

Jude – Study Notes

Contextual Summary

Jude warns believers against false teachers who secretly infiltrate the church, twisting grace into license and denying the Lordship (authority) of Christ. Written to the sanctified, preserved, and called, this epistle exhorts the faithful to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Jude recalls historical examples of divine judgment on rebellion while assuring believers of God's keeping power. The letter concludes with a call to build up one another in faith, pray in the Spirit, remain in God's love, and rescue those led astray—all under the certainty of eternal security through Christ's preserving grace.

1–2. “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James...”

Jude identifies himself with humility as *doulos Iēsou Christou* (“bondservant of Jesus Christ”) and a brother of James, showing his earthly relation to Jesus without claiming special status. He writes to “them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.” The perfect participles (*hēgiasmenois*, *tetērēmenois*) indicate completed and continuing states—eternal security rooted in God's action.

3. “It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith...”

“Earnestly contend” (*epagōnizesthai*) denotes vigorous defense. “The faith” refers to the entire body of apostolic truth, not mere belief. Defending sound doctrine is an act of stewardship, not striving for salvation.

4. “For there are certain men crept in unawares... turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness...”

False teachers infiltrate covertly (pareisedusan), distorting grace into moral license. “Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” refers to rejecting His authority, not denying His existence. Grace never condones sin; it empowers godly living through gratitude.

5–7. “I will therefore put you in remembrance...”

Three historical examples illustrate divine discipline: unbelieving Israel (loss of inheritance, not salvation), fallen angels (kept in chains awaiting judgment), and Sodom and Gomorrah (physical destruction for immorality). Jude distinguishes temporal and eternal judgment to show God’s consistency in dealing with rebellion.

8–10. “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.”

False teachers reject divine authority and mock spiritual truths. Even Michael the archangel, disputing with the devil over Moses’ body, did not act presumptuously but said, “The Lord rebuke thee.” This shows reverence for God’s authority, unlike the arrogant deceivers.

11. “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain...”

Cain represents self-righteousness, Balaam covetous ministry, and Korah rebellion against divine authority. These figures illustrate religious corruption, greed, and insubordination—traits seen in apostates who exploit believers for gain.

12–13. “These are spots in your feasts of charity... clouds they are without water...”

Jude uses vivid metaphors: hidden reefs, fruitless trees, and wandering stars—symbols of spiritual emptiness and instability. Their influence corrupts fellowship but cannot remove the believer from Christ’s keeping.

14–15. “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints...”

Jude cites Enoch’s ancient prophecy of divine judgment. This refers to Christ’s Second Coming to execute justice on the ungodly. Believers will return with Him as glorified saints (cf. Rev. 19:14), not as those judged.

16–19. “These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts...”

False teachers flatter for advantage and cause division. Jude reminds readers that apostles predicted such mockers. They are “sensual” (psuchikoi), devoid of the Spirit—indicating unbelievers within the visible church, not regenerated saints.

20–21. “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God...”

This is an exhortation to abide in fellowship, not a command to maintain salvation. “Keep yourselves” (tērēsate heautous) refers to experiential closeness to God’s love. “Building up” (epoikodomountes) means spiritual strengthening through doctrine and prayer.

22–23. “And of some have compassion, making a difference...”

Believers should respond to the wavering with mercy, rescuing others from error “with fear,” showing discernment. “Pulling them out of the fire” signifies deliverance from temporal judgment, not eternal damnation.

24–25. “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory...”

This doxology celebrates eternal preservation. “Keep” (phylaxai) and “present” (stēsai) affirm God’s sustaining power. Believers stand faultless (amōmous) through Christ’s righteousness,

not personal merit. The final verse ascribes eternal glory and dominion to God our Savior through Jesus Christ.

Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Doulos Iēsou Christou (Gk., v.1): “bondservant of Jesus Christ.”

Hēgiasmenois (Gk., v.1): “having been sanctified.”

Tetērēmenois (Gk., v.1): “having been preserved.”

Epagōnizesthai (Gk., v.3): “to contend earnestly.”

Pareisedusan (Gk., v.4): “crept in secretly.”

Psuchikoi (Gk., v.19): “natural, unspiritual.”

Tērēsate heautous (Gk., v.21): “keep yourselves.”

Epoikodomountes (Gk., v.20): “building up.”

Phylaxai (Gk., v.24): “to guard, keep safe.”

Amōmous (Gk., v.24): “blameless, faultless.”

Stēsai (Gk., v.24): “to set, present.”

Doctrinal Insight

Jude distinguishes between God’s eternal preservation of the believer and His temporal judgment on apostasy. True believers are “kept” forever by divine power, though they may face loss of reward or discipline for compromise. Apostates, however, remain unbelieving intruders destined for judgment. Contending for the faith involves defending grace without resorting to legalism or neglecting compassion.

Free Grace Summary

Salvation is secure; God preserves the believer eternally.

Contending for truth safeguards fellowship, not justification.

Apostates twist grace into license but cannot undo it.

God's judgment on rebellion warns believers to stay vigilant.

Building in faith and prayer sustains fellowship with the Lord.

Divine keeping guarantees presentation faultless before His glory.

Grace saves forever; obedience sustains joy and reward.