and with the appearance of death. They had then gone through the cycle of the seasons, and now, in the late autumn, are bare again — twice dead — without having borne fruit (1 Tim. 5:6).

There is a striking and dramatic association of ideas between this metaphor, and the Apocalyptic comments concerning “the second death”. (The death of the rejected at the judgment seat of Christ) for those who are unfruitful, in the service of the Spirit.

“Plucked up by the roots” — “torn up by the roots” (Twentieth Century New Testament). A dramatic action, requiring enormous strength. There is One who has such strength, and Who will do precisely this to those who oppose His will (Matt. 15:3; cp. Psa. 1:3).

VERSE 13

“Raging waves of the sea”
— The fifth figure of speech.

*“Raging waves
of the sea,
foaming out
their own shame”*



Perhaps an oblique reference to Isa. 57:20, “the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt . . .” (cp. Isa. 17:12-13; Psa. 93:3-4).

“Raging” is the Gk. **agrios** — “wild” — Thus unrestrained, ungovernable, destructive.

Raging seas also cause shipwreck — like the “hidden rocks” of v.12 — picking up the helpless vessels, tossing them about upon the wild ocean, dashing them to pieces, in the fury of the storm.

“*Foaming out their own shame*” — Raging seas produce foam. It covers the surface of the sea as a white, swirling mass; and much of it becomes cast upon the shore. The foam produced by these false brethren was their shame. “Shame” is that which **should** arise from guilt. But these felt no shame for their guilt.

“shame” is plural, relating to the many disgraces of their conduct, and perverse example to others.

Jude looked at these false teachers, and this is how **he** saw them. But what of the other brethren? Did they see raging seas, foaming out their shame? Or did they see a quiet, peaceful, placid sea?

“*Wandering stars*” — The sixth figure of speech. “Wandering” is the Gk. **planetes** — “a wanderer”. (English, “planet” — so called, because of their irregular movement, in relation to the earth).



“Stars” are “fixed” — in relation to the earth — and each is a “sun” generating **light**. But the planets follow no set pattern in relation to the earth. They cannot be relied upon as guides because of their constantly changing positions — and they are **dead!** They generate **no light** of themselves — but only reflect light from the sun.

But, the stars of heaven all follow a regular pattern, and can be relied upon in the darkness of the night for two important things: **light** and **guidance**. Thus, **faithful** brethren are described by Daniel as the “stars, for the olam and beyond . . .” (12:3) constant in the political and ecclesiastical heavens, to give light and guidance to the world.

But **these** “wandering stars” could never be relied upon.

“*To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever*” — An apparent reference to 2 Pet. 2:17.

“reserved” is **tereo** — (See v.1, v.6).

The end for **these** “stars” is **not** to shine in the “heavens” of the kingdom, but to have their light (which is really darkness Matt. 6:23) put out forever. They are useless for Yahweh’s purpose or His glory. And they are destructive menaces to their fellow-men.

SUMMARY OF SIX METAPHORS

- The first:** Hidden from the view of those who are not fully sure of the way, they make shipwreck of the faith of many.
- The second:** Whilst professing to be shepherds of the flock, they are really interested only in their own personal advantage, and do not really make sacrifices for the good of the flock.
- The third:** Whilst having the appearance of those who bring the refreshing teaching of sound doctrine, they fail to deliver that which they appear to offer — so that the ecclesias remain no better off in spiritual matters.
- The fourth:** Whilst appearing outwardly to be fruitful trees, they do not produce fruit that the ecclesia might be fed.
- The fifth:** Whilst professing piety, they are really not restrained by the principles of the Truth, and bring chaos and destruction to the brotherhood (like the raging waves of the sea).
- The sixth:** Like planets, they go their own way — undisciplined by the principles of the Truth — causing disaster to any who will follow them.

VERSE 14

“*Enoch also*” — His name means “dedicated” or “initiated”. He was “initiated” into the ways of Yahweh, and “dedicated” his life to walking in those ways. (An example to all true believers; and an impressive contrast to the false teachers whom Jude is forced to indict.)

A “Book of Enoch” purports to recount revelations received by the Enoch of Genesis 5. Never formally recognised as part of the Canon of Scripture, it was generally associated with the period of the book of Barnabus, which was probably in late New Testament times. The “Book of Enoch” was entirely lost sight of from A.D.600 until about 200 years ago, when the Abyssinians discovered an Ethiopic version of the book. The first known English translation did not appear until 1821. Attempts have been made to date the book as far back as the second century B.C., but portions of it seem to be quite clearly of New Testament dating, or later.

“*The seventh from Adam*” — “Seven” signifies completeness; thus, in Enoch there is typified the complete purpose of the Creator. He also typifies those who will be living in the seventh millennium from Adam, and who will be alive upon earth at the Lord’s coming. Like Enoch, they will be removed from their evil environment, that they “should not see death”. Enoch testified for the Truth, without compromise, against belligerent opposition. One of Cain’s descendants, Lamech, was a powerful man of the flesh. Indeed, his name means “powerful, overthrower, wild man”. He wrote a personal anthem to his power and his progress:

*“I can kill a man for wounding me,
And a young man for hurting me,
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly, Lamech seventy and sevenfold.”*

(Gen. 4:23-24, see Companion Bible;
these verses said to have been set
in poetical form in the original).

