

Author – He is “Jude, ...brother of James” (v 1; solitary occurrence in the NT). NT history indicates nine individuals bearing the name, three of whom lived prior to NT times; of the remaining six, two were disciples of Jesus.

- Judas, “not Iscariot” (Joh 14:22), one of the Twelve (cf. Mat 10:3; Mar 3:18; Luk 6:16; Act 1:13)
 - no certainty this Judas was the Apostle James’ brother (genitive in Luk 6:16, Act 1:13 could as easily designate son, as brother)
 - the author conspicuously makes no claim of apostleship
- Judas, the brother of James (Mat 13:55; Mar 6:3)
 - Jesus had a brother, James, prominent in the Jerusalem church (Act 12:17; 15:13-21; 21:18), most prominent James at the time of writing, giving immediate credibility to this conjecture
 - during Jesus’ earthly ministry, His own brothers did not believe Him (Joh 7:5)
 - Jesus’ resurrection marked a watershed in His relationships, familial and otherwise
 - it seems entirely in keeping with these facts that the one who now calls himself a *bondslave* would, at the same time, be reticent to even seem to make opportunistic boast of a familial relationship to the One he had initially disdained (Mar 3:21, 31)
 - Vincent suggests that Jude avoids familial reference, feeling “that the natural relationship in his mind would be subordinate to the spiritual (Luk 11:27-28), that such a designation would,” in Alford’s words, “have been in harmony with those later and superstitious feelings with which the next and following ages regarded our Lord’s earthly relatives.” As many have observed, James also avoids this singularly distinguishing designation.

Date – While theological liberals date the epistle during the first half of the second century, conservatives place its origin between 61 – 80 AD. In view of overwhelming evidence for prior authorship of Second Peter, Jude was written no earlier than 65 AD, most certainly before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Accordingly, a date of authorship of 67 – 68 AD is suggested.

Purpose – Jude writes to Jewish Christians, encouraging them to “earnestly contend for the faith – [the body of doctrine] – once for all delivered unto the saints (v 3),” and to warn of “ungodly men, [changing] the grace of our God into debauchery (v 4).” Jude notably asserts that the conditions about which Peter gave advance warning (2Pe 2) have become present reality in Jude’s day (Jud 3-4).

Style and Characteristics – Punctuated with terse and vivid language, Jude evokes natural imagery with passion and righteous indignation, expressed in rhetorical couplets and triplets, compelling for a treatise of only 25 verses. Conservatives have consistently and overwhelmingly concluded that similarities between **2 Peter** and **Jude** are explained by each writer having written about the same things, albeit from different perspectives, Peter warning early of impending apostasy, Jude ultimately exposing apostasy already widely evident within the church of his day. While many commentators have glossed over its content with astonishing brevity, argument against its canonicity has been remarkably muted. Conservative scholar, D. Edmond Hiebert writes,

“That the early Church, after full questioning and debate, received the epistle as canonical indicates its strength.” (Second Peter and Jude: An Expositional Commentary)

The epistle is unparalleled in the N. T. for its unvarnished denunciation of religious apostasy and sensual excess while, at the same time, voicing affectionate concern and encouragement for true believers. It is as relevant today as it was when Jude penned its stirring, closing doxology.

*To the |uniquely| wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty,
dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.*

The readers – Jude’s recipients are likely Jews in Palestine (though perhaps not of the diaspora) to whom association with James would have been meaningful and significant. He addresses them as those “*that are called, sanctified by God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ*” (**v 1b**). This description comprehensively encompasses all Church saints.

1:1 *Jude, brother of James*...(probably the Apostle James, prominent in Jerusalem Church, so, half brother to Jesus of Nazareth; cf **Mat 13:55; Mar 6:3**). This familiar association would have been important to Jews in Palestine.

...**bonds**servant of Jesus Christ (**doulos**)

Most common NT term for servant, slave, “*originally the lowest form in the scale of servitude*”(Vine), eventually broadly encompassing commitments of unbonded submission and voluntary indentureship out of love and gratitude.

Note: Bondsservant (or servant) – Frequent apostolic self-designation, sometimes implying consistency with call to public service, found in the salutations of the following epistles: **Rom, Php, Tit, Jam, 2Pe, Rev; Apostle – 1 & 2 Co, Gal, Eph, Col, 1 & 2Ti, 1 & 2Pe** . The resurrection thoroughly transformed regard for ordinary familial relationships with Christ (**Joh 20:28**, cf **Joh 7:5**); Jude makes no claim to apostleship. Saints as **bonds**servants of Christ – cf **1Co 7:22; Eph 6:6; 1Pe 2:16**. Compare,

contrast **James**: good works evidence salvation; **Jude**: evil works evidence ungodliness

...to those who are **called** (dat pl m, **klētos**)

The reference is **adjectival**, standing emphatically at the end of the clause in the original, **with substantive force**. The term in Scripture may designate a general invitation in the Gospel (**Mat 22:14; Luk 14:16-24; Joh 12:32**). When individualized in the Epistles (**Rom 1:1, 6-7; 8:28, 30; 1Co 1:2, 9, 24**), it is apparent that the invitation is an effectual summons, *always affirmed*. The called one *always comes* (**Rom 8:30; 1Co 1:2, 9**; cf **Joh 6:37-44**). In this context, the call of God is said to be effectual, designating His sovereign choice. Here, it is a clear reference to Church saints. Notably **2Th 2:13-14** indicates, with the apostle's thanksgiving, that it is to obtaining of future glory that the saint has been called by the gospel! (Cp "*saints by calling*," **Rom 1:7; 1Co 1:2**; "*appointment to apostleship*," **Rom 1:1; 1Co 1:1**)

Note: Call (**kaleō**, **Rom 8:29-30; 1Co 1:2, 9; 1Th 2:12; Heb 9:15**) in Scripture must be carefully considered along with two related terms, *choose*, or *elect* (**eklegō**, invariably in Scripture with the **middle voice**, **Joh 6:70; 13:18; 15:16** (twice), **19; Act 13:17; Eph 1:4; eklektos**, **Mat 20:16; 24:22, 24, 31; Rom 8:33; 1Ti 5:21; 1Pe 1:2; 2:4**) and *draw* (**elkuō**, **Joh 6:44; 12:32; 21:6, 11; cp surō**, **Joh 21:8; Act 14:19**).

Addit: Effectual working of power, **Eph 3:7**; to holiness, **Eph 4:1; 2Th 1:11**; hope, **Eph 4:4**; *Prove it*, **2Pe 1:10**; call of Abraham, **Rom 4:13-22**, cf **Heb 11:12**

...**sanctified** by God the Father, ("*having been sanctified*," **perf pas ptc dat pl m, hagiadzō**)

Careful study reveals that each Person of the Godhead has a role in sanctification, separating from that which is unholy. In the case of created things, sanctification also necessarily separates unto holy use. It is explicitly the Father who has sanctified here, apparently in direct response to the petition of Christ (**Joh 17:17-19**). The verb tense expresses **action at a point in past time, with results continuing** uninterrupted or abated, unto perpetuity. 3 aspects of sanctification in Scripture – positional (irrespective of individual state): **Act 20:32; 26:18; Rom 15:16; 1Co 1:2; 6:11; 7:14; Heb 10:10**; practical (believer responsibility): **Rom 12:1; Heb 10:14**; perfect (completed): **1Th 5:22-23**.

Note: Textual var., NU reads **ēgapēmenois**, "*beloved*," lit., "*having been loved*" (**Eph 1:6; Col 3:12; 1Th 1:4; 2Th 2:13**), seen by some as a scribal effort to harmonize with a balancing word or phrase in the immediate context (cp. **agapē**, v 2, **Agapētoi**, v 3); interpretive difficulty is also compounded by apparent redundancy. **Hagiosmenois**, "*sanctified*," lit., "*having been sanctified*" (**Act 20:32; 26:18; Rom 15:16; 1Co 1:2; 7:14; Heb 10:10**), explains the purpose for the immediately successive clause. Positional sanctification results from God the Spirit, on the occasion of salvation, placing the saved one into the imputed reality of identifiable and inextricable intimacy with the risen, glorified Christ (**1Co**

...and **preserved** (“having been preserved,” perf pas ptc dat pl m, *tēreō*)

“Suggestive of watchful care over a present possession (*Wuest*),” “it is used of the keeping power of God the Father and Christ” (*Vine*). Jude will use this term again in **vv 6** (twice), **13**, and **21**, emphasizing to his readers that God is *keeping* His word, sovereignly *maintaining* His will according to His own purpose. As with the preceding verb, the reference here is to **past action with continuing, uninterrupted result**. Hence in this context, *preserved*. It is with this same term the Lord Jesus besought the Father in the garden: “*keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are*” (**Joh 17:11b** NKJV). These are they...

Note: Synonymously translated *reserve*. Cf **Joh 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:10** (twice), **20; 17:6, 11-12, 15; Act 25:4, 21** (twice); **2Co 11:9** (twice); **Eph 4:3; 1Th 5:23; 1Ti 5:22; 2Ti 4:7; Jam 1:27; 1Pe 1:4; 2Pe 2:4, 9, 17; 3:7; 1Jo 2:3-5; 3:22, 24; 5:2, 3, 18; Rev 3:10** (eight additionally). As for the relationship between “*having been sanctified*,” and “*having been kept*,” it may be observed that the *kept* ones are so kept, *not because of love* (God will never mute His righteous demands as a function of love), but because they are *set apart in Christ*, i.e., *pure* by the sanctifying work of the Father

...|by| **Jesus Christ: (*Iēsou Christō*, anarthrous)**

The grammar supports either “*by*” (**instrumental**), or “*for*” (**dativ**), the latter according with **vv 24-25**, also complimenting injunction to duty, “*Keep yourselves in the love of God*,” **v 21** (*Hiebert*. Cf. also **Joh 17:11, 15**). In His prayer for the saints (**Joh 17:1-26**) Christ petitioned the Father to *sanctify* (**v 17**), and to *keep* (**v 11**) those whom the Father had given Him (**vv 2, 6, 9, 11**). This verse plainly manifests exquisite concert of wills among the Persons of the Godhead!

Note: Upon comprehensive analysis it is probable that this keeping is actually accomplished *by* the Son (cf **Heb 7:24-25**) inasmuch as the petition in **Joh 17:11** certainly contemplated temporal change in economic responsibilities associated with the Son’s impending offer of Himself in sacrifice. It is important to note that the security here issues expressly because the called one is *sanctified*. God’s possessions are His *by choice*, and Scripture is replete with reference to God’s jealousy over His treasured, holy things (**Joel 3:5**), which holy things we are (**1Co 6:19-20**)! The believer’s portion resulting from his identification with Christ and based upon His completed work is an inexhaustible theme of Scripture, manifestly worthy of diligent study (**Php 3:10**). In this connection, subtle yet vital distinction apparent in Christ’s work on Calvary as *substitute* must not be confused with His subsequent office as the NT saints’ *representative*

1:2 *Mercy... (eleos)*

Outward manifestation of pity; assumes and recognizes need, responding with sufficient resource (*Vine*). This term occurs frequently in salutation, almost always preceding *peace* when used together (except **Gal 6:16**). Its use elsewhere frequently signals *threat of danger* and comes as no surprise here. Notably here, no amount of correct teaching will forestall the threat, which *is apparently now upon them*. Not contemplated here as a component of the fruit of the Spirit, mercy is now urgently needed to withstand the suffering of a perilous present condition. Mercy *is not a synonym for grace*, though hardly foreign to it (**1Ti 1:2; 2Ti 1:2; Tit 1:4; 2Jo 3**). “Grace describes God’s attitude toward the creature, while mercy is His attitude toward those who are in distress” (adapted from Hogg and Vine’s comments on Galatians).

