
Jude

“Step Up The Fight For The Faith”

An Exegetical Commentary & Exposition

by Nate Wilson

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Introduction

Nate Wilson grew up as a pastor's kid, attending Briarwood Christian School and Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama. He gained a love for studying God's word from his father, Ken Wilson, and an appreciation for exegetical preaching from pastor Frank Barker. He went on to Covenant College to earn a Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies under the mentorship of Dr. Joseph Clumpner (Math & Physics), Dr. John Hamm (Music & Voice), and Dr. Roger Lambert (Bible & Missions). After a 14-year career in mobilizing students and church leaders in the United States toward world missions through the Student Foreign Mission Fellowship and Caleb Project, Nate earned a Master of Divinity degree (with a focus on Biblical Languages and Exegesis) at Sangre de Cristo Seminary in Westcliffe, Colorado, under the mentorship of Dr. Dwight Zeller and Dr. Andrew Zeller, and was ordained as a teaching elder in the Rocky Mountain Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America. In the year 2006, he was called to organize a new church in Manhattan Kansas, under the name of Christ The Redeemer, so he moved there with his wife Paula and eight children (to which four more were added in Kansas). Over the course of the next several years, Nate concluded that the small, mostly-German-ethnicity town they had moved to did not have the demographics to support a self-sustaining P.C.A. church, so he changed his church affiliation to an informal and interdenominational group of evangelical pastors local to Manhattan, Kansas who re-ordained him to pastor Christ The Redeemer Church as a non-demoninational congregation, committed to the doctrines common to the English Presbyterian Westminster Confession, the Second London Baptist Confession, and the Dutch-Reformed Three Forms of Unity. This commentary was developed in the process of preaching through the book of Jude to Christ The Redeemer Church during the spring of the year 2017.

This commentary comes from an evangelical and reformed perspective, so the Bible is treated as coming authoritatively from God, not man, and the Bible is seen as primarily revealing God's plan for saving those He loves by paying the atonement for their sins through the death of His Son Jesus. This commentary also highly values the thinking of honest Christian scholars throughout history, which is the reason for incorporating the side-by-side charts of different translations on each passage and the reason for surveying a wide range of commentary from ancient church fathers to modern Reformers and Puritans as well as some contemporary scholarship. Another value which shaped this study is the conviction that God has preserved His word in all ages for His people, so Biblical texts and versions which have sustained Christians for over a thousand years should be given great consideration. At the same time, Christians need to hear God's word in language they can understand, so there has to be a balance between preserving time-honored traditions and keeping Biblical teaching understandable in our time. This commentary is an attempt to strike that balance in a more traditional direction than most contemporary versions and commentaries, making it easier to see the traditional Greek text through the contemporary American English. Finally, this commentary was not intended to be a mere academic exercise, but rather a spur to

personally know God better and to live that love out in practical ways in everyday life. It is hoped that the practical application of each passage in this commentary will indeed have that effect.

Other Bible books on which Nate Wilson has written commentaries include:

- Leviticus,
- 1 Samuel,
- 2 Samuel/1 Chronicles,
- Psalms (1-50),
- Jeremiah,
- Ezekiel,
- Jonah,
- Micah,
- Habakkuk,
- Matthew,
- 1 Corinthians,
- 2 Corinthians
- Philippians,
- 1 & 2 Thessalonians,
- Hebrews,
- James,
- 1 & 2 Peter,
- 1, 2, 3 John

Most of these are available in print at:

- Clark Memorial Library, 6160 County Road 130, Westcliffe, CO 81252
- Christ The Redeemer Church Office, 2488 Woodside Ln, Manhattan, KS 66503

Digital copies of most are available as individual sermons in the sermon section of the website of Christ The Redeemer Church www.ctrchurch-mhk.org or at the author's website: www.NateWilsonFamily.net

Jude 1:1-7 – Step Up the Fight For Faith, Because The God Of Love Destroys Covenant-Breakers.

Introduction to Jude

- In Greek, his name is pronounced “Judas” but the “-as” ending is just a nominative case ending in Greek, so the names “Judah,” “Judas,” and “Jude” are all the same name.
- In the genealogy that begins the New Testament book of Matthew, this name refers to Judah, the fourth son of Jacob the patriarch of Israel. And there are other “Judah’s” in the Luke 3 genealogy, but those were all further back in history in the Old Testament. The Jude who wrote the New Testament book lived in the first century AD.
- When we get into the Gospels and see the lists of the 12 apostles that Jesus chose, we see that there were two guys named “Judas” (or “Judah”) among the disciples:
 - One was from the southern Judean town of Cariot, so he was called Judas Iscariot. His father’s name was Simon, and that Judas was the one who betrayed Jesus and then hung himself.
 - The other is listed in Luke 6 and Acts 1 as “Judas [son] of James” (τουδαν ιακωβου) and is called “Thaddeus” by Mark and “Lebbaeus” by Matthew.
 - ◇ (It would be interesting to know why he went by so many different names. I might guess that with the bad reputation of Judas Iscariot and the persecution of Christians by Jews, the names “Judah” and “Judas” might have lost popularity among some Christians.)
 - ◇ This disciple makes only one little cameo appearance in John 14:22 where he asks, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" (NKJV)
 - ◇ Although commentators John Gill, Albert Barnes, and A.R. Fausset identified Thaddeus as the author of the book of Jude, the fact that neither James the son of Zebedee nor James the son of Alpheus have the same father as Thaddeus Jude (who was the son of James) and the fact that there is no James known to have been married to Mary after Joseph, discounts this theory in my book.
- Two other mentions of a man named Judas in the New Testament¹ are of note because they might be the same Judas as the writer of this book:

¹ Not counting two other men in the book of Acts by that name who seem unlikely to be the same person: Acts 5:37 “After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.” (NKJV)
The name Jude also appears later on in Acts 9:11 describing a man in Syria, who hosted the Apostle who would soon be called Paul for a time after God blinded him on the road to Damascus, but it seems unlikely that an escort tasked with persecuting Christians would headquarter themselves at the residence of Jesus’ brother, and the more likely Jude mentioned later in Acts didn’t move from Jerusalem to Syria until Paul’s second missionary journey.

- One is called the “brother” of Jesus in the Gospels, which also mention that he had a brother named James: Matthew 13:54 says of Jesus, “after coming into His hometown, He taught them in their synagogue in such a way that they were astounded and saying, ‘Why is it to this man that this wisdom and these miracles [came]? 55 Is not this man the son of the carpenter? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers [named] James and Joseph and Simon and Jude? 56 And are not his sisters near us? Why then is it to this man that all these things [came]?’ 57 And they were scandalized by Him.” (NAW)

That fits with the Jude who wrote this epistle who mentions in v.1 that he is the brother of James. Apparently Mary had other children after Jesus², making this Jude the son of Joseph or perhaps of a second husband of Mary, and the only name I’ve ever heard postulated for a second husband of Mary was Cleopas (which is Greek for the Aramaic name Alphaeus), not James, so I think this Jude the brother of Jesus and of James is different from the disciple of Jesus named Thaddeus Jude son of James.³

- The other mention of Jude that I think is significant is in Acts 15:22, “Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely*, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.”
 - ◇ Here is a Jude who is a Christian leader in Jerusalem in close proximity to a prominent Christian leader named James, for whom it might have been natural if Jude was his younger brother, to trust him as an ambassador of the church in Jerusalem.
 - ◇ Later on in Acts 15, it says that this Jude was a “prophet” which again would fit with a writer of Scripture, and that he and his buddy Silas “exhorted and strengthened the brethren [in Antioch] with many words” before Jude came back home. Here in this epistle, the same word “exhort” is used of Jude’s message, although this letter is so short that we might surmise that, after another 15 years in ministry, when it came time to write this letter around 65 AD, perhaps Jude was less youthful and less wordy.
 - ◇ So, although Jude was a fairly common name at the time, and the Bible doesn’t explicitly identify him, it seems entirely possible that this is the same Jude who wrote the epistle, and it gives us a glimpse of what his life was like after Jesus’ resurrection.

² Some people think she married a widower after Joseph died and that her second husband brought children into the marriage, but that theory has the difficulty that there seemed to be no husband when Jesus relocated his mom and family to Capernaum at the beginning of his ministry years and when Jesus died on the cross at the end of his ministry years, even though He was visited by brothers and sisters in the middle of His ministry years.

³ Origen and Adam Clark agreed for other reasons, saying that “of James” could mean “brother of” rather than “father of.” Clement of Alexandria and Jerome agreed that this Jude is the son of Alphaeus and Mary, as did M. Vincent, A.T. Robertson, and editors of the NASB and the NET Bible.

- It is interesting that Jude in v.1 calls himself the “slave/servant of Jesus Christ.” This is particularly striking if he is actually the brother (or half-brother) of Jesus. In this case we see humility on the part of Jude as well as the recognition of Jesus’ divine Lordship.
 - Jude could have identified himself as the brother of Jesus, but instead of name-dropping, he takes the minimal approach of identifying himself humbly – just “Jude – nobody important, although you might know my big brother James.”
 - Jude could have identified himself as the brother of Jesus, but instead he chose to model for us the worship of Jesus as the Messiah (the Christ, in Greek).
 - ◇ Jude could have created a far more entertaining – and popular – letter by saying, “Now you may wonder what Jesus was like as a boy, well, I’m his little brother, and let me tell you some stories from when we were growing up together!” But he doesn’t.
 - ◇ Even though Jesus was truly human – human enough to have real brothers and sisters, even his siblings recognized that he was no mere man, but rather the holy God incarnate, the bringer of eternal life (v.21), the keeper of our salvation (v.1&25), “our only Sovereign and Lord” (v.4), Christ the cosmic authority over angels (v.9) and demons (v.6), with the power to come in judgment and consign anyone he wants to the deepest darkest depths of hell (v.13), the one who stands in the very presence of God in heaven (v.24). Jude portrays for us a Jesus who is God and therefore calls himself His slave.
 - Do you see Jesus that way? Are you so humbled by His power and authority and majesty and saving love that you say, “I am Jesus’ slave. He is my God; He is my rightful owner, and whatever He says I will do. Period.”
- At any rate, with a name like “Jude” he’s bound to have a Jewish background, and indeed he shows a great familiarity with the Old Testament and even with Jewish traditions surrounding the Old Testament, and he uses this knowledge effectively to illustrate and lend authority to his exhortations.⁴

⁴ He also has a message much in common with Peter’s second epistle. Albert Barnes quotes an author named Hug who gives the following reasons why he thought that 2 Peter quoted from Jude’s epistle: “(1) That there is little probability that Jude, in so brief an epistle as his, consisting of only 25 verses, would have made use of foreign aid. (2) That the style and phraseology of Jude is simple, unlabored, and without ornament; while that of Peter is artificial, and wears the appearance of embellishment and amplification; that the simple language of Jude seems to have been moulded by Peter into a more elegant form, and is embellished with participles, and even with rhetorical flourishes. (3) That there is allusion in both Epistles to a controversy between angels and fallen spirits; but that it is so alluded to by Peter, that it would not be understood without the more full statement of Jude; and that Peter evidently supposed that the letter of Jude was in the hands of those to whom he wrote, and that thus the allusion would be at once understood.” However, as Fausset points out there is the fact that, “Jude 7-8 plainly refers to *the very words* of 2 Peter 3:3, ‘Remember the words which were spoken before of the *apostles* of our Lord Jesus; how they told you there should be *mockers in the last time* who should *walk after their own* ungodly *lusts*.’ This proves, in opposition to Alford, that Jude’s Epistle is later than Peter’s...”

- “Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.20 states that when [Roman emperor] Domitian inquired after David’s posterity, some grandsons of Jude, called the Lord’s brother, were brought into his presence. Being asked as to their possessions, they said that they had thirty-nine acres of the value of nine thousand denarii, out of which they paid him taxes, and lived by the labor of their hands, a proof of which they gave by showing the hardness of their hands. Being interrogated as to Christ and His kingdom, they replied that it was not of this world, but heavenly; and that it would be manifested at the end of the world, when He would come in glory to judge the living and the dead.” ~A.R. Fausset (*What a marvelous testimony of the fruit of this New Testament prophet who exhorted people to contend for the faith – his grandsons were still preaching Jesus!*)
- To finish introducing this letter, we need to look at who it is written to.
 - Jude is not very specific about his audience. All we know is that:
 - ◇ he loves them,
 - ◇ he thinks that they are saved,
 - ◇ he assumes that they are familiar enough with the writings and oral traditions of both Judaism and Christianity to follow his allusions to them,
 - ◇ and He sees that they are dealing with unruly, flagrantly-sinful, heretical people in their Christian community (which might indicate that it is not a brand-new church plant but rather one that has had time to degenerate).
 - All this would fit pretty well, in my opinion, with the church in Jerusalem or the church in Antioch (which was the first church plant after Jerusalem), both of which would have had lots of Jewish-background Christians, and it seems to fit with the Jude in the book of Acts who was based in Jerusalem and visited Antioch, writing to one or the other of those churches⁵, or perhaps more generally to believers throughout the Levant⁶.
 - but clearly Jude doesn’t limit his book to believers in only one time and place.
 - ◇ This book is addressed in v.1 to “those who have been called and loved by God the Father and who have been kept by Jesus Christ.” That’s not just the 1st Century church in Palestine; that’s for us too! We too are “called” and “loved” by God the Father and “kept” by Jesus Christ!
 - ◇ We too have to deal with degenerate Christianity – with slippage of the faith (v. 3) – people claiming to be Christians but practicing immorality (v.7), people claiming to know God but who are disrespectful of proper authority (v.8) and are greedy for wealth (v.11), Christian leaders who have no love (v.12), scoffers who follow their fleshly lusts (v. 18), and even doubters who need help spiritually (v.22).

⁵ Adam Clarke argued against Antioch being the destination because, “in this case the epistle would not have been written in Greek, but in Syriac or Chaldee, and would certainly have been received into the old Syriac version [which it was apparently not],” but A.T. Robertson was favorable to the position of a certain Dr. Chase that Syrian Antioch was the destination.

⁶ Cf. A.R. Fausset, “Jude addressed his Epistle primarily to *the Jewish Christians in and about Mesopotamia...*”

- ◇ That's the context in which we practice our faith too, so the book of Jude is for us!
- And in the book of Jude, the main exhortation is seen in v.3. What must a Christian do in the midst of the degeneration of Christianity and culture around us? We must “contend earnestly for the faith” – we must push back against every message that tends to break down our belief in Jesus and fight to keep trusting Him to forgive our sins, make us right with God, make us happy, and ultimately bring justice to the world.

The Main Point

3 Loved ones, while I was making all due diligence to write to y'all concerning our shared salvation, I felt the necessity to write to y'all exhorting/urging [y'all] to step up the fight/contend earnestly for the faith once delivered/ handed down to the saints,

- The Greek root word *agwnizomai* is used to describe competing in athletic contexts and to compare that to the effort we put out to trust Jesus:
 - Luke 13:24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate..."
 - 1 Timothy 6:12 "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called..." (NASB)
- But the verb as it occurs here in Jude has an additional prefix which generally means “upon” – as in “pour on the steam” – to make it an even more intense word that occurs nowhere else in the Bible. This is the main exhortation in the book of Jude.
- What are we to fight and contend for? “the faith once delivered to those made holy.” The singularity of that faith is also expounded in other places in the Bible:
 - Cf. Psalm 89:34-35 “Neither will I by any means profane my covenant; and I will not make void the things that proceed out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie to David.” (Brenton translation of the Septuagint)
 - 2 Peter 2:21 “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”
 - Hebrews 9:26-28 “...but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself... so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many...”
 - 1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit...” (NKJV)
- Christ's death on the cross is the center of that delivery, and this faith/belief system results in making humans into holy people, forgiven of their sins on account of Jesus' death. This faith is what we are called to strive for.

v.4 because certain men have settled in/crept in unnoticed/secretly slipped in alongside [you] who have already been prescribed/or-dained/marked out/designated to this condemnation/judgment, ungodly men who are turning/perverting/displacing the grace of our God with licentiousness/unbridled sensuality and who deny our only Sovereign/Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

- The main verb literally translates “gone down in alongside” and it has four nominative phrases which describe the “certain men” who have “crept in unnoticed/slipped in secretly^{NIV},”
 - 1) they have been marked out for judgment from of old (or already written about as to their judgment),
 - 2) they are *asebeis*/ungodly/not devout/impious,
 - 3) they exchange/turn/pervert God’s grace into unbridled living/licentiousness, and
 - 4) they deny Jesus – particularly His authority over them.
- I will plan to go more in-depth in my next sermon on the character of faithlessness, so let me skim over this verse at this point [jump over verse 4 for now] to focus on three strategies in verses 5, 6, and 7 for stepping up the fight for faithfulness:
- We must take in the history books of Scripture to remind us that God holds His people accountable to trust Him.
- We must remember the futility of Satan’s rebellion and humbly submit to the cosmic authority of Jesus rather than impatiently leaving Him.
- We must remember the eschatological books of the Bible, that there are fires of hell with which God punishes those who indulge in sin rather than trusting God.

A) We must take in Scripture to remind us that God holds His people accountable to trust Him.

v.5 Although y’all know fully/all [these] things, I’m wanting to remind y’all that once having saved a people from the country of Egypt, the Lord later/afterward/subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.

- The scriptures explicitly state that at the time of deliverance from Egypt, the people of Israel “believed” the word of the LORD through Moses (Ex. 4:31, 14:31),
- but later, after the ten spies disheartened the people from entering the promised land, God indicates that this was the tenth time of unbelief and the result of that protracted unbelief was the banning of that generation of Hebrews from the Promised land (Numbers 14:11 “And the Lord said to Moses, ‘How long does this people provoke me? and how long do they refuse to believe me for all the signs which I have wrought among them? ... 22 For all the men who see my glory, and the signs which I wrought in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me this tenth time, and have not hearkened to my voice, 23 surely they shall not see the land, which I sware to their fathers...’” (Brenton, cf. Deut. 9:23)

- Everyone who trusts God to save them gets saved, but those who stop trusting God don't coast into heaven on the faith that they had back in the past somewhere. That's why Jude says that we need to fight to keep our faith up!
- How did Jude do that? Through writing scripture to "remind" us!
- So the first application is to fight to keep the faith through taking in reminders from the Bible of God's redemptive (and judicial) work throughout history. We need to regularly read or listen to sermons about the history books of the Bible. They will remind us to keep trusting God because He has proved Himself a good savior, and everyone who has not trusted Him has ended up in a bad way. We have to keep reminding ourselves of this or we tend to forget, and when we forget, our faith tends to slip away from God and get fixated on other people and vain things that we think will help us instead.

