

THE

# EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE, THE APOSTLE.

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## Introduction.

**AUTHOR OF.**—St. Jude, the author of this Epistle, also called Thaddeus, to distinguish him from the traitor Iscariot, was brother of James the Lesser, also of Simon, the successor of St. James in the See of Jerusalem, and of Joseph, surnamed the Just. These four were the sons of Alpheus, likewise called Cleophas, and of Mary, the cousin of the Blessed Virgin; they are termed in Scripture “the brethren of our Lord,” in accordance with the usage of the time, designating those, who were merely cousins, by the title of brethren. The Sacred Scriptures are quite silent regarding the particular of St. Jude’s call to the Apostleship. We find his name introduced for the first time (Matthew, chap. x.), where there is mention made of the names of the twelve Apostles. After he had gone forth to preach the gospel, we are informed by Nicephorus and the Martyrologies, that he preached throughout Judea, Samaria, Idumea, Syria, and, especially, in Mesopotamia; some persons state that he preached in Lybia. Fortunatus, and several Martyrologies, informs us, that he went from Mesopotamia to Persia; the same tells us, that he was martyred there. The Menology of the Emperor Basil, and other Greek authorities, say it was at Ararat, in Armenia, then subject to the Parthian Empire, his death occurred.

The writer of this Epistle is not to be confounded with another Thaddeus, who, as we are informed by Eusebius, was sent by St. Thomas, the Apostle, to Odessa, and died in peace at Phenicia, as is stated by the Menæa. Our Apostle is, according to the common opinion, of quite a different person.

**CANONICITY OF.**—The Canonicity or Divine authority of this Epistle was not universally admitted in the Church until the fourth century; since then, it has been admitted universally, both by the Latin and Greek Churches. It has been quoted by such of the Holy Fathers, as since that time, furnished catalogues of the inspired Scriptures, viz., Innocent I., Pope Gelasius, Athanasius, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Isidore, &c.; and by the Councils of Laodicea, Carthage, Florence, and Trent. Its inspiration is believed, by every Catholic, as undoubtedly as that of the four Gospels. We have in its favour, the only certain means by which, in the present order of things, the inspiration of any book can be known, viz.: the infallible authority of the Catholic Church. The principal reasons for questioning its Canonicity on the part of some persons, were founded on certain points to which it refers, regarding the contest of the devil with Michael the Archangel, for the body of Moses (verse 9), and the prophecy of Enoch, which are not found in any part of the ancient Scriptures. But it will be shown in the Commentary, that the mention of these is no argument against its claims to inspiration and Canonical authority—(see verses 9 and 14).

OCCASION OF.—The occasion of this Epistle was the same as that of the other Catholic Epistles. We are informed by St. Augustine (*Libro de Fide*, &c., ch. xiv.), that all the Catholic Epistles had for object, to meet the unsound doctrine and perverse principles of morality, put forward by the early heretics, viz., the Simonians, the Valentinians, and the whole swarm, comprised under the general denomination of Gnostics. All these erred regarding either the Divine or Human Nature of Christ; and their principles and practices of immorality were too shocking to be mentioned. St. Jude graphically describes them, in this short Epistle.

TIME OF.—From the similiarity, and, in many cases, identity, that exists between certain words and phrases in this and the Second Epistle of St. Peter (chap. ii.), it is inferred by some, that St. Peter, in the chapter referred to, borrowed from this Epistle of St. Jude. In that supposition, this Epistle must have been written before the year 66, the date to which the Second Epistle of St. Peter is generally referred. The common opinion, however, appears to be, that St. Jude has borrowed from St. Peter, and this opinion has some foundation in the words of St. Jude (verse 17), where he speaks of the words of the Apostles, words almost identical with those of St. Peter (2 Ep. iii. 3). In this supposition, this Epistle must have been written after the year 68, the date of St. Peter's death, under Nero.

LANGUAGE OF.—It is commonly believed that it was written in Greek—the language then most generally diffused, and consequently the best adapted for a circular Epistle like the present—the language, too, in which almost all the New Testament was written.

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## EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE, THE APOSTLE.

