

1st August 2019

Overview of Jude Introduction

Dear Brethren and Sisters of the Lord Jesus.

This small epistle is described as being authored by Jude the servant and brother of James. It would be interesting to find out a bit more. Using the term brother of James, means the writer knew that people would know who he was referring to, ie that the James mentioned was well known. There was two Judes mentioned. Jude the Apostle, and Jude the brother of James the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, Jude the Apostle is only recorded once speaking up in John 14:22, and was not a particularly vocal man. Also, in the letter of Jude here in verse 17 we read how the author writes: *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.* It seems an odd thing to say, if Jude was an apostle himself, therefore we think it more likely that this Jude is not the Apostle Jude, but the half brother of Jesus and brother of James. Jude is first recorded for us in Matthew 13:55, *Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?* We know that when Jesus was undertaking his ministry, that his family did not believe him. At one point suggesting that he was beside himself. However after his resurrection the Lord Jesus appeared to them to James his oldest sibling first as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:7, and we find all of Jesus family in close fellowship with the apostles in Acts 1:14, in breaking of bread and in prayers. James the Lord's brother became an elder in the Jerusalem ecclesia and became well known, Peter referring to him as a leader of the ecclesia in Acts 12:17. This we believe is why Jude refers himself as the brother of James, because James was someone everyone was familiar with. He could have referred to himself as the half brother of Jesus. But this would

be elevating himself and using Jesus name for the wrong purpose. Why do we spend time on such, when the letter of Jude itself does not. Only that it is of a bearing upon the letter, when we realise that Jude the author of this letter had a early life of doubt, questioning, and himself needed to be convinced, but having been an eye witness growing up with the young Jesus of Nazareth, he was able to write out of conviction and authority, from personal experience, and from inspiration from the Lord Jesus himself. We note he does not describe himself as an apostle, again supporting the fact he wasn't one, and Instead of claiming blood relation, he describes himself as a servant or bond slave as the Greek word *doulos* means. Here Jude shares the same humility and recognition of his true relationship with Christ Jesus, using the same term of duty and lifelong commitment as Peter, Paul and James the other authors of letters in the New Testament do, when they commenced their epistles. Jude addresses his letter not to a specific ecclesia, but to any who would be described as sanctified by God the Father. Sanctified – *hagiazō*. From which saints is derived. Those who are set apart or made holy by God, preserved in Jesus we read. Preserved. A similar idea is in 1 Peter 1:4,5, where the reward of the faithful is reserved in the heavenlies, and verse 5, *and who are kept, by the power of God*. It is God who is calling out, preserving and keeping, it is his work his sanctifying, and not anything attributed towards the believers, except of course faith, and these of course will receive mercy and peace and love both now and, in the time, to come. Jude commences his letter, Beloved, three times he uses this term, he is appealing with a heartfelt urgency, because as he goes onto reveal, things needed addressing. As Diaglott and other renderings of verse three show better than this KJV, Jude explains that he was going to write to them about their common salvation, explaining and teaching of the gospel, but instead found it immediately necessary to write

instead a warning to earnestly contends for the faith once delivered. Actually, it should read once for all delivered. And this was the point. The gospel was being altered, changed, to suit the fashion and thought of the times, as is always the case, but the faith was under threat and in great danger. Jude is exercised about this, and uses emphatic words. To contend earnestly, in Greek is to agonise, to put in every effort and be on super alert, a matter of life and death. The gospel was under attack. Again, we refer to verse 17, Jude comments on the writings of the Apostles in the past tense. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, Jude revealing here that the letters of Paul, James, Peter and John had already been written and were in general circulation. As Jude makes no reference to the calamity of AD70, we assume Jude was writing a few years before, but when the warnings of Paul, and other apostles about the rise of the apostasy had taken hold strongly. Jude shows us clearly that whilst the work of preaching is vital, things pertaining to the common salvation, it is an equal responsibility to strengthen those things that remain. There was not just a lampstand in the holy place of the tabernacle but also the table of showbread, the symbol of fellowship which has to be protected and maintained. Divisive elements have to be tackled and dealt with. Jude teaches and advises how using various scriptural examples, referring us in various degrees of detail to Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Sodom and Gomorrah, Joshua the high priest and Sanballat the Horonite, Cain and Balaam. Not all of these are mentioned by name, as Jude is writing in urgency, a matter of brevity, expecting those who are made holy by the gospel, those called out, those described as saints to be familiar with scripture and follow his reasoning, and know to what and who he is referring to. So Jude explains what the issues are. *4 For there are certain men crept in*

unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. What does he mean before of old ordained... if it is meant to be then why fight against it? Is this saying that God has decided in advance that these men are to be condemned, and is so seeing to it that they will sin? Of course not, but as the Apostle Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 11:19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. It is this process that has been before ordained. Whoever it is to fall into this category, it is their own choice, not God's fault. Jude is concerned particularly because these teachers of heresies have crept in unawares. As we have been following in the recent history of the truth, we can recall how George Dowie in 1866, Edward Turney in 1874, and Robert Ashcroft in 1884, all turned up without warning, and introduced their ideas, in plausible cogent ways, deceiving the elect, taking away in some instances the majority. So in Jude's day. Nothing has changed. Unawares, or unnoticed, *pareisduno* — "to settle in alongside; to lodge stealthily. This is because the ungodly men, do not have the right motivation, but enter the flock as wolves in sheep's clothing not sparing the flock, as Paul reminds in Acts 20, so they having the wrong motivation, ie they want a following, or they want to be noticed, they crave attention, or they want to be regarded as a special one, they cover their tracks by appearing to be something else. In this case Jude accuses them of turning the Grace of God into lasciviousness or licentiousness as some of us might have in the margin, or absence of restraint. It is true that the grace of God has afforded believers a certain liberty, a liberty from the effects of the effects of the nature of sin, in that they can receive forgiveness of sins, but this however does not give them license to do whatever they want, as it seems had become a common belief in some

quarters. Also Jude accuses them of denying the only Lord God, or *despostes* as Diaglott has it, sovereign, and our Lord Jesus Christ. That is a rejecting that the Lord Jesus Christ is the final authority, an excuse for laxity, and an excuse to turn a blind eye to error. Jude could see a wholesale undermining of all that the Truth stood for. He urgently reminds his readers that it is most certainly not a case that once saved always saved, or I have been baptised, so I am alright now. Most certainly not. In verse 5 he brings to the memory that God, went to great trouble and saved the people out of the land of Egypt. Yes, they were saved by water. Saved. But not to do as they pleased, as they soon found out, their salvation was conditional, he destroyed those that believed not, conditional upon faith, belief. We notice how the author uses Old Testament examples, but refers to them briefly, but hinges his warning upon them, he expects his readers to be fully conversant, and to pick up on the allusions and inferences, we wont be able to , if we are not familiar with these passages and scriptures, and thus will be caught out unawares. Staying with the example of Israel in the wilderness, he refers to another example, of those who denied the concept of authority and took it upon themselves, a verse which causes confusion to those not conversant with the scripture: 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. This passage together with those of Peter, where Jude is emphasising Peters words, and endorsing them, these words being used by Pentecostals and JWs etc to preach yet other heresies about fallen angels and Satan, I am sure you are aware of what we are referring to. However, the verse is easy to comprehend when we keep it in context and remember that the word angel is *aggelos* [angelos] simply messengers. This is a term which applies to mortal people as well as immortal spirit creatures. These messengers did

not keep their first estate or principality as Diablot has it, proper domain, as again the margin has it, or designated status as we might say today, and left their own habitation we see in verse 6. Of course, we see that this is exactly what happened in the camp of Israel, where some men not content with their allocated position, they believed they should receive an elevated position, this can be all seen by a reading of Numbers 16, they questioned the authority of Moses and Aaron, and saw themselves as equal in authority, their demise was swift and unprecedented. A earthquake prepared by God swallowed them all up, into the depths of the earth, where they are still, awaiting the time of resurrection where they will rise to receive condemnation and the second death. As Jude explains. In the first instance a lack of faith, in the second instance the sin of pride, Jude explains leads to a situation which he presents by way of a third example even the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, who were completely unrestrained – licentious, I can do what I want how I want and when I want and no one can judge me kind of attitude. And the depths to where that leads Jude does not shrink from describing he says it how it is, sexual immorality, strange flesh, ie homosexuality etc, this is an example says Jude of unrestrained human nature, so following these heretics ideas, this is where it will lead you. Likewise, these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Exactly the same says Jude is going on right now. Worth noting to despise dominion means reject authority, and speak evil of dignities, my margin has despise glorious ones - (*blasphemeo doxas*) mock the striving for purity, Oh you think you are perfect being a case in point. Jude continues to supply further examples: verse 9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. Again this verse abused by Satanists, fallen angelists