B) We must remember the futility of Satan's rebellion and humbly submit to the cosmic authority of Jesus rather than jumping ship religiously.

v.6 Also, He has reserved/been keeping in everlasting chains under gloom/darkness for the judgment of the Great Day the angels which did not keep their own principality but instead have left their proper home/habitation/dwelling.

- At some point in the created order, God made spirits called angels. As beings that were created by God, it was only proper for the angels to be in submission to God and to obey His authority.
- In Hebrews 1:14 it says that angels were designed by God to serve/minister to Christians.
- But from the third chapter of Genesis we see some of these spirit-beings living in rebellion against God and working at cross-purposes to God's design,
 - working instead to hurt believers (like Satan did to Job)
 - and working to get believers to put their trust anywhere but in God (like when Satan moved King David to trust in his army instead of in God – 1 Chron. 21:1),
 - working to sift Christians (like Satan did to Peter trying to get him to deny Jesus forever – Luke 22:31),
 - and even trying to tempt Jesus away from His plan to save sinners (Mt. 4:10, 16:23).
- It's possible that this transgression of legitimate domains is also referring to unclean spirits possessing people in the N.T., which is one reason why Jesus cast them out⁷.
- Scriptures speak of partial judgments against Satan and demons

⁷ Some Christians also believe that this domain transgression is also referred to in Genesis 6 where the "sons of God looked upon the daughters of men" and married them, but I am of the opinion that the two groups referred to in Gen. 6 were both human.

- in the casting of Satan out of heaven to earth (Isa. 14:12ff, Rev. 12:9)
- and in Jesus' cryptic comment in Matthew 12:43 about how demons that are cast out of human hosts wander through dry places seeking rest and finding none.
- And in Jude we see some kind of binding upon the earlier liberties of unclean spirits.
- These seem to be an initial judgment upon them which will be consummated in a final and complete way on the "great day" of judgment in the future.
- Much time could be wasted chasing down details about demons, but Jude's point is that if Jesus Christ has brought judgment upon angels who have transgressed His rules, then you can be sure that He will bring judgment upon humans who transgress His rules.
 - The Apostle Peter made the same point in his second epistle: 2 Peter 2:4&9 "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment... then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment..." (NKJV)
- What is being referred to here with angels not "keeping" their "first estate/their own domain/authority"? The Greek word for "keep" (or "stay within," if you're looking at the ESV) is the same word that occurs at the other end of verse 6 when it says Jesus Christ "has been keeping" them in chains and darkness. These fallen angels were supposed to preserve a boundary, but instead they violated it.
- The thing they did not preserve is called *archane* in Greek, and is usually translated "beginning" or "ruler" in the Bible, but here it usually gets translated "first estate/domain/position of authority."
- In Rom. 8:38, "angels" are again mentioned together with this word, and traditional translations render it "principalities" there, as though it were a higher rank of spiritual being above angels.
- Who is the "ruler" over the angels – their principal? Ultimately Jesus is, but some rebelled against Him, and so He will hold them accountable with justice both now and in the future. I think that Satan's rebellion against God's authority is what Jude is talking about here.
 - Jude's reference to the "great day" is an allusion to the prophecy in the book of Zephaniah 1:14-17 "The great day of the LORD *is* near; *It is* near and hastens quickly. ... That day *is* a day of wrath, A day of trouble and distress, A day of devastation and desolation, A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness... I will bring distress upon men, And they shall walk like blind men, Because they have sinned against the LORD; Their blood shall be poured out like dust, And their flesh like refuse." (NKJV)

- This “Great Day” became a symbol in Jude and in Rev. 6:17 of the final judgment day of the Lord in which all sin is finally and fully dealt with justly.
- In the book of Revelation we see the same Jesus with full power over Satan and his demons, binding them with chains and ultimately casting them into the lake of fire for eternal judgment (Rev. 20:1-10).
- When we remember this, we can have faith to stand up against Apollyon when he attacks us because we know that “greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).
- Remembering the absolute authority that Jesus exercises over the vast powers of the spirit world is the second way that we can step up the fight for the faith! It helps us to humbly submit to Jesus’ word and to His ways rather than jumping ship and rebelling like the demons did, and getting into trouble like the demons did.

C) We must remember the fires of hell with which God punishes those who indulge in sin rather than trusting God.

v.7 In similar manner to these, Sodom and Gomorra and the towns around them, after acting out/giving themselves over to/indulging in sexual immorality and degradingly going off into/after abnormal/unnatural/strange/perverse physical/fleshly [relations] are laid out as an example when they suffered the justice/punishment of eternal fire.

- In verse seven, Jude transitions from angels back to men and notes some similarity. Just as the Devil and his demons transgressed the boundaries that Jesus had designed for them when He created them, so too the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah transgressed boundaries that Jesus had designed for them when He created them, and just as the Devil will be punished with fire from God, so the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were punished with divine fire. What were the transgressions of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah? Jude highlights two, although I’m sure there were others (cf. Ezek. 16:49):
- First: sexual immorality taken to an extreme. The KJV calls it “fornication,” and I am inclined to take this first sin in the sense of heterosexual transgression – violating one or more members of the opposite sex. The Greek word here adds a prefix which indicates that they took this sin to extremes – they were not just occasionally immoral, they were fully given over to sexual immorality.
 - This sin is clearly mentioned in the Genesis 19 account of the ways of Sodom and Gomorrah – and of the way Lot’s daughters continued in this sin even after the cities were destroyed.
 - We think of Sodom and Gomorrah’s sin primarily in terms of the sin of homosexuality and hypocritically stigmatize homosexuals while accepting fornicators; we forget that the Bible tells us in the book of Jude that both of these classes of adultery were what made God punish them with fire and brimstone from heaven. *Every form of adultery is serious!*

- The New Testament tells us in Ephesians 5:3 not to tolerate even a hint of sexual sin.
- The second way that the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah and their sister cities transgressed the boundaries Jesus had created for them was, to follow the Greek wording literally, “going away backwards after other flesh.” “Other” as in “other than the gender that was designed to be complimentary to your gender,” which is another reason I think Jude was writing of these two classes of adultery – heterosexual and homosexual. (The NIV and ESV editors seem to have been embarrassed by this and were a bit euphemistic.)
- One thing that struck me as I looked at the Greek wording was this word *hopisw*, which means “backwards” – I translated it “degraded.” In our culture today, the affirmation of homosexuality is considered to be progressive – we’ve been told that old-fashioned moralists are on “the wrong side of history” and that the inevitable future will be the outlawing of old, outmoded intolerance and the development of a society where everybody accepts everybody else – everybody, that is, except for “intolerant” people like us who believe in absolutes! The Bible says the very opposite here; according to Jude, homosexuality is “abnormal” and “backwards;” it is de-humanizing, de-personalizing, and moves the practitioner “away from” God.
- Now the point of verse 7 is not so much how bad it is to be “gay” but to reiterate how important it is to maintain faith in Jesus because there are those in the past who have moved away from trusting God into uncontrolled indulgence in things God calls sin and who have experienced terrifying punishment from God as a result – punishment that reminds that there is a terrifying final judgment coming in the future in which no sin will be left unpunished. Revelation 21:8 says that the “...unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (NKJV)
- Remember the fires of hell to motivate you to fight for the faith; it will be worth the fight to stand against the lies of this age we are in and to obey Jesus when everybody else is scoffing at Him.
- The verses before Revelation 21:8 explain why: Revelation 21:6-7 “And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.’”
- “He who overcomes shall inherit all things.” How do we overcome? By faith. That’s also in 1 John 5.
- When we trust Jesus to be faithful and true, we win against temptations to sin, we overcome the lies of the Devil, and we prove to the world around us that Jesus was right after all, and He gives to us - for free - the costly eternal life that He earned for us by His death on the cross, without us doing anything to earn it.

If we keep trusting that this is what He is doing, He will keep pouring that eternal life into us, and we will never have to fear the justice of eternal fire.

Conclusion

- Read the history books of Scripture to remind us that God holds His people accountable to trust Him.
- Read the poets and prophets of Scripture to remind us of the futility of Satan's rebellion and how we should humbly submit to the cosmic authority of Jesus rather than impatiently leave Him.
- And read the apocalyptic books of the Bible to remind us of the final judgment of the fires of hell by which God will punish those who indulge in sin rather than trusting in Jesus for their comfort and joy.
- So let us fill our minds with God's word and "step up the fight" in support of "the faith once delivered to the saints." Our heavenly reward will be worth every bit of the fight!

Greek Edition and English Translation of Jude 1:1-7⁸

Greek NT	NAW	KJV	NASB	NIV	ESV
<p>1 Ἰούδας, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος, ἀδελφὸς δὲ Ἰακώβου, τοῖς ἐν Θεῷ πατρὶ ἠγαπημένοις⁹ καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τετηρημένοις κλητοῖς:</p>	<p>1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, TO: the called ones who have been loved by God the Father and who have been kept by Jesus Christ.¹⁰</p>	<p>1 Jude, [the] servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified^{Maj} by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, <i>and</i> called:</p>	<p>1 Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved^{UBS} in God the Father, and kept fœr Jesus Christ:</p>	<p>1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ:</p>	<p>1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept fœr Jesus Christ:</p>

⁸ [Brackets] indicate the addition of a word or concept not originally in the Greek text.

Strikethrough indicates an inaccurate meaning or inaccurate grammar in the English version compared to the Greek text. X's are inserted where a version omitted a word present in the Greek. Underlining highlights translations where the wording is different from all the other English versions. Where English versions are more than diverse on a key word, I shaded the Greek word and its translated words with the same color. I have also used some abbreviations to identify the sources of variants based on editions of the Greek New Testament (GNT) currently in print: "Maj." stands for the reading of the majority of all Greek manuscripts predating the printed editions, "UBS" stands for critical editions of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Society, "T.R." stands for the *Textus Receptus* editions of the Greek New Testament, and "Pat." stands for the 1904 Greek Orthodox Patristic edition of the GNT.

⁹ The Majority of Greek New Testament Manuscripts (as well as the *Textus Receptus* and Patristic Greek Orthodox editions) read ἡγιασ- ("holy"), but all 4 of the pre-6th century manuscripts as well as all the Latin, Coptic, and Syrian translations from ancient times read "loved" (60% of the Greek letters are the same, only two being different). Paul used both "holy and beloved" in Col. 3:12, so both are true.

¹⁰ Cf. 1 Cor. 1:2 "TO: the church of God which exists in Corinth, having been made holy by Christ Jesus, the called saints together with all those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord in every place – theirs and ours." (NAW) and Rev. 17:14b "...He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." (NKJV) "Christ keeps the believer safe until the parousia (cf. 1Th. 5:23; 1Pe. 1:4; Rev. 3:10; other terms meaning "to guard," "to keep" are also found in similar eschatological contexts [cf. 2Th. 3:3; 2Ti. 1:12; 1Pe. 1:5; Jud. 1:24]) ~NET Bible

2 ἔλεος ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη καὶ ἀγάπη πληθυνθείη.	2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to y'all! ¹¹	2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.	2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.	2 Mercy, peace and love <u>be</u> yours <u>in</u> <u>abundance</u> .	2 May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.
3 Ἀγαπητοί, πᾶσαν σπουδὴν ποιούμενος γράφειν ὑμῖν περὶ τῆς κοινῆς [‘ημων ¹²] σωτηρίας, ἀνάγκην ἔσχον γράψαι ὑμῖν παρακαλῶν ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ἀπαξ παραδοθείσῃ τοῖς ἀγίοις πίστει.	3 Loved ones, while I was making all due diligence to write to y'all concerning our shared ¹³ salvation, I felt the necessity to write to y'all exhorting [y'all] to <u>step</u> <u>up the fight</u> for the faith once de- livered to the saints,	3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the ^{T.R.} common sal- vation, it was needed for me to write unto you, [and] exhort <i>you</i> that ye should earnestly con- tend for the faith which was once de- livered unto the saints.	3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that [you] contend earnestly for the faith which was once [for all] handed down to the saints.	3 Dear friends , although I was X very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt [I] had to write [and] urge you to contend for the faith that was once [for all] entrusted to the saints.	3 Beloved, although I was X very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once [for all] delivered to the saints.
4 παρεισέδυσαν	4 <u>because</u> certain men	4 For there are certain	4 For certain persons have	4 For certain men whose	4 For certain people have

¹¹ Cf. 1 Peter 1:2c "...grace and peace fulfilled in y'all"

¹² Although not in the Majority of Greek NT manuscripts or in the T.R. or Patristic editions, it is in all the oldest-known manuscripts including P72, ⱼ, B, C (+11 other mss), and it's in all the oldest versions: Syriac, Coptic, and Vulgate. Here is a case where the variant adds weight to what was already a possible interpretation – in the absence of an explicit pronoun ("our") the definite article (τῆς) could have been interpreted with possessive pronominal force, so there is no difference in meaning with the variant.

¹³ The only other time this word koine appears in the Bible to speak of "common" good is Titus 1:4 "To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior." (NKJV)

<p>γάρ τινες ἄνθρωποι, οἱ πάλαι προγεγραμμέν οι εἰς τοῦτο τὸ κρίμα, ἀσεβεῖς, τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν χάριν¹⁴ μετατιθέντες εἰς ἀσέλγειαν καὶ τὸν μόνον δεσπότην¹⁵ καὶ Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀρνούμενοι</p>	<p>have settled in alongside [you] who have <u>already</u> been <u>prescribed</u>¹⁶ to this <u>judgment</u>, ungodly men who are <u>displacing</u> the grace of our God with <u>licentious-</u> <u>ness</u>¹⁷ and who deny¹⁸</p>	<p>men crept in unawares, who were before of old <u>ordained</u> to this condemna- tion, ungodly men, <u>turning</u> the grace of our God into <u>lascivious-</u> <u>ness</u>, and denying the only <u>Lord</u> <u>God</u>^{TR}, and</p>	<p>crept in un- noticed, those who were long beforehand <u>marked out</u> for this condemna- tion, ungodly persons who <u>turn</u> the grace of our God into <u>licen-</u> <u>tiousness</u> and deny our only <u>Master</u></p>	<p>condemna- tion was <u>written</u> <u>about</u> long ago have <u>secretly slip-</u> <u>ped in</u> <u>among</u> you. They are godless men, who <u>change</u> the grace of our God into <u>[a license</u> <u>for] immor-</u> <u>ality</u> and</p>	<p>crept in un- noticed who long ago were <u>designated</u> for this condemna- tion, ungodly people, who <u>pervert</u> the grace of our God into <u>sensuality</u> and deny our only <u>Master</u></p>
our only	our Lord	and Lord,	deny Jesus	and Lord,	

¹⁴ The Patristic edition reads –τα, as does the UBS edition on the basis of three manuscripts (half of the oldest-known manuscripts, one of which is P72 which has three other variants which Nestle-Aland edition rejected in v. 4 alone). It's nothing more than a spelling variation, however, no difference in meaning or even in parsing.

¹⁵ The Majority of Greek manuscripts (and the Syriac and *Textus Receptus*) insert the word “God” here, but it's not in any of the pre-6th Century manuscripts, and there are manuscripts throughout history which don't have it and it's not in the Vulgate or Coptic versions.

¹⁶ *Progegrammenoi* only occurs 3 other places in the NT. Perhaps literally “pre-written” (as in Romans 15:4 “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” and in Ephesians 3:3) Jude elaborates in the next few verses how such men and their judgments have been written about previously in the OT), or perhaps more figuratively “marked forth,” as in Gal. 3:1 “Jesus Christ was clearly/publicly portrayed among you as crucified.” (NKJV) Regarding *palai*: I chose “already” (L&N#67.22) because JFB indicate that the writings were relatively recent from Peter and Paul (“forewritten,” namely, in Peter's prophecy quoted in Jude 17-1:18; and in Paul's before that, 1Tim. 4:1 & 2Tim. 3:1).

¹⁷ Romans 6:1-2 “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (NKJV)

2 Peter 2:1-2 “Nevertheless, there were also false prophets among the people, as also among y'all there will be false teachers – those who will slip (*παρεισάξουσιν*) destructive heresies in, even denying the Master Who bought them, thus bringing upon themselves sudden destruction. And many will follow into their immoralities, on account of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.” (NAW)

¹⁸ Matt. 10:33 “10:33 But whoever shall deny me in front of men, I will also deny him in front of my Father in the heavens.” (NAW)

2 Timothy 2:12 “If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny

<p>5 Ὑπομνήσαι δὲ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι, εἰδόμενος ὑμᾶς παντα¹⁹, ὅτι ὁ Κύριος ἄπαξ λαὸν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου σώσας, τὸ δεύτερον τοὺς μὴ πιστεύσαντας ἀπόλεσεν·</p>	<p>5 Although y'all know all [these] things, I'm wanting to remind y'all that once having saved a people from the country of Egypt, the Lord subse- quently destroyed those who did not believe.</p>	<p>5 I will therefore put you in rem- embrance, though ye once knew this^{TR}, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.</p>	<p>5 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.</p>	<p>5 Though you [already] know all [this], I want to remind you that the Lord X delivered [his] people out of X Egypt, [but] later destroyed those who did not believe.</p>	<p>5 Now I want to remind you, [although] you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.</p>
<p>6 ἀγγέλους τε τοὺς μὴ τηρήσαντας τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, ἀλλὰ ἀπολιπόντας τὸ ἴδιον οἰκητήριον εἰς κρίσιν μεγ- άλης ἡμέρας δεσμοῖς ἀϊδίους ὑπὸ</p>	<p>6 Also He has been keeping in everlasting chains under gloom for the judgment of the Great Day the angels which did not keep their own</p>	<p>6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness</p>	<p>6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for</p>	<p>6 And the angels who did not keep their X [positions of] authority but abandoned their own home- [these] he has kept in darkness,</p>	<p>6 And the angels who did not stay [within] their own [position of] authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under</p>

us.” (NKJV)

1 John 2:22-23 “Who is the liar, if not the one who is making the declamation that Jesus is not the Christ? This man is the antichrist--the one who is denying the Father and the Son. All who are denying the Son also don't have the Father.” (NAW)

¹⁹ The majority of Greek manuscripts, followed by the Patristic and *Textus Receptus* editions substitute τοῦτο (“this”) for (“all”) and move the “once” up next to the “this.” I have followed the critical editions which seem to be supported by all the oldest-known Greek manuscripts as well as by all the ancient versions and by many church fathers. The editors of the UBS 4th edition of their GNT give their own edition a “D” rating on this phrase, however.