Note: Mercy *presumes* need; emphasize *distress*. It was “according to (*kata*, lit., “coming down from”) *His mercy He saved us* (**Tit 3:5**);” Scripture admonishes in times of distress to approach the throne of grace boldly (**Heb 4:16**) that we may find both mercy, and “well timed” (*eukairos*) grace resource to battle temptation (cp **Rom 8:26**); also, **Exo 25:17-22; Rom 3:25; Heb 9:5**; mercy is to characterize the activity of God’s people, “*Be merciful*” – **Deu 25:4; Psa. 37:21; Mic 6:8; Jam 3:17**

...*peace (eirēnē)*

This is the privilege and portion of those who have been reconciled to God (**Rom 5:1**; cf **Isa 57:20-21**). Jude notably commends to his readers the very provision of God to garrison the thought processes (cf **Php 4:6-7**, “*garrison your hearts and minds*,” i.e., *noēma*, “*devices of thought*”, as with a military phalanx), for it is precisely in the area of the mind that the saint is susceptible to Satanic *devices* (again, *noēma*, **2Co 2:11**). The peace of God is the experience of every believer who is consciously aware of his position, and Jude has just finished reviewing with his readers things related to their position. In stark summary, Jude’s invocation in the immediate context heightens the gravity of his readers’ present peril. Also, **Heb 13:20**; cf. **Joh 14:27**; “*He is our peace...*” **Eph 2:14**.

Note: The *ma* ending noun of **Php 4:7** and **2Co 2:11** clearly indicates it is not simply the *mind* but rather the *conclusions of the mind* – the *result of activity of thought* – which are so bastioned by peace

...*love (agapē)*

Occurs in opening salutation only here (*Hiebert*). This is not the love with which God loved the world and sent the Son (**Joh 3:16**), for that cannot quantitatively increase. This is the love of the Son imparted to the believer as a peculiar and unique quality of the faith-rest life (**Joh 5:42**; cf. **Gal 5:22-23**). More than emotion, neither by accident or happy coincidence, this kind of love characterizes a conscious and deliberate governance of mind and heart among and toward those “in Christ.” It is impossible to love God without loving His people (**Joh 13:34-35**). Jude’s admonition here again enhances the gravity of his readers’ present circumstances. Love will be necessary to weather the ravages of assault

upon their “shared salvation.” To saints, there is no better proof of experiential intimacy with God than the love of Christ manifested in the fellowship of His people (1Jo 4:7-11). Jude will return to this theme in v 21 with the use of an imperative.

...*be multiplied to you* (1aor pas opt 3ps, *plēthunō*)

The idea is “to be increased, or richly allotted.” To be sure, these saints had these preceding things by position, certainly also in their conscious experience. Jude prays that a quality of these present possessions may increase, “*that they may abound in your experience.*” It will be seen that, relative to the Christ-life of the NT saint, these will qualitatively increase with maturity. The verb tense may suggest that Jude’s prayer is incident-specific.

1:3 *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you...* (Lit., “*While using all diligence to write...*”)

Jude’s salutation is taken as a straightforward way of expressing his genuine love for them. Some suggest that Jude was yet in preparation when the purpose of his discourse was urgently changed. However, grammatical analysis of the next clause indicates that Jude’s intended discourse was not altered, that it was always intended to be generally related to the *practical salvation experience* in daily living, and thus is seems to be.

...*about the common salvation* (*peri* with the genitive; *tēs koinēs sōtērias*, articular)

Occurring nowhere else in Scripture, perhaps generally equivalent to “*common faith*” (Tit 1:4), the expression is absolutely devoid of even the slightest inference that this salvation experience, “held in common” by Church saints everywhere, is inferior, unremarkable, or even ordinary. Jude’s reference is to the practical daily salvation experience of NT Christianity. It will be seen in the next verse that this is where the ungodly ones have focused their subversive energies.

Note: *Peri* with the genitive, *tēs koinēs*, indicates a general relationship to “the common salvation,” eliminating any supposed requirement that Jude’s subject necessarily represents a change in his original intent. Schafer, Vincent, Robertson accept NU reading, *hēmōn* here, thus “*our common salvation*”

...*it was needful for me to write unto you* (2aor act ind 1ps, *anagkēn eskon*; lit., “*necessity |I got|*”)

Context and the aorist verb combine Jude’s motive and its resultant necessity as a single act at a point in time past.

Note: Use of an epistolary aorist literally indicates that the necessity which compelled the letter will lie in the past by the occasion of its receipt

...*exhorting you that ye should earnestly contend* (pres mid infin,

epagōnidzomai)

With settled confidence in their existing disposition, Jude persuades his readers from a position of authority to literally *agonize* in strenuously defensive struggle. His language, in a compound form found only here in the NT, envisions a contest with all energies expended in the interest of prevailing. One authority suggests, metaphorically, a “fight, standing upon a thing which is assaulted..., which the adversary desires to take away..., a fight so as to defend it, and to retain it.” The present tense certainly suggests an ongoing duty in present reality (*Hiebert*).

Note: **1Ti 6:12** for a similar though **grammatically less intense** verb form, *agōnidzou*, pres mid imp 2ps

...for the faith

The **faith** (**articular**) references with particularity the “body of truth” contained in Scripture, especially here as it informs the faith-rest life of the grace believer. Notably, Jude’s message can only be heeded in concert with disciplined study of the Word. Not a single passage of Scripture excuses subordination of the study of the truth to pursuit of the understanding of cultic teaching, even for the ostensible purpose of refuting it. It will be seen in development of Jude’s discourse that defense of the faith has primary benefit for the saints. Paul’s instruction to Timothy has particular relevance here (**2Ti 2:15-16**; also **3:16-17**).

Note: There is a distinction to be made between *doctrine which is to be received as authoritative and believed* (***didaskalia***), and *doctrine which is to be received as authoritative, believed and then put into practice* (***didachē***). It is unlikely that Jude’s reference to “the faith” limits to the NT body of doctrine (***didachē***) in its technically restrictive Pauline sense

...once for all (***apax***)

“...what is of perpetual validity, not requiring repetition” (*Vine*). Entirely **adequate to denote singularity**, ***apax*** in this pointed context additionally **signals a finality**. Accordingly, “once, and for all.”

...delivered unto the saints (1aor pas ptc dat sing fem, ***paradidomai***)

With syntax which is awkward in English, Jude arranges **all modifiers in the clause between the noun and its article** thus delineating the intrinsic nature of the faith. Understanding of the clause’s full meaning compounds progressively upon analysis of its components. The word *delivered* (***paradidomai***) implies “a leaving [of] things in another’s hands by way of trust” (Manton), signaling duty. Such a transaction hardly admits of subsequent addition, review or interpretive revision. Any commodity thus delivered constitutes a treasure, deposited in trust. This particular treasure neither originated by the creative act of man (**2Pe 1:20-21**), nor continues to exist by his will. Indeed, for the grace-believer, this treasure constitutes the very

“...things which God has prepared for those who love Him;”

which things

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have ever entered into the heart of man...”

“...things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual /thoughts/ with spiritual /words|.” 1Co 2:9-13 selected

The saints to which “the faith” has been “once for all, delivered” are, of course, the sanctified ones (v 1). Jude’s designation for his readers was common in the early church (Act 9:13, 32, 41; 26:10; Rom 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25-26; 1Co 1:2; 6:1; Eph 1:1, 15; Php 4:21) and sets them in clear contrast to the libertines against whom he is about to warn his readers.

Note: Concerning finality of the sacred deposit of Scripture with the saints, related NT terms convey the idea of transmission of traditions, ordinances, precepts (1Co 11:2; 2Th 2:15; 1Ti 6:20; 2Pe 2:21). As to the solemnity of this trust and the sober vigilance enjoined, the Old Testament bears stark witness to the necessity for alert defenses even while advancing the work of God (Neh 4:16-18)

1:4 *For certain men have crept in unawares ... (2aor pas ind 3ppl, pareisdunō)*

The syntax hints prominently of the reason for the epistle’s origin. An ominous development, anticipated by Peter (2Pe 2:1, interestingly, Peter’s warning is against the heresies, not the “creeps!”) had apparently come to fruition in Jude’s day and continues unabated until the present (Paul prophesied a departure from sound doctrine; cf. 1Ti 4:1-3; 2Ti 3:1-5). Dangerous and covert infiltration of the very corporate testimony of Christ is a distinguishing characteristic of “this present evil age” (Gal 1:4; *ponēros*, “pervasive, malignant evil”), prophesied by Jesus Himself in Matthew 13:24-30 and 36-43, tares carefully situated among the wheat, so apparently indigenous that Christ privately explains it would endanger the wheat to uproot the tares. What a consequence for lack of vigilance (the only valid conclusion from Mat 13:25, “while men slept”)! Jude’s designation, “certain men,” distinguishes the perpetrators with an attitude of righteous contempt (cf 2Co 10:10-12; Gal 1:7); if he knows their identities he does not divulge them. The verb tense may hint at a particular occasion of this insidious encroachment, or may signal Jude’s collective regard for this alarming condition as a settled reality.

Note: Counterfeit Christianity continues to pose persistent threat to the Church of Jesus Christ, witness the cumulative warning of Scripture. The pastoral imposter seeks entrance through a “different way” (Joh 10:1); as in Paul’s day, “false brethren” (*pseudadelphos*) pursue secret advantage within the body by privileged access in order to subvert grace-living (Gal 2:3-5), as well as other Scriptural scenarios not always fully explained

(2Co 11:26); Satan himself is a master of deceit (2Co 11:14), similarly enabling his emissaries (2Co 11:13). Distinction between specifics of Peter's and Jude's warnings constitutes yet another proof against any theory of mere copying

...*before of old ordained* (perf pas ptc nom pl m, *prographō*)

The duration of Jude's implicit time interval is not clearly specified inasmuch as the term may signal antiquity or simply a time recently past (*palai*, "old" cf. 2Co 12:19; Mar 15:44; Heb 1:1). If recent, it almost certainly references Peter's warning (2Pe 2:1-3). It is more probable, because of Jude's frequent backward glance (overwhelming use of *palai* in Scripture), that this reference has a more broadly historical sweep (Mat 7:15; 13:24-25; Mar 13:22; Act 20:29-30), possibly even including Jude's allusion to an apocryphal *Book of Enoch* (cf vv 14-15). The verb *ordained* is poorly translated in the KJV and has no sense of *ordination*, *foreordination*. It means "before, having been written down" (Rom 15:4; Gal 3:1; Eph 3:3), and may signal a historical public indictment (without necessary inference of punishment or reprobation). It is more likely however, that Jude simply indicates that this development and its just consequence have been abundantly foretold in Scripture, perhaps dating back to the occasion of decree of God.

Note: It is not precisely the ungodliness of the men that has been decreed, but the judgment. Jude's source is "the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jud 17), not "the holy prophets" (2Pe 3:2), admittedly a minor point, though again significant in dispelling any suggestion of copying, or common sources

...to this *condemnation* (*krima*)

This is judicial act resting upon investigation – and, logically resulting in a verdict – perhaps with heightened emphasis upon an anticipated sentence of guilt (Mar 12:40; Luk 23:40; activity, as indicated with the *sis* ending, is not the emphasis here, but rather the result of such activity). Vv 5-7 likely provides necessary clues as to the time of this judgment.

...*ungodly men* (*asebēs*)

The term, in its various forms, occurs throughout Jude and designates a fundamental attitude, expressed in deeds and activity, of defiance and disregard for the Person of God (*Vine*), wholly devoid of all due reverence and dangerously unrestrained by appropriate awe. It is patently the opposite of godliness (*eusebeia*). On this there will be more to say as the study progresses to characteristically shameful deeds (v 15) and illicit desires (v 18) of these corrupt ones. Borrowing from the parable of the wheat and the tares (Mat 13:24-30, 36-43), "the seed of irreverence was already producing a crop of corruption" (*Hiebert*).

