

The General Epistle Of Jude

The Argument

Jude admonisheth all Churches generally to take heed of deceivers which go about to draw away the hearts of the simple people from the truth of God, and willett them to have no society with such, whom he setteth forth in their lively colors, shewing by divers examples of the Scriptures what horrible vengeance is prepared for them; finally he comforteth the faithful and exhorteth them to persevere in the doctrine of the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

Jude

3 He warneth the godly to take heed of such men, 4 that make the grace of God a cloak for their wantonness; 5 and that they shall not escape unpunished, for the contempt of that grace, 6-7 he proveth by three examples; 14 and allegeth the prophecy of Enoch; 20 Finally he sheweth the godly a means to overthrow all the snares of those deceivers.

1 Jude a servant of Jesus Christ, and (a) brother of James, to them which are called and sanctified (b) of God the Father, and (c) reserved to Jesus Christ:

(a) This is put to make a difference between him and Judas Iscariot.

(b) The faithful are sanctified of God the Father in the Son by the holy Ghost.

(c) Set apart by the everlasting counsel of God, to be delivered to Christ to be kept.

2 Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied.

3 (1) Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the (d) common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, to exhort you, that ye should earnestly (e) (*) contend for *the maintenance* of the faith, which was (f) (♣) once given unto the Saints.

(1) The end and mark whereas he shooteth in this Epistle, is that he confirmeth the godly against certain wicked men, both in wholesome doctrine and good manners.

(d) Of these things that pertain to the salvation of all of us.

(e) That ye should defend the faith by all the might you can, both by true doctrine and good example of life.

(*) Against the assaults of Satan and heretics.

(f) Which was once so given, that it may never be changed.

(♣) That ye should keep it forever.

4 (2) For there are certain men crept in, which were before of old (♣) ordained to this condemnation, (3) ungodly men *they are*, which turn the grace of our God into wantonness, and (*) deny God the only Lord, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) It is by God's providence and not by chance, that many wicked men creep into the Church.
(♣) He confirmeth their heart against the contemners of religion, and Apostates, shewing that such men trouble not the Church at all adventures, but are appointed thereunto by the determinate counsel of God.
(3) He condemneth this first in them, that they take a pretence or occasion to wax wanton, by the grace of God; which cannot be, but the chief empire of Christ must be abrogated, in that such men give up themselves to Satan, as at this time the sect of the Anabaptists doeth, which they call Libertines.
(*) 2 Peter 2:1 .

5 (4) I will therefore put you in remembrance, forasmuch as ye once knew this, how that the Lord, after that he had delivered the people out of Egypt, (*) destroyed them afterward which (♣) believed not.

(4) He setteth forth the horrible punishment of them which have abuseth the grace of God to follow their own lusts.
(*) Numbers 14:37 .
(♣) Their incredulity was the fountain of all their evil.

6 (5) The (*) Angels also 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.

(5) The fall of the Angels was most sincerely punished, how much more then will the Lord punish wicked and faithless men?
(*) 2 Peter 2:4 .
(♣) Or, original.
(♣) Then shall be their extreme punishment.

7 As (*) Sodom and Gomorrhah, and the cities about them, which in like manner as they did, (g) committed fornication, and followed (h) (♣) strange flesh, are set forth for an example, and suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

(*) Genesis 19:24 .
(g) Following the steps of Sodom and Gomorrah.
(h) Thus he covertly setteth forth their horrible and monstrous lusts.
(♣) Most horrible pollutions.

8 Likewise notwithstanding these (i) (*) dreamers also defile the flesh, (6) and despise (k) government, and speak evil of them that are in authority.

(i) Which are so blockish and void of reason as if all their senses and wits were in a most dead sleep.
(*) Which shew themselves dull and impudent.
(6) Another most pernicious doctrine of theirs, in that they take away the authority of Magistrates, and speak evil of them, as at this day the Anabaptists do.
(k) It is a greater matter to despise government, than the governors, that is to say, the matter itself than the persons.

9 (7) Yet (*) Michael the Archangel, when he strove against the devil, and disputed about the body of Moses, durst not blame him with cursed speaking, but said, (♣) The Lord rebuke thee.

(7) An argument of comparison: Michael one of the chiefest Angels, was content to deliver Satan, although a most cursed enemy, to the judgment of God to be punished; and these perverse men are not ashamed to speak evil of the powers which are ordained of God.
(*) It is most like that this example was written in some of those books of the Scripture which are now lost; Numbers 21:14; Joshua 10:13; 2 Chronicles 9:29 .
(♣) In Zechariah 3:2, Christ under the name of the Angel rebuked Satan as knowing that he went about to hinder the Church; but here we are admonished not to seek to revenge ourselves by evil speaking, but to refer the thing to God.