Lamech’s boast was that he no longer needed God’s protection, as had been the case with Cain. Now, he believed, he was sufficiently powerful to ensure his own protection, and to enforce his will upon others. Thus, it was an era of evil, with immorality and materialism dominating the minds of men. The times were so evil, they led to the greatest judgment mankind was ever to know, prior to Christ’s second coming. All except eight people were found unfit to live upon the earth. In this environment of evil and violence and godlessness, Enoch testified to the Truth.

Among the antediluvians three great men stand out, each teaching us a profound lesson upon the subject of living the truth in a hostile environment.

- ABEL** showed the necessity of correct worship, and of submission to God.
- ENOCH** showed the need for separation from evil, faithful dedication to God, and a consistent walk in the Truth.
- NOAH** showed the need for faithful obedience in preparation for escape from judgment.

Virtually the same message is conveyed in the meanings of their names, when they are linked together: “Discern that all is VANITY, except the will of Yahweh; become INITIATED into the way of life and DEDICATED fully thereto; after which, Yahweh will give us REST . . .”

“*Prophesied of these*” — “these” of v.8, 10, 12. But “these” types were also in the “ecclesias” in the days of Enoch. So he prophesied against them, when the sons of God saw the daughters of other men, and married out of the faith (Gen. 6:2). Whilst Enoch’s prophesying may have had a primary application to his own day, it is evident from Jude’s comments that the days of Noah were typical of that judgment which will be manifested at Christ’s return. The Lord himself made this quite clear: Matt. 24:37-39.

“*The Lord cometh with 10,000 of his saints*” — “Cometh” is “the act of coming” (Bullinger) — thus relating to the great drama and purpose of Christ’s coming!

From the Gk., the literal expression here is: “in holy myriads of Himself” (see Diaglott Lit. Gk.). In this phrase is the Gk. word “*hagiais*”, related strongly to “*hagios* (v.3) where it is rendered “saints”, and “*hagiazō*” (sanctified [v.1] — meaning: “separated, made clean”). Thus Jude is speaking of the doctrine of God manifestation — one of the doctrines rejected by these false teachers!

A dramatic and sobering thought is presented in this verse: that at this time, the ungodly — whether in or out of the ecclesia, will be separated from God’s true servants, and will face a judgment that will bring them destruction! Paul says that Christ comes “to be glorified in his saints”. This is God-manifestation! But it also means the rejection and judgment of the ungodly within the ecclesias!

The true saints are those who imitate the attitude and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Cp. similar language in Deut. 33:2; Psa. 68:17; Dan. 7:10; 1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 1:7-8; Matt. 16:27).

These saints will go forth with Christ, for the judgment of the world; “Unto ye that fear my Name . . . ye shall go forth . . . and ye shall tread down the wicked . . . for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith Yahweh of Armies . . .” (Mal. 4:2-3).

The word translated “ten thousands” is the Gk. “**urias**” (English “myriad”). It does not necessarily mean 10,000; but a very large number (rendered “an innumerable multitude” Luke 12:1; rendered “many thousands” Acts 21:20).

(But, 10,000 is figurative in Scripture for a large, unspecified number: see 1 Sam. 29:5; Psa. 3:6; 1 Cor. 4:15; 14:19; Dan. 7:10; Rev. 5:11).

Remember the great characteristic of Enoch: “He walked with God . . .”. That means that he thought and acted in harmony with the Divine mind. This is the great challenge for us all.

VERSE 15

“*To execute judgment*” — Gk. **krisis** (same as v.6).

First: a careful assessment of the evidence;

Second: the passing of judgment;

Third: the execution of the judgment.

It will be righteous judgment (Psa. 9:7-8). In so judging, Yahweh will vindicate His righteous servants (Psa. 31:18, 23).

“*Upon all*” — Gk. **kata** — with the genitive — literally “down upon”; thus, the Diaglott translates: “against all” (see also Rotherham).

i.e., Yahweh will be against all the “ungodly”.

Jude is providing a stark warning for these false teachers.

Paul said, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31).

Of this time, Christ has said: “as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth” (Luke 21:35).

“*And to convince*” — “convict” (Weymouth, Twentieth Century New Testament, Rotherham, etc.) Vine: “to convict thoroughly” (Gk. intensive).

In that day, what of the unsuspecting flocks who have followed these men?

Where will they stand at that time?

This is one of the appalling features of the work of false teachers: they not only destroy themselves, but very often lead many others also to destruction.

“*ungodly*” — Gk. **asebes** — One who is impious, who opposes the things of God (see v.4, 18).

“*Ungodly deeds*” — Jude not only condemns the teaching of these false shepherds, but also the deeds, or actions of life, which result from wrong thinking and wrong action (Contrast Rom. 2:7).

“*Ungodly committed*” — Gk. *asebeo*. Not only were the deeds ungodly; but the committal of them was effected in an attitude of defiance of God’s will.

“*Hard Speeches*” — “harsh words” (Twentieth Century New Testament); “hard things” (Rotherham). Gk. *skleros* — “hard, rough, dry, harsh”. A most interesting expression! Whilst Jude’s opponents spoke scathingly of Jude’s lack of “christian charity” and his “hardness” and his “lack of love”, in the eyes of God it was these men, not Jude and his faithful followers, who were guilty of hardness. And note well Jude’s words, stating that when men who are faithfully defending the Truth are opposed by others, the opponents are actually speaking against the Lord and not merely against their brethren.

“*Against him*” — In their pride and folly, they opposed Yahweh! Compare the illustrations already cited: Israel in the wilderness (v.5); Korah and his associates (v.6); and the men of Sodom (v.7). Then the personalities: Cain, Balaam, and Korah (v.11).