## CHAPTER I.

## Analysis.

*St. Jude commences this Epistle with the usual form of Apostolical salutation (verses 1, 2). He next enters on its subject, and says, that to his anxious desire of writing to the faithful, was superadded a sense of duty to do so, in order to exhort them to firmness and perseverance against the machinations of the corrupt teachers, whom he describes, both as to morals and faith (2, 3). He then points out some of the instances in which their crimes, and the punishment which is to await these false teachers, were prefigured (5, 6, 7); and shows how these heretics followed the pernicious example of the wicked sinners of old (8).*

*He contrasts their blasphemous conduct with the forbearance exhibited by Michael, the Archangel, towards the devil, when disputing about the body of Moses (9, 10); and denounces against them the punishment of eternal destruction, prefigured in the signal punishment of the wicked of old, whose perverse ways they followed (11).*

*He next describes their corrupt morals, and the awful doom reserved for them (12, 13). He quotes a prophecy of Enoch, to prove the truth of the menaces denounced against those heretics (14, 15). He continues to describe their corrupt morals (16), and cautions the faithful against them, by referring to the words of the other Apostles, graphically describing beforehand their impiety in religion, and corruption of morals (17, 18). The Apostle himself gives a further description of their disobedience and wicked works (19).*

*He exhorts the faithful to persevere, and to rear themselves into a spiritual edifice, of which the foundation was to be faith; the superstructure, hope, and charity, joined to earnest prayer (20, 21). He points out what line of conduct they should pursue with reference to the heresiarchs and their deluded followers (22, 23), and concludes with an appropriate doxology.*

*It will be seen by comparing both Epistles, that the 2nd chapter of the Second Epistle of St. Peter and this Epistle of St. Jude, perfectly coincide in their description and denunciation of the early heretics; one Epistle throws great light on the other.*

## Text.

I. JUDE the servant of JESUS CHRIST, and brother of James: to

## Paraphrase.

I. Jude, who has been engaged in the service of Jesus Christ, as minister of his gospel, and the brother

## Commentary.

I. "Jude," (see Introduction), "the servant of Jesus Christ," refers to the special engagement of preaching the Gospel. Similar is the introduction of the Epistle of St. James, "and brother of James." This he adds, as well to be distinguished

## Text.

them that are beloved in God the Father, and preserved in JESUS CHRIST, and called.

2. Mercy unto you, and peace and charity be fulfilled.

3. Dearly beloved, taking all care to write unto you concerning your common salvation, I was under a necessity to write unto you: to beseech you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

4. For certain men are secretly entered in (who were written of

## Paraphrase.

of James, the lesser (writes), to the called, that is to say, to all Christians, who are beloved and sanctified by God the Father, the author of all sanctity, and are guarded by Jesus Christ, against being led astray by the spirit of error.

2. May the gifts of God's mercy, and peace, and charity, abound and be multiplied in you.

3. Dearly beloved, having been heretofore exceedingly anxious to write to you, concerning our common salvation, I felt it has become now a duty of necessity to do so, for the purpose of beseeching and exhorting you to contend earnestly for the unchangeable deposit of the faith once left with the Church.

4. (It behoves you earnestly to exert yourselves in the good cause), because, certain men have surrep-

## Commentary.

from the traitor, Judas Iscariot, as also to conciliate the good will of those whom he addresses; for, St. James the Lesser was held in the highest esteem by all. "To them that are beloved," the ordinary Greek for which is, *τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις*, *to them that are sanctified*. The Vatican and Alexandrian MSS. support the Vulgate, *τοῖς ἡγαπημένοις*, "beloved," "in God the Father and preserved.....and called." The particle "and," before "called," is not in the Greek. Hence "called," being a noun, is given as a peculiar epithet of all Christians; and the words "beloved of God and preserved," &c., are predicted of them (as in Paraphrase). The Greek ordinary reading, which for "beloved in God," has, *sanctified in God*, is preferred by many, because it conveys to the Christians an exhortation to shun and hold in abhorrence the impurities of the Gnostics, as opposed to the spirit of sanctity which they received. Both readings are employed in the Paraphrase.

2. "Mercy unto you," *i.e.*, the abundant gifts of God's grace, which to wretched sinners are a great mercy. Hence the form of salutation here employed by St. Jude, is substantially the same with "grace and peace," the form usually adopted by the other Apostles. "And charity," which may mean either the love of God, or of our neighbour. The former is the effect of mercy; the latter, the cause of peace. "Be fulfilled;" the Greek word, *πληθυνθειη*, also means, *to abound and be multiplied*.