Note: *Asebeia* (noun, "ungodliness"), Rom. 1:18; 11:26; 2 Tim. 2:16; Tit. 2:12; Jd. 15, 18; *asebeō* (verb, "ungodly"), 2Pe 2:6; Jud 1:15; *asebēs* (adjective, "ungodly"), Rom. 4:5; 5:6; 1 Tim. 1:9; 1 Pet. 4:18; 2

Pet. 2:5; 3:7; Jd. 4, 15 (twice). For *eusebeia*, “godliness,” cf Acts 3:12; 1 Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. 3:5; Tit. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:3, 6, 7; 3:11

...turning the *grace* of our *God* (pres act ptc nom pl m, *metatithēmi*; *charis* and *Theou*, articular)

Far from grace in an abstract doctrinal sense, we are convinced the articular reference here is to Christ, the proffered grace provision of the Father,

“...a lamb without blemish and without spot”

“...Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree,”

“...the power” and “wisdom of God, ...made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;”

“...neither is there salvation in any other;”

These ungodly ones were deliberately **changing** (present tense, “to place differently”) the grace provision for victorious daily living. Here is unfettered view of the perversion for which Paul reproachfully warns the Galatian Christians (**Gal 1:6**), namely, perverting the freedom of NT *grace living* into license to self-indulgent, wanton excess. Paul’s alarm at the Galatian error indicates the susceptibility of immature, untaught or undiscerning Christians to follow this fleshly bent in varying degrees. The attributive relationship of “our God” to “grace” draws attention to the fact in contrast that the parade of sensual excess is categorically *not* of God and has *nothing whatever* to do with His grace.

Note: The idea in *metatithēmi* of *carrying, resulting in change* may have some limited equivalence in the immediate context to our English expression, “carrying to ridiculous extreme,” wherein the extreme is so different that it bears no similarity whatever to the original. While the text is not explicit and there is divergent opinion regarding the extent to which these ungodly ones may have limited intellectual or intuitive comprehension of grace, conservative Bible students overwhelmingly agree that their perverted exchange of grace for immoral opportunity is clear and deliberate. The verb tense enhances Jude’s *sense of it as present reality*, i.e., “they are presently perverting...,” and accordingly continue to threaten today

...into *lasciviousness* (*aselgeia*)

This term comprehensively designates sensuously evil, moral debauchery, usually emphasizing sexual indecency, and perversion. It is usually grouped in Scripture with other terms for sexual sin (**Rom 13:13; Gal 5:19**). Its use here seems heightened by a component of insolence and disdain for conventionally accepted constraints of decency, a finding most unbelievers even admit. Commentators are remarkably intense in effort to

adequately convey the comprehensiveness of this outrage, both in its open practice as well as its motive and consequence.

D. Edmond Hiebert writes,

“Emboldened by their perverse conception of grace, they did not attempt to conceal their sins but arrogantly flaunted them, shocking public decency. Their lasciviousness may have been motivated by an incipient Gnostic dualism in which separation of flesh and spirit allowed them to maintain that what they did with their bodies did not affect their inner [spirituality].”

Trench,

“...acknowledg|ing| no restraints, ...|daring| whatever |their| caprice and wanton petulance may suggest.”

Perhaps anticipating the obvious rebellion in illustrations which Jude will yet introduce, Wuest suggests that the characterization must ultimately also encompass a component of anarchy. It is outrage to public decency, combined with scornfully insolent suggestion that some perverted religious guise not only permits such behavior, but shockingly, actually encourages it. As astonishing as such a proposition may seem, Jude’s treatise gives answer to the perennially rhetorical question, “Can it get any worse?” In a word, *yes*.

Note: *Aselgeia*, Mar 7:22; Rom 13:13; 2Co 12:21; Gal 5:19; Eph 4:19; 1Pe 4:3; 2Pe 2:7, 18; Jud 1:4

...and denying (pres mid ptc nom pl m, *arneomai*)

In defiance of this glorious Person of the Godhead, these ungodly ones resemble those in Paul’s pastoral epistle to Titus, “[professing] *to know God, but denying Him in their works*” (Tit 1:16). With notable irony, their professed knowledge of Him is limited to the intellect (*oida*, “to perceive with the intellect,” distinct from the *ginoskō* knowledge delineated in experience), albeit incomplete, and woefully devoid of the personal reality experienced in intimate relationship. About these, Peter has already expressed (*with precisely the same verb form*) that they are **denying** the ownership prerogatives of the very One whose precious blood had secured their **purchase** (2Pe 2:1, *agoradzō*). As in Peter, Jude’s term likewise expresses a condition of *reality in present time*. The *middle voice verb* also inheres with a peculiar sense in which *the subject is also in some way recipient of the action of the verb*, perhaps by an element of intensely personal – even stubbornly reflexive, disobedient refusal. The meaning in context compounds into a most ominous, even frightening picture.

...the only Lord God (*monos, Despotēs Theos*, articular)

Here begins a comprehensive and interpretively demanding, attributive reference to a Person of the Godhead. Whatever lesser

interpretive conclusions are drawn from it, Jude’s language comprises a glorious refutation and rebuke of the ungodly ones’ pointedly insulting wickedness. Scholarly debate and ensuing commentary abound concerning the Divine Person in view here. For reasons summarized, this writer believes that Person is Christ.

- Personal identity is emphasized by the syntax (especially relevant to the nature of Jude’s discourse)
- Though usually a reference to the Father (**Luk 2:29; Act 4:24; Rev 6:10**), *Despotēs* is used elsewhere in similar context with reference to Christ (**2 Pe 2:1**; also cf. **Act 7:59**)
- Appositional arrangement of the terms “*Master*” and “*Lord*” with the singular article
- “*Our*” (next clause) enhances the singular determination uniting Jude with his readers in defense of the surpassing greatness of Christ’s Person, against the wanton insolence of the opposers of the truth
- Frequent use of *monos* (“alone, solitary,” sometimes in compound with emphasis upon singularity as in “one of a kind, unique”) with reference to the Father (**Joh 17:3; 1Ti 1:17**) does not preclude its reference here to the Son, inasmuch as it is the Son’s Person herein at issue (cf. *monogenēs*, **Joh 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn. 4:9**). It may also witness of Paul’s repudiation of “*gods many, and lords many*” in **1Co 8:5**
- “...*the grace of our God*” being perverted in the earlier clause may easily be a reference to “*the grace of Christ Jesus*” (cf. **2Ti 1:2**)
- If the relationship of absolute sovereign master is contemplated within the sphere in which these outrages manifest, this Person can only be Christ
- Grandeville Sharp adherents hold that this is one Person, the Son (see Smythe for comprehensive Grandeville Sharp rule)
- Additionally: *Despotēs* (necessary implication of absolute power and unquestioned authority) unmistakably correlates by sharp contrast with Jude’s own personal identification in **v. 1** as “*bondservant of Jesus Christ*,” *Kurios*, frequently used of the Father, also clearly designates Christ in His post resurrection prerogatives (NT references abound)

Note: There is broad consensus that NU’s omission of *Theos* would not significantly impact the cumulative weight of the instant analysis. On the reference of *Despotēs* to a Divine Person other than the Father, it is suggested that Simeon’s reference in **Luk 2:29**, whether comprehensively understood by him or not, is to the Spirit (cf. **vv. 25-26**), similarly the prayer in **Act 4:24** (cf. Stephen’s prayer explicitly to the Son, **Act 7:59**), these prayers occurring during transition, before the NT doctrine of prayer has had sufficient apostolic distribution

...and our Lord Jesus Christ (*hēmōn Kurios Iēsous Christos*)

Jude has been starkly pointed in description of the ungodly and their wanton debauchery. He is no less pointed in his comprehensive reference to Christ. It is additionally tempting, in the words of one commentator, to infer from Jude's emphasis that the ungodly ones also challenged Christ's deity in some theoretical "distortion of basic monotheism and Christology." The final clause completes a four-fold designation of Christ's Person and work: Master – sovereign God (*Despotēs Theos*), designating absolute sovereignty; Lord (*Kurios*), designating post resurrection prerogatives; Jesus identifies Him as Savior; Christ comprehensively establishes Him as God's Anointed. We are in agreement with Coder, Hiebert, Kelly, Lawlor, H. L. Schafer, R. Steeg, Wiersbe and numerous others that Jude's breathtaking statement in **v 4** is a stirring reference to the 2nd Person of the trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ, our sin bearer-substitute and risen Savior, High Priestly Intercessor and righteous Advocate, God's glorified Man in the third heaven, Head of the Church which is His Body, soon-coming King of the earth and worthy to judge. Amen.

1:5 Consideration of this verse fraught with textual variants begins with a suggested alternate reading.

"I determined to remind you though you knew (intellectually, or intuitively) all things that the Lord did when He saved, once, a people out of |the| land of Egypt, the second time He destroyed those not believing."

I will, therefore... (pres mid ind 1ps, *boulomai*)

The emphasis is explicitly upon Jude's *determination*.

*...though you knew all things (2perf act ptc acc p m, *oido*; *panta*, "all things," strengthened form)*

This knowledge is intellectual and / or intuitive, having been learned **in past time with continuing result**. It is qualified by the immediately successive clause as a reference to the things God accomplished "*when He saved, once, a people out of Egypt,*" its meaning having special emphasis for Jude's audience of Jewish Christians.

*...that the Lord |did|, **having saved, once,** |the| people out of the land of Egypt (1aor act ptc nom s m, *sōdzō*)*

God **once** (*apax*) saved Israel (lit., "*people,*" *anarthrous*) in the exodus **out of** (*ek*) Egypt, a historical fact intimately familiar to Jewish Christians, a fact fundamentally and comprehensively instructive to an understanding of God's dealing with humanity, both elect and non-elect. Thus begins historical backdrop for Jude's introduction of the judgment of God upon this peculiar form of arrogantly unrighteous insolence.

Note: The suggested alternate reading requires supply of a verb equivalent to "did," as indicated, and falls well within the legitimate critical analysis of the verse's numerous textual variants. Cf. analyses by D. Edmond

...afterward **destroyed** them that believed not (1aor act ind 3ps, **apollumi**)

The idea here is not annihilation or extinction but of total ruination with respect to intended use or purpose, ruin, “not of being but of well being” (*Vine*). Thus the term may include physical death but should never be used to teach the idea of annihilation and ultimate escape from judicial consequence, as some suggest concerning the ultimate end of all unrighteous. “Afterward” is quite literally, “the second time” (*Vine*), and is overwhelmingly so translated elsewhere. It is suggested that the judging *the second time* took place at Kadesh Barnea (**Num 14**). The stark impact of this in its historical context upon the minds of Jude’s Jewish Christian recipients is instructive and must not be overlooked or minimized.

Note: After involved analysis, broad consensus among conservatives favors a final rendering substantially as offered above

1:6 And |the| angels who **kept** not **their first estate**... (**aggelous**, anarthrous; 1aor act ptc acc pl m, **tēreō**; **tēn eautōn archēn**, lit., “their own principality”)

These were angels, as the context seems to clearly say, who did not esteem or value, so did not *carefully guard* their *God ordained area of rule*, or *principality* (KJV “first estate” is awkward at very least). This angelic rebellion took place at a time unspecified here, though apparently coincident with Satan’s fall. Its occurrence was certainly prior to **Gen 3**, from comparative analysis of such passages as **Isa 14:12-17** and **Eze 28:11-19**, likely between **Genesis 1:1** and **1:2**.

Note: Scripture is clear that spirit beings – both elect and non-elect, including Satan himself – have access to the third heaven at the behest of God and are compelled there by summons as it suits the Lord’s purpose (cf **Job 1:6-12**; **2:1-6**; **Dan 4:13-17**; **1Ki 22:19-22**; **2Ch 18:18-21**; **Rev 16:13-16**)

...**but left** (**alla**, strong adversative; **apoleipō**, 2aor act ptc acc pl m)

With strong contrast, Jude describes certain ones within the rebellious whole as disdaining their area of God ordained rule, resulting in *abandonment*.

...**their own habitation** (**to idion**, “uniquely individual;” **oikētērion**, lit., “manner of dwelling,” cf. **2Co 5:1-4**).

Rather than *their very own possession(s)* – we do not contemplate that these rebelling angels commandeered possession(s) or place as if to own them – the idea here is to something with which they became individually identified by *unique distinction*. This will be seen in **v 7** to particularly suit the developing context as, compounded by scorn for their *uniquely individual manner of dwelling*, they “went after strange flesh” (**heteros**, i.e., *flesh of a completely different kind*).

...he hath **reserved** in **everlasting** chains unto darkness (*tērēo*, perf act ind 3ps; *aidios*)

This is confinement (*closely guarding*) which happened at a point in time past with uninterrupted result (though qualified by the next clause). The darkness here is an unimaginably ominous, penetrating gloom (*zophos*; cf **Jud 13**; **2Pe 2:4, 17**).

