

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF
JUDE

WRITER. Jude, the brother of James (1).

Date. Probably A.D. 66.

Theme. It is not so much Jude who speaks, as the constraining Spirit (v. 3), and the theme is, "Contending for the faith" (Lk. 18:8, *refs.*). In this brief letter the apostasy (2 Thes. 2:3, *note*) of the professing church is predicted, and the cause and course described. As in Second Timothy and Second Peter the apostasy is treated as having already set in.

The Epistle is in five divisions: I. Introduction, vs. 1, 2. II. Occasion of the Epistle, vs. 3, 4. III. Apostasy is possible, vs. 5-7. IV. Apostate teachers described, vs. 8-19. V. The saints assured and comforted, vs. 20-25.

Chapter 1

¹ Jude, bondman of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to the called ones beloved in God *the* Father and preserved in Jesus Christ: ² Mercy to you, and peace, and love be multiplied.

³ Beloved, using all diligence to write to you of our common salvation, I have been obliged to write to you exhorting *you* to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

⁴ For certain men have got in unnoticed, they who of old were marked out beforehand to this sentence, ungodly *persons*, turning the grace of our God into dissoluteness, and denying our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵ But I would put you in remembrance, you who once knew all things, that the Lord, having saved a people out of *the* land of Egypt, in the second place destroyed those who had not believed. ⁶ And angels who had not kept their own original state, but had abandoned their own dwelling, he keeps in eternal chains under gloomy darkness, to *the* judgment of *the* great day; ⁷ as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities around them, committing greedily fornication, in like manner with them, and going after other flesh, lie there as an example, undergoing the judgment of eternal fire.

⁸ Yet in like manner these dreamers also defile *the* flesh, and despise lordship, and speak railingly against dignities. ⁹ But Michael the archangel, when disputing with the devil he reasoned about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a railing judgment against *him*, but said, *The* Lord rebuke thee. ¹⁰ But these, whatever things they know not, they speak railingly against; but what even, as the irrational animals, they understand by mere nature, in these things they corrupt themselves. ¹¹ Woe to them! because they have gone in the way of Cain, and given themselves up to the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. ¹² These are spots in your love-feasts, feasting together *with you* without fear, pasturing themselves; clouds without water, carried along by *the* winds; autumnal trees, without fruit, twice dead, rooted up; ¹³ raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames; wandering stars, to whom has been reserved the gloom of darkness for eternity. ¹⁴ And Enoch, *the* seventh from Adam, prophesied also as to these, saying, Behold, *the* Lord has come amidst his holy myriads,

¹⁵ to execute judgment against all; and to convict all the ungodly of them of all their works of ungodliness, which they have wrought ungodlily, and of all the hard *things* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. ¹⁶ These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts; and their mouth speaks swelling words, admiring persons for the sake of profit. ¹⁷ But ye, beloved, remember the words spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁸ that they said to you, that at *the* end of the time there should be mockers, walking after their own lusts of ungodliness. ¹⁹ These are they who set *themselves* apart, natural *men*, not having *the* Spirit. ²⁰ But ye, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. ²² And of some have compassion, making a difference, ²³ but others save with fear, snatching *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. ²⁴ But to him that is able to keep you without stumbling, and to set *you* with exultation blameless before his glory, ²⁵ to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, might, and authority, from before the whole age, and now, and to all the ages. Amen.

1 Assurance is the believer's full conviction that, through the work of Christ alone, received by faith, he is in possession of a salvation in which he will be eternally kept. And this assurance rests only upon the Scripture promises to him who believes.

6 The judgment of the fallen angels. The "great day" is the day of the Lord (Isa. 2:9–22, *refs.*). As the final judgment upon Satan occurs after the thousand years, and preceding the final judgment (Rev. 20:10), it is congruous to conclude, as to the time, that other fallen angels are judged with him (2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 20:10). Christians are associated with Christ in this judgment (1 Cor. 6:3). See other judgments. Rev. 20:10 *note*.

11 Cain (cf. Gen. 4:1), type of the religious natural man, who believes in a God, and in “religion,” but after his own will, and who rejects redemption by blood. Compelled as a teacher of religion to explain the atonement, the apostate teacher explains it away.

Balaam. The “error” of Balaam must be distinguished from his way” (2 Pet. 2:15, *note*), and his “doctrine” (Rev. 2:14, *note*). The “error” of Balaam was that, reasoning from natural morality, and seeing the evil in Israel, he supposed a righteous God *must* curse them. He was blind to the higher morality of the Cross, through which God maintains and enforces the authority and awful sanctions of His law, so that He can be just and the justifier of a believing sinner. The “reward” of v. 11 may not be money, but popularity, or applause.

See Num. 16. The sin of Korah was denial of the authority of Moses as God’s chosen spokesman, and intrusion into the priest’s office.

23 Flesh, Summary: “Flesh,” in the ethical sense, is the whole natural or unregenerate man, spirit, soul, and body, as centered upon self, prone to sin, and opposed to God (Rom. 7:18). The regenerate man is not “in [the sphere of] the flesh, but in [the sphere of] the Spirit” (Rom. 8:9); but the flesh is still in him, and he may, according to his choice, “walk after the flesh” or “in the Spirit” (1 Cor. 3:1–4; Gal. 5:16, 17). In the first case he is a “carnal,” in the second a “spiritual,” Christian. Victory over the flesh will be the habitual experience of the believer who walks in the Spirit (Rom. 8:2, 4; Gal. 5:16, 17).