and devil promoters, but Michael the Archangel is a title and not a name, meaning simply the chief messenger, Michael who is like Ail, that is an ambassador of God. Again, there is no reason to assume this is a spirit creature, a literal angel, but can just as equally apply to a mortal representative, and as Jude is speaking of literal flesh and blood examples, previously quoted in Scripture, and where we find the words the Lord rebuke thee is in Zechariah 3, and when we match what Jude is saying to the example there in that prophecy, we can see what he is referring to. We would invite further comment on this afterward, as we don't have time in this a mere introduction not an exegesis to comment further, but suffice it to say that Jude is using this great example in contrast to the previous examples of where the truth was earnestly contended for, the word of God championed as the final authority. Jude proceeds to use another three examples practical historical examples of the type of people to look out for: 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. The way of Cain, who expected God to be happy with whatever he offered, it didn't really matter, we are free to do what we want kind of thinking, the error of Balaam who said and proclaimed one thing, but in the end did the opposite, as that was where his heart was all along, seeking what this world can offer here and now, as opposed to the riches reserved in heaven, and Korah, he already alluded to, but highlighted here as someone who deeply resented authority because of his overweening pride. Jude observes that these are spots in your feasts of love when they feast with you. Yes, because they are unaware they are at the Table. Their influences are poisonous but not always obvious, they lack a guilty conscience, as it has been seared with a hot iron, partaking of the emblems without fear, feeding themselves, as opposed to feeding one another the flock of God, no humility or realisation that

they are heaping to themselves condemnation . Twice dead Jude says, what does this mean, well, spiritual death, will result of course in the death of eternity. Each description of Jude here deserves attention: 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. Raging waves of the sea: Isa. 57:20, "the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Foaming out their own shame, great output which amounts to nothing, the foam produced by angry waves, is formed by the wind, and particles of dirt and detritus in the water, shameful, wandering stars, no orbit, cannot be relied upon, no regularity, and so on. We notice how Jude quotes from Enoch. Many jump on the bandwagon, and claim this is an endorsement of the Book of Enoch, which is not part of the canon of scripture, but was only discovered about 200 years ago. Jude under divine inspiration could easily have been quoting from quite a different writing. And this debate just detracts from the point the writer is making. He shows how right from the beginning this earnest contention from the faith was necessary, 14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, who are these? The proud, ungodly masquerading as saints yet are liars, the same sons of God who saw the daughters of men that they were fair and took of them who they chose, these mighty men of renown the Nephilim, men of reputation, who wanted a following, and did so through apostacy, corrupting the truth of God, Jude informs us of Enoch's preaching and vision: saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands (or myriads, without number as it should be) of his saints, (the same vision we note as Moses in Deuteronomy 33,) The Lord, coming with the sanctified ones, God manifest in the flesh, the very doctrine these are denying see verse 4. And what will be their first function? 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they

have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. The truth will be proclaimed as a complete contrast to the false religion peddled by the superstitious and vain, these who have deluded millions. Contending earnestly for the faith a priority Jude explains because 16 *These are murmurers, complainers*, we recall these descriptions being of the unbelieving generation who perished in the wilderness, *walking after their own lusts*; we note that Jude has just quoted Enoch, who we read of in Genesis 5 as one who walked with God, not after his own lusts *and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage*, that is flattering for gain. We are reminded of the Proverb: 28: 21 *To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress*. Great swelling words, yes, new ideas, put across so plausibly, skilfully under the radar so to speak, to lead away men, being bombastic, forceful, by personality, and not through divine reason, but against reason, anti-logia, which is the Greek word incidentally for the gainsaying of Korah (verse11) Verse 17 *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ*; now Jude expects his readers to be well versed in the epistles recently delivered by the Apostles under Divine inspiration, how he quotes their warnings, indeed, we may all be well aware of the very similar words, and warnings Jude uses as compared to those of Peter in 2 Peter 3, which evidently had not been paid enough attention to, 18 *How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts*. Jude of course is correct we were warned of this in Acts 20:29, the words of Paul, recorded by Luke, 2 Timothy 3:1, the Words of Paul: *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come*. 2 Tim 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine*, 2 Peter 3:3 *Knowing this first, that there shall*

