

Jude 1

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

THE EPISTLE OF Jude *A Brief Exposition*

Some regard Judas also called Thaddeus, one of the Twelve, as the author of this epistle. (Compare Luke 6:16; John 14:22; Matthew 10:3). Others consider the writer to be Judas the brother of James, the leading spirit of the Church at Jerusalem, who would therefore be one of the Lord's brethren (Mark 6:3). However, not the author but his inspired message is the thing that is important.

This letter is principally taken up with a severe condemnation of some highly favored ones who come into contact with holy things and into association with God's people and then prove unfaithful. Some of these, it would seem, fail to go on to a full consecration to the Lord, while others having consecrated and having been anointed, afterwards fall away. The writer thus shows the great responsibility resting upon those the Lord has to any extent favored during the Gospel Age.

Jude 1.

"Jude (Judas), the servant ("Bond- servant" Diaglott) of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father (Sanctified by His Word and Spirit), and preserved in Jesus Christ (Hebrews is the Savior or preserver of the body- the body of Christ- Ephesians 5:23), and called:"

None can come of their own volition into this place of favor. The privileges of the Gospel Church are not "of him that willeth or of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Romans 9:16). Every member of the body of Christ must first experience a manifestation of God's free unmerited favor by being drawn and called.

In the literal Greek, those Jude addresses are described as "sanctified ones, preserved ones, called ones." The call comes first. We are preserved as New Creatures to the extent we abide in Christ. Entire sanctification is the end to be obtained ere we pass into the Kingdom.

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

Jude 2.

"Mercy unto you (—needed so long as we are in the tabernacle condition), and peace and love be multiplied." "May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you." (Diaglott)

The close connection between mercy, peace and love, and our call, preservation and ultimate sanctification should be noted. The call is a most gracious manifestation of divine mercy. The Lord's preserving or keeping power in our hearts and lives, brings us the peace that passeth all human understanding: And our sanctification is in proportion to the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts.

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

Jude 3.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you (although this epistle is only a short one, Jude evidently realized the great responsibility resting upon him in writing to the brethren in the name of the Lord, and surely gave of his very best regarding the points at issue, that his letter might be helpful to the maximum extent and to the largest number) of the common salvation ("Our common salvation" Diaglott- The restitution secured for all mankind by the ransom, which called ones receive by faith that they might lay it down in sacrifice with Christ: The salvation we have in common with all men: Although the salvation we have in common with all Christians may be the thought in the writer's mind) it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend (in a loving and not in a biting and devouring spirit- Z '06- 297) for the faith (not for non- essentials- Z '07- 180) which was once delivered unto the saints," The teaching given us through Jesus, the Apostles and prophets.

Some when they see God's gracious provision for all mankind under Messiah's Kingdom, settle down to an enjoyment of the precious knowledge, saying- "all will be enlightened when the Millennial day is fully ushered in. Why incur the displeasure of the world and Churchianity by trying to give the message to those not ready to receive it?" But "the faith;" the knowledge of the true plan of salvation, for both Church and world, has been given to God's people that they might be his witnesses, that they might show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Appreciation of our message and of our calling demands that we do not less than this. Any other course means unfaithfulness to our stewardship. The writer now goes on to show why watchfulness and activity, that purity of doctrine be maintained, is necessary: —

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 4.

"For there are certain men (The Grecian philosophers- E286) crept in unawares (Certain ones have quietly come into the Church and obtained some influence among the brethren) who were before of old ordained to this condemnation (Satan's apparent success in corrupting the Church did not take Jehovah by surprise, but was fore-told in the writings of the Apostles and prophets. Daniel 7:21; 8:9- 13,24,25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-5; 1 Timothy 4:1- 3; 2 Timothy 3:1- 5) ungodly men (Men not submitted to the word and spirit of the Lord), turning (Men who are continually endeavoring to turn) the grace of our God (His wonderful grace in providing through Christ the salvation of the Church to the incorruptible heavenly inheritance, and the restitution of the world to that which was lost in Adam) into lasciviousness ("Licentiousness" Diaglott. Looseness of conduct: Lowering the standard required of a Christian, saying that to indulge in harmless amusements is not inconsistent with a full consecration to the Lord); And (what is still more serious) denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ:" "Denying our only sovereign and Lord, Jesus Christ." (Diaglott) "Denying the Lord that bought them," (2 Peter 2:1). (1) Denying his ransom sacrifice, (2) Denying his right to fully control the lives of those who profess to be his people. It is thus possible to deny his lordship without denying the literal fact that he died for our sins.