10 (8) But these speak evil of those things, which they know not; and whatsoever things they know (*) naturally, as beasts, which are without reason, in those things they corrupt themselves.

(8) The conclusion: These men are in a double fault, to wit, both for their rash folly in condemning some, and for their impudent and shameless contempt of that knowledge, which when they had gotten, yet notwithstanding they lived as brute beasts, serving their bellies.
(*) By their carnal judgment.

11 (9) Woe *be* unto them! For they have followed the way (*) of Cain, and are cast away by the deceit (♣) of Balaam's wages, and perish in the (♠) gainsaying (♣) of Core.

(9) He foretelleth their destruction, because they resemble or shew forth Cain's shameless malice, Balaam's filthy covetousness, and to be short, Core's seditious and ambitious head.
(*) Genesis 4:8 .
(♣) Numbers 22:23; 2 Peter 2:16 .
(♠) For as Core, Dathan and Abiram rose up and spake against Moses, so do these against them that are in authority.
(♣) Numbers 16:1 .

12 (10) These are rocks (♣) in your (l) feasts of charity, when they feast with you, without (m) (♣) all fear, feeding themselves; (*) clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; corrupt trees *and* without fruit, twice dead, *and* plucked up by the roots;

(10) He rebuketh most sharply with many other notes and marks, both their dishonesty or filthiness, and their sauciness, but especially, their vain bravery of words, and most vain pride, joining herewithal a most grave and heavy threatening out of a most ancient prophecy of Enoch touching the judgment to come.
(♣) These were general feasts which the faithful kept, partly to protest their brotherly love, and partly to relieve the needy, Tertullian in Apology chapter 39 .
(l) The feasts of charity were certain banquets, which the brethren that were members of the Church, kept altogether, as Tertullian setteth them forth in his Apology, chapter 39 .
(m) Impudently, without all reverence either to God or man.
(♣) Either of God, or of his Church.
(*) 2 Peter 2:17 .

13 *They are* the raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; *they are* wandering stars, to whom is reserved the (n) blackness of darkness forever.

(n) Most gross darkness.

14 And Enoch also the seventh from Adam, prophesied of such, saying, (*) (♣) Behold, the Lord (o) cometh with thousands of his Saints,

(*) Revelation 1:7 .

(♣) This saying of Enoch might for the worthiness thereof have been as a common saying among men of all times, or else have been written in some of those books which now remain not; yet by the providence of God, so many are left as are able to instruct us in the faith of Jesus Christ to salvation; John 20:31 .

(o) The present time, for the time to come.

15 To give judgment against all men, and to rebuke all the ungodly among them of all their wicked deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their cruel speakings, which wicked sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own (♣) lusts; (*) whose mouth's speak proud things, having men's persons in admiration, because of advantage.

(♣) In ungodliness and iniquity.

(*) Psalm 17:10 .

17 (11) But, ye beloved, remember the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

(11) The rising up of such monsters was spoken of before, that we should not be troubled at the newness of the matter.

18 How that they told you that there should be mockers (*) in the last time, which should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

(*) 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1; 2 Peter 3:3 .

19 (12) These are they that separate themselves from others, natural, having (*) not the Spirit.

(12) It is the property of Antichrists to separate themselves from the godly, because they are not governed by the Spirit of God; and contrariwise it is the property of Christians to edify one another through godly prayers, both in faith and also in love, until the mercy of Christ appear to their full salvation.

(*) Of regeneration.

20 But, ye beloved, edify yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost,

21 And keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

22 (13) And have compassion of some, (*) in putting difference;

(13) Among them which wander and go astray, the godly have to use this choice, that they handle some of them gently, and that others being even in the very flame, they endeavor to save with severe and sharp instruction of the present danger; yet so, that they do in such sort abhor the wicked and dishonest, that they eschew even the least contagion that may be.

(*) Some may be won with gentleness, others by sharpness.

23 And others save with (p) (*) fear, pulling them out of the fire, and hate even the (q) (♣) garment spotted by the flesh.

(p) By fearing them, and holding them back with godly severity.

(*) By sharp reproofs to draw them out of danger.

(q) An amplification taken from the forbidden things of the Law which did defile.

(♣) He willet not only to cut off the evil but to take away all occasions which are as preparatives, and accessories to the same.

24 (14) Now unto him that is able to keep you that ye fall not, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with joy,

(14) He commendeth them to the grace of God, declaring sufficiently that it is God only that can give us that constancy which he requireth of us.

25 *That is*, to God only wise, our Saviour, *be* glory, and majesty, and dominion, and power, both now and forever, Amen.