Note: *Aidios* in Scripture, distinct from extra-biblical usage, is always limited by time continuum

...unto |the| **judg|ing|** of the great day (*krisis*, anarthrous)

Not “judgment, but “judging,” the *sis ending, anarthrous noun denoting activity* in the abstract with emphasis upon quality. While the day is not designated here, it is a likely reference to the Great White Throne, probably the very occasion contemplated by Paul in **1Co 6:3**.

1:7 *Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them...* (**Gen 19**; cf. **2Pe 2:6**)

This likely includes such cities of Scriptural reference as Admah and Zeboiim (**Deu 29:23**; **Hos 11:8**; Bela, or Zoar, was apparently spared at Lot’s request, **Gen 19:20-22**).

Note: With virtual absence of either significant textual variants or evidence of theological mischief, this verse bears stark witness to the wickedness of these ancient societies and draws heavily upon the history recorded in **Gen 6:1-5**. Cumulative Scriptural account of these cities hints at fascinating and instructive record of metropolitan centers approaching mythical proportion and legendary for literary and sociological reference, yet *without an existing trace of archaeological evidence!*

...*in like manner* |to these| (*ton homoion tropon |toutois|*)

Untranslated in the KJV, the *masculine pronoun* occurs here in the original without variants. By the rules of Greek grammar, in uncomplicated syntactical arrangement, *the pronoun here may only refer to the angels of v 6*. It is to the rebelling angels that Jude likens the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah, ...*and the cities about them!*

Note: Context will not permit that *toutois* looks forward to the evil men of **v 8**. While interpretive differences may abound, *grammatical rules of gender agreement* are quite restrictive here in what may be permitted in literal translation

...*giving themselves over to fornication* (*ekporneuō*, 1aor act ptc nom pl f)

In its usual NT form, it is the term most often translated fornication. In this compound, only here in the NT, its meaning suggests an outward disposition, literally, “*fornicating out*.” Some have suggested “*out and out surrender to*” extravagant sexual wantonness (from *Hiebert*), though taking sexual practice *outside* any conceivable manner of normalcy – so, outside its original design – may be closer (from *Schafer*).

...and going after strange flesh (2aor act ptc nom pl f, *aperchomai*; *heteros*, “other of a different kind”)

The verb has frequent occurrence in the NT as *go* or *come*. The evil activity is commonly taken to be homosexuality because of, lit., “different flesh,” i.e., *different kind*. While homosexuality was certainly evident in the record of **Gen 19**, there is no reason to limit the *different kind* of flesh to human flesh. Indeed, these cities have become historically notorious for bestiality and other like perversions.

Note: While secular tradition holds that bestiality and similar sexual perversion was prevalent in Sodom and Gomorrah, explicitly supportive Scriptural witness is wanting. It must be logically inferred, however, that early Scriptural prohibition against homosexuality and bestiality certainly witnesses its contemporaneous prevalence among the ungodly. Also notable, the fact that “*all flesh*” – with use of a term not restricted to human flesh (cp **Gen 7:21**) – was corrupted in God’s assessment (**Gen 6:12-13**). This fits well with the use of *ekporneuō* in **Jud 7**

...are set forth for an example (pres mid ind 3pl, *prokeimai*; *deigma*)

The middle voice verb literally suggests subject participation in the action. By exegetical inference, it is suggested that the idea is of an *exhibit*, lit., “set before”, with these cities serving as illustrative exhibits of the punishment awaiting this outrageous perversion. Fanciful conjecture that this exhibit continues to serve as uninterrupted visual witness before disembodied spirits is without Scriptural warrant. It is notable in Scripture that worse punishment awaits Capernaum and those that will yet accept the mark of the Beast than the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Note: Peter’s term for *example* is a strengthened form (**2Pe 2:6**). The race has been *set before* the church saint as *exhibit* in **Heb 12:1** as the joy was *set before* Christ in **Heb 12: 1-2**

...suffering |the| vengeance of eternal fire (*aiōnios*, *anarthrous*).

This becomes a historically instructive exhibit of eternal punishment in the lake of fire, existing outside the bounds of the present universe which will ultimately be destroyed. The *anarthrous* construction emphasizes a quality of vengeful punishment, as *distinct from duration*, an idea perhaps not immediately or easily grasped by many Christians.

1:8 |Yet| in like manner also... (*mentoi*, untranslated; *homoioōs*)

Similitude is again invoked as Jude further describes activity of these ungodly ones. *Yet*, i.e., “nevertheless” (**Joh 4:27; 20:5**).

...these filthy dreamers (pres mid ptc nom pl masc, *enupniadzō*)

The participle “is predicatively attached to the subject and thereby pertains to all three verbs” which follow (*Lenski*), i.e., the verbs each say a similar thing about their subject (supported also by the *men...de...de* construction, i.e., “closely connected...yet different.” *Hiebert*). The idea here is of one given over to self-indulgent dreaming, not in fitful sleep but

in deliberate, wakeful fantasy. While “*filthy*” is interpretive (KJV), immediate context suggests something perhaps on the order of erotic fantasy. The middle voice verb indicates action of the subject clearly having impact upon itself, described by Jude in the successive examples.

Note: *Enupniadzomai* (deponent form) occurs only here and in **Act 2:17**, where with the noun form it designates prophetic activity. While it seems strained to suggest that the unrighteous behavior in view here deceptively purports to necessarily involve prophetic activity as in **Acts** – neither Jude nor Peter have specifically warned about false prophets – a peculiar leadership charade of deceptively self indulgent behavior masquerading under the guise of grace should not be overlooked

...*defile* |the| *flesh* (pres act ind 3pl, *mianō*)

The verb’s action is continuous, viewed as a present tense reality, the idea being morally staining, “to pollute, contaminate” (*Vine*). *Flesh* is anarthrous singular, indicating not the flesh *per se*, but its quality. Cf **Joh 18:28; Tit 1:15; Heb 12:15**.

...*despise dominion* (pres act ind 3pl, *athetō; kuriotēs*, anarthrous sing)

These ungodly “*reject*,” or “*set aside*” dominion, or “*lordship*.” Malicious, lying assault upon reputation in the next phrase suggests that the lordship here may be authority, duly constituted by statute. Thus, the impudence of these ungodly ones knows no statutory constraint or conventions of decency. As with the verbs immediately preceding and following, the activity is viewed as continuous, present reality.

Note: Conservatives vary here as to what is designated by *lordship*. In two (**Eph 1:21; Col 1:16**) of the four NT occurrences (including **2Pe 2:10**), the reference is clearly to “angelic ranks” (*Hiebert*), “angelic orders” (*Mayor*). Kelly takes it here as a reference to “divine sovereignty.” Others take it as reference to ecclesiastical authorities, objecting that its singular form here and in **2Pe 2:10** cannot be a reference to angelic beings

...and *speak evil* of *dignities* (pres act ind 3pl, *blasphēmō; doxa*, anarthrous pl).

The evil behavior here is, quite literally, *blasphemy*, characterized by nearly every lexical authority as *calumny*, defined as follows:

1: *the act of uttering false charges or misrepresentations maliciously calculated to damage another’s reputation* 2: *a false charge or misrepresentation intended to blacken one’s reputation : slander* (*Webster’s Third New International, Unabridged*)

“*Dignities*” is overwhelmingly *glories* in its KJV occurrences in the NT, broadly, *reputations, opinions, favorable estimation* (*Vine*), and accordingly, the praise, honor and respect due to such. Shockingly devoid of moral constraint and openly contemptuous of authority, it is against the character or quality of *lordship* and *reputation* that these ungodly ones

rail, “*blaspheming glories*,” i.e., insolently slandering reputations with *deliberately malicious falsehood*. Small wonder indeed that they would impudently presume to deny the very ownership prerogative of Sovereign Deity (v 4).

Note: As with the previous clause, conservative opinion diverges as to whether the reference here is to esteemed civil or ecclesiastical authorities, or spirit beings, elect or otherwise. One commentator, holding that the “dignities” are elect spirit beings, notes instructive contrast between the arrogant insolence of mortals to holy angels in v 8, and the restraint of Michael the archangel in v 9 when facing Satan

1:9 Yet Michael, the archangel, when **contending** with the devil...
(pres mid ptc nom s masc, *diakrinō*)

With a mild adversative, *de*, contrast is introduced with circumstances surrounding the burial of Moses. In an account found only here in scripture, reference is made with a **present tense verb** to what may by its very nature be characterized by ongoing dispute between Michael the Archangel (*articular*) and Satan. The idea expressed by the verb is “to distinguish, decide, ...to separate oneself” (*Vine*), implying a process of reason.

Note: Satan’s disruptive method of choice involves appeal to *conclusions of the mind* (cf *noēma*, “devices,” 2Co 2:11; “mind(s)” 2Co 3:14; 4:4; 11:3; Php 4:7; “thought” 2Co 10:5). *Ma* ending denotes results of activity, hinting somehow at the archangel’s settled conclusion of mind

...he **disputed about** the body of Moses (*imperf mid ind 3ps*,
dialegomai; *peri* w/gen)

While the activity of the preceding clause is viewed in the present tense, **the action here is viewed as continuous in past time**, indicating “thinking different things with oneself,” then to dispute with others (*Vine*); “to argue a reason” (*Schafer*). Together with the preceding clause, a distinct difference of opinion is presented, complete with verbal argument, over the disposition of Moses’ body. The preposition indicates argument which may have ranged somewhat, yet within restrictive bounds of immediate relevance. This text offers interesting insight into the nature of historic angelic activity (**Rev 12:7-8**), as well as the brilliant subtlety of Satan’s effectively deceptive masquerade as an angel of light, **2Co 11:14**.

Note: Contrary to extra-biblical tradition, Jude gives the only Scriptural details apart from **Deu 34:5-6** concerning the burial of the body of Moses. In an account openly maligned for its reference to details not otherwise canonized – details which have regrettably become the grist of lore and legend – Jude alludes to an encounter between Michael the archangel and Satan. According to Clement of Alexandria, Origen and others, what is known about this encounter, apart from Scripture, comes from the apocryphal *Assumption of Moses*, fragments of which remain though none which confirm this account. It is widely accepted, nonetheless, that these Church fathers were sufficiently familiar with the complete work, contributing to the widespread early church view that Jude’s source was

this apocryphal account. Others consider that Jude’s source was reliable oral tradition, also prevalent in the early church. Still others assert direct revelation as Jude’s source. What may be confidently known, given the doctrine of inspiration, is that God buried Moses – whether with angelic instrumentality or not we are not told – the account having been written by Moses himself apparently before his death. Jude’s account compounds the revelation concerning Moses death. That spurious tradition has spawned apocryphal literary work need have no more significant impact upon Scripture than does the uninformed and ongoing conjecture of infidels and skeptics today. As for the reason(s) for dispute over Moses’ body, it is suggested that had it been possible to discover Moses’ burial place, Israel might well have made his sepulcher or accoutrements of interment objects of idolatry (cf **2Ki 18:4**)

...dared not bring against him a **railing accusation** (lit., “a **judging of blasphemy**”: **krisis**; pres act ind 3pl, **blasphēmeō**)

Michael “was not **bold (tolmaō)** to **impose (epipherō)** a judging of blasphemy.” Again, *blasphemy* here is *the act of uttering false charges or misrepresentations maliciously calculated to damage another’s reputation*. Its occurrence here has raised questions and doubtless also contributed to some confusion. In view of the basic meaning of the terms, it must be contemplated that Michael had opportunity to use his knowledge of Satan’s history to accurately impugn his character with epithets and invectives, and wisely chose not to. Neither was this select one of God’s “chief princes” (**Dan 10:13**) willing to usurp prerogatives of deity, as the successive clause will witness.