In v.5-7 three examples were quoted from the past to show that apostasy is destructive of the Truth. Then, in v.11, **three** persons were named, whose characters embodied evil principles of the flesh. Now, three aspects of the flesh are listed as being the basic principles which lead to apostasy:

MURMURING	(cp. Israel in the wilderness, v.5)
COMPLAINING	(cp. the rebellion of Korah, v.6)
LUSTS	(cp. the men of Sodom, v.7)

VERSE 16

“*These are murmurers*” — The Gk. verb *gonguzo* and noun *gongusmos* occur in the Septuagint for Israel’s “murmuring” against Moses and Aaron (see Ex. 15:24; 17:3; Num. 14:29, 36 etc.). These two Greek words occur three times in John 6, wherein the Jews are said to have “murmured” against the teaching of the Lord Jesus, and even some of the disciples murmured against him. The words speak of smouldering dissatisfaction; a condition that often exists as a prelude to blatant opposition and rebellion. And because these ideas emanate

from the flesh, it is often a relatively easy matter to spread this condition to embrace many others, particularly those who are not strong in the Truth. (Note carefully Peter's words in this regard: 2 Pet. 2:14, 18. In the latter verse, the words rendered "those that were clean escaped" would be better rendered "just escaping" [R.V.], or "men who have barely escaped" [R.S.V.]. That is, those are either young or immature in their grasp of the faith, and therefore comparatively easy prey to the "great swelling words of vanity" [v.18] expressed by the false teachers whom Peter and Jude opposed.)

The rebellion at Sinai, which resulted in the manufacture of the golden calf, had begun with murmuring (1 Cor. 10:10); and the rebellion in the wilderness of Paran, when the Israelites flatly refused to enter the land, also began in the same way (Psa. 106:25). Workers of iniquity, purveying their ideas of treachery, labour quietly behind the scenes until they feel they have sufficient power or support to bring the issue into the open.

"Complainers" — "complaining of their lot" (Wey.). The Gk. word **memp-simoiroi** is compounded of two words, **mephomai** "to blame" and **moira** "a fate, or a lot", (see Vine).

They were discontented at the restrictions placed upon their lives by the Word of God. The strict self-discipline of a life of self-denial did not suit them; they failed to appreciate the dictum of Paul: "in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" — and that the flesh must therefore be disciplined into conforming to the ways of the Spirit. Because of "complaints" at the strictures of life in the Truth, the philosophy of **license** was promulgated by these teachers (v.4). Their doctrine was "shall we continue in sin that grace might abound? **Yes!**" (contrast 1 Cor. 9:27).

The correct attitude towards our conditions of life: 1 Tim. 6:6; Phil. 4:11.

"Walking" — As "murmurers" and "complainers" they were not standing still! In the middle voice, it signifies what they were doing for themselves. (Elsewhere, this word is rendered "as I made my journey" Acts 26:23; "I take my journey" Rom. 15:24; etc. Lit. "to go, to proceed on one's way . . .".)

How were they "walking" or "proceeding"? See the next phrase!

"After their own lusts" — "their evil passions" (Wey.). "They follow where their passions lead them" (Twentieth Century New Testament).

Gk. **epithumia** — "a longing, especially for what is forbidden: strong desire . . ." (cp. 1 Jno. 2:16).

Only in three places is the word used of a GOOD strong desire (Luke 22:15; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:17). In all other cases where it occurs it has the connota-

tion of evil. Any strong desire of the flesh which is contrary to the will of God, is “**lust**” within the Biblical meaning of the word. Today the world is filled with it, in every possible form. How intense must be our faith, and our love of the Word of God to counter these intense pressures being forced upon us!

See Peter’s comment: 2 Pet. 2:10; 3:3.

“*Their mouth speaketh great swelling words*” — Gk. **huperogkos** — the same word used by Peter (2 Pet. 2:18) which is the only other occurrence of this word. Jude’s usage, therefore, is a further reference to Peter’s second epistle. The Greek word has been described as conveying extremeness, to denote excessive weight or size. Hence, the oratory of Jude’s opponents was quite impressive, and possibly even emotionally moving; so that they did not lack talent as Speakers. But when their words were carefully considered, in the light of the Word of God, it could be seen that their words were empty of any real power to build up the ecclesias, and to transform their brethren into the pattern of Christ (cp. this characteristic in Psa. 12:1-4). The great danger, therefore, was that brethren and sisters who were “unskilful in the word of righteousness” (Heb. 5:13) would be led away from the Truth by these brethren whose force of oratory alone might sweep many away, setting them upon a course that would lead them out of the Truth.

“*Having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage*” — “they flatter men for the sake of what they can get from them” (Twentieth Century New Testament). One of the greatest weaknesses of the flesh — perhaps the greatest — is that of human pride. These false brethren would play upon that weakness in their brethren. Basic dishonesty is the primary aspect of this characteristic. Such conduct was condemned in both Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures: Lev. 19:15; Jas. 2:1, 9. Yahweh’s own character is a refutation of this sin, for He has clearly stated that He will be no respecter of persons; Deut. 10:17, cp. Acts 10:34. The word translated here as “advantage” signifies “gain”, thus the false teachers would place personal standing or personal gain before the Truth. (Is it not a fact that flesh, of itself, will not take kindly to strong exhortation; but on the other hand will revere the person who expresses admiration?) Note the wise proverb: “To have respect of persons is not good: for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress” (Prov. 28:21).