3. He introduces in this verse the subject of the Epistle, "taking all care to write to you concerning your common salvation," ("your," is not in the ordinary Greek according to which it is, *concerning the common salvation*. The Vatican and Alexandrian MSS. have, *περι της κοινης υμων σωτηριας*, "concerning *our* common salvation,") which may either mean—that his desire of writing to them concerning their common salvation, was so great, that he felt himself constrained by this desire, as by a kind of necessity; or, according to others, that he formerly had an anxious desire of writing to them, but, that it now became a matter of duty or necessity to do so, owing to the dangers to which they are exposed, "to beseech you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," *i.e.*, for the integrity of the deposit of faith, "ONCE delivered," as a deposit in its unchangeable entirety, incapable of increase or diminution; no point of faith can be added to it, or taken from it. Hence, in her Dogmatic Definitions, nothing *new* is defined by the Church. She only formulates revealed doctrines; "to the saints," *i.e.*, left with the Church, the assembly of the saints.

4. "For certain men," &c. The Apostle, in this verse, shows the cause of the necessity, which he was under, of writing to them, *viz.*, because certain men covertly insinuated themselves amongst them; ("who were written of long ago unto this judgment;") these words, which are to be read within a parenthesis, mean, that all the punishment inflicted on the wicked in the Old Law, were so many types and figures of the punishment to be inflicted on the heretics, in the New. Similar is the idea conveyed (Rom.

## Text.

long ago unto this judgment) ungodly men, turning the grace of our Lord God unto riotousness, and denying the only Sovereign Ruler, and our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

5. I will therefore admonish you, *though* ye once knew all things, that JESUS, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, did afterwards destroy them that believed not :

## Paraphrase.

titiously insinuated themselves amongst you (whose judgment of obduracy here, as well as of eternal punishment hereafter, was long since predicted and prefigured by the punishment of the wicked in the Old Law), impious men, who have no regard for religion; who convert the grace and liberty of the gospel into a licentious system of impurity, and deny the divine nature and Sovereign lordship of the only supreme Lord and God, Jesus Christ.

5. I will, therefore, remind you, who have already known all the things necessary for your salvation, that the Lord Jesus, after having rescued the Hebrew people from the Egyptian bondage, did afterwards destroy those amongst them, who were incredulous.

## Commentary.

xv. 4; Gal. iii. 1); "this judgment" refers to their present punishment of obduracy and insensibility in this life, as described, verses 10, 11, 12, 13, of this chapter (for, sin is the most dreadful punishment of sin); and to their eternal punishment hereafter. Similar are the words of St. Peter regarding them (2 Ep. ii. 3): "ungodly men," who have no regard for the relations towards God, which religion prescribes; "turning the grace of our Lord God," *i.e.*, abusing the grace of the gospel and converting it "into riotousness," *i.e.*, into a system of licentious impurity; thus, looking on the gospel liberty, unto which Christ asserted us, as a perfect freedom from restraint, and a permission to indulge all their corrupt passions. This refers to their errors in morality. He next describes their errors in faith, "and denying the only sovereign ruler, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The first part is made by some to refer to God the Father; but, it is better refer both members of the sentence to "Jesus Christ." For, looking to the Greek, *τον μονον δεσποτην και κυριον ημων*, we find the two nouns are preceded by only one article, and followed by the pronoun, and should, therefore, refer to the same subject, *viz.*, "Jesus Christ." Moreover, the errors of the Ebionites, Simonians, Nicolaites, and Gnostics, regarded the divine nature of Christ, whom they admitted to be the expected Messiah, but denied to be God, this interpretation is confirmed by a reference to 2 Epistle ii. 1, of St. Peter, where the idea conveyed is the same as that intended here by St. Jude, and is understood only of Christ. The heretics referred to did not deny one sovereign ruler; they only denied Christ to be such. Of course, when Christ is termed, "the only sovereign ruler," the Father and the Holy Ghost, who possesses the same Divine nature and essence with him, are not excluded from a participation in the Supreme sovereignty. After "sovereign ruler," the ordinary Greek adds ("God"), but, it is wanting in the chief MSS.