Note: This prudent angelic restraint is instructive for saints on many levels, inasmuch as there is not a syllable of Scriptural warrant for the popular contemporary trend of openly mounting blustering harangue of the Christian’s brilliant, powerful and dangerous adversary, nor for the misguided counsel that if Christians simply rebuke him, ostensibly “in the name of Jesus,” he will flee. Rather, church saints would do well to heed Scriptural counsel to humility, soberness, vigilance, and finally, resistance, with attendant warning that this rebellious created being is as dangerous as a ravening lion prowling for food, and bent on the ruin of saints (**1Pe 5:6-9**). Proper disposition for spiritual warfare is not found in a theology of naiveté but in the equipping of **Eph 6:10-18**

...**but said**, [The] **Lord rebuke thee** (strong adversative, **alla**; laor mid opt 3ps, **epitimaō**)

Michael’s pronouncement stands in strong contrast to what he *did not do*. Refusing to assume authority belonging to God, Michael literally said, “May one with the quality of Lord rebuke you, *for Himself!*” This bears remarkable similarity to the rebuke of Satan found in **Zec 3:2**, and employs a NT term for adjudging one upon whom honor has been positioned, hence, “rebuke.” Michael’s restraint stands in stark and final contrast to the ungodly ones whose wanton insolence is unbridled in the face of every respectable person or thing they encounter.

1:10 *But these **speak evil** of those things which they **know** not... (pres act ind 3pl, **blasphēmēō**; perf act ind 3pl, **oida**)*

Mild contrast is again used to characterize the subjects of Jude's warnings. Their "*speaking evil*" is blasphemy – *malicious slander with falsehood* – specifically, of things of which they have "*no intellectual knowledge*." The verb designates a knowledge which has come by intelligent perception, yet has no basis in personal experience. Things of which these ungodly ones are *intellectually ignorant*, they *maliciously slander with falsehood!*

Note: *Oida*, from the same root as *eidon*, "to see," is a perfect tense form with a present meaning, signifying, primarily, "to have seen or perceived"; hence, "to know, to have knowledge of" (*Vine*)

*...but what they know **naturally** (pres pass ind 3pl, **epistamai**; **phusikōs**,)*

This knowledge is a fixed understanding, without implying any content or quality of intellectual knowledge. The next term conveys the idea of "growing naturally," having been produced "by nature." Combined in this context, the idea becomes, "to understand instinctively." While viciously slandering out of intellectual wasteland, there is something which drives these ungodly ones, something they accept as if by instinct.

Note: Cp **2Pe 2:12** for related adjectival usage

*...as **brute beasts**, in those things **they corrupt themselves** (**alogos zōon**; pres mid ind 3pl, **phtheirō**)*

Simply, "as dull, unreasoning." Jude's term for beasts is a broad term for "living flesh," with *life* as the common denominator. The complex verb conveys the idea of "destroying by corrupting," worsening. It may be translated, "depraved," but must not be confused with depravity in the theological sense in which all of creation was blighted by the fall. In the present tense with the middle voice here, the idea that these ungodly ones literally debase themselves by their own animalistic instincts.

1:11 *Woe unto them!*

This is an unambiguous rendering of the clear warning in the original. This expression may be either an imprecatory prayer or a statement of what impends: "*Look out!*". Most concur with the latter.

*For they **have gone** in the way of Cain... (1aor pas ind 3pl, **poreuomai**)*

The Scofield reference notes adjacent this text and the account of Cain's sin in **Gen 4:1-7** are jointly instructive, as excerpted below.

Jud 1:11 - Cain

Cain (compare **Gen 4:1**) a type of the religious natural man, who believes in a God, and in "religion," but after his own will, and who rejects redemption by blood. Compelled as a teacher of religion to

explain atonement, the apostate teacher explains it away.

Gen 4:7 - sin

Or, sin-offering. In Hebrew the same word is used for "sin," and "sin-offering," thus emphasizing in a remarkable way the complete identification of the believer's sin with his sin offering (cf **Joh 3:14; 2Co 5:21**).

Here both meanings are brought together. "Sin lieth at the door," but so also "a sin-offering croucheth at the tent door." It is "where sin abounded" that "grace did much more abound" (**Rom 5:20**).

Abel's offering implies a previous instruction (cf **Gen 3:21**) for it was "by faith" (**Heb 11:4**) and faith is taking God at His word; so that Cain's unbloody offering was a refusal of the divine way. But Jehovah made a last appeal to Cain (**Gen 4:7**) even yet to bring the required offering.

Cain scornfully refused to view himself as God did (**Gen 4:5**) and disdained God's sacrificial remedy for his sin, with "eyes wide open," so to speak. This provides sharp backdrop for the recklessness of the ungodly in Jude's day.

...and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward (1aor pas ind 3pl, *ekcheō / ekchunō; planē; misthos*)

This is *reckless abandon* of the most ominous order, *headlong pursuit* against all supposed impediment, literally, for wages. This strong verb pictures, with a passive form, an unrestrained "pouring forth," variously translated "gush," "spill," "shed." It is the term used to describe the bloody carnage in the slaughter of the saints by the foes of God in **Rev 16:6**. Jude's example here is the absurdity of Balaam (**Num 22-24**), willing to rush to his own certain death but for the irony of refusal by the dumb jackass upon which he vented blind fury (**Num 22:22-32**). The *deceptive*, even *fraudulent* nature of the error only compounds the sin. Whether money, popularity, fame or applause, recompense is clearly anticipated (*Scofield*). Hellenized *ekcheō* is *ekchunō* (**Luk 22:20**).

Note: While there is legitimate suggestion of wandering in the term translated "error," it must never be forgotten that there is a *waywardness* to this wandering course, deliberate from its inception. On the *way*, *doctrine*, and *error* of Balaam, the *Scofield* notes are again helpful.

The "**error**" of Balaam was that, reasoning from natural morality and seeing the evil in Israel, he supposed a righteous God must curse them. He was blind to the higher morality of the Cross, through which God maintains and enforces the authority and awful sanctions of His law, so that He can be just and the justifier of a believing sinner. The "reward" of (**Jud 1:11**) may not be money, but popularity, or applause.

2Pe 2:15 - Balaam was the typical hireling prophet, anxious only to make a market of his gift. This is the "**way**" of Balaam.

Rev 2:14 The "**doctrine**" of Balaam was his teaching Balak to

corrupt the people who could not be cursed (**Num 31:15; Num 31:16; Num 22:5; Num 23:8**) by tempting them to marry women of Moab, defile their separation, and abandon their pilgrim character. It is that union with the world and the church which is spiritual unchastity (**Jam 4:4**). Pergamos had lost the pilgrim character and was "dwelling" (**Rev 2:13**) "where Satan's throne is," in the world (**Joh 12:31; Joh 14:30; Joh 16:11**)

...and *perished* in the *gainsaying* of Korah (2aor mid ind 3ppl, *apollumi; antilegō*)

Korah's sin was his *rebellious opposition* to Moses' authority, and subsequent usurpation of Moses' priestly office. Though frequently translated "destroy," the verb used here describes, not total annihilation, but *loss of well being*, or *ruin with respect to intended use*.

Note: Use of a futuristic aorist, middle voice here renders Jude's reference a prophetic foretelling of the ultimate ruin these ungodly ones have wrought in themselves. Their demise, having not yet occurred, was certain. For range of influence of rebellion on the ministry, cp **2Ti 3:1-9; 3 Joh 9-10**

1:12 *These are spots* in your love feasts, when they feast with you... (pres act ind 3ppl, *eimi; spilās*)

Redirecting attention to the ungodly ones with a demonstrative pronoun and present tense verb, Jude references the activity Paul decried at Corinth (**1Co 11:17-34**). Interpretive opinion diverges here, whether "spots," as in **2Pe 2:13**, or "rocks" (or, *hidden reefs*), distinct terms, each developing from similar roots. Early evidence favors "hidden rocks," with indication that later manuscripts may have been influenced by the Petrine passage. Notably, a submerged reef, partially hidden beneath the water may appear upon casual observation as a dark spot. Jude clearly characterizes these ungodly ones as imminently perilous to church life. Even more sinister is the impact this danger poses to believer-unity on the occasion of commemoration of the Lord's table. Some have suggested because of the presence of *sun* in compound with the verb for feed that these offenders held themselves apart in private feasting though this may unnecessarily strain the context.

Note: Consensus regarding the NT practice of the love feast has become imprecise. It is suggested that its original intent was to prepare the local body for observance of the Lord's table with a gathering for fellowship around a meal. Jude's absence of actual emphasis upon surreptitious entry into the church meetings alone may serve to alert to their entrance more broadly into other fellowship gatherings, as here with the love feast

...*feeding themselves* without fear; (pres act ptc nom pl m, *poimainō heautou*)

The KJV translation and syntax of *feeding without fear* can be improved. It is, literally, "to behave as a shepherd." (*Vine*). Together with the previous phrase, Jude's characterization is clearly of these ungodly ones "shepherding themselves without fear when they feast with you"

(Hiebert). While it is nowhere explicitly stated that these were pastors in Jude's day, that they enjoyed leadership recognition seems clear from the language. It is not difficult to imagine the conduct of such, gorging themselves sumptuously, literally, "nurturing themselves," at a meal designed to model the very intimately kindred spirit of *agape* love while glibly masquerading as shepherds.

Note: Biblical warnings against false shepherds (**Eze 34:2-8; Isa 56:11; Joh 10:12-13**). Also, of Christ, as the *Good Shepherd* (**Joh 10:11, 14**), the *Great Shepherd* (**Heb 13:20**), the *Chief Shepherd* (**1Pe 5:4**)

...clouds they are without water, carried about by winds;

These are clouds worthless for the purpose of rain production. Here, and in the successive clauses, Jude portrays the present tense activity of the offenders in metaphors fraught with "promise but no performance" (Hiebert).

Note: Recognition of normal and valid literary devices neither signals nor excuses abandonment of a literal method in translation or interpretation, nor ever controverts it.

metaphor – "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase denoting one kind of object or action is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them (as in *the ship plows the seas* or in *a volley of oaths*): an *implied comparison* (as in *a marble brow*) in contrast to the *explicit comparison* of the **simile** (as in *a brow white as marble*)." (Webster's Third New International, unabridged)

*...trees whose fruit withers, without fruit (**dendra phthinopōrinōs**)*

Once beautiful, inviting by appearance to be sure, the picture is of "autumnal trees," now seasonally denuded, leafless, barren and starkly worthless as to intended purpose.

*...twice **dead**, plucked up by the roots; (**dis**; 2aor act ptc nom pl n, **apothnēskō**)*

Jude's expression is not far from our own idiom, "dead as a doornail!" Leaving the **present tense verbs** of the previous metaphors, the whole view of this doubly dead condition with an **aorist tense verb** vividly transcends any metaphor in contemplating the certainty of spiritual death awaiting these ungodly ones following their own physical death. A familiar symbol of judgment (**Psa 52:5; Pro 2:22; Jer 1:10**), the uprooted condition enhances the grim nature of their end.

1:13 *Raging waves of the sea, **foaming out** their own shame; (**pres act ptc nom pl n, epaphridzō**)*

Restless, unrestrained and untamed, the **present tense** reality of the shame is literally rendered here in **the plural**. The language evokes imagery of reckless and persistent futility, leaving only refuse in its wake (cp **Isa 57:20**).

...wandering stars

Treatment of the **metaphor** in context surely suggests that these ungodly ones, as luminaries having arrested attention – perhaps as comets or errant shooting stars – disappear rapidly into distant darkness. Notably, luminaries in the heavens have long been inspiration, even symbols, for pagan worship.

...to whom is **reserved** the blackness of darkness **forever**. (perf pas ind 3ps, **tēreō**; **eis aiōnios**)

It must be noticed that a final disposition of judgment is, literally, *having been carefully guarded* for these offending ones. Appropriately, this is the same term Jude has used to describe the effective keeping power of God (**vv3, 6**). With the literal phrase, “the gloom of |the| darkness,” Jude characterizes their final judgment with terms expressing the ominous foreboding often associated with death (**zophos**), and the darkness (**skotos**) caused by “the lack of the presence of the manifestation of the life of God” (*Schafer*). Without dismissing any connotation of pain, this second term likely describes, from a spiritual point of view, the torment of sheol and subsequently the lake of fire. Another noted Bible student describes this condition as “soul chilling terror” (*Vander Lugt*). The comprehensive picture is unimaginably horrifying. Though this punishment has not yet been executed, its certainty is a settled matter. “Forever” is literally, “into |an| age” (**anarthrous**), looking to fulfillment in a successive age.