ζόφον τετήρηκεν·	principality but instead have left their proper home.	unto the judgment of the great day.	the judgment of the great day,	[bound] w/ everlasting chains for X judgment [on] the great Day.	[gloomy] darkness until the judgment of the great day—
7 ὡς Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα καὶ αἱ περὶ αὐτὰς πόλεις τὸν ὅμοιον τούτοις τρόπον ἐκ- πορνεύσασαι καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἐτέρας πρόκεινται δειγμα, πυρὸς αἰωνίου δίκην ὑπέχουσαι.	7 In similar manner to these, Sodom and Gomorra and the towns around them, after acting out sexual immorality and degrad- ingly going off into abnormal physical [rela- tions] are laid out ²⁰ as an example when they suffered the justice of eternal fire.	7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner X, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suf- fering the vengeance of eternal fire.	7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.	7 In a similar way X, Sod- om and Gomorrah and the sur- rounding towns X gave them- selves up to sexual im- morality and XXX perversion. They serve as an ex- ample of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.	7 just as X X X Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities X, which like- wise in- dulged in sexual immorality and pursued X unnatural desire, serve as an ex- ample by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

²⁰ This word literally means “to lie stretched out,” so is probably a purposeful use of irony relating the prone position of their immorality to their punishment.

Jude 8-11: Beware The Error of Balaam

- In the first section on the book of Jude, I focused on verses 5, 6, and 7 which described three groups of people that were punished for not trusting God, and I concluded that we need to take in God's word to step up the fight to keep trusting God ourselves.
- John Calvin summarized it thus: “[A]fter having been called by God, we ought not to glory carelessly in His grace, but on the contrary, to walk watchfully in His fear; for if any trifles thus with God, the contempt of His grace will not be unpunished.”
- Now I want to come back to v.4 that I skimmed over and relate that to three examples in v.11 of individuals who did not keep the faith but rebelled against God:

v.4 [step up the fight for the faith] because certain men have settled in alongside [you] who have already been prescribed/designated to this judgment, ungodly men who are displacing the grace of our God with licentiousness/unbridled sensuality and who deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

- The main verb literally translates “gone down in alongside” and it has four nominative phrases which describe the “certain men” who have “crept in unnoticed/slipped in secretly^{NIV}”
 - 1) they have been marked out for judgment from of old (or already written about as to their judgment), Some places they have “already been written about” are:
 - 2 Peter 3:3&7 “...scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts... until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (NKJV)
 - 2 Tim. 3:1-9 “...in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient... slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth... men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all...” (NKJV, cf. 1 Tim. 4:1)

- 2) they are *asebeis*/ungodly/not devout/impious, they do not orient their thinking and actions around God,
- 3) they exchange/turn/pervert God's grace into loose living/licentiousness,
 - In my Christian High School, in the Christian college I went to, and even now in the Christian Home School association I lead, I have had occasions where I've had to shake my head in disbelief at students who claimed to be Christians and gave lip-service to the grace of God, but at the same time encouraged one another in sexual sin, listening to music that was blatantly anti-Christian, and watching movies that promoted all kinds of sin. This kind of casual attitude toward violations of the 10 commandments is deadly dangerous.
 - John Calvin, in his commentary linked Jude to Paul's epistles: "they abused the grace of God, so as to lead themselves and others to take an impure and profane liberty in sinning. But the grace of God has appeared for a far different purpose, even that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world."
- and 4) they deny Jesus – particularly His authority over them.
 - "it was...the ruling power of Christ that was denied; they boasted of His grace, but did not submit to him as a king. Hence the word *despotes* is used – one exercising absolute power." ~John Owen, 1855 AD

8. In a similar way, these men, through their dreaming, however, are both making their physical bodies unclean and also displacing authority – even blaspheming glorious beings.

- In Greek, the first in v.8 is a comparative (*homoious*) just as the first word in v.7 was a comparative (*hws*), so this creates a chain of comparisons of the problem-persons in this church - described in v.8 to the licentious people in Sodom and Gomorrah - described in v.7, and to the rebellious fallen angels - described in v.6.
- However, in verse 8, there is an additional Greek word *mentoi* which, unfortunately, the NIV drops out, but which indicates that there's a new and unexpected twist to these problem-persons in the church. The new twist is that they are doing both: defiling/polluting/making unclean their physical bodies through sleeping around like they did in Sodom and Gomorrah, while also doing what the fallen angels did by rejecting/displacing/despising authority and claiming that they don't have to obey anyone – ultimately not even the God of glory and His glorious/celestial/angelic/dignities. The new twist is that they have

combined the anarchy of Satan with the debauchery of Sodom and tried to do this in the church! No wonder Jude “lights into” them like he does!

- The only other place in the Greek Bible that this participle for “dreaming” shows up is in Isaiah 29:7, where, as Sir Lancelot Brenton translated it from the Septuagint, “...all they that war against Jerusalem, and all who are gathered against her, and they that distress her, shall be as one that dreams in sleep by night. And as men drink and eat in sleep, and when they have arisen, the dream is vain: and as a thirsty man dreams as if he drank, and having arisen is still thirsty, and his soul has desired in vain: so shall be the wealth of all the nations, as many as have fought against the mount Sion.” I believe Jude is alluding to this passage in Isaiah, where “Jerusalem/ Zion” is a type of the church. Here are men “fighting” against church leadership and “distressing” the people in the congregation, thinking they have spiritual dreams that they want to lead the church into, but they will get no further satisfaction in their rebellion and loose living than someone who has a dream about eating and drinking and then wakes up still hungry and thirsty.
- The parallel passage in 2 Peter 2:10 says basically the same thing, but substitutes the phrase “in unclean lusts” for “in their dreaming,” which is probably where the KJV came up with the word “filthy” here in Jude.
- The Greek word for “defile/pollute/make unclean” in v.8 is also found in Paul’s warnings to Timothy about similar people: “For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.’ This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” (Titus 1:10-16, NKJV).
- We also see it in Hebrews: “Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.” (Hebrews 12:14-16, NKJV) – *We must fight fornication and profanity with holiness and a true understanding of the grace of God – that’s the same as Jude’s message!*

- The word which Jude uses to describe their “rejecting/displacing/despising authority” was used by Jesus in the Gospels²¹ to describe Jewish religious leaders who “set aside the commandment of God in order to keep... tradition” (Mark 7:9), who “rejected God’s purpose” by not repenting of sin under the prophetic ministry of John the Baptizer (Luke 7:30), and who ultimately rejected Christ (Luke 10:16) by not “receiving what [He] said” (John 12:48). *How do we contend for the faith? By receiving what Jesus said, respecting God’s commands, repenting from the ways we have transgressed those commandments, and trusting Christ to bring us into a right relationship with God forever.*

9. Even Michael the chief angel, when he was hashing it out with the Devil while making an assessment concerning the body of Moses did not go so far as to bear culpability for blasphemy but rather said, “May the Lord reprimand you.”

- The Bible doesn’t make clear what Jude refers to here.
- All we know for sure is what it says in Deut. 34:5-6 about the end of Moses’ life: “So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day” (NKJV).
- The archangel named Michael is mentioned elsewhere in Scripture as “one of the chief princes” (אחד השרים הראשנים) in Dan 10:13, and then even more explicitly in Dan. 12:1 as “the great prince who stands over the sons of your people.”²²
- The words in Jude 9 describing this dispute paint the picture of Michael carrying the authority to represent God’s interests and to make a “judgment” call (διακρινόμενος), after “talking a matter through” (διελέγετο) with the Devil, examining both sides of the case from every angle. This would stand to reason if Michael had some sort of position of authority to take care of the affairs of the Hebrew people, of whom Moses was a member.

²¹ **Mark 7:9** “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.”

Luke 7:30 “But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.”

Luke 10:16 “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

John 12:48 “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.” (NASB)

²² Cf. “your prince” Dan. 10:21. Michael is also mentioned as fighting “in heaven” with the dragon in Rev. 12:7.

- As to what exactly the issue was between Michael and Satan, we cannot be sure.
 - The early church fathers Clement of Alexandria and Origen suggested that it came from a traditional Jewish story. The closest traditional story anybody has ever found is one²³ that speaks of an argument between Michael and Samael, prince of the demons, but it doesn't mention the body of Moses, so I don't think Jude is alluding to that.
 - The ancient Jewish historian Josephus, together with about half the Christian commentators that I read (John Calvin, Matthew Henry, Adam Clarke, John Wesley) suggested that the Devil was trying to find the secret location where God buried Moses in order to get Jews distracted from worshipping God by building a shrine and venerating Moses²⁴.
 - The closest Scriptural account to what we have here in Jude is the account in the book of Zachariah, chapter 3, where the prophet Zachariah sees, in a vision, "...Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. And the LORD said to Satan, 'The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! *Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?*'"
 - ◇ There is a lot of similarity: Satan disputing and someone replying with the exact words, "The LORD rebuke you."
 - ◇ The Puritan commentator John Gill suggested that Jude and Zechariah 3 could be the same, if the phrase "body of Moses" were to be taken to mean "the body of laws given to Moses" which would convict Joshua (and any other man, for that matter) under God's judgment, but from which the Lord Jesus would save Joshua (and all His people) by grace as one might pluck a stick out of a bonfire, rescuing him from the fires of hell.
 - ◇ I like that explanation best, but can't be dogmatic about it.
- This is one of those curious passages in the Bible where scholars can waste a lot of time on rabbit trails, but we need to focus on the main point: Jude is merely

²³ *Debarim Rabba*, sec. ii., fol. 263, 1: "Samael, that wicked one, the prince of the satans, carefully kept the soul of Moses, saying: When the time comes in which Michael shall lament, I shall have my mouth filled with laughter. Michael said to him: Wretch, I weep, and thou laughest. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, because I have fallen; for I shall rise again: when I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light" (as quoted by Adam Clarke)

²⁴ Albert Barnes, however, denied that any reason should be concocted, and Fausset suggested matter-of-factly that the Devil was trying to prevent Michael from raising Moses from the dead for the transfiguration, which seems even more imaginative.

citing this story as an illustration of his point that it's wrong to "trash-talk" things and persons that are "glorious" – not even an archangel would dare to speak disrespectfully to Satan²⁵.

10. But as for these men, whatever they don't understand they blaspheme, and whatever they, like the unreasoning animals, know instinctively, by these things they are corrupted.

- Cf. 2 Peter 2:11-13 "whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord. But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, and will receive the wages of unrighteousness..." (NKJV)
- How typical it is of natural human nature to take everything familiar to us and abuse it... until it destroys us, while we make fun of everything we don't understand!
- It's natural to like the hormonal highs of sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll. But indulgence in those things (apart from submission to the laws of God) have burned out, used up, and destroyed untold millions of lost souls, while they, all the while, speak hatefully of Christians and the Bible because they just don't comprehend the grace and love of God.
- It's the closest Jude comes to showing pity for them, and on these grounds, there is room for pity, to help us get past being mad merely at the actual troublemakers to fortify us in the larger war against the entire demonically-inspired fallen world system which has rebelled against the Lordship of Jesus.
- Now, three Biblical characters are compared to these problem-persons: Cain, Balaam, and Korah.

11. Woe to them, because they conducted themselves into the way of Cain and they poured themselves into the error of Balaam for reward, and in the controversy of Korah they were destroyed.

1. What is the "way of Cain"?

- The Apostle John elaborated in his first epistle: "...love one another, not as Cain [who] was of the evil one and slaughtered his brother--and for what reason did he slaughter him? Because his works were evil, but those of his brother, good." (3:11-12, NAW)

²⁵ "a memorandum to all disputants, never to bring railing accusations into their disputes. Truth needs no supports from falsehood or scurrility." ~Matthew Henry

- The Book of Genesis tells the story more fully: Genesis 4:5-16 "...[God] did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.' Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where *is* Abel your brother?' He said, 'I do not know. *Am* I my brother's keeper?' And He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. So now you *are* cursed from the earth... Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment *is* greater than I can bear!' ... Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.'" (NKJV)
 - Do you see from the Genesis account that it was not just a dispute between brothers? This is about a bad relationship between Cain and God. It started with Cain's awareness that there was something between Him and God that wasn't right, but instead of figuring out how to get right with God, he decided to join the rebellion against God. He killed Abel because he hated God. When God gently gave Cain an opportunity to repent and be forgiven, Cain spoke disrespectfully to God, and then complained that God was unjust in His punishment, and, in the end, "he departed from the presence of the LORD." *The "way of Cain" is the way of rebellion against God.*
 - But Cain should have known better! Adam and Eve were his parents; they had walked and talked with God. There's no way Cain couldn't have known that God punishes sin, because that's why his parents had been kicked out of the Garden of Eden. There's no way that Cain couldn't have known that God gives grace to those who confess their sin, because that's how his parents were still alive, and that's why they offered sacrifices to God. Cain was rightfully a member of the church of his day that contained his parents, his brother, his sisters and him, but he left it all, uninterested in ever getting right with God because he preferred to nurse his bitterness against God.
 - *Brothers and sisters, do not let anyone who has gone in the way of Cain sidetrack you from trusting Jesus to make you right with God!*
2. **Balaam is the next example** of someone within the pale of the church who nevertheless joined in rebellion against God and His people, in his case, to get "reward/pay/profit/gain."

- According to the Old Testament book of Numbers chapter 22, the King of the country of Moab offered Balaam a “diviner’s fee” (Numbers 22:7), he offered “great honor” (v.17), and he provided the attention of the most “honorable princes” of the land (v.15) – the text even suggests that the king offered Balaam a “house full of silver and gold” (v18) in order to put a curse on the nation of Israel. These rewards tempted Balaam to defy God.
- 2 Peter 2:15 “They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness” (NKJV)
- Balaam tried multiple times to curse the people of Israel in order to get that wealth, but was prevented by God. The Bible doesn’t tell us how Balaam came to know God, but it is clear that Balaam actually talked with God and accurately delivered some messages from God. But instead of responding in faith towards the true God, instead of joining the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38) – the people he knew were under God’s blessing, Balaam instead chose to side with God’s enemies. He made his home with the Midianites, and made it his life-mission to subvert the people of God.
- He sent a bunch of Midianite women into the camp of Israel, and these women threw a big party that looked like so much fun that a lot of the men of Israel joined the party, which included a forbidden barbeque outside the temple, committing adultery, and worshipping idols (Numbers 31:16). Balaam had it figured out, and God indeed got mad at the people of Israel for committing spiritual and physical adultery and killed thousands of them in His judgment.
- This may have gotten Balaam the reward that he sought, but he didn’t live to enjoy it. He was killed shortly thereafter when the Israelites conquered the Midianites (Numbers 31:8).
- Balaam’s name shows up again a couple thousand years later in God’s message in the book of Revelation to the church in Pergamos, Turkey. “...you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality...” (Rev. 2:14, NKJV).
- These two temptations are still used today to move people away from trusting God, and they are exactly what Jude has already mentioned – rebellion against God and the licentious indulgence in immorality.
- *Brothers and sisters, do not let anyone who has gone into the error of Balaam sidetrack you from walking faithfully with Jesus!*

- God offers us a better reward than anything the world has to offer: Genesis 15:1 “...[T]he word of the LORD came to Abram... ‘I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.’” (NKJV) *God Himself is our reward!* We also saw that in...
2 John 8-9 “Watch out for yourselves in order that y’all might not lose what we worked for, but instead y’all may get back a full reward. Every one who launches forth while not remaining in the teaching of Christ does not have God; the one who remains in the teaching [of Christ], this one has both the Father and the Son.” (NAW)
- The same verb *exechuthesan* here translated “ran greedily/abandoned themselves/rushed headlong/(lit.) were poured” is used throughout the New Testament to speak of the blood of Jesus poured out for us to forgive our sins and of the Holy Spirit poured out upon Christians. There again is the real reward which is better than any amount of monetary reward – God Himself!

3. The third example is the “**rebellion/gainsaying/controversy of Korah**”

- Korah was Aaron’s cousin, a Levite, so he, perhaps even more than Cain and Balaam, was “in the know” about God. He wasn’t just a member of the church, he was a leader in the church.
- Numbers 16 tells his story: After the Israelites failed to trust God and enter the promised land and Moses had told them that they would have to wander in the desert until that generation died off, Korah pulled together an alternative government composed of 250 leaders and challenged Moses’ and Aaron’s political and spiritual leadership of the nation of Israel, saying, “Why are you exalting yourselves over the assembly of the LORD?” His buddies Dathan and Abiram said, “You have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, why should you keep acting like a prince over us?” Moses countered by suggesting that Korah and his 250-member congress try offering incense to God. Now, Korah should have known better than to accept this challenge. It hadn’t been all that long ago that his cousins Nadab and Abihu (actually Korah’s first cousins once removed) had pulled a similar stunt in Leviticus 10 (offering incense before the LORD when God hadn’t asked them to) and they had been destroyed in the fire of judgment that came from the presence of the Lord. Korah had the audacity to try it again, and the earth split open underneath him and closed back up after he had fallen in, so he perished, and then God sent fire from heaven and killed all 250 of the men in Korah’s rival

government, and that was that. *It started with Korah “speaking against” (anti-logia) the leadership that God had set over him.*

- *Brothers and sisters, do not let anyone who has a rebellious attitude suck you into their distrust of Jesus and his authority!*

Conclusion

So there we have three examples of ungodly, licentious, lordship-denying persons:

1. Cain (who hung on to bitterness against God),
2. Balaam (who purposefully tempted believers into idolatrous feasting and partying), and
3. Korah (who rebelled against God’s authority and dragged everyone who followed him down to hell).