5. "I will, therefore, admonish you," *i.e.*, recall to your remembrance, "though ye once knew all things" *i.e.*, you were formerly instructed in all things appertaining to the knowledge of salvation. In the ordinary Greek, we have for "all things," *τιυτο*, *this*. The chief MSS. have, *παντα*, the Vulgate reading. The Apostle now instances a few of the cases in which the heretics, to whom he alludes, "were written of long ago unto this judgment" (verse 4), *i.e.*, in which their condemnation, as well as their crimes were prefigured. The first is, the example of the incredulous Hebrews. "That Jesus having saved the people," &c.; by "Jesus" (for which in the ordinary Greek we have, *κυριος*, *the Lord*; but the Vatican and Alexandrian MSS. have *Ιησους*, is evidently meant our Lord Jesus Christ; since Josue, to whom, some think, reference to be made, did not save the people out of Egypt, nor did he destroy the unbelievers. "Did afterwards destroy them that believed not." Caleb and Josue were the only persons, out of 600,000, whose carcasses were not overthrown in the desert (Heb. chap. iii.; Numbers xiv. and xxvi.) Reference is made to the same (1 Cor. xiv.) It was our Lord Jesus, according to his Divine Nature, which existed from eternity, that inflicted

## Text.

6. And the angels, who kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, he hath reserved under darkness in everlasting chains, unto the judgment of the great day.

7. As Sodom and Gomorrha, and the neighbouring cities, in like manner, having given themselves to fornication, and going after other flesh, were made an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire.

8. In like manner these men also defile the flesh, and despise dominion, and blaspheme majesty.

## Paraphrase.

6. And the angels, who, by falling into sin, forfeited their excellence and the primitive state of justice and innocence, in which they were created, and forsook, or rather were forcibly expelled from, their heavenly habitation suited to their former dignity, he hath reserved under darkness, in everlasting chains, unto the judgment of the great and terrible day, when all things shall be brought to a close.

7. As Sodom and Gomorrha, and the neighbouring cities, which, like Sodom and Gomorrha, had committed fornication, and indulged in unnatural lusts, were made an example of the eternal torments of fire, when suffering the dreadful punishment described in the book of Genesis (chap. xix. 24).

8. In the same way, these senseless men (notwithstanding the examples of divine vengeance set before their eyes) defile the flesh by their lusts and impurities; they, moreover, despise all divine and earthly dominion, and blaspheme the celestial majesties.

## Commentary.

those punishments, and effected the deliverance of the Israelites; both acts were common to the Son, with the Father and the Holy Ghost. On this account it may be, that "Lord" was substituted in the ordinary Greek text.

6. The second example of divine wrath, which, also, prefigured the punishment of the heretics, is that of the fallen angels, whom our Lord, after they "kept not their principality," *i.e.*, forfeited the original justice and excellence in which they were created; "but forsook their own habitation," *i.e.*, were hurled from their heavenly habitation, "their own," alone suited to their former excellence and dignity—"hath reserved under darkness and everlasting chains," &c. The idea conveyed here, is the same with that expressed in the 2nd Epistle, chap. ii. of St. Peter. Although the words of this passage would appear to afford grounds for the opinion that the devils are confined to hell; it is, however, the far more probable opinion, that they were first hurled into hell; and that some of them were, by divine dispensation, as St. Thomas expresses it, allowed to come forth to tempt and carry on their fiendish war against mankind. Wherever they are, they carry their torments with them. St. Jerome expressly assures us, "*omnium Doctorum est opinio, quod aer iste, qui cælum et terram medium dividens inane appellatur, contrariis fortitudinibus sit plenus*," (in cap. 6 *Ep ad Ephes.*; see 2 Ep. of St. Peter, ch. ii. 4).

7. The next example (which is also adduced by St. Peter, ii. 6), is that of Sodom and Gomorrha, and the neighbouring or surrounding cities, Adama and Seboim "in like manner having given themselves to fornication." The words, "in like manner," as appears from the Greek, *των ὁμοιον τούτους τρόπον*, mean, that the other cities gave themselves up, like Sodom and Gomorrha, to fornication, "and going after other flesh." The words, "other flesh," are commonly understood to express the unnatural lusts of these sinful cities, to which the Apostle refers (Rom. i.) and which derive their odious name from sinful Sodom; "other," means contrary to nature; "were made an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire." The connexion adopted in the Paraphrase seems the most probable; it is admitted by the Greek, and it connects the words, "eternal fire," with "example;" they were made an example and clear type of eternal fire, "suffering punishment," of fire and brimstone, showered down upon them from heaven (Genesis, xix. 24).

8. "In like manner." In this verse, the Apostle applies to the men in question, the awful example of the Sodomites. These heretics, like the men of Sodom, "who went after other flesh" (verse 7), "also defile the flesh," by their impure lusts; and hence, will be involved in the eternal fire, of which the punishment of the Sodomites was an expressive type. In the Greek, we have the words, *ὁμοίως και οὔτοι ενυπνιζόμενοι*, "in like manner, *these dreamers* also," &c., which word, "*dreamers*," refers to the

## Text.

9. When Michael the Archangel, disputing with the devil, contended about the body of Moses, he durst not bring against him the judgment of railing speech, but said : The Lord command thee.