PART TWO

Vv.17-25: HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

In this profound epistle, Jude emphasises two vital aspects of ecclesial life. The first is, that we must have sufficient knowledge of the truth — and love for it — to recognise and acknowledge sound leadership within the Body; a leadership which is soundly based upon the purity of apostolic teaching. Secondly, we must know how to implement this principle in a practical way. Thus, this second part of the epistle is devoted to showing us **how** we should contend for the faith.

VERSE 17

“But beloved” — “But ye, beloved” (R.V.); “Ye” (faithful brethren) are now contrasted with “these” (false teachers). ‘Beloved’ is Gk. **agapetos** — see occurrence v.3. There now follows a moving, uncompromising appeal to those who remain faithful among the brotherhood. Exhortation of this nature will not affect those who are working to undermine the Truth; but those who still retain something of their “first love” (Rev. 2:4) must see the need for guarding the purity of the faith. Jude therefore sets out to encourage them to follow a path of faithfulness.

“Remember” — A dynamic word, in this context. Jude’s first instruction is that they should take their minds back to the past, when the foundation of apostolic preaching had been laid.

This same word occurs four times in Peter’s second epistle. (Note especially in 3:3, where the word has been rendered “mindful”.) Jude is here echoing the plea of Peter. Four times in his second epistle that apostle had called for remembrance of the original apostolic teaching; a plea that would be quite unnecessary, unless “new ideas” were then in evidence, perverting the Truth. From Peter and Jude, the message is unmistakable: “Get back to your Pioneers if you wish to preserve the Truth! Turn away from the modern philosophers!”

“The words which were spoken before of the Apostles” — Did the apostles write that the Truth would grow and prosper? Did they write that the world would become a lovelier place as the Truth spread, and ecclesias sprang up throughout the world? Did they write that peace and well-being would be the lot of the ecclesial world until the second coming of Christ? Not at all!

This phrase constitutes an urgent appeal to the writings of the apostles — especially such prophetic warnings as 2 Pet. 2:1-2; and 2 Tim. 4:3-4 — and one

of the most tragic verses in the Scriptures: Rom. 16:18. The dangers threatened not simply ecclesias, but individuals. Even those who are basically sound and sincere in the Faith, can be led away from the Truth, and lose the Kingdom!

Cp. Acts 20:30-31; 1 Jno. 2:18-19.

Now, more than ever before, this appeal from Jude rings out with an urgency unparalleled in human history — because we are living at the time of the end!

Mention of the apostles would represent an appeal to the highest source of written Divine Light which could lead the ecclesias away from the philosophy of the false teachers, and back into the way of the Truth.

VERSE 18

“*How that they told you*” — “told” is Gk. **lego**. Primarily, “to pick out, gather, to collect, then to lay before”.

A characteristic of this word is that it refers to the substance of the words, and the meaning contained in those words. Note e.g. Heb. 8:1; Jno. 12:49; “what I should SAY (**lego**) and what I should SPEAK (**laleo** — simply, to “talk”). Again in Rom. 3:19, “what things soever the law **saith** (**lego**), it speaketh (**laleo**) to them that are under the law . . .”.

What a tremendous word! Jude alludes not merely to the fact that the apostles had given many addresses and compiled certain epistles, but that those words spoken or written, convey powerful truths. It was the “substance” of the words, and the meaning they contained, that received full emphasis from Jude.

With the use of this word, **lego**, Jude reminded his brethren that they had been clearly warned by the apostles concerning the dangers which would develop. Apostasy would surely come. And this phrase implies that each brother and sister had a responsibility to uphold and defend the Truth against attack, whether from within or without.

“*There should be*” — “there will be” (Twentieth Century New Testament). “there *shall be*” (Wey., Roth.). Make no mistake, said the apostles: they **will** arise! And here is Jude saying: “Now they are here in the ecclesias!”

“*Mockers in the last time*” — Again, a quotation from Peter’s second epistle (2 Pet. 3:3), where the word “scoffers” is the same Greek word as here rendered “mockers”. Gk. **empaiktes**. This word is, in part, derived from **pai**, meaning a child. Thus, these men were the equivalent of immature, irresponsible children. Significantly, this word occurs in the Septuagint version of Isaiah 3:4, “and I will give **children** to be their princes, and **mockers** (**empaiktai**) shall have dominion over them.”

Peter's fearful prophecy had been fulfilled!

“Walk after their own ungodly lusts” — The same wording as in v.16, repeated for emphasis as a warning to brethren to beware of this characteristic — but adding the word “ungodly” to emphasise the enormity of this sin.

VERSE 19

“Separate themselves” — The Greek verb is **apodiorizo** — “to mark off”. Derived from, **apo** (from), **“dia”** (through, or by means of), and **horizo** (to limit). The word “themselves” does not appear in the text.

Had these false teachers left the ecclesia? Not at all. If they had literally separated themselves from the brethren there would have been little need for Jude to warn against their activities. In what sense, then, could it be said that they had “separated”? Firstly they had separated themselves from “the love of God” (v.21) and His son by their way of life and rejection of true apostolic teaching. They were therefore guilty of causing factionalism within ecclesias by setting forth their philosophies and practices as **alternatives** to those beliefs and practices propounded by the first century “pioneers” and their followers. These false teachers considered themselves to be more responsible and more enlightened than the earlier generation. They believed they had “new light” on numerous matters, which the earlier generation had failed to discern (cp. Isa. 65:3-5; Ezek. 14:6-8; Hos. 9:10).