Jude says that these kind of people will infiltrate churches and we must be on our guard against accepting their licentious, rebellious ways.

“let their character, course, and end, be our seasonable and sufficient warning”

~Matthew Henry

Jude 8-11 Greek Edition and Comparative translations²⁶

GNT	NAW	KJV	NASB	NIV	ESV
8 Ὅμοίως ²⁷ μέντοι καὶ οὗτοι ἐνυπνιαζόμεν οὶ σάρκα μὲν μαίνουσι, κυριότητα δὲ ἀθετοῦσι, δόξας δὲ βλασφημι- οῦσιν. ²⁸	8. In a similar way, these men, through their dreaming however are both making their physical bodies unclean and also displacing authority – even blaspheming glorious beings .	8 Likewise also these <i>filthy</i> dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion , and speak evil of dignities .	8 Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties .	8 In the very same way, these X dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings .	8 Yet in like manner these people also, [relying on their] dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones .
9 ὁ δὲ Μιχαὴλ ὁ ἀρχάγγελος, ὅτε τῷ διαβόλῳ διακρινόμενος διελέγετο περὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως σώματος, οὐκ ἐτόλμησε κρίσιν ἐπενεγκεῖν	9. Even Michael the chief angel, when he was hashing it out with the Devil while making an assessment concerning the body of Moses did not go so far as to bear culpability for blasphemy but	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 ,	9 But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against [him] a railing judgment , but	9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil X about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation	9 But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous

²⁶ [Brackets] indicate the addition of a word or concept not originally in the Greek text.

Strikethrough indicates an inaccurate meaning or inaccurate grammar in the English version compared to the Greek text. X's are inserted where a version omitted a word present in the Greek. Underlining highlights translations where the wording is different from all the other English versions. Where English versions are more than diverse on a key word, I shaded the Greek word and its translated words with the same color. I have also used some abbreviations to identify the sources of variants based on editions of the Greek New Testament (GNT) currently in print: "Maj." stands for the reading of the majority of all Greek manuscripts predating the printed editions, "UBS" stands for critical editions of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Society, "T.R." stands for the *Textus Receptus* editions of the Greek New Testament, and "Pat." stands for the Greek Orthodox Patristic edition of the GNT.

²⁷ NASB & NIV seems to have followed the *Alexandrinus* against all other Greek manuscripts with the reading of "same" instead of "similar."

²⁸ The parallel word in 2 Peter 2:10 is *katafronew* – "to despise, think little of."

βλασφημίας, ἀλλὰ εἶπεν· ἐπιτιμήσαι σοι Κύριος ²⁹ .	rather said, "May the Lord reprimand you."	but said, The Lord rebuke thee.	said, "The Lord rebuke you!"	against [him], but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"	judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."
10 οὗτοι δὲ ὅσα μὲν οὐκ οἶδασι βλασφημοῦσιν, ὅσα δὲ φυσικῶς ³⁰ ὡς τὰ ἄλογα ζῷα ἐπίστανται, ἐν τούτοις φθείρονται.	10. But as for these men, whatever they don't understand they blaspheme , and whatever they, like the unreasoning animals, know instinctively, by these things they are corrupted.	10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know <u>naturally</u> , as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.	10 But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know [by] instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.	10 Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand; and what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals — X these [are the very] things [that] destroy X them.	10 But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by X all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.
11 οὐαὶ αὐτοῖς, ὅτι τῆ ὁδῷ τοῦ Κάιν ³¹ ἐπορεύθησαν, καὶ τῆ πλάνῃ τοῦ Βαλαάμ ³² μισθοῦ ἐξέχυθησαν, ³³ καὶ τῆ ἀντιλογία τοῦ Κορὲ ³⁴ ἀπόλοντο.	11. Woe to them, because they conducted themselves into the way of Cain and they poured themselves into the error of Balaam for reward , and into the trash-talk of Korah they were destroyed.	11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after X the error of Balaam for reward , and perished in the gainsaying of Core.	11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.	11 Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.	11 Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for [the sake of] gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.

²⁹Compare with Zech. 3:2.

³⁰ The only other place this word occurs in the Greek Bible is in Rom. 1 as an adjective describing heterosexual relations.

³¹Gen. 4:3-8, 1 John 3:12

³² Numbers 22-26, 31:16, Rev. 2:14

³³ This word is not usually translated "rushed;" its literal meaning may actually be intended to describe the physical pouring out of wine and of sexual impurity.

³⁴Num. 16:19-35

Jude 12-13: You don't want to be around "that guy"

Introduction

- As we look at verses 12-13, Jude drives the point home with six metaphors that even though certain people seem like the life of the party and seem to be great spiritual leaders, there's something bad wrong with them if they do not have faith in Jesus, and we must not be allured by their natural attractiveness.
- I also want to point out a contrast word that appears 6 times between vs. 8-19, the word "these"
 - V.8 These defile the flesh
 - V.10 These blaspheme what they don't know
 - V.12 These are stains
 - V.14 These are the topic of prophecy
 - V.16 These are grumblers
 - V.19 These cause division
- In Greek, this word for "these" can indicate disapproval. For a time, there was a billboard on the highway leading in to the Ogden Gate of Fort Riley designed to help soldiers see that getting drunk on alcohol is not the great thing that the beer and liquor advertisements crack it up to be. This billboard highlighted stupid things that guys have done while drunk (such as talking obnoxiously or wrecking cars) and reminded soldiers that they don't want to be "that guy." Jude is doing something similar here.
- But there is a contrast word in Jude to "these/that guy," and that is the word "you":
 - V.2 to you be mercy, peace, and love
 - V.3 to you I am writing
 - V.5 I am reminding you
 - V.12 your love feasts
 - V.17 but you, beloved, remember
 - V.20 but you, beloved, building faith
- Do you see the contrast between "these" ungodly persons and "you" who are keeping the faith?
- Now, in verses 12-13, the ungodly are compared to six natural phenomena that help us understand the gravity of their situation:

#1) These men are reefs at y'all's love-feasts,

- John Gill: “These here seem to be the Agapae, or love feasts, of the primitive Christians; the design of which was to maintain and promote brotherly love, from whence they took their name; and to refresh the poor saints, that they might have a full and comfortable meal now and then: their manner of keeping them was this; they began and ended them with prayer and singing; and they observed them with great temperance and frugality; and they were attended with much joy and gladness, and simplicity of heart: but were quickly abused, by judaizing Christians, as observing them in imitation of the passover; and by intemperance in eating and drinking; and by excluding the poor, for whose benefit they were chiefly designed; and by setting up separate meetings for them, and by admitting unfit persons unto them; such as here are said to be spots in them, blemishes, which brought great reproach and scandal upon them, being persons of infamous characters and conversations.”
- Adam Clark: “ The feasts of charity, the *αγαπαι* or love feasts, of which the apostle speaks, were in use in the primitive Church ‘till the middle of the fourth century, when, by the council of Laodicea, they were prohibited to be held in the Churches; and, having been abused, fell into disuse. In later days they have been revived... among the Moravians... and... Methodists [John Wesley believed that “feasts of love (were) Anciently observed in all the churches.”]. Among the ancients, the richer members of the Church made an occasional general feast, at which all the members attended, and the poor and the rich ate together. The fatherless, the widows, and the strangers were invited to these feasts, and their eating together was a proof of their love to each other; whence such entertainments were called love feasts. The love feasts were at first celebrated before the Lord’s Supper; in process of time they appear to have been celebrated after it. But they were never considered as the Lord’s Supper.”³⁵
- The meaning of this Greek word *spilades* is debated.
 - It is found nowhere else in the Greek Bible, although a similarly-spelled root word meaning “spot/stain” is used half a dozen places in Scripture³⁶.
 - The meaning of this word, therefore, has been determined by its use in secular Greek literature, where Homer used it to describe “rocks hidden under the sea” that could shipwreck sailors.

³⁵ Albert Barns, however strongly objected, saying that love feasts were unbiblical and that this must just be talking about partaking in communion.

³⁶ 1 Tim. 6:14; James 1:27; 3:6; 2 Peter 3:14; Jude 1:23, cf. only LXX instance in Wisdom 15:4

- The word is spelled slightly differently in the parallel passage of 2 Peter 2:13, and everybody agrees that it means “spots/stains” there.
- Throughout the Bible, the concept of a spot or stain is commonly applied to moral failure – disobedience to God.
- Both meanings are quite true:
 - ▶ Christian frauds have patterns of sin from which they have no intention of repenting, although they often do a good job of looking very acceptable outwardly.
 - ▶ And Christian frauds can be dangerous spiritually, teaching ideas that sound all right but which will bring shipwreck to the souls of their followers in the end.

#2) fearlessly partaking of good things, feeding themselves,

- The Greek word *aphobos* translated “without qualm/fear” shows up only three other times in the NT, and all three other times describe what true Christians do fearlessly:
 - They “serve God” (Luke 1:74),
 - they do the Lord’s work (1 Cor. 16:10),
 - they “speak the word of God” (Philippians 1:14).
- This makes the contrast between you and these posers even more stark: what is it that they do most fearlessly? They eat.
 - Godlessness leads to self-gratification rather than love for others. They care only about feeding themselves.
 - Cf. Ezekiel 34:8 “‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock... 21 Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, 22 therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23 I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd.’” (NKJV)
 - This was fulfilled by Jesus in Matt. 2:6 (cf. Rev. 7:17), and by His apostles (John 21:16) and the NT elders they appointed (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:2).

#3) clouds without water carried along by winds,

- In the parallel passage of 2 Peter 2:17, it's "springs without water" instead of "clouds without water," but people who don't have indoor plumbing relied on both to get their drinking water.
- I remember my first backpacking trip on the Odum Scout trail in central Alabama. Our trail guide had been up and down it frequently, and there was a spring where he had found water about five miles down the trail, so we decided to carry only a couple of pints of water each because we were just scrawny junior high kids and we were already packing all our food and tents and clothes too. The plan was to hike in five miles with all our gear, set up camp, refill our water bottles at the spring, make dinner and spend the night, and then strike camp and go on down the trail the next day. Well, apparently there had not been as much rain as usual, so when we arrived at the camp site exhausted from our first backpacking hike, almost all of us had drunk all of the water in our canteens and we were thirsty, so we went to the spring, but THERE WAS NO WATER! I've been on other backpacking trips where we were hard up for water but it rained and we were able to collect rain water off of our tents, but there was no rain on that first trip. Some of the guys had brought macaroni and cheese for dinner; since they had no water, they were just crunching on those dry noodles and getting more thirsty tasting that cheese powder. It was brutal for a bunch of tenderfoot junior high kids. As I recall, our guide felt so sorry for us that he hiked the 10 miles to the car and back the next morning and brought us a couple of 5-gallon bags of water to rescue us. I've never been so excited to see water!
- But what if he had promised to get us water and then come back without any water? **Proverbs 25:14** "Whoever falsely boasts of giving *is like* clouds and wind without rain." That's what these church imposters were doing.
- If you are a Christian, you have living water flowing out of you. That's what Jesus said, **John 4:14** "...whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."
- It is precisely because imposters have not "drunk in" faith in Jesus alone that they are carried about by the storm winds of human ideas that blow all four directions at once like the Greek *anemwn* wind: **Ephesians 4:14-15** "... we should no longer be infants, tossed back-and-forth and carried about in every wind of teaching in the cunning of men in craftiness toward the deceit of straying, but by being truthful in love we might grow all things into Him, who is the head: Christ..." (NAW)

- **Hebrews 13:8-10** “Jesus is the Anointed One – past and present the same – even into eternity. Stop getting sidetracked with divergent and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be confirmed by grace rather than by foods with which those who participated were not benefited. We have an altar from which the men who minister in relation to the tabernacle do not have authority to eat...” (NAW)
- If we can grasp that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, we will not be blown around willy-nilly. We will also live with eternal life and bear fruit, “for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth... have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*.” (**Ephesians 5:9-11**, NKJV)

#4) fruitless trees at harvest-time, having died a second time after being uprooted

- **Matt. 13:22** “Then the one that was sown into the thorns, this is the one who hears the word, yet the cares of this age and the deception of wealth choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.” (NAW)
- Fruitfulness is described in Titus 3:14 as “doing good works” and “meeting people’s needs” and 2 Peter 1:8 says that fruitfulness is exercising “brotherly kindness” and “love.” Love is, after all the fruit of the spirit.
- Imposters don’t have that, not even at the peak of maturity and the peak of the season for fruit-bearing, which is the time referred to by the Greek word *fthinopwrina*, translated “autumn,” and, I think, mistakenly translated “withered” by the KJV (the fact that this word only occurs once in the whole Greek Bible does make it harder to translate, but it is corrected to “autumn” by the NKJ).
- In the autumn, my family gets permission to harvest our neighbor’s apple and pear trees, but a couple of years ago there was a frost late in the spring which froze the blossoms of all the fruit trees and kept them from bearing fruit, so when it came time to harvest pears and apples in the fall, there were hardly any to be found. How disappointing.
- Even more disappointing is a Christian who is self-centered and does not love others. But if you can recognize that not only are they not trusting God, they are under God’s judgment for being in rebellion to Him, you can learn not to expect the fruit of faith and love from them.
- They are like doubly-dead trees that are not only too disease-ridden to live, but they have also been knocked over so that their roots have been ripped out of the ground and will never draw the sap of life again.

- Jesus called the judgment day in the parable of the wheat and the weeds a time of “uprooting” (Mat. 13:29)
- and in Matthew 13:29, he spoke of the future judgment to come upon the Pharisees using the same word, “Every plant which my Heavenly Father did not plant will be rooted out” (NAW).
- The eternal judgment of the last day is called “the second death” in Rev. 21:8 “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (NKJV).
- However, we also see that those who contend earnestly to keep the faith will overcome the world (1 John 5:2), and Jesus promised in Revelation 2:11b that “he who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.”

#5) v.13 wild waves of the sea foaming up their own shameful deeds,

- John Calvin noted, “Why this was added, we may learn more fully from the words of Peter: it was to show that, being inflated with pride, they breathed out, or rather cast out, the scum of high-flown stuff of words in grandiloquent style. At the same time they brought forth nothing spiritual, their object being on the contrary to make men as stupid as brute animals. Such... are the fanatics of our day, who call themselves Libertines. ... they imagine a state of innocency in which there is no difference between baseness and honesty; they imagine a spiritual life, when fear is extinguished and when every one heedlessly indulges himself; they imagine that we become gods, because God absorbs the spirits when they quit their bodies.” *These kinds of false ideas just keep coming ‘round.*
- **James 1:6** tells us that those who do not contend for the “faith” but give themselves over to “doubts” are “wind-blown and tossed like a storm-wave at sea.” (NAW)
- Jude speaks of “shameful deeds” (plural); what sort of deeds might these be? Other epistles can fill in our understanding:
- **2 Corinthians 4:2** “[W]e renounced the shameful secrets, not walking in craftiness or misleading with the word of God, but rather using the revelation of the truth, endorsing ourselves to every person's conscience in the sight of God.” (NAW)
- **Philippians 3:18-20** “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* their belly, and whose glory *is* in

their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (NKJV)

#6) wandering stars for whom the gloom of darkness has been kept for eternity

- This is the only mention of “wandering stars” in the whole Bible, but it probably refers to planets, since we get the English word “planet” from the Greek word for “wandering” – *planetai*.
 - The moon revolves around the earth, and the earth revolves around the sun, so we see regular patterns in where we see the sun every day and every night,
 - and the stars are so far away that the motion of the earth is about the only variable in how we see them, so again, that creates predictable patterns in the placement of the stars,
 - but the planets, since they are much closer than the stars, their motion around our sun is noticeable from earth, so the motions of the planets have two factors that affect where we see them: the earth’s motion, and their own motion. The difference in motion of the stars versus the planets left astronomers scratching their heads at first because the planets didn’t follow the same regular patterns of the stars; they appeared to “wander” due to the extra factor that their own motion was noticeable from earth.
- We humans get to wandering morally and spiritually when we lose sight of the object of our faith (Jesus)
 - *This comes from not getting input from the Bible: **Matt. 22:29*** Jesus said to the Jewish Saducees, “You are wandering off course because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God” (NAW).
 - *Spiritual wandering also comes when we focus our attention on people who are impressive: **Matt. 24:24*** “for false messiahs and false prophets will be raised up, and they will give great signs and wonders so as to cause, if it were in their power, even the chosen ones to wander astray” (NAW).
 - *Spiritual wandering comes through temptations that appeal to our flesh: **Rev. 2:20*** “...Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and cause My servants to wander astray to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols” (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 2 Pet. 2:15).
 - *Spiritual wandering come through the influence of demons too: **1 Timothy 4:1*** “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will de-

- part from the faith, giving heed to wandering spirits and doctrines of demons” (NKJV).
- How do we keep from wandering off?
 - *Study the Bible: 2 Timothy 3:13-15* “But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, wandering astray and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned... the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (NKJV)
 - *Confess faith in Jesus: 2 John 1:7* “For many who wander astray have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” (NKJV)
 - *Confess sin to Jesus: 1 John 1:8* “If we say that we have no sin, we wander astray, and the truth is not in us.” (NAW)
 - Just as fallen angels are doomed to darkness in the final judgment, so also are rebellions humans.
 - **Jude 1:6** “And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”
 - **2 Peter 2:4,9,17** “For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment... then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment... These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever^{-USB}” (NKJV)
 - We also see that sequence of judgment of spiritual beings first, then men in Rev. 20, but both get the same end in the lake of fire.
 - **Matthew 8:10-12** “And when Jesus heard [the Centurion], He marveled and said His followers, ‘So be it! I tell you, such great faith have I found with no one in Israel. And I tell you that many from East and West will come and will be pulled up to the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness. Weeping and the gnashing of teeth will be there.’” (NAW)
 - In Jesus parables, “outer darkness” is where the guy who refused to wear the host’s wedding garment was thrown (Mt. 22:13) and where the unprofitable steward of the single talent was thrown in the parable of the talents (Mat. 25:30).