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

Jude 5.

"I will therefore put you in remembrance though ye once knew this (Although I have told it to you before), how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward (Literally, "the second time," thus illustrating the Second Death- Z '92- 284) destroyed them that believed not."

Israel's deliverance from Egypt is a picture of our deliverance from Satan's empire, "this present evil world."

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

Jude 6.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate (At the time of the flood), but left their own habitation (By materializing and coming down to the human plane, remaining here and intermarrying with the daughters of men- Genesis 6:1- 4), he hath reserved in everlasting ("age- lasting" - Diaglott) chains (restraints, forbidding them to appear as men- S105) under darkness (Not permitting them to exercise their powers in the light- S16) unto the judgment (Krisis, trial- S113) of the great day." The Millennial day, when we may expect the incorrigible ones among them to work lying wonders in the day- light as they are now attempting to do (S16); The day for which mankind is also waiting for its trial (S113);

The permission of these angels to find and use means of materialization and communication with mankind, which will be one of the great features of the time of trouble now drawing on, will furnish the special trial and testing of these angels, proving at the same time those who are sorry for sin and at heart loyal to God (Z '07- 299; 2 Peter 2:4). While the destruction of those who were rebellious after being delivered from Egypt pictures those who after being delivered from the dominion of darkness go into the Second Death: The restraining of the angels who sinned, pictures to some extent the hard bondage into which the Great Company are cast because of not carrying out their covenant of sacrifice faithfully.

As the angels who are rightly exercised by their experiences will be received back again into favor (1 Corinthians 6:3), so those of the Great Company, who are rightly exercised by the great tribulation, will eventually be brought to a position before the throne (Revelation 7:9,14,15).

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

Jude 7.

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them (Such as Admah and Zeboim- Deuteronomy 29:23) in like manner (to the angels that sinned), giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange (Greek "other") flesh (Showing that although the angels assumed human form, it was not pure human nature; and God prohibits any blending of natures- Genesis 6:1 - 4), are set forth for an example (Both of God's justice and mercy- Z '94- 47), suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," Utter destruction, not eternal torment (Z '07- 60), The Second Death. Not that the Sodomites have suffered the Second Death, but their experience is an example of what the ultimate fate of all willful sinners will be (Ezekiel 16:53,55; Matthew 11:24).

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

Jude 8.

"Likewise also ("Yet in the same manner" - Revised Version. In spite of these examples of God's just retribution) these dreamers (These who had come into association with the Lord's people but who either never possessed or who had lost the Lord's spirit. Dreamers because of thinking they can improve upon the divine methods for carrying on his work; imagining they can successfully carry out projects He has never authorized; For instance the conversion of the world. Some are dreamers because they think the contemplative life alone will bring them the Lord's likeness and carry them to glory.) defile the flesh (By their worldly methods, compromising course; Indulgence of their natural desires. And the next statement of the writer naturally follows- They) despise (Think lightly of) dominion ("Authority" - Weymouth. They divine law; The precepts of the divine Word; The true organization and work outlined for the Christian Church during the Gospel Age), and speak evil of dignities;" Literally "glories", The Lord's honored servants, those specially set in the body for instruction and guidance of the Church.

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

Jude 9.

"Yet ("But" - Revised Version) Michael the archangel (The Lord Jesus in his pre- human condition) when contending with the devil he disputed ("reasoned" - Diaglott- with him) about the body of Moses (The mysterious disposition of which typified the disposal of our Lord's fleshly body- B130, Deuteronomy 34:6; Satan evidently desired to gain possession of the body of Moses so that his mummy might become a temptation to idolatry on the part of the Hebrews- Z '07- 267) durst not ("Did not presume to" - Diaglott) bring against him a railing accusation ("judgment" - Diaglott- at this time the eternal destiny of Lucifer had not been fixed- John 12:31); but said, The Lord rebuke thee."