“Sensual” — Gk. **psuchikos** — related to **psuche**, and formed from the noun **psyche**. The word refers to the natural or animal aspect of man; hence the translation of **psuche** as “soul”. Occurs Jas. 3:15 (note marg. A.V.). This word is in direct contrast to the Greek word **pneumatikos**, which relates to that which is spiritual. Both words occur 1 Cor. 2:14; and 1 Cor. 15:44 (twice).

Jude's point is clear: these false teachers were governed by the flesh, not the spirit.

“Having not the spirit” — Gk. **pneuma**. In this usage, the opposite of **psuchikos** — natural versus spiritual.

It is certain that this phrase means “the spirit” which is “**THE** truth” (1 Jno. 5:6; Jno. 17:17).

See Rom. 8:14, true sons of God are **led** (Gk. “to carry, to lead, to bring”) **BY** the spirit of God. The Spirit, for the purpose of leading, is manifested **IN THE WORD**.

With a particularly moving appeal, Jude now shows:

- (a) What we are to do for ourselves (v.20-21)
- (b) What we must endeavour to do for others
(vv.22-23)

VERSE 20

“But ye, beloved” — A moving appeal to the faithful — to those for whom there is still hope. The “ye” here and v.17 appears to be in direct contrast to the repetitive use of “these”, for the false teachers. It seems that they were so steeped in their apostate philosophies that Jude does not even appeal to them. For they can no longer discern the spirit of the Truth.

Gk. **agapetos** — same as v.3, 17 (third occurrence).

“Building up yourselves” — These words contain the essence of perseverance. “Persevere in the ways of the Truth”, Jude is saying, “and you will surely be rewarded with the Kingdom”. Jude now outlines four major steps which must be taken to preserve the faith within individuals. (And “four” is the symbolic number for the multitudinous Christ!) Spiritual inactivity will cause the individual to lose sight of the need for continual development in the Truth. We cannot really stand still in these matters. We are either going forward or slipping back. Consider the number of times the word “walk” occurs in apostolic writings, to indicate the necessity for continual movement forward in the Truth, towards the perfection which is in Christ Jesus.

Jude’s exhortation here is very powerful when it is seen against the background of his overall message. The Truth was under strong attack from within; and unless brethren responded to this call to build themselves up, eventually true understanding and practice of the Truth would no longer be manifested, and they would be left entirely to the sway of the apostates.

The word “building” (Gk. **epoikodomeo**) occurs only eight times in the New Testament. Acts 20:32; 1 Cor. 3:10-12 (3 times); 1 Cor. 3:14; Eph. 2:20; Col. 2:7. The eighth occurrence is here in Jude v.20. There appears little doubt that, with such rare usage in the New Testament, Jude is basing his use of the word upon earlier apostolic writings. A careful consideration of the eight passages is recommended. A uniformity of purpose is found in all occurrences of the word: Nothing can be accomplished in the Truth without the power of the word operating upon individuals, to flood their intellect and morally transform their lives.

By using the word “yourselves” Jude carried the challenge to every individual. How imperative and how personal is his exhortation. Salvation is an individual matter; and we are all individually responsible to Christ. Note, in fact, Christ’s usage of the same word: “Take heed to yourselves”! (Luke 21:34). And John also: “Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward” (2 Jno. v.8).

“On your most holy faith” — This is that in which they were to be built up. Note that in 2 Pet. 1:5-7, Peter sets out eight necessary attributes for success in the Truth — but seven of these are added to faith. That is, faith is the foundation upon which all the other attributes should be built.

Peter then adds (v.8) that if these attributes are added to faith, we shall not be “barren or unfruitful”.

Purity of life commences with sound doctrine — which is the “most holy faith” — which is “the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints” (v.3). Thus there is a reversion here to the foundation of the epistle; which is, to “earnestly contend for the faith”.

“Praying in the holy spirit” — No article. Study the Word and pray!

There is no evidence that in apostolic times **all** believers had one of the spirit gifts. So that if this phrase was related to literal exercise of Spirit gifts, the activity would be limited to certain members of the Body (cp. 1 Cor. 14:12-16;11:4-5).

“Spirit” and “holy spirit” often have application to the Word of God. Thus, Jude’s exhortation is: pray in accordance with the principles of the Spirit Word. (What is the value of praying for a cause that is not in accord with the Word? Or to pray from a motive or an attitude that is not a reflection of the character and purpose of Yahweh?).

Eph. 2:18: **“through him (Christ) we both have
access by one spirit (the truth)
unto the Father . . .”**

For the correct attitude towards praying according to the Truth, see Jno. 15:7. Christ says that if his **words** abide in us, we will pray accordingly, and those prayers will be answered. This is praying according to the Spirit-Word.

Note: Eph. 6:18: **Pray “in the spirit”, says Paul.
And in the previous verse (v.17)
he had told us that “the sword of
the spirit is “the word of God . . .”**

See, too Rom. 8:26. The Spirit-Word will help us to understand the things for which we should pray. The Word reveals God’s character and ways, which we should be endeavouring to develop.

VERSE 21

“Keep yourselves” — “Keep” is a further usage of the Gk., **tereo** (cp. earlier use: v.1, v.6 twice, v.13). “Yourselves” occurs again here. Another reminder of the personal and individual responsibility that all have to Christ, who have embraced the Abrahamic covenant. This is a call to all Believers to guard their relationship to the Father. As we have seen here, this necessitates constant application to the Spirit-Word, prayer; and now; self-examination.