come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, Warnings often, but ignored it seems. 19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. Separate themselves not from the world, not set apart as in being sanctified, separate themselves, not from the ecclesia either, but separate themselves from the love of Christ, because they have not the Spirit of Christ. His humility, and character is not a force in their lives, they are instead lost to themselves. These are the ones, Jude explains who must be noted, and to contend earnestly against. But although this is the main challenge that Jude focusses on, he also teaches his readers not to neglect themselves, lest they join the same ranks of these gainsayers. 20 *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* It is true in the beginning of his letter he speaks of the true believers being preserved in Jesus Christ, indeed as Paul explains, who can separate us from the love of Christ,. After a long list, it can only be concluded that it is our own decision. Our own faith our waywardness if we let it, that can permit us to turn from being beloved, to becoming a wandering star. Keep yourselves in the love of God, and as Jude as shown very powerfully, as the majority of his little letter is quotations from other Divine messages, that it can only be done by a reliance upon the Word, and whilst doing be mindful of the weaknesses of others, verse 23: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Save with fear, look to yourselves when rebuking or assisting another, as Paul reminds us in his letter to the Galatians: 6:6: *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* Finally Jude gives the glory to His inspirer: 24 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present*

you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. We notice again his teaching and acknowledgement, that always the works is God's. He that is able to keep you from falling. The safety net is there, his everlasting arms, the comfort and reassurance of His Word, Yes, Jude has written of the common salvation, and he has done so diligently, how to defend it, and maintain it and strengthen it. He ends his missive, with giving full glory to the Sovereign, God only who so many deny, the spirit of antichrist which doth already work, and today has spread like the leaven throughout the world. The purity of the doctrine, has been preserved, kept, and is reserved, both now and for ever. Amen.

Notes

Three key words dominate the epistle:

1. "Beloved" Occurs 3 times. V.I, 17, 20. agapetos — occurs again v.17, 20. There is only one other occurrence of this word in an introduction to an epistle: 3 Jno. v.2 cp. agapetos, which occurs in Matt. 3:17, to express the Father's deep love for His son. Could anyone feel greater love than this? Jude had a deep and sincere love for his brethren, and for their eternal welfare.
2. "Ungodly" Occurs 6 times. (The number of flesh!) V.4, 15, 18.
3. "Preserved" Occurs 5 times. V.I: rendered "reserved", V.6, 13; "kept", V.6; and "keep", v. 21.

Thus both parties are "reserved" for something in the Divine purpose: the "beloved" will be preserved to inherit the Kingdom; the "ungodly" will be "reserved" for Divine judgment!

Zechariah 3

"Joshua" — He was the high priest. Ezra was associated with him in the work of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 4:1-6) — and in this work they were strongly opposed by the "satan", the Samaritans. By exercising strong pressure, the "satan" eventually caused the work to cease (v.24). "Standing before the angel of Yahweh" — Cp. Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43. The angels were present to strengthen Christ — so they were present to assist in the work of restoration, under Zerubbabel and Joshua. The angels are "public-serving spirits" who are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14 Diag.). "Satan standing at his right hand" — The Samaritans (Ezra 4:1-5). Cp. Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, who fulfilled the anti-type, in the days of Christ. "To resist him " — From the same root as "satan". A trial to the faith of Joshua.

VERSE 2

"And Yahweh said" — This is a most interesting comment. Jude has stated that it was "Michael" who spoke in this matter, but Zechariah says it was Yahweh. Yet, both are correct; for Michael was a manifestation of Yahweh, and therefore when he spoke it could be truthfully said that Yahweh spoke. God-manifestation is the principle involved (cp. Ex. 23:21: "for my Name is in him . . ."). "Yahweh rebuke thee O satan" — This came to pass (Ezra 6:7). Darius ordered the adversaries to cease their activities — and the work of rebuilding to continue . . . (A powerful example of the way in which "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men ... " Dan. 4:17). ' 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire" — The affairs of Israel at this time

appeared to be facing disaster — but, through Divine intervention, the cause of Joshua and Israel was "plucked out of the fire" — i.e., saved from what appeared to be inevitable failure.