In the same way we are to let the Lord rebuke the selfish institutions of the present time (F608); We are not permitted to pass sentence or inflict penalty (Z '07- 46). "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." Lucifer contending for the body of Moses, fore- shadows how hard he would try during the Gospel Age to gain possession of the "body of Christ" - To deceive and control the Christian Church. We are here shown our Lord's wonderful forbearance- bringing against him no reviling judgment, but patiently waiting the Father's due time to cast him out (Revelation 12:9).

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

Jude 10.

"But ("Yet" - Diaglott) these (False teachers, unfaithful leaders, with no excuse whatever) speak evil of those things which they know ("Understand" - Diaglott) not (Things that are only appreciated (1) By those who faithfully walk in the light (2) By the spiritually minded); but what they know naturally (Those features of the Truth that the natural man can understand), as ("like") brute beasts (Even as brute beasts have some measure of instinct) in those things they corrupt themselves." "In these things they are corrupt" (Diaglott). They are unfaithful and go contrary even to the measure of light they do have: the things they can understand with their natural minds.

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

Jude 11.

"Woe unto them? For they have gone in the way of Cain (They have followed the example of Cain by hating their brethren- Humble Christians faithfully letting the light of Truth shine out- 1 John 3:12), ran greedily after ("rushed into" - Diaglott) the error of Balaam for reward (Teaching error for financial gain: Following a compromising course in order to secure the honors of the world- Numbers 22:7,21; 2 Peter 2:15), and perished ("Destroyed themselves" - Diaglott) in the gainsaying (Literally "contradiction", "defiance of authority") of Core", Like that of Korah, who refused to recognize the divine appointment of Moses and Aaron, typifying those who through "not holding the Head", Jesus, fail to see and recognize those specially set in the body and used by him (Numbers 16:1; Isaiah 30:20). Lack of the spirit of love, desire for ease, honor, earthly gain, is frequently the cause of one misunderstanding the Lord's arrangements in the Church; His leading of his people.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

Jude 12.

"These are spots in your feasts of charity ("love" - Revised Version- "These are hidden rocks in your love feasts." - Diaglott- Assemblies for fellowship and the study of the Word) when they feast with you (As dangerous as hidden rocks to those making for the heavenly port: Specially so, because the assembly of the Church of God is not the place where dangers are naturally expected), feeding themselves without fear (Satisfying a merely natural thirst for knowledge, with little desire to come into accord with whatever they should learn of the Word of God): clouds without water (Suggesting a class at one time blessed with the light of Truth and able to refresh others, but because of unfaithfulness no longer able to do so), carried about of winds ("Being swept along by winds" - Diaglott- Winds of false doctrine, strong delusions); trees whose fruit withereth (Because of walking after the flesh and not after the spirit), without fruit (The condition quickly reached by those who deny the Ransom- Jude 4 - "Autumn trees without fruit" - Revised Version. The time when fruit should be expected. The Harvest at the end of the age is the time when the Lord specially expects to find fruit among his people), twice dead (In order to be begotten of the spirit, one must first die as a human being- Colossians 3:3: If the New Creature die, or in other words- should the Holy Spirit be lost, one would properly be described as "twice dead"), plucked up by the roots," Having entirely lost one's standing as one of the Lord's family- as one of the "trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord."

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

Jude 13.

"Raging ("Wild" - Revised Version- Lawless) waves of the sea (Refusing all the restraints of the divine law), foaming out their own shame; (Advocation doctrines, teachings and practices of which as professing Christians they should be most thoroughly ashamed), wandering stars (False stars, vainly aspiring to be considered of equal authority with the "Twelve stars", the inspired teachers of the church- D594; The stars in their orderly course picture the course of those who so run as to obtain the great prize. Teachers who wander from the path of obedience quickly become false lights to those who look to them for guidance), to whom ("For whom" - Revised Version) is reserved the blackness ("gloom" - Diaglott) of darkness (Suggesting the unsatisfying, unhappy condition of those whose unfaithfulness has either kept them in or carried them into outer darkness, when they might have enjoyed the light of Truth and divine favor) for ever." So long as they live such must be the condition of the unfaithful.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Jude 14, 15.

"And Enoch, also, the seventh from Adam ("who belonged to the seventh generation from Adam" - Weymouth. A possible hint that man's restoration to perfection would take place in the seventh thousand year day- Z '80- 605) prophesied of these (unfaithful leaders, 'Hireling shepherds' who violently oppose the outworking of the plan of God.), saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds", etc.