Note: “Darkness” is consistently associated in the NT with the absence of the manifestation of the life of God (*Schafer*), hence here, the associated consequential suffering

1:14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam...*

God translated Enoch without undergoing physical death. Jude’s is the second of only two references to Enoch in the NT (**Heb 11:5-6**; cf **Gen 5:19-24**).

...**prophesied** of **these**, saying, (1aor act ind 3ps, **prophēteuō**; **toutois**, near demonstrative)

Positioned emphatically in the original, it’s translation confounds English syntactical arrangement, so the resultant English rendering. While Jude’s attribution is similar to a passage in a noncanonical book bearing godly Enoch’s name, it neither implies an assertion of canonical authority for this apocryphal work, nor even begins to establish it with any certainty as Jude’s source. Since earliest scholarly evidence of the Book of Enoch’s contents follow Jude’s writing by many centuries, it is even likely that Jude may have been the source for this anonymous author. Further, conservative grammarians concur that Jude cites Enoch’s prophecy, not the record of it: “*Jude quotes Enoch, not some book*” (*Hiebert*, citing *Lenski*). If God had revealed truth to Enoch which was then orally transmitted, becoming the source for Jude, the instant text would require no improvement or explanation, with or without the apocryphal Book of Enoch. As to the legitimacy of regarding Enoch as a prophet, numerous

conservative Bible students (*Macknight, Jamieson, Coder, Fairbairn, Fausset*) hold that Enoch's son Methuselah's name literally means, "he dies and it is sent," or "dying, it cometh" (*Schafer*). The Genesis account clearly marks Methuselah's birth as a beginning point in Enoch's walk with God (**Gen 5:21-22**). He was the exception to the rule among his descendents however, some suggesting that the song of Lamech (**Gen 4:23-24**), an artfully cynical celebration of unbridled revenge and murder (*A. C. Gaebelain; also, Liberty Bible Commentary*), may have been composed in mocking contrast to Enoch's righteous life. OT chronology establishes that Enoch's son Methuselah, after notably living nine hundred sixty nine years, died in the year of the Noahic flood. No serious student of Scripture will easily dismiss as mere coincidence the fact that Methuselah's name signaled precisely the globally catastrophic event with which Noah is universally associated. Enoch was indeed a prophet of God, and mouthpiece for revelation of judgment to come.

Note: While some may object to Enoch's credentials as a genuine prophet inasmuch as there is no Biblical record of his original prophecy, it may be responded that "there is no absurdity in supposing that a true prophecy, though unrecorded, might be handed down by tradition" (*Barnes; also, H. Laverne Schafer*). Scripture calls Abel a prophet though no canonical record of any original prophecy by Abel exists (**Luk 11:49-51; cp. Gen 4:3-7**)

...Behold, |the| Lord **cometh** with ten thousands of His saints,
(2aor act ind 3ps, **erchomai; hagian muriasin**)

That Enoch prophesied the Lord's coming is clear. Which advent is less apparent. The aorist tense verb designates point action, usually in past time, though it does sometimes function as a futuristic aorist, thus "the Lord cometh," i.e., "the Lord came." As previously noted, a clue to the occasion prophesied will be found in the meaning of the name given to Enoch's son Methuselah, "dying, it cometh." Careful analysis of the Genesis chronology marks the death of Methuselah as coincident with the year of the Noahic flood, giving strong implication that Enoch prophesied of the visitation of God accompanied by elect spirit beings in the catastrophic judging of the flood. Secondary fulfillment – sometimes termed double reference, or compenetration – of this prophecy certainly involves the return of Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation (**Rev 19:11-21; Mat 24:29-31**). "Ten thousand...saints" is literally, "holy myriads" – the plural frequently indicating an innumerable host – and can as easily be a reference to hosts of redeemed ones, though these are never expressly said to participate in executing judgment, while angels are so designated in Scripture. Lord is **anarthrous**, giving emphasis to His Lordly quality.

Note: Rendering the verb as a futuristic aorist rests soundly upon the explicitly prophetic nature of Enoch's announcement

1:15 To execute judgment upon all, (1aor act infin, *poieō*; *krisis*)

Additional evidence that Enoch's primary prophetic vision was the flood is found in Jude's term for judging, *krisis*, a sis ending noun indicating an abstract idea of a quality or an activity, not a specific incidence or occasion of judgment (*krima*, the result of an act) as with the judgment of the Great White Throne. The idea may literally be rendered "to do judging" (occurring elsewhere in this peculiar compound only in **Joh 5:27**), expressly, "against all" (*kata* w/genitive). Four times in the immediately successive clauses the scope of this judging activity is stressed with the word "all" (*pas*), literally, "every kind or variety, all inclusive." "Judging" here denotes a deliberate separating, with resultant decision, and has frequent use as a forensic term. Compounded with a term signifying "[adoption| of a way of expressing thoughts and feelings by an act" (from *Vine*), the result becomes one of a verdict and its execution by the Lord Jesus. Indeed, "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (**Psa 34:16**).

Note: All (*pas*) Adjective, STR #3956, *pas*, radically means "all." **Used without the article it means "every," every kind or variety.** So the RV marg. in **Eph 2:21**, "every building," and the text in **Eph 3:15**, "every family," and the RV marg. of **Act 2:36**, "every house;" or it may signify "the highest degree," the maximum of what is referred to, as, "with all boldness" **Act 4:29**. Before proper names of countries, cities and nations, and before collective terms, like "Israel," it signifies either "all" or "the whole," e.g., **Mat 2:3**; **Act 2:36**. Used with the article, it means the whole of one object. **In the plural it signifies "the totality of the persons or things referred to." Used without a noun it virtually becomes a pronoun, meaning "everyone" or "anyone."** In the plural with a noun it means "all." One form of the neuter plural (*panta*) signifies "wholly, together, in all ways, in all things," **Act 20:35**; **1Co 9:25**. The neuter plural without the article signifies "all things severally," e.g., **Joh 1:3**; **1Co 2:10**; preceded by the article it denotes "all things," as constituting a whole, e.g., **Rom 11:36**; **1Co 8:6**; **Eph 3:9**. See EVERY, Note (1), WHOLE. (*Vines*)

...and to **convict** all that are ungodly among them (1aor act infin, *elenkō*; *asebeia*, articular)

Again the **futuristic aorist** is invoked, this time to prophetically announce conviction of the ungodly. Far more than simply bringing a charge, this term involves *effectively convincing the mind of a reality*, substantiating guilt beyond all ground of appeal. It is Christ's prophetic term in **Joh 16:8-11** announcing the Holy Spirit's absolutely effective future ministry of convincing the world of the reality of sin, righteousness and judgment. "All" in this clause is **articular**.

...of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, (*peri*, w/genitive; 1aor act ind 3ppl, *asebeō*)

There is no smooth English translation here. The **prepositional phrase** "of all" hints that the judicial review **takes in everything generally**

relative, not simply isolated specifics. The verb tense indicates that the *ungodly commission* of these *ungodly deeds* is viewed, from a judicial standpoint, in its entirety or as a whole. This is a summary indictment, and it is effective. With Spirit governed precision, the prophecy removes any doubt that the shocking commission of these *ungodly deeds* is itself *ungodly*. The grammar also clearly indicates a peculiar ownership, “their very own” (possessive pronoun, *autōn*). Enoch’s and Jude’s prophecies concur regarding the character of humanity before sin was imputed under law. It was consummately ungodly.

...and of all [their] hard speeches (*peri*, w/genitive; *sklēros*, articular)

This again includes all diatribe generally relative, uttered with defiant impunity against the Lord, Christ the Judge. Never complimentary, the term for hard here is used of the ferocity of winds (Jas 3:4), also descriptive of harsh temperament (Mat 25:24) or circumstances (Act 9:5; 26:14). Interestingly, the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* makes no mention of judicial condemnation for “harsh sayings” attributed to these ungodly ones, but does refer to “saying hard things about his glory” (*Hiebert*).

...which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. (1aor act ind 3ppl, *laleō*; *kata*, w/genitive)

“Ungodly sinners” is *anarthrous*, emphasizing their ungodly quality or characteristics. Interesting placement of the adjectival modifier at the end of the sentence in the original has the rough grammatical equivalent of punctuating this verse with an exclamation point. While a minor textual variant involving the verb suggests that the activity encompassed by the harsh speech (present tense) may be an ongoing present reality, Enoch’s prophecy concerning the flood makes the aorist tense reading here more likely. The prepositional phrase (*kata* w/genitive) conveys the idea of *moving away from a standard*, hence, “against.”

Note: Based upon careful exegesis, it must be posited that though Enoch’s prophecy has in immediate view the ungodly of his own day, the “hard speeches” of this verse can only be a reference to the ungodly of Jude’s day, repudiating Christ, the Despot-God of v4, inasmuch as here they are called sinners, i.e., ones to whom sin is imputed *after* the law had been given

1:16 These are *murmurers*, complainers... (*gonggustēs*, *mempsimoiros*)

Jude’s terms are plain and unmysterious, the first an onomatopoeic word for mutter or grumble (Eng., “gong”), the second a compound (found in the NT only here) composed of a term for “finding fault” and a term for “lot.” The present tense verb provides additional indication that he has left Enoch’s prophecy and turned his attention again to the contemporary threat. Jude characterizes these ungodly ones as insolent grumblers who willingly blame God, not only for their circumstances, but presumably also for all constraints imposed through societal conventions of morality.

...*walking after their own lusts*; (pres mid ptc nom pl m, *poreuomai*; *epithumia*, articular)

Rather than walking in the normal sense, this is a “deliberate course.” Frequently signifying a planned journey, here it describes a deliberate course of conduct, literally according to their own specific lusts, or strong desires. The personal significance of their motivating desires is enhanced by combination of the *middle voice verb* and a *possessive pronoun*. Peter gave similar warning (*2Pe 3:3*), also reminding the saints of their own contrasting previous lifestyle (*1Pe 4:3*).

and their mouth speaketh great swelling words... (pres act ind 3ps, *laleō*; *huperogkos*)

Jude description employs an adjective having the force of a noun in its use, only here and in *2Pe 2:18*. Descriptive of “excessive weight or size” (*Vines*), the term evokes comparison with the contemporary English idiom, “big mouth,” or “loud mouth.” In a manner somewhat similar to James (*Jas 3:5-10*), Jude reproaches the mouth, though the offense is not the mouth but the words issuing from it. Notably, these who disdain any and all submission to God exalt also themselves and others with pompous self aggrandizement and empty flattery.

Note: Jude’s term for “great swelling words” is the same as that found in the Septuagint, *Dan 11:36*, of the Antichrist’s outrageous utterances against God. This rebellious character is in view in *Psa 12:4*, as well as in numerous other passages

...*having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage* (pres act ptc nom pl m, *thaumadzō*; *ōpheleia charin*)

Driven by their own strong desires, these ungodly ones also crave the limelight. Keenly aware of the attention their brash utterances attract, they are overweening – literally, “marveling at faces” – willing to exploit attractive appearances for their own advantage. Whether extolling themselves or others, in pursuit of prestigious notice and approval, their goal is their own gain.

Note: A “Hebraism denoting a flattering admiration of persons” (*Hiebert*) suggests to some that Jude may have in mind a propensity to impress, for advantage. Whether this is the meaning, or simply a shameless willingness to exploit one’s attractive appearance, selfishly personal gain is the end goal

1:17 *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before...* (1aor pas imp 2ppl, *mimnēskō*; *rhēma*; perf pas ptc gen pl m, *prolegō*)

With a grammatical shift in emphasis and an *imperative*, Jude addresses his readers as “beloved ones,” reminding them of previous admonition. From his careful choice of terms in the original, there can be no doubt here that Jude’s collective reference is to *previously spoken verbal utterances* (*Gal 5:21*; *1Th 3:4*). This substantially dispels any definitive notion that Jude must have had a Petrine epistle in mind

inasmuch as he appeals, not to something previously written but to *verbal utterances* (*rhēma*), *previously spoken* (*prolegō*). This peculiar wording also strongly suggests that whether or not Jude had read **2 Peter** – it is likely he had – his references here and in the following clause make clear that the material he cites was available from numerous apostolic sources, having been delivered orally.