“In” — Gk. **en** — “to remain within . . .”. How intimate our relationship with the Father should be! “Keep WITHIN the love of God” (Twentieth Century New Testament).

“Love of God” — This is a remarkable statement when viewed in the context of the overall message of the epistle. It is as though Jude is saying: “Consider the evil that abounds on every side, and the normal environment in which we live; yet, in spite of that, we must make **our** environment “the love of God”. Therefore, keep yourselves in that environment”. Cp. Christ’s words in Jno. 15:9-10, from which Jude could here well be drawing. One of the most misunderstood verses in Scripture is the oft quoted statement of John: “God is Love (**agape**)”. It follows that whatever God **is**, that is what sacrificial love must be — and the Word of Truth makes it clear that God is GOODNESS and SEVERITY (Ex. 34:7; Rom. 11:22, etc.). The believer must be constantly aware of the two sides of Yahweh’s character, and govern his life according to the holiness of God. Thus, he will keep himself in the “love of God”.

“Looking for” — Gk. **prosdechomai**. **pros** — “to, or towards”; **dechomai** — “to accept, by a deliberate and ready reception of what is offered” (Vine). The word, in this context, therefore, seems to imply: “look for the coming of Christ, to bring mercy, having accepted the teaching of the Truth regarding that event”.

See Jas. 5:7; contrast Jude v.12, “trees whose fruit withereth”.

“The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ” — Jude had earlier expressed this hope for these brethren (v.2).

Vine’s comment upon this word is interesting: ELEOS “is the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it”.

Thus, here are four stages in spiritual development:

1. Strengthen ourselves in the Word.
2. Pray, according to the spirit of the Truth.

3. Remain within the circle of God's love.
4. Always look for the Lord's coming.

"Unto eternal life" — The great goal which should be ever before the true disciple of Chrst: the hope of complete and perfect God-manifestation — to become a bearer of the Divine glory in the age to come (cp. 1 Tim. 6:12).

VERSE 22

"And of some have compassion" — Gk. **eleeo** — from **eleos** "mercy". Bullinger says the word means more than "have compassion" — and means "to have the desire of relieving the miserable, to show kindness by beneficence or help . . ."

The word has 26 times been translated "mercy" (in A.V.).

Are we not to practise God-manifestation? And is not "mercy" one of the two great characteristics of the God whom we worship? Ex. 34; Cp. Psa. 79:9.

This Gk. word (**eleeo**) occurs in Matt. 5:7, "blessed are the merciful" (**eleemon**) — "not merely unhappy for the ills of others, but desirous of relieving them; not merely pity, but beneficent aid promptly applied" (Bullinger) "for they shall obtain mercy (**eleeo**)".

"Making a difference" — Gk. **diakrino** — literally "to separate, distinguish, judge, to contend".

But the R.V. here adopts the accusative, and renders: "who are in doubt . . ." (the A.S.V, Weymouth, Twentieth Century New Testament, Rotherham, all endorse the R.V. on this point; Moffat renders: "have mercy on the waverers").

This means that we should distinguish between those who are truly doubtful as to what they should do, and those who have clearly rejected the principles of truth which can lead to eternal life.

Observe: One class may be prepared to reason upon the basis of the Word (Isa. 1:18); the other class will not determine upon this basis. They have developed a definite religious philosophy, and they have evolved a firm policy — and they cannot be shifted (cp. Gal. 6:1; Isa. 35:3; Matt. 9:13; 18:12, 15; Luke 15:4-5).

Try prayerfully and diligently to win over the uncommitted and the undecided; but even with these, you can achieve nothing, unless they come, with you, to the Word. This is contending earnestly for the faith!

"The word of God is living and energetic" (Heb. 4:12, Diaglott).

Some versions claim that the word should be rendered to "contend with the

doubters for the truth”, a claim based largely on the fact that this same word had been translated “contending” in v.9. But the end-meaning of the verse would remain virtually the same. And as Jude wrote these words, his heart would have been heavy at the prospects which he saw ahead for the brotherhood; knowing that so many brethren and sisters would be unable to pull through the momentous crisis that was coming upon them. All would have to decide whether to follow Jude’s opponents, or turn to the pure words of truth as now propounded by this courageous brother, and the apostles who had preceded him. So many would make the wrong decision, at the hour of crisis. And why? Because, at the moment of decision, these brethren and sisters would not have sufficient of the Word within them to guide them to a right decision. Yet, in v.21, Jude had set before them four stages in spiritual development which would have got them through the time of testing. But how many really listened to, and absorbed, the message of Jude?

VERSE 23

“*And others*” — V.22 states “and some” (Gk. **kai ous**); but here it is “and others” (**ous de**) which should be rendered “but some”. Thus, Jude has set before us in this epistle four classes of brethren:

- First:** Jude’s class, uncompromising upholders of the Truth.
- Second:** Their adversaries, the false teachers, who are “ungodly men” (v.4).
- Third:** Those of v.22, who are “doubters” or “waverers” — but when brought to reason upon the Word they “discriminated themselves” — as some suggest “making a difference” might be rendered. That is they recognise the truth themselves. They see Jude’s class for what they are, and they see the false teachers for what they are. Therefore, they are able to make the right decision at a moment of crisis.
- Fourth:** Those of this verse. With a feeling of fear, (which we do not experience with regard to the third class) these must be “pulled out of the fire . . .”. They are even weaker, and the strongest possible means must be brought to bear to bring them to their senses.