- Darkness, however, is also a present state for all who have not heard the Gospel and believed in Jesus (John 12:46 “I have come *as* a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.” NKJV cf. Matt. 4:16, 6:23, Acts 26:18, 2 Cor. 6:14, Eph. 5:8, 1 Peter 2:9.)
- Darkness symbolizes the absence of God’s love in the New Testament, and naturally shows up
 - among the wicked who are apart from God’s mercy,
 - and in scenes of judgment, such as the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai (Heb. 12:8),
 - the crucifixion (Mt. 27:45),
 - and the judgment day (Acts 2:20).
- The word translated “reserved” here in v.13 shows up
 - in verse 1 (where it is translated “kept” or “preserved”)
 - in v.6 (where it is translated “kept” or “stay”)
 - and in v.21 (where it is translated “keep”).
- The parallels are not to be missed: there is a “keeping” role on the part of both God and man.
 - God “keeps” us in Jesus Christ (according to v.1), and we “keep ourselves in the love of God” (according to v.21) by contending for the faith and waiting for Jesus to save us and consummate eternal life with us.
 - On the other hand, God “keeps” angels and humans in darkness who, for their part do not “keep” obedience to Him as their rightful authority.

Conclusion

- Stepping back to look at the big picture again after these six metaphors, let’s remember that Jude does not seem to be worried that the people he is speaking to are “those guys,” instead, he is describing just how wide the chasm is between God’s people who keep fighting to trust Jesus and those who have joined the rebellion against Jesus.
 - There might be something beautiful about a coral reef, but a reef in a shipping lane is a public threat.
 - There might be something noble about being a shepherd, but an animal abuser who feeds himself and starves his sheep is despicable.
 - There might be something majestic about clouds, but clouds of dust are just a nuisance.
 - There might be something wonderful about Fruit trees, but if they bear no fruit, they’re good for nothing but firewood.

- There might be something relaxing about ocean waves, but anybody in the water when storm winds are whitecapping is just going to drown.
- And there may be something inspiring about stars, but stars wandering forever in blackness just sounds unpleasantly lonely.
- God inspired Jude to write these things for us to help us see how bad sin and rebellion against God is. He wants us to get a knot in the pit of our stomach when we think of such perversions so that we won't be tempted to follow after them. God wants us to see sin as the deviant and foolish behavior it is, so that we will care about the purity and holiness of the church and not tolerate sin.

Jude 12-13 Greek Edition and Comparative translations³⁷

GNT	NAW	KJV	NASB	NIV	ESV
12 Οὗτοι εἰσιν ³⁸ ἐν ταῖς ἀγάπαις ³⁹ ὑμῶν σπιλάδες ⁴⁰ , συνευωχ- ούμενοι ἀφόβως, ἑαυτοῦς ποιμαίνοντες, νεφέλαι	12. These men are reefs at y'all's love-feasts, fearlessly partaking of good things, feeding themselves, clouds without water	12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast [with you ^{Scribner TR,C}], feeding themselves without fear: clouds <i>they</i>	12 These are the men who ^{UBS} are [hidden] reefs in your love feasts when they feast with [you] without fear, caring for themselves;	12 These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with [you] without [the slightest] qualm-[shep- herds] who feed [only] themselves.	12 These are [hidden] reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with [you] without fear, [shepherds] feeding themselves; waterless

³⁷ [Brackets] indicate the addition of a word or concept not originally in the Greek text.

Strikethrough indicates an inaccurate meaning or inaccurate grammar in the English version compared to the Greek text. X's are inserted where a version omitted a word present in the Greek. Underlining highlights translations where the wording is different from all the other English versions. Where English versions are more than diverse on a key word, I shaded the Greek word and its translated words with the same color. I have also used some abbreviations to identify the sources of variants based on editions of the Greek New Testament (GNT) currently in print: "Maj." stands for the reading of the majority of all Greek manuscripts predating the printed editions, "UBS" stands for critical editions of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Society, "T.R." stands for the *Textus Receptus* editions of the Greek New Testament, and "Pat." stands for the Greek Orthodox Patristic edition of the GNT.

³⁸ On the basis of the reading of half the oldest-known manuscripts and little else (P72, A, B, +9 others) the modern critical text adds οἱ = "the ones who." It makes no difference in meaning. The NASB is about the only English version that carries it through.

³⁹ Curiously, by transposing two letters, you can change the word "love-feast" in Greek to the word "deceptions," and by adding two letters to the word "stain" you get the word for "reef." We find both of these switcheroos in the parallel passage of 2 Peter 2:13 "spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you." This doesn't necessarily mean that either one is wrong, it is just curious. It might even point toward a solution to the puzzle of who is quoting who; such a curious word similarity could be explained if both Peter and Jude had read the same document and wrote an inspired commentary on it, while the original was lost.

⁴⁰ Arndt & Gingrich cite Homer, Philostratus, and Ignatius as using spilad- in the sense of a rock hidden under the sea which can sink ships unexpectedly, and this meaning is the one taken by Strong, Thayer, Albert Barnes, A.R. Fausset, Marvin Vincent, A.T. Robertson, and among the versions by the Geneva, Revised Standard (and therefore ESV), American Standard (and therefore NASB), NET, NLT, and French (LS). The Vulgate, KJV, NIV, and CEV rendered it "spots/blemishes," as did the older English commentators Matthew Henry, John Gill, Adam Clarke, and John Wesley, as well as John Calvin (who was using the Latin).

<p>ἄνδρῳ ὑπὸ ἀνέμων παρα- φερόμεναι^{T.R.=} ^{περι-}, δένδρα φθινοπωρινά, ἄκαρπα, δις ἀποθανόντα, ἐκριζω- θέντα⁴¹,</p>	<p>carried along by winds, fruitless trees at harvest- time, having died a second time after having been uprooted,</p>	<p>are without water, carried about^{TR} of winds; trees [whose fruit] withereth, without fruit, twice dead, [plucked up] by the roots;</p>	<p>clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;</p>	<p>They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit [and] uprooted-- twice dead.</p>	<p>clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees [in] late autumn, twice dead, uprooted;</p>
<p>13 κύματα ἄγρια θαλάσσης ἐπαφρίζοντα⁴² τὰς ἐαυτῶν αἰσχύνας, ἀστέρες πλανῆται, οἷς ὁ ζόφος τοῦ σκότους εἰς αἰῶνα τετήρηται.</p>	<p>13. wild waves of the sea foaming up their own shameful deeds, wandering stars for whom the gloom of darkness has been kept for eternity.</p>	<p>13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shameX; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.</p>	<p>13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shameX [like foam]; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.</p>	<p>13 [They are] wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shameX; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.</p>	<p>13 wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shameX; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of [utter] darkness has been reserved forever.</p>

⁴¹ The Aorist forms of these two participles lead me to believe that the death and the uprooting happened previous to the present time, so I tried to bring that temporal idea out in my translation.

⁴² *Hapex legomenon*. This is also the only mention of “wandering stars” in the Bible.

Jude 14-19: The Lord Cometh to Judge

- As we look at verses 12-19, the second character trait mentioned in verse 4 rises to prominence, the character trait of being “ungodly/*asebeis*.” We will see that the main difference between those who are blessed and those who are condemned on Judgment Day is whether or not their lives are oriented around God.
- Tension between godly and ungodly people has been ongoing through the entire history of mankind, and Jude illustrates this by bringing forth one of the earliest examples⁴³ of a godly man and his message to the ungodly folks around him:

Enoch’s Life Message

Jude 14. Now Enoch (seventh [generation] from Adam) prophesied also concerning these guys, saying, “Look! The Lord cometh with myriads of His holy ones⁴⁴ 15. to execute justice against all men and to lay out a case against all the ungodly [among them] concerning all their works of ungodliness which were ungodly and concerning all the harsh things that ungodly sinners uttered against Him.”

Genesis 5 gives the record of the generations between Adam and Noah, listing Enoch as seventh, or the great-great-great-great grandson of Adam⁴⁵. In that record, it says twice that this Enoch “walked with God.”

- ◇ Think about the times that Enoch lived in: Everyone around him was sinking deeper and deeper into sin and rebellion against God. Genesis 6:5 says that “the wickedness of man was great on the earth and every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” and it “grieved” God’s heart (NASB).
- ◇ Surely when Enoch walked with God, they talked about this. Surely Enoch and God grieved together over all the wickedness around them as they walked. Surely God spoke of His coming judgment of flooding the earth with water and killing all but Enoch’s grandson Noah.

⁴³ **John Calvin (1551):** “Were any one to ask, that since similar sentences occur in many parts of Scripture, why did he not quote a testimony written by one of the prophets? The answer is obvious, that he wished to repeat from the oldest antiquity what the Spirit had pronounced respecting them...”

⁴⁴ Jude has mentioned the “saints/holy ones” once before in v.3 when he said that the faith had been delivered to them. Since other passages in the Bible mention angels also being part of the Lord’s company, John Calvin commented, “by ‘saints’ he means the faithful as well as angels; for both will adorn the tribunal of Christ...”

⁴⁵ Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, and Enoch.

- ◇ Is it any wonder then that the one message preserved from the life of Enoch is that God is coming to hold mankind accountable for sin; God will judge the world.

It should be no surprise then that Enoch's life-message is preserved both in the Bible (in the book of Jude) and also in non-inspired Judaistic literature like the second-century book of Enoch. There were oral traditions accurately passed down through the ages that both Jude and the author of the later book of Enoch apparently drew from, but the so-called book of Enoch was probably written after the book of Jude by a Jew who was hostile toward Christianity, so we needn't bother with it⁴⁶. What Jude calls us to concern ourselves with was the life-message of Enoch which warned of God's judgment against those who walk contrary to God. Some Bible scholars even say that Enoch's naming of his son Methuselah was prophetic, for it could be interpreted to mean, "After his death will be the sending-forth" – and indeed the sending forth of the flood waters of God's judgment happened the very year that Methuselah died.

It should be no surprise then that ever afterward in the scriptures, when the prophets and apostles wanted to describe God's judgment coming upon sinners, they picked up on some of the phrases known to have been used by Enoch and which were inspired by God:

- ◇ When Moses prophesied God's judgment upon the Canaanites and blessing on the Hebrews, he said, "The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came with ten thousands of saints..." (**Deut. 33:1-2**, NKJV)
- ◇ When Daniel prophesied about Judgment Day, he said, "...thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated... Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened. I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame." (**Daniel 7:9-11**, NKJV)
- ◇ And when Jesus spoke of Judgment Day, he said, "whenever the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit upon His throne of glory, and all the nations will be gathered before Him, and He separates them from one another, just like a shepherd separates his sheep from his goats." (**Matthew 25:31-32**, NAW)

⁴⁶ See appendix of commentators on this topic.

- ◇ Likewise the Apostle Paul, “He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints” (1 Thess. 3:13), and, “...the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...” (2 Thess. 1:6-10, NASB)

The legacy of Enoch then provides a warning to the ungodly that God has come and judged mankind in the past and that He will come and do it again. However, Enoch’s legacy also provides the good news that those who orient their lives to walk with God will not be condemned in the judgment, for God’s holy ones will be “with” Him, and God will deliver some from the trial (as God did with Enoch, taking him to heaven without even apparently experiencing death), and others God will deliver through the trial (as God did with Noah who was safe inside the ark).

Now, let’s turn our attention to what Jude (and Enoch) meant by the word “ungodly.” Does it mean they have piercings and tattoos? Does it mean they drink beer and listen to rock music? Does it mean they are part of some denomination we don’t like?

What is Ungodliness?

Deeds that are specifically equated with “doing ungodliness” in the Greek Bible include:

- ◇ Rebellion against the legal decision of a civil magistrate (Deut 17:13),
- ◇ Living a life that does not keep the ways of the LORD (Psalm 18:21),
- ◇ Sinning against God (Isaiah 59:13 “We have sinned, and dealt falsely, and revolted from our God: we have spoken unrighteous words, and have been disobedient; we have conceived and uttered from our heart unrighteous words.” ~Brenton),
- ◇ Breaking God’s law (Hos. 8:1, Zeph. 3:4),
- ◇ Delivering a false prophecy – or a prophecy from some other god besides the LORD (Deut. 18:20, Jer. 2:8),
- ◇ Worshiping false gods (Jeremiah 2:28-29 “And where are thy gods, which thou madest for thyself? will they arise and save in the time of thine affliction? for according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Juda; and according to

the number of the streets of Jerusalem they sacrificed to Baal. Wherefore do ye speak unto me? ye all have been ungodly, and ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord.” ~Brenton),

- ◇ Adultery/sexual immorality (Lev. 20:12, Jer. 3:13?, Ezek. 16:27),
- ◇ Murdering or otherwise oppressing the poor (Jer. 22:3),

Notice that it is not only lawbreaking “deeds” but also “harsh things...said” which God will judge. **The Septuagint uses this word “hard/harsh” to refer to:**

- ◇ Korah, Dathan and Abiram in Numbers 16:26 who criticized Moses and Aaron and tried to overthrow God’s government over Israel... and were swallowed up in an earthquake.
- ◇ 1 Samuel 20 describes King Saul’s words concerning David as “hard” (1 Samuel 20:30-31 “Son of rebellious girls! Didn't I know that you have been campaigning for the son of Jesse, to your shame and to the shame of your mother's exposure? - that all the days in which the son of Jesse lives upon the earth your kingdom will not be established? So now, send servants and capture this young man, for he is worthy of death.” ~NAW). God saw to it that Saul was brutally murdered by his enemies.
- ◇ 1 Sam 25 also describes Nabal as “hard,” who insulted David’s messengers after David’s men had defended Nabal’s sheep from raiders. Nabal died the next day of a heart attack.
- ◇ Later, King Rehoboam of Judah spoke harshly to the people of Judah (1 Kings 12:14 “And he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, ‘My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.’” ~Brenton) God sent the Egyptian army after him to humble him. There will be a day of reckoning.

Every careless criticism of God will be brought up in a court case against you, and you will see how terribly offended He gets when He is diss’ed. There will literally be hell to pay.

Breaking the 10 Commandments, speaking harsh words, and v.16 lists five more...

More traits of ungodliness

16. These guys are grumblers, discontent, conducting themselves according to their own lusts, and their mouths utter over-statements, admiring faces for the benefit of an advantage.

γογγυσταί – “grumbling”

- ◇ People grumbled against Jesus for eating with tax-collectors (Luke 5:30),
- ◇ They grumbled about Him claiming to be the bread that came down from heaven (John 6:41),
- ◇ They grumbled when He showed up and did a miracle, and they grumbled when He didn’t show up and didn’t do a miracle (John 7:12),
- ◇ In the OT, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram grumbled against Moses & Aaron’s leadership⁴⁷,
- ◇ Ex. 16:8 Moses and Aaron said, “Jehovah hears your grumbings which you grumble against Him: and what are we? your grumbings are not against us, but against Jehovah.” (NKJV)
- ◇ In the NT, the Greek Christians grumbled because the church was giving more food to the Jewish Christians (Acts 6:1),
- ◇ In Corinth, church folks were grumbling about Paul’s authority: “I am of Paul/Apollos/Peter” (1 Cor. 1:12),
- ◇ And the battle against grumbling still needs to be fought in the church today: 1 Peter 4:9 “be hospitable toward one another without grumbings,” and Phil. 2:14, “Do all things without grumbling or arguing” (NAW).

The next word in v.16 for “complainers/faultfinders/malcontents” (μεμψίμοιροι) doesn’t occur anywhere else in the Greek Bible. The closest word I could find was in Job 33, where the first half of this Greek word occurs speaking of how God is able to find fault with anybody.

- ◇ It is the prerogative of a god to find fault, but if we believe we are not God but are rather under the sovereign care of a perfect God, then we have no room to complain and find fault concerning what God has provided us.
- ◇ It is an attitude which is not oriented toward the truth of who God is that always finds something to complain about.
- ◇ This, in fact is one of the tenets of Secular Humanism which K-State attempts to inculcate in every student through its English 101 class. Some call it Marxist jealousy politics. Students are trained to look at themselves as victims who have been disenfranchised by white, Christian, capitalist, heterosexual males, and write articles about this. This is perfectly consistent with the belief that God does not exist and that human beings are essentially all

⁴⁷1 Cor. 10:10 “And stop complaining, as some of them complained and were destroyed by the Destroyer” (NAW, cf. Num 16:1-9).

little gods with the authority to define their own little systems of ethics and justice and blame everybody else for what's wrong with the world.

- ◇ The Bible, however, links contentment with being oriented around the true God, as it says in 1 Timothy 6:6, “godliness with contentment is great gain” (KJV).

The third characteristic of the ungodly in v.16 is “Walking after their own desires/lusts” – this characteristic shows up in the NT only in 1-2 Peter and Jude.