## Paraphrase.

9. When Michael, the Archangel, disputing with the devil, contended about the body of Moses, he durst not pronounce against him, in reproachful language, the harsh sentence of condemnation, so justly called for ; he merely contented himself with saying : May the Lord command, and foil thee in thy attempt.

## Commentary.

delusive, idle fancies of these men, imagining themselves secure, while opposing the holy will of God. "And despise dominion," understood by some, of the lofty and supreme dominion which God exercises over creation, and which these bring into contempt, by their foolish, ridiculous fables ; by others, of ecclesiastical authorities, whom the heretics, in all ages, make it a merit to despise ; by others, of civil authority, which the first Christians were accused of undervaluing, owing to the insubordination of the early heretics. "And blaspheme majesty," (in Greek, *δοξας* (*majesties*), this, most probably, refers to the angels, regarding whom the Gnostics held so many disparaging and ridiculous opinions ; they are called "*majesties*," owing to the exalted nature of their office, while assisting before the throne of God. This verse is the same as verse 10, chap. ii. of St. Peter. The latter words of the verse, "and despise dominion," &c., are not intended as applications of the foregoing examples, they are added to express the crimes of these men ; the particle "and" means "*moreover*," they despise dominion."

9. The Apostle, in this verse, contrasts the blasphemies of these heretics, with the forbearance exhibited by Michael, the Archangel, under circumstances of the greatest provocation, "When Michael the Archangel, &c." As the circumstance recorded here by St. Jude, is not mentioned in any other part of Scripture, it is likely, he learned it from the tradition of the Jews, as St. Paul learned the names of the Egyptian Magicians, Jannes and Mambres (2 Tim. iii. 8) ; or, it may be, that he found it in some of the Apocryphal books, and having been quoted by St. Jude, it became a divinely revealed fact of Scripture. Everything in the Apocryphal work need not be untrue. We even find St. Paul quoting some true passages from Pagan authors, and having been quoted by him, they have all the authority of divinely inspired Scriptures (Titus, i. 12 ; 1 Cor. xv. 33 ; and Titus, chap. i.) It is stated in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, that when Moses died, "the Lord," *i.e.*, Michael, the Archangel, in the name of the Lord, "buried him in the valley of the land of Moab, over against Phogor, and no man hath known of his sepulchre until this present day," (Deut. xxxiv. 6). The most probable reasons of this dispute between Michael and the Devil appear to be—1st, Because the devil wished to have Moses buried publicly, in order to serve as a rock of offence to the Jews, who, already prone to idolatry, might, at some future day, be tempted to pay him divine honours. 2ndly, Because the devil would prevent the sepulture of Moses in the land of Moab, in a special manner his own, on account of the gross idolatry of the people ; his reason being lest the presence of the saint's body should obstruct the permanence of his reign, in that land of darkness and idolatry. Michael, on the occasion of the altercation in question, through reverence for a creature, though a fallen creature of God, refrained from cursing him, as he deserved, or from uttering against him maledictory or reproachful language, such as, "*Begone to the infernal abyss, wicked devil, proud, haughty rebel*," or the like. The Tradition, from which the knowledge of this fact has been derived, represents Michael merely as saying, "May the Lord command thee," *i.e.*, prevent thee from succeeding in thy attempt. This altercation, or rather the reasons assigned for it above, are, by no means opposed to the Catholic worship of images or relics of the saints. The first reason assigned, is not opposed to us, since it supposes that the object of the Archangel was, to guard against paying divine worship to the body of Moses—and Catholics never intend any such worship for images ; nor is the second reason—on the contrary, it favours us ; for, if the devil feared so much from the presence of the body of Moses, has he not equal reason to fear from the presence of the relics and images of the saints, which are, therefore, entitled to a certain degree of religious respect from us ?

## Text.

10. But these men blaspheme whatever things they know not : and what things soever they naturally know, like dumb beasts, in these they are corrupted.

11. Wo unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain : and after the error of Balaam they have for reward poured out themselves, and have perished in the contradiction of Core.