This is the only quotation from the apocryphal book of Enoch in the New Testament. The contents of this book is a reminder of the fact that many men have been used at different times to proclaim and write vital truths, without their message being recognized and used by God as a part of the Divine record provided for the special guidance and instruction of his people.

Another striking passage from the Book of Enoch, very full of meaning to those in the light of Present Truth is as follows: - "And I know this mystery, that many sinners (The Higher critics, for instance) shall alter and pervert the words of the righteous, to the righteous, and they will believe in them and rejoice over them and learn from all the secrets of wisdom. And in that day, saith the Lord, shall they cry and testify to the children of earth concerning their wisdom and show it unto them."

There are several suggestions given in the Scriptures to show that Enoch specially typifies the saints living during the seventh or Laodicean stage of the Church; the seventh period from our Lord, the Second Adam. Enoch died quite young (Genesis 5:23). His early death spared him from seeing the deplorable conditions that developed in the earth prior to the flood, and which made the destruction of the old world a necessity (Genesis 6:1- 7). His translation that he should not see death foreshadows the instantaneous change that comes to those who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord, who instead of sleeping until the resurrection are changed in the moment of death, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." His name means "dedicated", or "disciplined". Rotherham's translation shows a little more forcefully than the Authorised Version that Enoch's message is that of the Church during the Laodicean period: -

"Behold the Lord has come with his holy myriads- To execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly of their works of ungodliness, which they committed in ungodliness; And of all the hard things which they have spoken against him- sinners, ungodly"!

The reference in the first place would be doubtless to the evil speaking

and evil practices of the antediluvians directed against Noah. Speaking against, and opposing Noah was as though such conduct had been manifested directly against Jehovah. "As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man." In our day the reference would be to the hard speeches and willful opposition directed against the Harvest and Kingdom work and the Lord's servants identified with the same. Under the administration of the Millennial Kingdom all will be convinced that in fighting against "Russellism," so called, they were fighting against God, and great will be the mourning because of this (Zechariah 12:10- 14).

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

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

Jude 16.

"These (Most of the opposition to the Truth comes from prominent ones in the religious world) are murmurers (against the Lord's arrangements; Against those specially set in the "body" - 1 Corinthians 12:18), complainers ("Fault- finders" - Diaglott- Finding fault with those faithfully endeavoring to serve the Lord and advance the interests of his Kingdom. In the next statement of the writer we see what is nearly always the reason for the development of a murmuring, fault- finding spirit), walking after their own lusts (Desires); and their mouth speaketh great swelling words (Great and boastful claims regarding their own teachings, conduct, and accomplishments- 2 Peter 2:18), having men's persons in admiration because of advantage;" Giving close attention to flattering those who can advance their selfish interests. "And they are great admirers of those who give them gifts." (See Weymouth notes. James 2:1,9).

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Jude 17.

"But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of ("by" - Diaglott) the apostles (The 'sent forth ones') of our Lord Jesus Christ," Those specially commissioned and sent forth by him.

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

Jude 18.

"How that they told you that there should be mockers ("Scoffers" - Weymouth) in the last time (Specially during the closing years of the Gospel Age. The expression "the last time" evidently refers to the period covered by the last or seventh seal- the day of the lord, beginning in 1874. And to- day we are surrounded by those who scoff at the evidences of the change of dispensation, the Harvest and Kingdom work, the deep truths now opened up. It is at the very time when the full and complete revelation of the Truth is given to the Lord's faithful, that the leaders and teachers of Churchianity have most deeply corrupted themselves. Alas that some who have been favored by Present Truth are also to be found in this category), who should walk after their own ungodly ("impious" - Diaglott) lusts," desires. Those who live merely to fulfill their own selfish ambitions, as do the bulk of the clergy, always scoff at any message proclaimed by untitled people that would in any way tend to thwart them in their desires, however obviously true and Scriptural that message may be. (2 Peter 3:3).

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Jude 19.

"These are they who separate themselves ((1) From their flocks, calling themselves the clergy and all others the laity (2) From the Truth and its spirit- Z '93- 309; (3) From those faithfully continuing to carry forward the Harvest and Kingdom work), sensual ('Animal'; Minding earthly things and gratifying the ambitions and tastes of the old nature- Z '93- 309; Content to live on the plane of the fallen human nature and so blinded by the Adversary as to think that such a course has the Lord's approval), having not the spirit," "Wholly unspiritual" (Weymouth); Not having the spirit of God (Romans 8:9).