- ◇ It's a condition of the latter days when people throw off accountability to God and figure they can do anything they want because they think they are god.
- ◇ That reminds me of a Bob Dylan song I heard last week where he sang (if you could call what he does “singing”), “I don't know which is worse, doing your own thing or just being cool,” but that was a profound insight.
- ◇ We also see people living by their lusts in the Old Testament, for instance the rebellious Hebrews in the wilderness: Numbers 11:1-6 “And the people murmured sinfully before the Lord; and the Lord heard them and was very angry; and fire was kindled among them from the Lord, and devoured a part of the camp. And the people cried to Moses: and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire was quenched... And the mixed multitude among them lusted exceedingly; and they and the children of Israel sat down and wept and said, ‘Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we ate in Egypt freely; and the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the garlic, and the onions. But now our soul is dried up; our eyes turn to nothing but to the manna.’ (Brenton) So God gave them quail (like little chickens) to eat, but also killed a bunch of those grumblers with a plague while they were pigging out on the quail, and they were buried in a place they called “the graves of lust.”
- ◇ Now desire, in-and-of-itself, is not bad. (That's one of the problems with Buddhism which considers desire itself to be the problem.) The Bible tells us that desire which is oriented around God is good and brings about good things. The Proverbs, for instance, are full of statements about this: Prov. 10:24 “The ungodly is engulfed in destruction; but the desire of the righteous is acceptable.” Prov. 11:23 “All the desire of the righteous is good: but the hope of the ungodly shall perish.” And Prov. 13:12b “...a good desire is a tree of life.” (Brenton).

The 4th characteristic of ungodliness in v.16 is having “mouths that utter υπερογκά – great, swelling, arrogant, loud,” literally “overweight” words. In the parallel passage of 2 Peter 2:18 “they noise exaggerations out of nothing” (NAW).

- ◇ This seems to be an echo of the prophecy of Daniel 11:36 “And he shall do according to his will, and the king shall exalt and magnify himself against every god, and shall speak great swelling words, and shall prosper until the indignation shall be accomplished: for it is coming to an end.” Now, whether Daniel’s prophecy refers to Antiochus Epiphanes or to the Pope or to the Antichrist (cf. 2 Thess. 2:3-4) can be debated, but note that inflated rhetoric is typical of leaders who are not oriented around the true God.
- ◇ We see this to be true of political leaders today, from our latest American Presidents to the latest dictators of Iran and North Korea. One reason for this is that truth is regulated by God, so anybody that disconnects himself from the one true God disconnects himself from objective truth and becomes delusional, promising more than can be delivered, and playing loose with accuracy in order to manipulate people.
- ◇ On the other hand, what is it that those who are oriented around God “utter”? Truth! Ephesians 4:17-25 “...y’all are no longer to walk also as the nations walk, in the futility of their minds... having been darkened in their understanding, having been alienated from the life of God; through the ignorance that continues to exist in them through the hardness of their hearts, who, having become apathetic, they delivered themselves into sensuality, into every impure work in greed. But as for y’all, it was not in this way you learned about Christ... so truth is in Jesus: to put off of you what pertains to the former way of life – the old man which is being corrupted according to the lusts from deception – and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind and to put on the new man which was created by the likeness of God in righteousness and in the holiness of truth. Therefore, after putting off falsehood, continue to utter truth each with his neighbor...” (NAW)

The last characteristic of ungodliness in the list at v.16 is θαυμάζοντες πρόσωπα ὠφελείας χάριν.

- ◇ Nowhere else in the Bible is this Greek word *thaumazō* translated “flatter,” so I prefer the ESV’s interpretation of “showing favoritism,” even though words literally mean “admiring faces.”
- ◇ Not showing favoritism is what those who are oriented around God do: Leviticus 19:15-16 “Thou shalt not act unjustly in judgment: thou shalt not accept the person of the poor, nor admire the person of the mighty; with jus-

tice shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Thou shalt not walk deceitfully among thy people; thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord your God.” (Brenton) That is because God Himself doesn’t show favoritism (Deut. 10:17, 2 Chron 19:6-7).

- ◇ As for those who fall into this sin, the Old Testament prophets promise that God will punish this: Job 13:10b-12 “...if moreover ye should secretly re-spect persons, shall not His whirlpool sweep you round, and terror from him fall upon you? And your glorying shall prove in the end to you like ashes...” (Brenton, cf. Isa 9:15).
- ◇ When our life is oriented around God, we will look to God for help before we look to people (Isaiah 30:1-5).

The Bible sorts out the truth for us

17. But as for y’all, beloved, keep remembering the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, 18. that told y’all that up to the end time there will be mockers conducting themselves according to their own ungodly desires. 19. These guys are the ones who are cliquish, sensual, not having the Spirit.

Matthew (and Mark 13:23) quoted Jesus saying: “...false messiahs and false prophets will be raised up, and they will give great signs and wonders so as to cause, if it were in their power, even the chosen ones to wander astray. See, I have foretold it to y’all.” (Matt. 24:24-25, NAW)

And Peter, who also references Old Testament prophets before him, said the same thing: “...be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.’ For this they will fully forget: that by the word of God... the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire [for] the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (2 Pet. 3:2-7, NKJV)

This is also hinted at by the Apostle Paul in Gal. 1:9, “As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed” (NKJV).

The only other time the phrase “end *chronos*-time” shows up in the Bible is in 1 Peter 1:20, where it refers to the phase of history that started at Jesus’ incarnation. But there are many other similar phrases in scripture, such as:

- ◇ “last hour” (which John identified as being during his time and thus the same period of history as Jude’s “last time” - 1 John 2:18),
- ◇ and “last days” which, in the OT prophets, refers to the A.D. years,⁴⁸ and in the NT, plural “last days,” is the present time up to the last day.
 - > They are characterized by God’s word and Spirit being more fully-available to believers (Acts 2:17, Heb. 1:2) while at the same time unbelievers are going from bad to worse (2 Tim. 3:1, James 5:3, 2 Pet 3:3),
 - > which comports with Paul’s “last *kairos*-times” (plural) in 2 Timothy 3:1-5, “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (NKJV).
- ◇ This “end-time/last times/last days/last hour” ends in the future at the singular “last day” when the dead will be resurrected and all will be judged⁴⁹.

Jude was in the end-time and so are we, and he is not the only apostle who alerted us to expect mockers/scoffers.

- ◇ The noun *εμπαικται* (“mockers/scoffers”) is only found in three places in the Greek Bible: here, in the parallel passage in 2 Pet 3:3, and also in Isa. 3:4

⁴⁸ Jer. 17:11; 23:20; 25:19; 37:24; Eze. 38:8,16; Dan. 2:28; 10:14; Hos. 3:5; Mic. 4:1 - In the Pentateuch, however, “last days” seems to just mean “in the years to come” (Gen. 49:1; Num. 24:14; Deu. 4:30; 8:16; Jos. 24:27).

⁴⁹ John 6:39-40 “This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (NKJV)

John 11:24 “Martha said to Him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’” (NKJV)

John 12:48b “the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.” (NKJV),

These comport with Peter’s singular “last *kairos*-time” (1 Peter 1:5 “y’all are protected by God’s power through faith for the purpose of a prepared salvation to be revealed during the final time.” -NAW) as the ending of the plural “last times.”

(LXX rendering of Hebrew תעלולים – pretentious, capricious, fit-throwing, immature babies/infants/youths/children).

- ◇ The verb form shows up 11 times in the Gospels to describe Jesus being mocked by the Jews and Romans at His trial and execution.
- ◇ Mockers there will be, but God will get the last word. The Apostle Paul reminds us (using a synonym for “mockers”) in Galatians 6:7-8, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked [μυκτηριζεται]; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” (NKJV)

Once again we see that the relationship of one’s desires to God is the dividing line between being blessed and being cursed. Those who walk/follow/conduct themselves according to their own desires/passions will be condemned in God’s judgment, but those who, like Enoch, “walk WITH God,” according to God’s desires, submitting to God’s laws, praising God instead of speaking harsh things against Him, trusting Jesus to save them, will be saved in the judgment and will be blessed forever!

Conclusion

Those who are oriented around their own desires have no connection with God’s Spirit, so they are limited to their five senses as to what they can perceive. They are sensual in that sense that they have no access to information by spiritual means, like we who have the mind and Spirit of Christ do. Furthermore, since they have no fellowship with Christ, they are limited to human companionship, so they can’t be content if they feel unloved by other people; they must manipulate relationships to get people to side with them, and this necessarily forms divisions/cliques.

1 Corinthians 2:12-16 gives the rest of the story, “Now, as for us, we received – not the spirit of the world, but rather – the Spirit, the one which [came] out of God, in order that we might know the things freely given to us by God. These are also what we are uttering, not in learned words of human wisdom, but rather in learned spiritual things from the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things. Now, a natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him. He is not even able to know because it has to be figured out spiritually. But the spiritual person figures everything out, yet as for him, no [natural] person figures him out, for who knew the mind of the Lord? Who will instruct Him? Yet we, we have the mind of Christ!” (NAW)

Note Hosea’s prophecy about how ridiculous ungodliness is: “Woe to them! for they have started aside from me: they are cowards; for they have sinned against me: yet I redeemed them, but they spoke falsehoods against me. And their hearts did not cry to me, but they howled on their beds: they pined for oil and wine. They were instructed by me, and I strengthened their arms; and they devised evils against me. They turned aside to that which is not, they became as a bent bow: their princes shall fall by the sword, by reason of the unbridled state of their tongue...” (Hosea 7:13-16, Brenton)

This is why we see in Psalm 1: “Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and has not stood in the way of sinners, and has not sat in the seat of evil men. But his pleasure is in the law of the Lord; and in his law will he meditate day and night. And he shall be as a tree planted by the brooks of waters, which shall yield its fruit in its season [*they are not fruitless trees at harvest-time like the bad-guys Jude described*]... the ungodly shall not rise in judgment, nor sinners in the counsel of the just. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.” (NAW)

APPENDIX: Commentators on the source of Jude’s quote of Enoch

John Gill (1766): “[T]hat Enoch wrote a prophecy, and left it behind him in writing, does not appear from hence, or elsewhere; the Jews, in some of their writings, do cite and make mention of the book of Enoch; and there is a fragment now which bears his name, but is a spurious piece, and has nothing like this prophecy in it; wherefore Jude took this not from a book called the ‘Apocalypse of Enoch’, but from tradition; this prophecy being handed down from age to age; and was in full credit with the Jews, and therefore the apostle very appropriately produces it; or rather he had it by divine inspiration...”

John Owen (1855): “There is no evidence of such a book [of Enoch] being known for some time after this epistle was written; and the book so called was probably a forgery, occasioned by this reference to Enoch’s prophecy.”

Adam Clarke (1826): “a book of Enoch was known in the earliest ages of the primitive Church, and is quoted by Origen and Tertullian; and is mentioned by St. Jerome in the Apostolical Constitutions, by Nicephorus, Athanasius, and probably by St. Augustine.”

Marvin Vincent (1886): “The Book of Enoch, which was known to the fathers of the second century, was lost for some centuries with the exception of a few fragments, and was found entire in a copy of the Ethiopic Bible, in 1773, by Bruce. It became known to modern students through a translation from this into English by Archbishop Lawrence, in 1821.”

Albert Barnes (1885): “Amidst the multitude of traditions, however, handed down by the Jews from a remote antiquity, though many of them were false, and many of a trifling character, it is reasonable to presume that some of them were true and were of importance... an inspired writer might ... be led to make the selection of a true prophecy from a mass of traditions... There is no clear evidence that he quoted it from any book extant in his time. There is, indeed, now an apocryphal writing called ‘the Book of Enoch,’ containing a prediction strongly resembling this, but there is no certain proof that it existed so early as the time of Jude, nor, if it did, is it absolutely certain that he quoted from it. Both Jude and the author of that book may have quoted a common tradition of their time, for there can be no doubt that the passage referred to was handed down by tradition. The passage as found in ‘the Book of Enoch’ is in these words: ‘Behold he comes with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon them, and destroy the wicked, and reprove all the carnal, for everything which the sinful and ungodly have done and committed against him.’” *Barnes seemed to think that this apocryphal book of Enoch (not actually in the Apocrypha) was written after Jude, and with that Fausset’s commentary offers support, saying that this Apocryphal book of Enoch is Jewish and not Christian, for it knows nothing of Jesus.*

Jude 14-19 Greek Edition and Comparative translations⁵⁰

GNT	NAW	KJV	NASB	NIV	ESV
<p>14 προεφήτευσεν δὲ καὶ τοῦτοις ἑβδομοῦ ἀπὸ Ἀδὰμ Ἐνὼχ λέγων· ἰδοὺ ἦλθε Κύριος⁵¹ ἐν ἀγίαις μυριάσιν αὐτοῦ,</p>	<p>14. Now Enoch (sev- enth [generation] from Adam) prophecied also concern- ing these guys, saying, “Look! The Lord cometh with myriads of His holy ones</p>	<p>14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophecied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,</p>	<p>14 X <i>It was</i> also about these men <i>that</i> Enoch, <i>in</i> the seventh <i>generation</i> from Adam, prophecied, saying, “Be- hold, the Lord came with many thous- ands of His holy ones,</p>	<p>14 X Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophecied X about these men X: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thous- ands of his holy ones</p>	<p>14 X It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, pro- phesied, say- ing, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones,</p>
<p>15 ποιῆσαι κρίσιν κατὰ πάντων καὶ ⁵²ἐλέγξαι πάντας τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς [αὐτῶν]⁵³ περὶ</p>	<p>15. to execute justice against all men and to lay out a case against all the ungodly [among them]</p>	<p>15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among</p>	<p>15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly</p>	<p>15 to judge everyone, and con- vict all the ungodly of all the un- godly acts X</p>	<p>15 to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness</p>

⁵⁰ [Brackets] indicate the addition of a word or concept not originally in the Greek text.

Strikethrough indicates an inaccurate meaning or inaccurate grammar in the English version compared to the Greek text. X’s are inserted where a version omitted a word present in the Greek. Underlining highlights translations where the wording is different from all the other English versions. Where English versions are more than diverse on a key word, I shaded the Greek word and its translated words with the same color. I have also used some abbreviations to identify the sources of variants based on editions of the Greek New Testament (GNT) currently in print: “Maj.” stands for the reading of the majority of all Greek manuscripts predating the printed editions, “UBS” stands for critical editions of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Society, “T.R.” stands for the *Textus Receptus* editions of the Greek New Testament, and “Pat.” stands for the Greek Orthodox Patristic edition of the GNT.

⁵¹ Genesis 5, Deut 33:1-2, Daniel 7:9-11, Zech. 14:3-5, Matthew 25:31-32, 1 Thess. 3:13, 2 Thess. 1:6-10, Enoch 1:9.

⁵² The T.R. adds the prefix ἐξ- (“out”) to this verb, but it doesn’t change the meaning. It’s not in the Patristic edition, and Nestle-Aland do not mention any Greek manuscripts with this extra prefix.

⁵³ On the basis of nothing more than two manuscripts (Papyrus72 & Sinaiticus, which, granted, are the oldest-known, but not by more than 1 century), the modern critical texts change “all the ungodly among them” to “every soul.” The ancient Syrian and Coptic translations are split between the two readings, but the Vulgate went with the former. This changes the meaning from

<p>πάντων τῶν ἔργων ἀσεβείας αὐτῶν ὧν ἠσέβησαν⁵⁴ καὶ περὶ πάντων τῶν σκληρῶν⁵⁵ ὧν ἐλάλησαν κατ' αὐτοῦ ἄμαρτωλοὶ ἀσεβεῖς.</p>	<p>concerning all their works of ungodliness which were ungodly and concerning all the harsh things that ungodly sinners uttered against Him.”</p>	<p>them^{TR,Maj,Pat} of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard <i>speeches</i> which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.</p>	<p>deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."</p>	<p>they have done in [the] ungodly way, and of all the harsh [words] ungodly sinners have spoken against him."</p>	<p>that they have committed in [such] an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”</p>
<p>16 Οὗτοι εἰσι γογγυσταί, μεμψίμοιροι, κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας ἑαυτῶν πορευόμενοι, καὶ τὸ στόμα⁵⁶ αὐτῶν λαλεῖ ὑπέρογκα, θαυμάζοντες πρόσωπα ὠφελείας χάριν.</p>	<p>16. These guys are grumblers, discontent, conducting themselves according to their own desires, and their mouths utter over-statements, admiring faces for the benefit of an advantage.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they X speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.</p>	<p>16 These men are grumblers and fault-finders; they follow their own [evil] desires; they X X boast about themselves and flatter others for [their own] advantage.</p>	<p>16 These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own [sinful] desires; they are loud-mouthed-boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.</p>

saying that God will convict only the ungodly of sin to saying that God will convict every person of sin, which, while it could be qualified by other scripture, borders on contradicting other scripture, and I believe was rightly rejected by the NASB, NIV, and ESV (even though they usually follow the UBS Greek New Testament pretty slavishly). It appears that the phrase “among them” might not be attested in any of the older manuscripts, but it doesn’t make a significant difference in meaning.

⁵⁴ This verb for “doing ungodliness” shows up in Lev. 20:12, Deut. 17:13, 18:20, Jer. 2:8, 28-29, Psalm 18:21, Isa. 59:13, Jer. 2:8, 28-29 & 22:3, Ezek. 16:27, Hos. 7:13-16 & 8:1, Zeph. 3:4, etc.

⁵⁵ The KJV and NIV reflect the reading of a minority of Greek texts (including the *Ephraemi Rescriptus*) which add the Greek word “words” here.

⁵⁶ On the basis of only 8 Greek manuscripts (only one of which dates earlier than the 6th Century) plus a correction at an unknown time to the oldest-known manuscript (P72, the original reading of which they reject, and they also reject its omission of six words earlier in this verse), the modern critical editions strangely opt for the reflexive spelling “themselves.” It doesn’t change the meaning, though.

