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Jude

Jude

New International Version

1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James,

To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for[a] Jesus Christ:

2 Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

The Sin and Doom of Ungodly People

3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. 4 For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about[b] long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

5 Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord[c] at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. 7 In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

8 In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. 9 But even the archangel

Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”[d] 10 Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them.

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.

12 These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. 13 They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 15 to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”[e] 16 These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

A Call to Persevere

17 But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. 18 They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.” 19 These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

22 Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.[f]

Doxology

24 To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Footnotes

Jude 1:1 Or by; or in

Jude 1:4 Or individuals who were marked out for condemnation

Jude 1:5 Some early manuscripts Jesus

Jude 1:9 Jude is alluding to the Jewish Testament of Moses (approximately the first century a.d.).

Jude 1:15 From the Jewish First Book of Enoch (approximately the first century b.c.)

Jude 1:23 The Greek manuscripts of these verses vary at several points.

The book of Jude is a short letter in the New Testament of the Christian Bible, consisting of only one chapter with 25 verses. It is attributed to Jude, who identifies himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James" in verse 1. Although it is not clear which James he is referring to, many scholars believe he is referring to James the brother of Jesus.

The letter of Jude is a warning against false teachers who have infiltrated the Christian community. Jude urges his readers to "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people" (verse 3) and to resist the teachings of those who deny Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He gives examples from the Old Testament of those who were punished for their rebellion and warns that these false teachers will suffer a similar fate. Jude also provides a vivid description of the behavior of these false teachers, calling them "blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm--shepherds who feed only themselves" (verse 12). He encourages his readers to stay strong in their faith and to remember the words of the apostles, who predicted the appearance of such false teachers in the last days.

The letter of Jude concludes with a prayer of praise to God, who is able to keep believers from stumbling and to present them blameless before his glorious presence.

In summary, the book of Jude is a warning against false teachers who have infiltrated the Christian community. Jude urges his readers to stay strong in their faith and resist the teachings of those who deny Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He provides examples from the Old Testament of those who were punished for their rebellion and encourages his readers to remember the words of the apostles. The letter concludes with a prayer of praise to God for his power to keep believers from stumbling and to present them blameless before his glorious presence.

All of the verses in the book of Jude are important in their own way, but here are a few that are often highlighted:

1. "Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people." (Verse 3) - This verse sets the tone for the entire letter and emphasizes the importance of defending the faith against false teachings.
2. "For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord." (Verse 4) - This verse identifies the false teachers that Jude is warning against and their harmful teachings.
3. "But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life." (Verses 20-21) -

These verses provide encouragement to believers on how to stay strong in their faith and resist false teachings.

4. "To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen." (Verses 24-25) - These verses offer a doxology, a hymn of praise, to God for his power and authority to keep believers from stumbling and present them blameless before him.

The Epistle of Jude is a short book in the New Testament of the Bible, consisting of only one chapter. It is written by Jude, who identifies himself as the brother of James. The primary theological thought and influence of the book of Jude can be summarized as follows:

Contending for the Faith: Jude's main theological thought centers on the importance of contending earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. He urges believers to defend the Christian faith against false teachers and false doctrines that had crept into the early Christian community. This emphasis on defending the purity and integrity of the faith reflects the concern for maintaining sound doctrine and preserving the apostolic tradition.

Warning Against Apostasy: Jude issues a strong warning about the presence of false teachers who were distorting the faith and leading believers astray. He describes them as "ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:4, ESV). Jude's theological influence here is in highlighting the danger of apostasy and the need for discernment within the Christian community.

Examples from the Old Testament: Jude draws upon examples from the Old Testament to illustrate the consequences of rebellion, unbelief, and immorality. He mentions the Israelites in the wilderness, fallen angels, and Sodom and Gomorrah as examples of God's judgment upon those who turn away from Him. This serves as a theological reminder that God judges unrighteousness and calls for obedience and faithfulness.

Encouragement to Remain Steadfast: Despite the challenges posed by false teachers and apostasy, Jude encourages believers to stay steadfast in their faith, building themselves up in their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and keeping themselves in the love of God (Jude 1:20-21).

Theological Influence:

The book of Jude has had a significant theological influence on the Christian tradition, particularly in the areas of defending the faith against false teachings and apostasy. It underscores the importance of maintaining doctrinal purity and standing firm in the face of challenges to the Christian faith. Jude's warnings and exhortations have been used throughout Christian history to address issues of heresy and false teaching within the Church.

Additionally, Jude's use of Old Testament examples and his focus on God's judgment serve as a theological reminder of God's holiness and the consequences of disobedience. This has contributed to discussions about the theology of judgment and the need for repentance and faith in Christ.

Overall, while the book of Jude is relatively short, its theological thoughts and influences continue to resonate within the Christian tradition, emphasizing the importance of contending for the faith and remaining faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Notes:

There are several difficult questions raised in the book of Jude that have no clear answer or resolution. Some of these questions include:

1. Who were the specific false teachers that Jude was referring to? Jude describes these individuals as "ungodly people" who have "crept in unnoticed" among the believers (Jude 1:4). However, he does not provide any specific names or details about these individuals, making it difficult to identify them with certainty.
2. What was the origin and nature of the false teaching that these individuals were promoting? Jude refers to their teachings as "godless" and "perverting the grace of our God into sensuality" (Jude 1:4). However, he does not provide any specific details about the content of these teachings or where they came from.
3. What is the exact meaning and significance of the reference to the story of Michael and the devil disputing over the body of Moses (Jude 1:9)? This reference is somewhat obscure and raises several questions about the nature of the dispute and the role of Michael and the devil in the story.
4. What is the identity of the "disputed about the body of Moses" (Jude 1:9)? There are different interpretations of who this refers to, with some suggesting that it is a symbolic reference to the Jewish religious leaders who rejected Jesus, while others see it as a historical event that is not recorded elsewhere in the Bible.

These are some of the difficult questions raised by the book of Jude that do not have clear answers. Nonetheless, these questions do not undermine the essential message of the book, which emphasizes the importance of holding fast to the faith and guarding against false teachings and ungodly influences.