Instead of merely reasoning with them, they must have it clearly pointed out to them the fearful position in which they stand. They must be pleaded with, and not merely reasoned with.

“*Save*” — Gk. **sozo** — a word which has been translated as “save”, “make whole”, “recover”, “heal”. It is also used of eternal salvation (Rom. 5:9).

See 1 Tim. 4:16.

“*With fear*” — Gk. **phobos** — (English phobia). Literally “flight, through being scared; then, that which may cause flight” (Vine).

Cp. Paul: 1 Cor. 10:14. Take hold of these brethren, if you can — and run! We must be aware that those who take such action to try and save these bewildered brethren are themselves susceptible to the pressures of the flesh, and may be endangered by the influence of evil.

Before even thinking about entering upon such work, one must be well-versed in the Word — otherwise, not only will he be running great risks himself, but due to lack of skill to handle the situation, might cause more harm than good.

Let your sympathies for those being led astray, be tempered with the knowledge that anything that is in opposition to the truth of God’s word, must defile — or stain — the Christ-garment. This final class are really the most dangerous to those who would desire to help them. With the false teachers, there is a clear line of demarcation — but not here; there is the danger of compromise. The faithful brethren, due to emotional involvement, or excess of pity, may be moved to come to terms with this latter class. And if this happens, the result will be disaster for **all**.

Whilst exercising every form of loving consideration for these unfortunate brethren, do not become involved in the weakness of their folly.

“*Pulling them out of the fire*” — “Pulling” — Gk. **harpazo** = to snatch. Probably a second reference to Zech. 3:2 (cp. v.9).

See also Amos 4:11.

Note: these unfortunate brethren are **in** the fire! The processes leading to Divine judgment are already in operation!

“*out of*” is **ek** in the Gk. There can be no mistaking the meaning!

“*fire*” is a symbol for “judgment”.

These brethren are in dire straits, and in the last possible state of peril. Possibly even supporting the false brethren — yet, there is still hope for them!

A difficult operation. Be certain not to get burnt in the process!

“*Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh*” — Hatred is the opposite of love — and, in this context, hatred is a Christ-like characteristic. “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness” (Ps. 45:7). This is a third allusion to Zech. 3, wherein there is mention of “filthy garments” which needed to be changed (v.3).

The word rendered “garment” here is of the utmost significance. It is the “**chiton**”, an inner-vest or undergarment. When Christ was crucified, the

soldiers took his “garments” (**himation**, plural) and divided them. Then they took his “coat” (**chiton**, the same word that Jude uses) and could not divide it, because “it was without seam, woven from the top throughout” — and this was the apparel of the high priest! (cp. Ex. 26:31-32). In Mark 14:63, the clothing which the high priest rent was the “chiton”. This garment of the high priest thus spoke of unity throughout the Body. Ideally, there was to be no division, no schism. In other words, this garment was a figure for the whole Body of Christ, the one true Israel of God! The “garment” also represents Christ as high priest and mediator, whom we “put on” at baptism (Gal. 3:27).

“*Spotted*” — is the Gk. **spiloo** — a word used to indicate the defiling effect of sin, upon the Christ-garment with which we have been clothed.

Cp. Lev. 13:47-52, re the garment of a leper.



“AND OTHERS SAVE WITH
FEAR, PULLING THEM OUT
OF THE FIRE; HATING EVEN
THE GARMENT SPOTTED BY
THE FLESH.”

In these final verses, Jude addresses his readers with deep love, and a moving appeal to them, that they should commit their cause into the hands of their loving Heavenly Father. Whilst we must strive earnestly to do what is right (v.17-23) it is necessary to remember that there is a Higher Power, far greater than us all, Who can watch over us, and eventually bring us through to victory and triumph. This is the only real and abiding security for Believers, in addition to the Word which God has given us.

VERSE 24

“*Now unto Him*” — In the environment of apostacy, fear, mistrust, dishonesty — these are moving words of sublime beauty. They remind us that Yahweh sees

all, and provides his servants with strength and guidance, in times of crisis (Psa. 34:7; 127:1).

Jude directs his readers to trust in Yahweh — All human effort is pointless, without such trust. Yahweh's resources are immeasurable, by human standards — and this means that only Yahweh is competent to uphold and defend the cause of righteousness.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31 cp. Eph. 3:20-21).

"That is able to keep you" — "to guard you" (Roth.). Not the same as v.21 Gk. **phulasso** — "to keep, guard". We are under Divine care, providing we are walking faithfully before Yahweh (cp. 1 Pet. 3:12).

Yahweh can uphold our cause now, and in the Age to come.

See Psa. 121:1-3; cp. Heb. 12:13.

"From falling" — "from stumbling" (Roth.). While the word means "without stumbling" it also has the meaning of "surefooted" (Vine). The Word of God provides this: Psa. 119:105, 1.

(Jude's brethren were in danger of stumbling — due to the treachery of their own brethren; to say nothing of the evil influences of the world, and their own nature.)

"Present you faultless" — "without blemish" (Roth.), "free from blemish" (Wey.). Always rendered "without blemish" in R.V. Gk. **amomos** — a sacrificial term.

Used of Christ, 1 Pet. 1:19.

A further reminder from Jude as to what the Truth is all about. Not a life of pleasing self, and pursuing the gratification of the flesh; but, a denying of self, and a repudiation of the flesh. Used of the ecclesia, in Eph. 5:27; and in Rev. 14:5, for the perfected Saints. Once again, only Yahweh can do this. For this to be effected on our behalf, our sins must be forgiven, and our faith accounted to us for righteousness.