17 Ὑμεῖς δέ, ἀγαπητοί, μνήσθητε τῶν ῥημάτων τῶν προειρημένων ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,	17. But as for y'all, beloved, keep remembering the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,	17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;	17 But you, beloved, [ought to] remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,	17 But, X dear [friends], remember X X what X the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.	17 But you must remember, beloved, the X X predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.
18 ὅτι ἔλεγον ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐπ ⁵⁷ ἐσχάτου του χρόνου ἔσονται ἐμπαῖκται κατὰ τὰς ἐαυτῶν ἐπιθυμίας πορευόμενοι τῶν ἀσεβειῶν.	18. that told y'all that up to the end time there will be mockers conducting themselves according to their own ungodly desires.	18 [How] that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.	18 that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts."	18 X They said to you, "In the last times ⁵⁸ there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires."	18 X They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions."
19 Οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀποδιορίζοντες ⁵⁹ , ψυχικοί, Πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες.	19. These guys are the ones who are cliquish, sensual, not having the Spirit.	19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.	19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded], devoid of the Spirit.	19 These are the men who divide [you], who [follow mere] natural [instincts] [and] do not have the Spirit.	19 It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

⁵⁷ "In" is the reading of the majority of Greek manuscripts and of the *Textus Receptus*, and of the 1904 Greek Orthodox Patristic edition, but "upon" is the reading of the modern critical texts because it is the reading of all five of the known pre-6th-century Greek manuscripts. This difference of preposition results in a change of case in its object words from genitive to dative (ἐν ἐσχάτῳ χρόνῳ), but there is no difference in meaning.

⁵⁸ "Times" is plural in a half-dozen of the later Greek manuscripts and in the Coptic versions, but it is singular in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts including all of the pre-6th Century ones.

⁵⁹ This word occurs nowhere else in the Greek Bible. The 19th century Scrivner edition of the *Textus Receptus* inserts the word "themselves" (ἑαυτοῦς), although it is not in the Stevens edition of 1550. It must also be in the Beza edition since it is in the KJV. The NKJV editors corrected this by removing the word "themselves," which would seem to indicate that they also considered it a later insertion. However, it is in at least six Greek manuscripts, one of which is pre-6th-Century, and in a few old Latin manuscripts.

Jude 20-23: How to Keep Yourselves in God's Love

- But now we get to the passage that made me want to preach from Jude in the first place, and that is verses 20-23. In verse 20, Jude switches away from “those guys” and doesn’t talk about “them” any more. Verse 20 begins, “But, loved ones, as for y’all...” Beloved, this is for us! We are dearly loved! What words of encouragement does the next-to-last apostle have for us? It is a wonderful encouragement!
- I want to illustrate it with a little demonstration involving a spotlight:
 - Thirty years ago, when I was a summer camp counselor at Camp New Pace, the retreat center we rented had a big electric spotlight the size of a small cannon, mounted in the balcony. It had half-a-dozen levers on the side that would lower different colored gels in front of the bulb, and a big handle in the back to control where the light was pointing. When we did Friday night skit night, one of us would sit back there and train that spotlight on the campers on-stage, and it was just as good as being on Broadway!
 - In that situation, there are two parties interested in the spotlight being on the performer: the performer himself, and the operator of the spotlight. Both want the same thing and are working toward the same end.
 - In a sense, all the performer has to do to stay in the spotlight is just to do his or her thing and not jump off the stage and run out of the theater.
 - If the performer walks to the other side of the stage, he doesn’t have to worry about whether the spotlight will follow because he is the actor and the spotlight operator’s job is to keep the actor in the spotlight.
 - The spotlight operator is not going to point the spotlight somewhere else unless perhaps it is to the spot where the actor is about to be.
 - No analogy is perfect, but this spotlight analogy gives some sense of what I see the apostle Jude commanding us in verse 21: “keep yourselves in the love of God.”
 - How do you keep yourself in the spotlight of the love of God? If God is the operator of the spotlight, you don’t have to worry about whether or not His love will be with you, it’s His job, as it were, to keep loving you, and it’s your job to keep displaying His character, so, unless you totally bag out of Christianity and leave the theater altogether, there’s really no reason to fear losing the love of God, keeping you in the love of God is the mutual interest of both you and God.
- The phrase in Jude 21, “the love of God,” also reflects the mutuality of love because it can be interpreted objectively “God’s love for you” or subjectively

“your love for God.” The NIV’s translation narrows it down only to God’s love (which does come first⁶⁰), but the wording here in Jude “*agape theou*” can have both your love for God and God’s love for you in view.

- But the command here is to “keep yourselves” in that love. How do you do that? Jude defines how to execute this command by employing three Greek participles in verses 20-21. Those three participles are “building,” “praying,” and “anticipating/looking/waiting.” In the KJV, NAS, and ESV, these participles are translated as English participles (with the “-ing” ending), but in the NIV, the first two participles are translated as imperatives to show their relationship to the main imperative “keep yourselves in the love of God,” meaning, “build up your faith and pray.” The NIV translates the third participle temporally with the word “as” – “as you wait.” But these three participles tell us how to obey this command. How do you keep yourself in the love of God? 1) Build up faith, 2) pray in the Spirit, and 3) anticipate Jesus’ mercy. Let’s look at these three in turn:

1) Keep Yourselves in the Love of God by Building Up Faith (v.20a)

- “But loved ones, as for y’all, building yourselves on in your most holy faith...”
- The Greek participle for “building upon” is a compound of the preposition *epi* (which means “upon”) plus the noun *oikos* (which means “house”) plus the verb *demo* “to build” – ἐπ-οικο-δομοῦντες. It implies that there is a foundation already-laid, and you are to be building something on top of that.
 - 1 Corinthians 3:10-13 lays it out clearly that the foundation is the Gospel, such as Paul preached, and what is built upon it is the subsequent teaching of pastors (like Apollos) as well as the way in which the gospel is lived out in the lives and work of believers: “According to the grace of God which was given to me as a wise architect, I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each look to how he is building upon it, for no one is able to lay another foundation besides the one which is being laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any one builds up gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, [or] straw upon the foundation, the work of each will become apparent, for the day will show that by fire it is revealed, and the fire will test the work of each one, as to what quality it is.” (NAW)
 - Colossians 2:6-7 says the same thing using the metaphor of a tree: The foundational “roots” are set in “receiving” the Gospel of “Jesus Christ,” but then there is subsequent “instruction” and “walking in” it: “As you therefore have

⁶⁰ 1 John 4:19 “As for us, we love Him because HE first loved us.” (NAW)

received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” (NKJV)

- When you prayed the sinner’s prayer – or walked the aisle, or were baptized, or whatever the moment was that you received the good news that Jesus died for your sins and is your Savior, that was only the beginning of your Christian life. Ever since then you have been “building on” that foundation of faith.
- Now, there are going to be those who do a poor job of it and will make it into heaven “only as one escaping through the flames” (as the NIV puts it in 1 Cor. 3:15),
 - Now, that would be fairly excusable if you were in some corner of the world where church meetings were illegal and all you had of God’s word was one page hand-copied from some visiting evangelist’s Bible, written in a trade language you understood only 80% of,
 - But in twenty-first century America, we do not have that excuse. We have dozens of English translations at our fingertips, accessible 24 hours a day on our smartphones and notebooks, complete with click-through pop-up menus that will show us the underlying Greek and Hebrew words and their definitions together with commentaries and audio sermons galore on it all.
 - The opportunity God has given us to get to know His word is fabulous, and it must not be squandered, we must seize the opportunity we have to grow in faith!
- And Faith is certainly portrayed in the Bible as something which grows:
 - After the Apostle Paul preached the gospel in the town of Thessalonica, he had to flee for his life because of persecution (Acts 17:13), but he prayed earnestly that he could come back and “perfect what was lacking in their faith,” and he sent Timothy to “strengthen and encourage” their faith.⁶¹
 - Faith is not a static thing; it grows and matures. Paul later wrote in 2 Corinthians 10:15b “...Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand” (NIV).
 - We see the same in the Apostle Peter’s writings: 2 Peter 1:5-7 “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perse-

⁶¹ 1 Thess. 3:2 “[I] sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith... 10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith.” (NKJV)

verance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” (NKJV) *Knowledge of Bible doctrine and the active obedience of love are the way we build upon our most holy faith*⁶².

- So, let us study the Word of God to “add knowledge to our faith” (“Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee” Ps. 119:11, KJV), but let us also do what it teaches us to do. Over and over in the Bible, loving God is equated with obeying His ways:
 - Deuteronomy 7:9 “Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments.”
 - John 14:15, 23-24 “If you love Me, keep My commandments... If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words...”
 - 1 John 5:2-3 “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” (NKJV)
- Some of you have taken up the challenge of reading a theological book, others have taken online seminary classes, others listen to sermons online – I hope all of you are reading your Bibles –these are all great ways to build yourselves up in your most holy⁶³ faith, but to keep ourselves in the love of God we must also act on what we are learning about God, growing in our praise for Him, growing in our repentance from sin, and growing in expressing His love toward others.

2) Keep Yourselves in the Love of God by Praying in the Spirit (v.20b)

- “Prayer is the nurse of faith,” wrote Matthew Henry. It is the second means of grace to keep ourselves in the love of God. John Calvin wrote, “whenever the question is respecting the constancy of faith, we must flee to prayer.”
- “Praying in the Spirit” means letting the Holy Spirit control and guide the words you say. Every time the Bible talks about being filled with the Spirit, the context has to do with communication.

⁶² “...men build on faith when love is added, or perhaps... men build on faith, as far as they make proficiency in it, and doubtless the daily progress of faith is such that itself rises up as a building.” ~John Calvin

⁶³ This is the only occurrence in the Greek Bible of “holy” in the superlative, so it seems to just be Jude’s unique way of showing respect for the Gospel.

- When Ezekiel was “in the Spirit” he prophesied about dry bones taking on flesh (Ezek. 37:1),
- When David was “in the Spirit” he wrote Psalm 110 (Matt. 22:4),
- Luke 1:17 says John the Baptizer prepared the way of the Lord by prophesying “in the spirit,”
- In Luke 10:21, when Jesus rejoiced “in the Spirit,” He prayed was praying to God the Father,
- When the Apostle Paul commanded us to be “filled with the Spirit,” he said it meant “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” and “giving thanks to God the Father through Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-20), and
- When the Apostle John was “in the Spirit” on the Lord’s Day (Rev. 1:10) He wrote the book of Revelation.
- When we start praying by saying, “Holy Spirit, what shall I say?” and we pray what He guides our minds to be concerned about, we are praying in the Spirit, and He will give us the words.
- And when you run out of words, Romans 8:26 tell us He will even communicate groans to God: “In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.” (NASB, cf. John 11:33)
- So, “*praying in the Spirit*” has to do with talking to God under the control of the Holy Spirit. We can also see what “*praying in the spirit*” is about by considering its opposite:
- Praying “in the Spirit” is the opposite of being controlled by your flesh:
 - Romans 8:9 “...you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you...” (NKJV)
 - Galatians 5:16 “...Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” (NKJV)
 - Philippians 3:3 “For we... worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” (NKJV)
 - So, praying in the Spirit is talking to God under the control of the Holy Spirit and not under the control of your natural, selfish instincts.
- Praying “in the Spirit” is praying within the context of a relationship with the one true God who is a spirit and who exists in three persons – who are all in seamless relationship with each other. Prayer is about a relationship with God!
- I have been reading through Andrew Murray’s book, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, and, although I find points occasionally that I disagree with, such as some dispensationalism that seems to come out in his chapter on “The Holy

Spirit and Prayer,” nevertheless, I think he expressed well in the following quote the way that praying in the Spirit is all about relating to all the persons of the Godhead: “True prayer is the living experience of the truth of the Holy Trinity. The Spirit’s breathing, the Son’s intercession, and the Father’s will become one in us.”

- Let me repeat that, “True prayer is the living experience of the truth of the Holy Trinity. The Spirit’s breathing, the Son’s intercession, and the Father’s will become one in us... The great work which Jesus began on earth of reconciling God and man in His own body, He carries on in heaven. To accomplish this, He took the conflict between God’s righteousness and our sin into His own person. On the cross, He ended the struggle once and for all in His own body. Then He ascended to heaven, where He carries out the deliverance He obtained and manifests His victory in each member of His Body. This is why He lives to pray. In his unceasing intercession, He places Himself in living fellowship with the unceasing prayer of His redeemed ones. Or rather, it is His unceasing intercession which shows itself in their prayers, giving them a power they never had before. He does this through the Holy Spirit. This Spirit of the glorified Jesus was not manifested and could not be until Jesus had been glorified [Here he references John 7:39b, where the Apostle comments that ‘...the Spirit was not yet present⁶⁴ because Jesus was not yet glorified’ ~NAW]... At Pentecost He descended as the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, bringing down and communicating to us the full fruit and power of the accomplished redemption. Christ’s continuing intercession maintains the effectiveness and application of His redemption. The Holy Spirit descending from Christ to us draws us up into the great stream of His ascending prayers.”
- *Such intimacy with God Himself in prayer is breathtaking, and this is how we keep ourselves in the love of God!*

3) Keep Yourselves in the Love of God by Waiting for Christ’s Mercy & Showing Mercy (v.21-23)

A) v.21 “Anticipate the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto/leading/bringing you to eternal life.”

○The Greek word for this “waiting/eager looking/anticipation” is the same one used of Simeon and Anna in the temple who were “eagerly anticipating” the

⁶⁴ The Greek verb here is the verb of being, which I translated “was present,” but most English versions add the English word “given.”

coming of the kingdom of God and who recognized the baby Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 2:25 & 38).

- It is later used of Joseph of Arimathea – it was his “anticipation” of the coming of the kingdom of God that gave him the courage to part ways with his buddies on the Sanhedrin and honor Jesus by collecting His dead body off the cross and burying it in his family sepulcher. (Mark 15:43)
- For these kind-of Old Testament saints in the New Testament, this expectation that God was going to do something wonderful to reveal Himself and to bring salvation in new ways and to further establish a community of people who reflected the character of God, this expectation led them to action – to living lives of obedience to God’s commands, going against the flow of their contemporaries, and pointing others to the coming of Christ.
- Today, we do much the same thing, just as Paul wrote in Titus 2:11-14, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for [anticipating] the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.” (NKJV)
- Are you looking forward with anticipation to seeing Jesus face-to-face? to being rescued completely from your sin and from all the sin in the world? to heaven? Do realize that you will attain these things not because you earned them but because God mercifully gave them to you? That attitude will keep you in the love of God⁶⁵.
- But, just as building yourself up in the faith means not only learning, but also acting on what you learn from the Bible, so also with mercy – not only do we anticipate receiving the mercy of Christ (in the forgiveness of our sins and the receiving of ourselves into heaven), but we also give out mercy to others.
- When you know you have received mercy, that’s when you can show mercy. Like Jesus said in His parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:33, “Isn’t it proper for you to have mercy on your fellow-servant, like I myself also had mercy on you?” (NAW)

⁶⁵ “[I]t ought to be noticed that he would not have us hope for eternal life except through the mercy of Christ: for He will in such a manner be our judge, as to have no other rule in judging us than that gratuitous benefit of redemption obtained by Himself.” ~John Calvin

B) So we must show mercy to others: v.22 “And keep showing mercy to those who are doubting, 23 and be saving those cautiously, grabbing them out of the fire while hating even the undergarment stained from the flesh.”

- Modern critical editions of the Greek New Testament add the words “and on some have mercy” (*ous de eleate*) to v.23, making “hating the defiled garment” part of a third category of people to have mercy on. This insertion is based on three of the five oldest-known Greek manuscripts and the Latin Vulgate (together with 18 or so more Greek manuscripts which are not as ancient). This is significant, but not overwhelming evidence in its favor, so I prefer the traditional Greek text. There is no essential difference in meaning, whether the people with the stained garments are the same as those who need to be snatched out of the fire or not, but the way I take it, the two participles “grabbing” and “hating” are descriptions of how to go about showing mercy by saving these kind of persons “with fear.”
- Bringing care and healing to the sick was frequently⁶⁶ the context in which the New Testament describes “showing mercy.” Jesus “showed mercy” in this way to many who were blind, sick with leprosy, or demon-possessed, and that is one way we too can show mercy, by bringing care and healing to the sick.
- But, as those of you who are health professionals know, you have to observe certain precautions when you expose yourself to those who are sick so that you don’t become sick yourself or pass the disease on to others. That is why I think Jude says to save those who are doubting while maintaining a healthy fear of falling into the same loss of faith into which they have fallen.
- The danger of hell-fire is real⁶⁷, and everyone who does not trust Jesus to save them – everyone who does not have that “most holy faith” as their own will be condemned, and that is a compelling reason to share the gospel with those who are lost. It’s the only way they can be saved from the fires of hell (Rom. 10:14), so let us keep ourselves in the love of God by both anticipating the mercy of Christ’s salvation for ourselves and sharing the good news of that salvation with others.
- At the same time, we must be careful in our interactions with those who do not have our faith. Remember Jude’s main command is to “step up the fight for the faith” in v.3, and we saw the echo of that same command in v. 20 to “build yourselves up in your holy faith.” Those to whom we are showing

⁶⁶ 40% of the 32 occurrences of *eleew* in the GNT

⁶⁷ Zech. 3:2, Amos 4:11

mercy and sharing the gospel in v. 22 are those who are “doubting,” and doubters can sometimes drag away towards unbelief the very individuals who are trying to help them:

- ◇ I have seen converts from religions like Islam go back to their people to share the gospel and get converted back to Islam instead.
 - ◇ I have seen Christians go into secular universities to be a gospel witness and come out atheists with their Ph.D’s.
 - ◇ I have seen apologists go out to engage various cult groups with the gospel, and then get sucked into heresies themselves.
 - ◇ It happens; that’s why we need to minister mercy “with fear/caution.”
- So we are to “hate even the garment polluted by the flesh” as a precaution against our own faith getting knocked down and losing the love of God ourselves. Keeping our love of God is done, in part, by keeping our hate for what is ungodly.
- ◇ Love and hate are two sides of the same coin; speaking of Christian faith that is all love and no hate is as nonsensical as talking about a one-sided coin!
 - ◇ Achan did not hate the garments stained with the sin of the Canaanite citizens of Jericho whom God had said to utterly destroy, instead, Achan was distracted from his devotion to God by an attraction to the collateral benefits he could get from the wicked – even while he was on a mission from God in the Israelite army.
 - ◇ What might tempt you to divide your attention between God and something else while you are on missions that bring you into contact with non-Christians?
 - ◇ In Revelation 2:6, Jesus commends the church in Ephesus for hating! *Yes, you heard that right!* (“But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”) The Nicolaitans were apparently into sexual immorality and idol worship, both of which are so much at odds with the faithfulness and integrity of God that He cannot tolerate those kinds of things, and neither should we who share in His character.
 - ◇ Perhaps a modern-day equivalent would be if one of you men felt called to preach the gospel in a strip-joint. It’s not something I would recommend, but if you were to do it, you would have to be so well-set in your hatred of the sin of adultery that you could minister in a context full of people committing adultery without being sucked down into the sin of adultery yourself. I think that’s what Jude is talking about.