...by the *apostles* of our Lord Jesus Christ; (*apostolos*, plural)

Strengthening the preceding affirmation, Jude reminds his readers of numerous apostolic references to the dangers of which he now warns. This need not surprise, having contemporary parallel in Bible conferences around such themes such as eschatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, etc., wherein numerous relevant passages of Scripture may be referenced in common by many speakers without speculation that every sermon was literally copied from one common source. In addition to undoubtedly having been regularly featured in apostolic preaching, similar warnings are also manifestly conveyed in numerous NT passages (**Act 20:28-32; 1Ti 4:1-3; 2Ti 3:1-5; 2Pe 2:1-3; 1Jo 2:18; 4:1-3**). Jude has now effectively combined prophetic warning from ancient days (**vv14-15**) with more recent apostolic warning in an effort to prevent a dangerous spiritual apathy. In so doing, he affirms the consistency and continuity of Scripture.

Note: While some may suggest that reference to extra-biblical oral sources necessarily indicates a lack of confidence in the written revelation, conservative scholars correctly insist it does precisely the opposite. Church history indicates that in a time during which the authenticity of Scriptural amanuenses was not yet confirmed, the practice of comparing for accuracy and consistency was common even among students of the apostles, ultimately serving eventual establishment of the canon

1:18 How *they told you* there should be mockers in the last time...

(imperf act ind 3ppl, *legō*; fut mid ind 3ppl, *eimi*)

Placing himself within the context of the earlier apostolic warnings, Jude continues his reminder expressing reality with **continuous action in past time**, as if to say (combined here with Jude's next phrase),

*“Remember? Remember how **they were saying** there would be mockers in [the] last time, deliberately pursuing their own lusts of ungodliness?”*

His peculiar wording here strongly suggests that prophetic warnings about the future had already become a recognizable feature of apostolic reaching and teaching (*Hiebert*), also clearly indicating that at least some among his readers had themselves been directly taught by the apostles. Again, the characterization in his warning is of ones who disdainfully exchange the truth regarding grace for daily living, for sexual wantonness.

...who *should walk* after their own **ungodly lusts**. (pres mid ptc nom pl m, *poreuomai*; *asebeia epithumia*)

Jude's complete statement in these clauses is categorically affirmative of the statement in **v16**, strengthened with the observation here that their strong desires are according to the specific brand of ungodliness (**articular**) against which Jude has warned from the outset.

Note: Opinion divides over Jude's indirect statement here, introduced by **hoti** in the original (TR, UBS GNT, 3rd ed., Hodges and Farstad, M) and formulated in Jude's own words, i.e., "...that they were saying to you that in the last time there shall be mockers..." If **hoti** is omitted (Westcott and Hort, Souter, Nestle – Aland, 24th ed., USB GNT, 1st ed., and Tasker), the statement becomes direct, i.e., "In the last time there shall be mockers..." (from *Hiebert*), and clearly already had apostolic force before its inclusion in Jude's epistle

1:19 *These are they who separate themselves ...* (pres act ptc nom pl m, **apodioridzō**)

The KJV is confusing here. Jude characterizes the ungodly ones as those, literally "making boundaries which cause separation," or division within the fellowship. This is not technically schismatic (**schisma**), "division by rending apart." Rather, it is a peculiar separation by "marking off limits" ("to mark off," *apo*, "from," *dia*, "asunder," *horizo*, "to limit," hence denotes metaphorically to make "separations." *Vines*). It is never explicitly stated that these ungodly ones separate themselves, only that they make bounds of separation. It will be seen in the following verse that this harsh reality poses as much danger to the fellowship as schismatic divisions.

*...sensual, **having** not the spirit.* (**psukikos**; pres act ptc nom pl m, **echō**)

These are "soulish," having their decisions and actions driven by emotion and temporal satisfaction of the senses, with no evident involvement of the rational human spirit, much less the renewedness of mind belonging to the regenerated grace-believer. Far from implying that these ungodly ones are devoid of spirit – for they certainly possess human rationale (**1Co 2:11**) – their activity here satisfies their soulish bent, i.e., satisfaction of the senses. Small wonder Jude's explicit reference in **v 10**, to brute beasts, corrupting themselves in the things they intuitively know, by nature.

1:20 *But ye, beloved, **building up yourselves** on your **most holy faith**...* (pres act ptc nom pl m, **epoikodomeō**; **eautous**; **tē hagiōtatē humōn pistei**, articular)

Shifting emphasis with an **adversative** – "But you, on the other hand" – Jude once again addresses his readers as beloved ones (**vv 3, 17**), appealing for individual, personal responsibility. Far from evangelistic growth, Jude's instruction designates distinctly individual activity, i.e., "each one, yourselves" (**heautous**, instead of **allelous**, "one another"), in a process of spiritual maturity. The **verb – first of three participles – indicates continuous action in present time**, implying "building upon" an

existing foundation. Jude’s counsel now stands in contrast to his preceding warning against destructive error. The faith in view is certainly that of **v3**, truly superlative (*tē hagiōtatē*, only here in the NT) and distinct “because of its origin and transmission” (*Hiebert*). Jude enjoins that his readers know what they are talking about in contending for the faith, and why!

Note: While some suggest instrumental force (*Lenski*), i.e., “by means of your most holy faith,” this mutes the normal sense of *epi* in compound, generally denoting “upon something” or “someone” (*Huther*), additionally taking “faith” to mean “trust in Christ and adhesion to His doctrine,” rendering the designation *most holy* distinctly awkward. Accordingly, it is best to view Jude’s reference to the foundation upon which the Christian life is founded (from *Kelly, Schafer, Hiebert* and others). Cp. also, **1Co 3:10-11; Eph 2:19-20**

...*praying in the Holy Spirit*, (pres mid ptc nom pl m, *proseuchomai*)

Again, while the grammar does support *instrumental* force here, “by praying,” it is more consistent with the context to take Jude’s reference as *temporal*, i.e., “while praying by the Holy Spirit.” While the term here can generally encompass all forms of prayer, its fundamental meaning emphasizes a worshipfully reverent attitude of Spirit-directed prayer to the Father.

1:21 *Keep yourselves in the love of God...* (1aor act imp 2 p pl, *tēreō; heautous*)

This is, emphatically, not an imperative that the Christian must keep himself so disposed that God can love him, for the Father’s love will never cease, diminish or be abated in the slightest measure. Failure to grasp this produces interpretive error, illustrated as follows:

“To keep oneself in God’s love is to stay where God can love us as His children and can shower upon us all the gifts of love that He has for us who are His children. God’s love cannot bestow the saving gifts upon those who spurn His love. He can and does bestow them upon true believers who are His children, hungry for these gifts... pray for them... use His word of truth... let the Holy Spirit lead and guide...” (from *Lenski*)

Explicit Scriptural proofs abound that *agapē* love contemplates no recompense or reward, thus the Father’s ceaseless love for the saint cannot be variously conditioned and will not change, witness Jude’s reference to his readers as beloved ones **vv3, 17, 20**. Accordingly, the view that Jude enjoins his readers to continue in the sphere of love toward the Father – a view equally supported by the grammar (*objective genitive*) – is the recommended interpretation here. Note again the emphasis upon individual involvement with the reflexive pronoun, *heautous*. This instruction bears most poignantly upon his readers’ ability to “earnestly

contend for the faith” (v3) in the midst of a seductive influence to sexual wantonness (v4) in the guise of grace-liberty.

Note: Cp perf pass ptc, *agapaē*, “having been loved,” Eph 1:6; 1Th 1:4; 2Th 2:13

...*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ* (pres mid ptc nom pl m, *prosdechomai*)

“Looking for” is literally, “expecting to welcome” (cp. Tit 2:13). Mercy is the divine pity of God upon the creature because of the consequence of sin. While mercy’s divine origin is normatively the Father, the NT makes reference to Christ as *intermediate source* of mercy toward the saints (1Ti 1:2; 2Ti 1:2), so here, “mercy *from* our Lord Jesus Christ.

...*unto eternal life.* (*eis zōēn aiōnion*)

Interpretive consensus diverges here, whether “keep yourselves... unto life eternal” (strained, though grammatically plausible) or, “looking for mercy... unto life eternal.” While the second rendering enjoys majority consensus, it is not without difficulties inasmuch as it suggests to some a suspended certainty concerning the ultimate outcome of salvation, illustrated in the following interpretive error.

“...*expecting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for life eternal. It is the mercy that Christ will grant us at the last day, in the final judgment...*” (from Lenski)

The error of the preceding commentary – reminiscent of Arminian error – can only suggest that salvation is an unfinished accomplishment, that its outcome is uncertain, awaiting some final disposition which is as yet unsettled. This is foreign to every Scripture passage affirming the sovereignty of God in elective grace and the sufficiency of the finished work of Christ in *propitiation* (Rom 3:25; 1Jo 2:2), *redemption* (Mat 13:44-46; Rom 3:24) and *reconciliation* (Rom 5:10; 2Co 5:18-19). Thus, we view Jude’s reference as an affirmation that mercy may be welcomed expectantly by the NT saint *because of* life eternal, which life is “in His Son.”

“*expecting to welcome the mercy from our Lord Jesus Christ because of life eternal.*”

This involves a less common, albeit wholly legitimate, rendering of *eis*.

1:22 *And of some have compassion, making a difference:* (pres act imper 2 p pl, *elēō*; pres mid ptc acc pl m, *diakrinō*)

This verse introduces a series of statements (vv22-23) much disputed in the original, not with respect to their authenticity, but to the precise reading. The compassion here is literally an attitude of mercy – divine pity for the consequence of sin – though no directly helpful activity

of aid is ever explicitly stated or even implied. If the **accusative participle**, *diakrinomenous*, is translated “the ones doubting,” the preferred reading of **v 22** becomes,

“And, on the one hand, **have mercy to those doubting**.”

Mercy is an altogether appropriate response to confused ones who are wavering indecisively. It must be implied by Jude’s very writing that some to whom he writes are in particular need of this warning, perhaps by reason of the very wavering referenced here! This accords with various accepted readings, including **NU**, and commentators such as Hiebert, Schafer, Wiersbe, as well as *The Liberty Bible Commentary* and numerous others.

Note: *Diakrinō*, “to separate wholly,” “to distinguish, decide, differ,” i.e., “to make distinction” (Alford and Lenski take that to be the meaning here), instead becomes “to waver, doubt, stagger” when occurring in the **middle** (Hiebert) or **passive** in the NT; cp. **Mat 21:21; Mar 11:23; Rom 4:20; 14:23; Jam 1:6** (from Schafer, Hiebert, Vine, others). Some have further complicated existing textual difficulties by insisting that a compassionate attitude of pity must also then necessarily involve an explicit duty to act urgently, as if one might literally snatch unredeemed ones out of judgment (**v 23**). This notion, while apparently heroic, is in fact misbegotten, controverting numerous Scriptural truths and encouraging untenable interpretive extremes

1:23 *And others save ...* (pres act imper 2ppl, *sōdzō*)

The Greek term translated *save* in the NT means *deliver*. For innumerable Scriptural reasons, Jude’s exhortation here cannot imply that saints possess inherent ability to effect the *spiritual salvation* of any. Far from suggesting that anyone can literally be snatched *out of hell*, the imperative to “save,” compounded in context with the **participial modifier** in the following clause, “snatching them out of fire,” enjoins action with the goal of rescuing some from the *potential* of eternal punishment in hell (**anarthrous**). This imperative contemplates the activity of a second group separate from the “doubting” ones, **v 22**, a group about whom Jude does not elaborate except to conclude that they are in imminent peril. It must be inferred that these are unsaved inasmuch as they face real prospect of eternal fire.

...by snatching them out of |the| fire (pres act ptc nom pl m, *harpadzō; ek pur, anarthrous*)

“Snatching” (“pulling,” in KJV), is literally, “to snatch, or catch away suddenly, with force” (cp. **Mat 11:12; 13:19; Joh 6:15; 10:12, 28, 29; Act 8:39; 23:10; 2Co 12:2, 4; 1Th. 4:17; Rev 12:5**). That a saint may be instrumental in warning such a one from the ultimate and irremediable consequence of his blatant sinful condition is wholly consistent with a merciful God. The picture of proverbially snatching away from the brink has precedence in **Amos 4:11** and **Zechariah 3:1-2**, and serves to remind

that it is exclusively God’s province to save, and at the final moment, as it pleases Him. Praise Him for His mercy and His grace.