The false teachers, and their followers, had placed themselves outside the saving principles of the Truth.

"Present" is Gk. **histemi** — "to cause to stand". Hence, R.V., "to set".

"Before the presence of his glory" — "presence" is the Gk. **katenopion** — "directly in front of, in the very presence of". How very real is the hope we hold! The Word of God is true! And all that it promises will surely be fulfilled, so far as the faithful saints are concerned. The approved saints will actually

stand before the glorious majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the presence of the throne of his glory. Again, there is an allusion to the doctrine of God-manifestation; for, the “glory” of the Father will be manifested in the Son, and then in all the redeemed (Matt. 16:27; 25:31; cp. Col. 3:4; 1 Jno. 3:2).

“*With exceeding joy*” — A further reference to Peter’s writings: 1 Pet. 4:13.

Jude’s faithful brethren, who now looked to the immediate future with some degree of uncertainty and fear, were to look beyond the trials and the depressions of the present. In the day of perfect union with Christ, the “weight” that now does “so easily beset us” will be removed (Heb. 12:1).

Christ will bring us through to triumph and victory.

The joy of the fellowship and glory of that time will be full and complete.

VERSE 25

“*To the only wise God*” — “wise” should be omitted. “*Unto God alone*” (Rotherham).

“*Our Saviour*” — Yahweh is the real saviour — but was “in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Cor. 5:19 cp. Isa. 43:11).

Yahweh to save through a Servant: Isa. 42:1-7; 49:6. Cp. Acts 5:31.

“*Be glory*” Gk. **doxa**. This word is among Peter’s final words: “to Him be glory both now and for ever” (2 Pet. 3:18).

God is manifested when His glory is seen. As in the character of the Lord Jesus; Jno. 1:14; or in a physical sense: 1 Pet. 1:17.

“*Majesty*” — A fitting word to describe a mighty King. The Gk. **megalosune** — is derived from **megas** meaning, “greatness, dignity, majesty”. Paul refers to the Lord Jesus as now being at the “right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3); and the same apostle refers to “the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb. 8:1). In the day of His glory upon earth, through His Son and the glorified saints, “Yahweh shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Yahweh, and His Name one . . .” (Zech. 14:9).

“*Dominion*” — Not the same as v.8. Here; **kratos** which speaks primarily of “manifested power” rather than territorial conquests. Bullinger gives its meaning as: “strength, power in action, force, superiority”. This is thus the power by which Yahweh will eventually bring the earth into subjection to Himself — a purpose He will realise through Christ and the saints. Surely, a reminder to the

brethren that if they “keep themselves in the love of God” there is a power working for them — now, and in the future — that flesh cannot overcome!

“**Power**” — “authority” (Roth., Wey.). Gk. **exousia** — denotes “freedom of action; the right to act, in any given situation”. Thus, in the case of Yahweh, it is an absolute and unrestricted freedom to act.

Yahweh has placed this authority and power of action in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; a right and an authority that will be shared with the saints, after their glorification (Matt. 28:18; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26-27).

“**Both now**” — Yahweh is a living God. He alone is the God Who is, Who was, and Who will be (Ex. 3:14). He possesses all the attributes Jude has listed: glory, majesty, manifested power, strength in action, authority, and complete freedom to act for the fulfilment of His purpose. And all these attributes are at work **now**, preparing all things for the great revelation of Divine glory that will flood the earth after Christ has returned. “Truly, **I live**, and all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh” (Num. 14:21).

“**And ever**” — Gk. **ainos** (plural) — “both now, and throughout all the ages” (Diaglott). These glorious attributes, as manifested by Yahweh, will never die, will never fade, will never be replaced or superseded.

Our own great hope is to eventually become an integral part of what Yahweh now is — to become manifestations of Yahweh, and to continue in Him throughout all ages.

With this hope Jude’s readers were to be humbled and encouraged. In spite of all the trials and difficulties, especially with regard to a falling-away from the Truth by many within the ecclesias, those who study the message of Jude will be moved to grasp more firmly the hope that has been set before them; not letting anything separate them from the love of God, and the hope of the Truth, and “the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints . . . ” (v.3).

“**Amen**” — “So be it”. A word of Hebrew origin, with a primary meaning of “faithfulness”. Yahweh is the very embodiment of faithfulness. If we contend earnestly for the faith, our Heavenly Father will surely bring us through to eventual triumph and the victory of faith. But we must clearly see that this word has two applications: if we expect Yahweh to remain faithful to what He has promised, is He not entitled to expect the same from us? Therefore, as He is faithful in all that He has promised, so we must strive to remain faithful to all that we have embraced in “the hope of Israel”.

We have undertaken to obey the terms of the covenant which we have made with our God through our Lord Jesus Christ in the waters of baptism. Thus

faithfulness must be a two-way affair; and therefore the final word in this magnificent epistle provides a one-word summary or epitome of all that has been written herein.

If we remain faithful, we shall be present to see the manifestation of the Divine glory, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be partakers of that glory together with him (1 Pet. 5:4, etc.).

Then indeed, after all the trials and tribulations of contending earnestly for the faith, we will appreciate not only the meaning, but the living reality of Jude's final words:

To the one God, who is our Saviour,
be ascribed, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
glory, majesty, power, and dominion,
as it was before time began, is now,
and shall be for all time to come.
Amen."

(Twentieth Century New Testament)