- ◇ There are sinners and temptations in every context to which God calls us, so we must bring our love and our hate into alignment with what God loves and hates so that we can stay in the love of God, anticipating His mercy, while being His agents of mercy in a sin-sick world (cf. Heb. 1:9).

Conclusion

So, there you have it, the three ways to keep ourselves in the spotlight of God's love:

1. "building yourselves on in your most holy faith,
2. "praying in the Holy Spirit," and
3. "anticipating the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And keep showing mercy to those who are doubting."

By the way, this is not a singular action, keeping yourself in the love of God. This is what the church does as a community for each other. Notice all the plural "you's": v.20 "loved ones (plural), as for y'all (plural), building yourselves (plural) in your (plural) most holy faith, you (plural) praying, keep yourselves (plural) in the love of God, you (plural) anticipating the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

- Do you see that this is not something you should try to do all by yourself, and it is not something you should leave your brothers and sisters in Christ to do all by themselves?
- What would it look like if the church as a community kept each other in the love of God?
 - We would be building up one another's faith, not just our own, by teaching and encouraging them.
 - We would be praying for each other, not just for ourselves⁶⁸.
 - And we would be anticipating the mercy of eternal life coming to each other, not beating everyone else down with criticism about how faulty their love for God is.
- Brothers, let us keep ourselves in the love of God!

⁶⁸ Ephesians 6:18 "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (NKJV)

Appendix: Excerpts from John Gill's commentary

Keep yourselves in the love of God,.... By which may be meant either the grace and favour of God, that love with which God loves his people; and then the exhortation to the saints to keep themselves in it is, to set it always before them, to keep it constantly in view, to exercise faith on it, firmly believing their interest in it; as also to meditate on it, give themselves up wholly to the contemplation of it, and employ their thoughts constantly about it, which is the foundation of all grace here, and glory hereafter; or to preserve themselves by it, for so the words may be rendered, "preserve yourselves by the love of God"; against Satan's temptations, the snares of the world, and the lusts of the flesh; whenever Satan solicits to sin, and any snare is laid to draw into it, and the flesh attempts to be predominant, saints should betake themselves to the love of God, as to a strong hold and preservative against sin, and reason as Joseph did, Gen 39:9, for the love of God, and continuance in it, do not depend on anything that can be done by men; nor is there any danger of real believers falling from it, or losing it, since it is unchangeable, and is from everlasting to everlasting; or else by the love of God we are to understand that love with which his people love him and of which he is the object, Luk 11:42; and then the meaning of the exhortation is, that though this grace of love cannot be lost, yet, inasmuch as the fervour of it may be abated, and the people of God grow cold and indifferent in their expressions of it, it becomes them to make use of all proper means to maintain and increase it in themselves and others; such as are mentioned in the context, as conversing together in an edifying way about the doctrines of the Gospel, and praying either separately or together, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, and looking forward for the grace and mercy of Christ unto everlasting life; all which, with many other, things, by the blessing of God, may serve to maintain and revive the grace of love, and blow it up into a flame: though perhaps this phrase may chiefly design that love, peace, and concord, which ought to subsist among saints as brethren, and which they should be careful to preserve; and may be called the love of God, just as the same thing is styled the peace of God, Col 3:15, because it is what God requires, what he calls unto, which is of him, and is taught by him in regeneration, and what his love engages to, and without which there is no true love to him; and he takes, love shown to his people as if shown to himself; and this sense is favoured by the context, both by the words in the preceding verse, and in the following ones:

looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. The mercy of Christ may be considered either as past, which was shown in eternity, in his covenant transactions with his Father, in engaging in the cause of his people, in espousing them to himself, and in the care of their persons, grace, and glory; and in time, in assuming

their nature, in his tender concern for the bodies and souls of men, in bearing the sins and sorrows of his people, in the redemption of them, and in their regeneration and calling; and there is the present mercy of Christ, in interceding for his people, in sympathizing with them under all their afflictions, in succouring them under all their temptations, in suiting himself, as the great Shepherd, to all the circumstances of his flock; and there is the future mercy of Christ, which will be shown at death, in the grave, and at the resurrection, at the day of judgment, and in the merciful sentence he will pronounce on his people; and this seems to be designed here; the consequent of which, or what is annexed to it, and in which it issues, is eternal life; which is not owing to the works of men, but to the grace of God, and mercy of Christ; eternal life is in him, and is given through him, and to his mercy should men look for it. Christ himself is to be looked for, who will certainly come a second time; and eternal life is to be looked for by him; and this is only to be expected through his grace and mercy; and this is to be looked for by faith, in the love of it, with delight and pleasure, and cheerfulness, with eagerness, and yet with patience.

hating even the garment spotted, by the flesh; by which may be meant the conversation of those men, even their filthy conversation, which is to be hated, though their persons are not; but all ways and means should be used to save them; and this is one way, by showing a dislike unto, and a resentment at their wicked way of living, excluding them from church communion for it, and shunning all conversation with them. The allusion is not to garments defiled by profluvius persons, or menstruous women, as some think, but to garments spotted with nocturnal pollutions, or through unnatural lusts, which these persons were addicted to (Vid. Sueton. in Vita Neronis, c. 28)...

Jude 20-25 Greek Edition and Comparative translations⁶⁹

GNT	NAW	KJV	NASB	NIV	ESV
20 Ὑμεῖς δέ, ἀγαπητοί, τῇ ἀγιωτάτῃ ὑμῶν πίστει ἐποικοδομοῦντες ⁷⁰ ἑαυτοῦς, ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ προσευχόμενοι,	20 But loved ones, as for y'all, building yourselves on in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,	20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy <u>Ghost</u> ,	20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,	20 But you, dear friends, buildX yourselves up in your most holy faith [and] pray in the Holy Spirit.	20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith [and] praying in the Holy Spirit,
21 ἑαυτοῦς ἐν ἀγάπῃ Θεοῦ τηρήσατε, προσδεχόμενοι τὸ ἔλεος τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.	21 keep yourselves in the love of God, anticipating the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.	21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.	21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.	21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [to bring you] to eternal life.	21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [that leads] to eternal life.
22 καὶ οὗς μὲν ἐλεεῖτε διακρινόμενους ⁷¹ ,	22 And keep showing mercy to	22 And of some have compassion,	22 And have mercy on some, who are	22 Be merciful to those who doubt;	22 And have mercy on those who doubt;

⁶⁹ [Brackets] indicate the addition of a word or concept not originally in the Greek text.

Strikethrough indicates an inaccurate meaning or inaccurate grammar in the English version compared to the Greek text. X's are inserted where a version omitted a word present in the Greek. Underlining highlights translations where the wording is different from all the other English versions. Where English versions are more than diverse on a key word, I shaded the Greek word and its translated words with the same color. I have also used some abbreviations to identify the sources of variants based on editions of the Greek New Testament (GNT) currently in print: "Maj." stands for the reading of the majority of all Greek manuscripts predating the printed editions, "UBS" stands for critical editions of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Society, "T.R." stands for the *Textus Receptus* editions of the Greek New Testament, and "Pat." stands for the Greek Orthodox Patristic edition of the GNT.

⁷⁰ The oldest-known Greek manuscript, P72 reads "being built up" instead of "building upon," and adds a word at the end that indicates "praying for yourselves."

⁷¹ The modern Critical editions of the GNT spell this participle in the Accusative case (which make it an adjective modifying what sort of people you are to have mercy on – viz. the NASB "have mercy on some who are doubting"). This is based upon the reading of all five of the known pre-6th century Greek Manuscripts: P72, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Ephraemi Rescriptus, and *Alexandrinus*. The Majority of the Greek manuscripts, on the other hand (and the TR and Pat

	those who are doubting,	making a difference ^{TR} :	doubting;		
23 οὓς δὲ ἐν φόβῳ σώζετε, ἐκ πυρὸς ἀρπάζοντες, ⁷² μισοῦντες καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς σαρκὸς ἐσπιλωμένον χιτῶνα.	23 and be saving those <u>cautiously</u> , grabbing them out of the fire while hating even the underwear stained from the flesh.	23 And others save with fear, pulling <i>them</i> out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.	23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy ^{UBS} with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.	23 snatchX others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy ^{UBS} [mixed] with fear--hating even the clothing stained by [corrupted] flesh.	23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy ^{UBS} with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

editions) render it Nominative, which would make it an adverb describing how you are to show mercy (viz the KJV “have compassion making a difference”). But the ancient Latin and Coptic versions go with the older reading over the majority reading, and I will throw in my lot with them. The modern critical editions also use a simpler spelling for the verb (ελεατε – found in the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, two of the oldest-known Greek manuscripts, although P72 agrees with the majority spelling!) which is no different in meaning; it is just a variant spelling.

⁷² Modern critical editions of the GNT add the words “and on some” (*ous de eleate*), making “hating the defiled garment” part of a third category of people to have mercy on. This insertion is based on three of the five oldest-known Greek manuscripts and the Vulgate together with 18 or so more Greek manuscripts which are not as ancient. This is significant, but not overwhelming evidence in its favor, so I will keep the traditional Greek text. There is no essential difference in meaning either way.

Jude 1 & 24-25 “The Ultimate Keeper”⁷³

GNT	NAW	KJV	NASB	NIV	ESV
<p>1 Ἰούδας, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος, ἀδελφὸς δὲ Ἰακώβου, τοῖς ἐν Θεῷ πατρὶ ἠγαπημένοις καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τετηρημένοις κλητοῖς·</p>	<p>1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, TO: the <u>called</u>⁷⁴ ones who have been <u>loved</u>⁷⁵ by God the <u>Father</u> and who have been <u>kept</u>⁷⁶ by <u>Jesus</u></p>	<p>1 Jude, [the] servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are <u>sanctified</u>^{Maj} by God the Father, and <u>preserved</u> in Jesus Christ,</p>	<p>1 Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, belov- ed^{UBS} in God the Father,</p>	<p>1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and</p>	<p>1 Jude, a ser- vant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus</p>

⁷³ [Brackets] indicate the addition of a word or concept not originally in the Greek text. Strikethrough indicates an inaccurate meaning or inaccurate grammar in the English version compared to the Greek text. X’s are inserted where a version omitted a word present in the Greek. Underlining highlights translations where the wording is different from all the other English versions. Where English versions are more than diverse on a key word, I shaded the Greek word and its translated words with the same color. I have also used some abbreviations to identify the sources of variants based on editions of the Greek New Testament (GNT) currently in print: “Maj.” stands for the reading of the majority of all Greek manuscripts predating the printed editions, “UBS” stands for critical editions of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Society, “T.R.” stands for the *Textus Receptus* editions of the Greek New Testament, and “Pat.” stands for the Greek Orthodox Patristic edition of the GNT.

⁷⁴ There is a “general” call to faith, but this is speaking of the “effectual” call:

1 Cor. 1:2 “TO: the church of God which exists in Corinth, having been made holy by Christ Jesus, the called saints together with all those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord in every place – theirs and ours.” (NAW)

Rev 17:14b “...He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” (NKJV)

1Cor 1:9 “God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” (NAW)

Acts 2:39 “For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Himself.” (NKJV)

Isa 63:19 mentions the nations that are apart from God’s kingdom as “those who were not called.” (NAW)

⁷⁵ The Majority of Greek New Testament Manuscripts as well as the *Textus Receptus* and Patristic Greek Orthodox editions read ἠγιασ- (“holy”), but all 4 of the pre-6th century manuscripts as well as all the Latin, Coptic, and Syrian translations from ancient times read “loved” (60% of the Greek letters are the same, only two being different). Paul used both “holy and beloved” in Col. 3:12, so both are true.

⁷⁶ “Kept called” by Jesus

	Christ:	and called:	and kept for Jesus Christ:	kept by Jesus Christ:	Christ:
24 Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ φυλάξαι ὑμᾶς ἁπταίστους καὶ στήσαι ... ἁμώμους	24 Now, to the one who is able to guard and to stand y'all stumble- free ⁷⁷ ... unblemished	24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless...	24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to... stand ... blameless	24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you ...w/o fault...	24 Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless ...
24 Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ φυλάξαι ὑμᾶς ἁπταίστους καὶ	24 Now, to the one who is able to keep and to stand	24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from	24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from	24 To him who is able to keep you from falling	24 Now to him who is able to keep you from

Rev. 3:10 “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.” (NKJV)

2Thess. 3:3 “But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.” (NKJV)

1 Peter 1:3-5 “Blessed is God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, in accordance with His [having] a bunch of mercy, re-birthed us into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead into an imperishable and undefiled and unfading inheritance which has been preserved in the heavens for y'all's disposal - y'all who are protected by God's power through faith for the purpose of a prepared salvation to be revealed during the final time.” (NAW)

⁷⁷ This alpha-privative form of this word occurs nowhere else in the Greek Bible, but without the alpha-privative, James uses “stumble” to mean disobeying God’s law: (**Jas 2:10** “For whoever might keep the whole of the law, yet happen to stumble in one of them has become guilty of all.” And James 3:2 “For we all stumble in many things. If, in discourse, someone is not stumbling, this is a mature man, able to hold in check his whole body also.” (NAW) Cf. Deut 7:25 LXX which speaks of falling into idolatry as a result of not destroying idols)

But Peter and Paul used the word for “stumble” in a more narrow sense of rebellion against God that would result in God’s ultimate judgment

Romans 11:11 “I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles.” (NKJV)

2 Peter 1:10-11 “Therefore, brothers, start being diligent all-the-more to make confirmed for yourselves your calling and choosing, for when y'all do these things you shall never stumble then, for in this way the inroad into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly provisioned to y'all.” (NAW)

(Cf. 11 uses of this verb in the history books to indicate being conquered militarily.)

στῆσαι κατενώπιον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ἀμώμους ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει,	y'all stumble- free excitedly ⁷⁸ before ⁷⁹ his glory unblemished ⁸⁰	falling, and to present <i>you</i> faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,	stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless...	and to present you before his glorious presence without fault	stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy,
25 μόνῳ ⁸¹ Θεῷ	25 to the one	25 To the only	25 to the	25 to the	25 to the only

⁷⁸ This “great joy” only occurs in the NT in Luke 1:14,44; Acts 2:46; Hebrews 1:9; and in the OT in Psalms 30:4-5 “Sing to the Lord, ye his saints, and give thanks for the remembrance of his holiness. For anger is in his wrath, but life in his favour: weeping shall tarry for the evening, but joy shall be in the morning.” 45:6-7 “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness beyond thy fellows...” 45:14 “in embroidered clothing: virgins shall be brought to the king after her: her fellows shall be brought to thee. They shall be brought with gladness and exultation: they shall be led into the king’s temple.” and 51:7-12 “Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be purified: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt cause me to hear gladness and joy: the afflicted bones shall rejoice. Turn away thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in my inward parts. Cast me not away from thy presence; and remove not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of thy salvation: establish me with thy directing Spirit.” (Brenton) (and several other instances in the OT, including a few having to do with the rejoicing of the Jews upon returning from exile).

⁷⁹ This word *katenwpiou* vividly pictures being face to face – literally “opposite the eyes” and occurs only two other times in the Greek Bible, both speaking of this same glorious future in heaven: Ephesians 1:3-6 “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved” (NKJV) and Colossians 1:21-23 “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.” (NKJV) (not in the LXX, although similar expressions like Gen. 32:30 Εἶδος θεοῦ and Ps. 99:2 ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ).

⁸⁰ This is the Greek word used in Leviticus for “blemishes” that made an animal or a person unfit to be brought into the temple for God.

⁸¹ Although “wise” is in the majority of Greek manuscripts and therefore in the T.R. and Pat. Editions of the GNT and in the KJV, it is not in any of the five pre-6th century Greek manuscripts, nor is it in the ancient Latin or Syriac or Coptic versions, which would indicate that

<p>σωτήρι ἡμῶν, [δια ἡσου χριστου του κυριου ημων]^{-Maj} δόξα [και]^{TR,Maj,P72} μεγαλωσύνη, κράτος και ἐξουσία [προ παντος του αιωνος]^{-Maj,P72} και νῦν και εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.</p>	<p>God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be⁸² glory and majesty⁸³, power and authority before all the ages as well as now and into all the ages [to come]. Amen.</p>	<p>wise^{TR} God our Saviour, <i>be</i> glory and^{TR} majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.</p>	<p>only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, <i>be</i> glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.</p>	<p>only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, X now and forever- more! Amen.</p>	<p>God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.</p>
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the word “wise” was added after the 5th century. It is certainly true of God, which is why the tradition was not objectionable, it just probably is not original to Jude’s letter. On the other hand, a surprising amount of text, found in practically all of the pre-6th century Greek manuscripts and versions of this verse, is not found in the majority of the Greek manuscripts - and therefore not in [the TR and Pat editions and] the KJV. The tendency of the oldest manuscripts not to be wordy, together with Jude’s preference for triads of ideas, seem to favor the extra words being original as well.

⁸² The result God’s work is that He gets the glory for the results. The word “be” which suggests in English a wish or prayer could be misleading because ultimately glory already belongs to Him no matter what we do, but there is also a sense in which we can contribute to the glory and majesty of God. How?

⁸³ This word for “majesty” is based on the Greek word for “big/great” and it is only used of God in His heavenly glory (only two other uses besides Jude 25 and they are Hebrews 8:1 “Now the sum of what is being said is: we have such a high priest who took office at the right hand of the throne of the Greatest One in the heavens,” and Heb. 1:3 which speaks of the same using a shorter phrase “He took office at the right hand of the Greatest One in the heights” ~NAW) This is yet another example of the holiness of God. Let us be people who hallow His name like this!

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