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

Jude 20,21.

"But ye, beloved (A suggestion regarding the great contrast there would be between the true people of God, the remnant, and all others, specially at the end of the age), building up yourselves (As individuals and as companies of God's people) on (the basis of) your most holy faith (fortitude, knowledge, self- control, patience etc.), praying, in the Holy Spirit *(1) With a spirit of loyalty and devotion to God- Z '93- 309; (2) Not in a formal way, but with spontaneous utterances prompted by the Spirit of the Lord. Only prayers of this character can be heard and answered,* Keep yourselves in the love of God (By daily and hourly obedience to and for the principles of righteousness- Z '02- 173; The Father can only bestow his special love upon those who walk in harmony with his will- Ephesians 2:4; Another thought would be that we are to endeavor to have the love that is of God in our hearts, the love that is self- sacrificing, operating where it is unmerited, totally different to anything known to fallen humanity- Z '00- 182; While he causes the pressure of all things to engrave it deeply upon you- Z '98- 201), looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

However faithful and loyal one may prove to one's covenant of sacrifice, the blessing of eternal life can never be merited. It is a free unmerited favor- "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

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

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

Jude 22,23.

"And of some (who are merely entrapped of the Adversary either in sin or in false doctrine- Z '02- 199) have compassion ("Pity" - Diaglott) making a difference (In the way you treat them. We may esteem the brethren in proportion as we find them to be copies of the Lord, in heart, motive, intention, in loving zeal for righteousness and truth, thus following the Lord's example who specially loved John because John was specially lovable. The Lord does not wish us to give the same treatment to those who walk disorderly or after the flesh as to those who walk after the spirit- Z '02- 198; To love some more than others is not partiality, any more than it is for the Father to love those who keep themselves in his love more than he loves those who fail in this respect. Z '02- 196; But even with the latter, we should distinguish as far as possible between deceived and willful transgressors. Even against willful opponents of the Truth we should never feel hard but should show them pity): And others save with fear (Their dangerous position demands drastic treatment) pulling them out of the fire (The consuming fire of God's just indignation in the time of trouble - A320; Out of the Second Death- Z '02- 199; Away from the influence and snares of the Adversary- Z '01- 72; Not excusing, condoning, sympathizing with, but) hating even the garment spotted by the flesh", The evidences of unfaithfulness, self- gratification, etc. These things leave marks upon the child of God that are not easily effaced.

Weymouth's translation of these verses is as follows: -

"Some when they argue with you, you must endeavor to convince (Because they honestly believe themselves to be in the right); Others you must try to save (By vigorous and drastic methods if need be) as brands plucked from the flames (They having come very near to the border line of destruction); and on others (Who seem to have gone beyond hope of recovery) look with pity mingled with fear, while you hate every trace of their sin", Hating the sin but not the sinner.

23 And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Jude 24.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling *"stumbling"* - *Revised Version- (1) Over points of doctrine, (2) Over the Lord's method of carrying on his work), and to present you faultless (As illustrated in the art of the paper maker in transforming dirty rags into white paper-F193* before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." The exceeding joy of the Church in the glorified condition will be equally shared by the Father and the Lord Jesus. Weymouth translates this verse as follows: -

"But to him who is able to keep you safe from stumbling (Causing every stumbling stone to become a stepping stone), and cause you to stand in the presence of his glory, free from blemish and full of exultant joy,"

25 To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Jude 25.

"To the only wise God our Savior (In the sense that he is the author of the great divine plan: "To God alone our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord." - Diaglott), be glory (All honor) and majesty, dominion and power ("Majesty, power and authority" - Diaglott), both now and ever. Amen." The thought in this verse is that the Father is beyond all comparisons. All true majesty, power and authority are but reflections of his own gracious character and plan. All honour resulting from the attainments and doings of any of his creatures belongs to him now and for evermore. (1 Corinthians 15:29; Revelation 15:3,4).

"If I in thy likeness O Lord may awake, And shine a pure image of Thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break, The fetters of flesh and be free."

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