

The Book of Jude

Lesson 1

Introduction

- Two primary theories on who the author is:
 - the half-brother of Christ, brother of James (pastor of church at Jerusalem – Acts 15:3, Galatians 1:9) – Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3 [MY PREFERENCE]
 - an Apostle, the brother of James the Less – Luke 6:16, Acts 1:13
- Written around A.D. 65-68
- Has a strong connection in theme to II Peter 2.
 - Where Peter speaks of the false prophets coming (II Peter 2:1), Jude speaks of them already being present.
- The theme of the book is Apostasy, which Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines as "an abandonment of what one has professed; a total desertion, or departure from one's faith or religion."

Verses 1-10

- vs. 1 – the audience is this letter are the steadfast believers who find their churches infiltrated by false doctrine.
- vs. 2 – note that Jude is well-intentioned in writing this letter.
- vs. 3 – Jude had intended to write a different letter, perhaps more encouraging, until led by God to address the issue of apostasy.
- vs. 3 – "common salvation" – there is but one salvation (by grace through faith, Ephesians 2:8-9) for all men. Location, genetics, etc. do not change this.
- vs. 4 – that apostates should appear should have not been a surprise: they appear in the history of Israel (as we will see...) and many warnings were made about their coming – II Thessalonians 2:3, I Timothy 4:1-3, II Timothy 3:5-6
- vs. 4 – the heresy is a rejection of Christ and a resulting license of lasciviousness
 - Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines *lasciviousness* as "looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires; wantonness; lustfulness."
 - Some identify these teachings as early forms of Gnosticism (secret knowledge, matter is evil, spirit is good) or Antinomianism (rejection of moral law and restrictions).
- vs. 5-7 – Historical examples of apostasy and its judgment
 - vs. 5 – The Israelites that perished in the wilderness – Hebrews 3:16-19
 - vs. 6 – The fallen angels – II Peter 2:4, John 8:44
 - vs. 7 – Sodom and Gomorrah – II Peter 2:6
 - This verse goes against a recent trend to reframe the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah as inhospitality by overemphasizing Ezekiel 16:48-50.

- vs. 8 – the practical outcome of this heresy – defilement and rejection of authority
 - I think the “dignities” (*doxas*, Strong’s G1391) refer to authority figures and not angels. See also II Peter 2:10.
- vs. 9 – the example of Michael condemns the apostate’s rejection of authority
 - Even a mighty angel would not speak against fallen Satan, but rather appealed to God’s greater authority – II Peter 2:11
- vs. 10 – to paraphrase, they are like dogs who snarl at a confining fence not understanding it keeps them safely out of the highway – II Peter 2:12

Further Notes on vs. 9

- Notes on Michael:
 - One of three angels named in Scripture, with Gabriel and Lucifer.
 - The only angel identified as an *archangel* – vs. 9
 - Also named in Daniel 10:13 and 21, Daniel 12:1, and Revelation 12:7
- This event is not recorded elsewhere in the Bible
 - It was likely preserved through Jewish oral tradition, though unsubstantiated claims that it was written in the apocryphal “Assumption of Moses”.
 - B.H. Carroll writes regarding the source:
 - “My answer is, Jude's information came from inspiration – the same source from which many other New Testament references come, not given in Old Testament. For example, Paul's giving the names, Jannes and Jambres, to the Egyptian priests who opposed Moses (2 Tim. 3:8). Does inspiration fall unless buttressed by tradition? Why should I assume the unnecessary burden of verifying Scripture by Jewish legend? One of the great offices of inspiration is to guide in the selection of material and to bring to remembrance. It is a characteristic of inspiration that it brings to mind unrecorded things of the past. Jesus speaks of unrecorded things; Stephen does the same. So does Paul. Why not Jude?”
- This event should be taken literally.
 - It is not a corruption of the vision of the High Priest Joshua in Zechariah 3.
 - It is not allegorically referring to Christ (as Michael) burying/defeating the teachings (“body”) of Moses.
- Why the dispute over the body of Moses?
 - Deuteronomy 34:6 says that God buried Moses and the location unknown.
 - This was likely done as a guard against worshipping Moses.
 - Consider how they worshipped the Brazen Serpent (II Kings 18:4)