Note: *Ek* here with the **anarthrous noun** conveys a temporal idea, so, “snatching them from potential fire”

...|*moreover to some*| *show mercy in fear* (***en phobō***)

Three groups in **vv 22-23** are differentiated with Jude’s familiar ***men..., de..., de*** sequence. Mercy is enjoined for this third group also, this time “with fear.” Caution is required lest the caring saint himself be imperiled. Jude makes no pretense that any among this third group will be saved. However, as with those potentially snatched from the prospect of eternal punishment, God will save as it pleases Him to do so.

Note: The textual variants in **vv 22-23** present unique interpretive difficulty inasmuch as the level of agreement among five prominent readings is unusually low. Because of textual variants, it is difficult to ascertain with certainty what is modified by the prepositional phrase, “with fear,” whether “have mercy... with fear” (**v 22**), “save with fear” (**v 23**), or “show mercy with fear” to yet a third group (**v 23**). The reading commended here preserves Jude’s propensity for triplets and has support from Schafer and Hiebert, among others

...|*while*| *hating* also ***the garment*** (**pres act ptc nom pl m, *miseō; ton chitōna***)

The garment in Jude’s pointed metaphor is the intimate personal undergarment, worn under clothing against the skin. “Hating” – likely a **temporal participle**, so “while hating” – employs the lesser Greek term for hatred and is notably here directed impersonally, i.e., at the evident accoutrements of ruin produced by the *lascivious intimacy* which the *ungodly ones* are promoting.

...*spotted from the flesh*. (**perf pas ptc acc s m, *spiloō; apo tēs sarkos***, **articular**)

It is also notably ironic that the stain despoiling the garment is unseen, out of view under the outer clothing. As ever, shamefulness flourishes where illuminating scrutiny is absent (**Joh 3:19**). The contaminating influence here is really the enemy within, the *sin nature* (“the flesh,” **articular**). In the summarizing words of noted Bible teacher Charles Erdman, Jude has given wise guidance on “*how to meet impiety and apostasy; not with surprise...; not with inactivity...; not with indifference...*”

Note: The *sin nature* is the inherent and controlling propensity to evil resident in the human nature of every Adamic person (**Romans 7:17, 20**, “the sin that dwells in me;” **23**, “the law of sin which is in my members;” **18**, “that is, in my flesh”), causing the individual to manifest its quality and consequent activity even against his own determination and desires (**Rom 7:17, 20, 22**). Jude affirms, with the overwhelming weight of other Scripture, that the contamination of the sin nature is permanent (**perfect passive participle, *spiloō***)

1:24 Now *unto Him* that is able... (*Tō*, lit., “to the One,” articular; pres ptc dat s m, *dunamai*)

This does not imply temporal transition, but is rather the language of grand summation. Against a broad backdrop of God’s *inherent power* (*able* to save, **Heb 7:25**; *able* to establish, **Rom 16:25**; *able* to assist, **Heb 2:18**; *able* to subdue, **Php 3:21**), Jude focuses on His sovereign *ability* here to do absolutely all He desires with respect to the safekeeping of the saints.

Note: *Dunamis* has broad Scriptural use as the term for God’s power, inherent within Himself

...to *keep* you from stumbling (1aor act infin, *phulassō*; acc pl m, *aptaistos*)

For *keep*, Jude uses a term here different from earlier verses (*tēreō*, **vv 1, 21**). The term designates a watchful vigilance (**2Th 3:3**; **1Ti 6:20**; **2Ti 1:12**; **1Jo 5:21**), to *protect*, even to *rescue* (**2Pe 2:5**) or *safely restrain* (**Luk 8:29**). In present context, its meaning likely designates a vigilant custodial restraint to protect “from stumbling,” so literally, to keep one “unstumbling” (a verbal adjective, *aptaistous*, from *ptaiō*, “to cause to stumble;” cp **Rom 11:11**; **Jas 2:10**; **3:2**; **2Pe 1:10**), hence, “to keep safe.” This is not preservation from sin, but contemplates effective and specific safekeeping for those of whom he has just enjoined mercy against any possibility of stumbling, “never to rise again” (Schafer). Jude’s use of the *orist tense* views this safely restraining activity in its entirety, without contemplation of interruption.

Note: There is absolutely no warrant for making any – some may suggest even all – among the tenuous groups in **vv 22-23** the object(s) of this sovereignly elective safekeeping, as might result from textual mischief with the pronoun, *humas* in **v 24**

...and to *present* you faultless (1aor act infin, *histēmi*; *amōmos*)

Moderate alteration of syntax has occurred in translation. The logical end suggested in the preceding clause is not simply spotless, but *ceremonially unblemished* (**Eph 1:4**; **5:27**; **Col 1:22**; **Heb 9:14**; **1Pe 1:19**; **Rev 14:5**). It is God’s inherent power, with which Jude introduces his doxology, that is infinitely able to effect this result. In corporate assembly, NT saints – “the Church which is His body” – will be made to stand before the Son *without blemish of any kind, hidden or otherwise!*

Note: The following distinctions will aid in differentiating among some relative synonyms in Scripture: *unblemished*, *visibly or otherwise* (*amōmos*): **Eph 1:4**; **5:27**; **Col 1:22**; **Heb 9:14**; **1Pe 1:19**; **Rev 14:5**; *unblamed*, *whether justly or not* (*amemptos*): **Luk 1:6**; **Php 2:15**; **3:6**; **1Th 3:13**; **Heb 8:7**; *no known ground for blame or reproof* (*anenklētos*): **1Co 1:8**; **Col 1:22**; **1Ti 3:10**; **Tit 1:6, 7**; *no discoverable ground for blame or reproof* (*anepilēptos*): **1Ti 3:2**; **5:7**; **6:14**

...*before the presence* of His glory (*katenōpion*, from “down against,” and “in the eye”)

“Glory” is *articular*, so it is the whole of His glory in view. It is the glory of *the Son*. In a breathtaking sequence commencing with the rapture (*harpadzō*, “catching up” of **1Th 4:17**), the Church, the Bride of Christ, will be made to stand distinctly “**down, facing the presence of**” (cp **Eph 1:4; Col 1:22**) His glory. This glory must comprehensively include:

- 1) His glory *belonging inherently to deity* as the Son of God, **Exo 16:10; 24:16-18; Hab 2:14; Isa 11:9; Rev 21:10-23**;
- 2) His *acquired* glory, given to the Son by the Father, as Christ Jesus the Savior,
 - A. *In the decree* – **Heb 13:20-21**; cp. **Psa 2:7; Act 13:14-37**
 - B. *Through obedience* – **Php 2:8; Luk 2:51-52; Joh 2:4; Joh 8:29, 48-50; 17:22-24**;
 - C. *By inheritance*
 1. *The nations* – **Psa 2:8**
 2. *The Church* – **Eph 1:11**
 - D. *Christ’s visible return to earth will be in power and great glory* – **Mat 24:30; Luk 21:27**; cp. **Php 2:9-11**
 - E. *Christ’s acquired glory, imparted to saints in salvation, will be the consummate experience of Church saints at His visible appearing* – **Col 3:4**

Note: Though nowhere explicitly detailed in its entirety, the spectacular events of which this presentation is a part conform to the following general sequence: Christ raptures the Church, his Betrothed (**1Th 4:17; Joh 14:3**), and returns with her to heaven; by inference, the Bema evaluation (**2Co 5:10**) will precede arrival in Heaven, inasmuch as the Bride will be presented upon her arrival “without spot or wrinkle” (**Eph 5:27**); Christ seats Himself upon the throne of His glory (**Mat 19:28; 25:31; Luk 9:26**) from which He will ultimately judge the nations, after His revelation in power and great glory (**Mat 25:31-46**), and *makes the Bride to stand before the face of His glory* (**Jud 24**), *ceremonially unblemished* (**Eph 1:4**); He presents the Bride alongside Himself (**Eph 5:27**), witnessing her glory to all watching (**Col 3:4**), and then presents the Bride to the Father (**1Th 3:13**) *unblemished, unblamed, and unblamable!* Then finally, we are woefully remiss if we fail to note that this must certainly contemplate grand fulfillment of the poignant yearning communicated by the Son to the Father in the garden (**Joh 17:22-24**)

...*with exceeding joy* (*en hagalliasis*)

Whether this modifies the quality of *blamelessness* or the activity of *making to stand* has been disputed, though most take it to be adverbial, thus, “to present you faultless... with exceeding joy” (KJV). This term is found principally in the Greek translation of the Psalms (**Psa 30:5; 42:4; 45:7, 15**), where it designates joy in the redemptive work of God. Difficult to adequately define, one commentator has said this is, “exultant jubilation,” more so than the more common NT word for joy, *chara*, finding its most frequent usage in eschatological fulfillment. Here, it is the

exultation of the Son in culminating what has been undertaken with complete redemption of the Church, His Bride.

1:25 *To the only wise God, our Savior (**monō sophō Theō**)*

Monō sophō Theō is literally, “uniquely wise God,” and emphasizes wisdom (**sophia**) as *the effective use of knowledge*, in this case the peculiar and uniquely effective role of the Son in the outworking of the redemption plan. This does not assert that God *became* wise, or that any Persons of the Godhead ever lacked wisdom, but simply that the Theanthropic Second Person acted effectively, according to knowledge with respect to His role as Savior. As in the opening verses of the epistle, it is God the Son in view now. From the outset, the “ungodly ones” have denied the “unique Despot God, even our Lord Jesus Christ” (v 4). Thus now does Jude rightly extol “the uniquely wise God, our Savior” (v 25).

Note: Mischief with a text extolling the uniqueness of the Son (**Joh 3:16**) has confused the occurrence of **monō** here as in **Rom 16:25-27**. Here, the Son’s *one-of-a-kind* quality (**monō**, “one of a kind,” “unique”) is in view respecting the effectiveness of His saving role, *according to knowledge*. In **Joh 3:16-17**, He is the “unique kind” of son (KJV, “only begotten”), i.e., He is not the *only* son inasmuch as there are innumerable sons of God by regeneration. Rather, He is the Son as *no other*. As for Christ’s uniqueness in Jude’s discourse, neither the Father nor the Spirit has literally purchased salvation, neither has died as substitute for sin, nor do either possess the peculiar physical deathlessness of Paul’s ascription in **1Ti 1:17** and **6:16** – inasmuch as the Son alone among the Triune Persons possesses a resurrection body – indeed, only the Son in His *uniquely wise*, saving role. Most conservative evangelicals agree that **dia Iēsou Christou tou kuriou hēmōn**, occasionally found here with mixed Alexandrian textual support (ASV, NASB, NIV, RV) and translated “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” has no manuscriptural authority

*...be glory and **majesty** (**doxa, megalōsunē**)*

Jude extols the inherently, “good opinion” and “favorable estimate” of God, hence the honor resulting from and issuing to that high opinion. This term comprehensively applies to all Persons of the Godhead, their nature and work. Here and until the end, it continues to be the Son in view. Jude’s term for “Majesty” occurs only three times in the NT (**Heb 1:3; 8:1**) and denotes the majestic greatness of God, here contributing to Jude’s consummate ascription of deity to Christ.

*...**dominion** and **power** (**kratos; exousia**)*

“Dominion” is *manifested strength* (**kratos**, derived from a root, **kra---**, “to perfect, to complete,” *Vine*). Distinct from the ability of *inherent power* (**dunamis**) of the previous verse, this asserts a power to grasp and hold, even power to retain with permanence; frequently used of the Father, here an ascription to the Son (**1Pe 4:11**). “Power” here is better, “authority;” originally “permission, or liberty according to law,” becoming “ability or strength with which one is endued,” ultimately,

“power of authority” (*Vine*). No strain for believers’ credulity that the One who was given all authority in **Mat 28:18** is so extolled here.

...both now and forever. Amen.

“Both now and into all [the] ages (**articlar**).” This contemplates manifestation of all attributes of the Son, *into all the ages*. Unparalleled encouragement for all who come to Him by faith. *Amen.*