12. These are spots in their

## Paraphrase.

10. But these wretched men blaspheme the things, which they neither understand nor know, as they are far above their comprehension ; and what things soever they know, like senseless beasts, from mere animal instinct, in these things they are corrupted, by reducing and degrading the dignity of human nature to the level of the brute creation.

11. An eternal malediction is in store for them, because they have, like the fratricide Cain, murdered the souls of their brethren, by infusing into them the poison of corrupt doctrines. They eagerly rush into the sin committed by Balaam, from the same motives of sordid avarice ; and by their disobedience to the divinely constituted authorities, they have become faithful followers of Core, and involved themselves in the like punishment.

12. These men are spots, and a disgrace both to

## Commentary.

10. "But, these men," far from following the example set them by the Archangel, "blaspheme whatever things they know not," which may refer to the ridiculous opinions and idle fables regarding the divine and angelic natures, so far above their comprehension ; such opinions are nothing else than blasphemies ; or, perhaps he refers to some mysteries of the Christian faith, and certain arduous precepts of Christian morality, which they treat disrespectfully ; "and what things soever they naturally know," *i.e.*, know from the senses and from mere animal instinct, "like dumb beasts," *i.e.*, senseless beasts, "in these they are corrupted," *i.e.*, in following and obeying the instincts of carnal concupiscence, they degrade and destroy the dignity of rational nature, reducing it to a level with the beasts.

11. "Woe unto them." He denounces against them the merited sentence of eternal punishment ; for, having imitated Cain, Balaam, and Core in their crimes, they shall be involved in their ruin. "For they have gone in the way of Cain," by becoming spiritual murderers of their brethren, infusing into them the deadly poison of their corrupt doctrines ; they have also imitated Cain in his irreligion and impiety, reserving to himself the best gifts of the earth, because they seek after their own advantage, without any regard for the interests of God ; "and, after the error of Balaam, they have for reward poured out themselves," *i.e.*, they have ardently and eagerly encouraged immorality, to advance their own private ends. Balaam, whose history is given (Numbers, xxii., xxiv.) counselled Balac, King of Moab, as is inferred from Numbers (xxiv. 14, xxxi. 16), and Apocalypse (chap. ii. verse 14), and is attested by Josephus (*lib.* 4, *Antiq.* chap. 6), to send the beautiful women of Moab and Madian into the Hebrew camp, in order to entice the Hebrews to commit fornication, and afterwards worship Beelphegor ; this counsel had the intended effect, as appears from Numbers, chap. xxv. 1, 2. So, in like manner, the Simonites and Gnostics corrupt the people, from motives of avarice and sensuality. "And have perished in the contradiction of Core," the punishment of Core is a clear type of the punishment in store for them, on account of murmuring and rebelling like him and his associates, (Numbers xvi.) against the authority appointed by God to rule them. Whether Core was swallowed down to hell by the opening of the earth, or was merely destroyed with the two hundred and fifty Levites, by fire from heaven, is disputed. It is quite clear, from Numbers, xvi. 33, and Deuteron. xi., and Psalm cv., that Dathan and Abiron were swallowed down in the opening of the earth. In the three examples adduced, St. Jude marks out three leading vices of the heretics, *viz.* : envy, avarice, and ambition, besides the vice common to them with all sinners of old, *viz.*, hostility towards the true worshippers of God, as in the case of Cain, who hated Abel ; of Balaam, who hated God's people ; and of Core, who rejected the authority of Moses and Aaron.

12. The Apostle now describes, in glowing metaphorical language, the immoralities of these heretics. "These are spots in their banquets ;" the Greek is, *εν ταῖς ἀγαπαῖς*

## Text.

banquets, feasting together without fear, feeding themselves, clouds without water which are carried about by winds, trees of the autumn, unfruitful, twice dead, plucked up by the roots,

13. Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion, wandering stars: to whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever.

## Paraphrase.

religion and humanity in your Agapes or feasts of Christian love, feasting with you in such a way as to show by their excesses that they have neither reverence for God, nor fear of man, seeking their own gain and emolument, while pretending to be concerned for the spiritual progress of others; they are clouds without water, which neither irrigate the earth, nor permit the genial rays of the sun to warm it, changeable as the winds, and inconsistent in their teachings; they are autumnal trees, that never bring fruit to maturity; they are without any fruit whatever; altogether dead; plucked up from the very roots.

13. Like raging waves of the sea, they are turbulent and boisterous in their conduct, foaming out, in the obscenity of their acts and language, their own confusion and shame. They are wandering stars, shedding a false light, ever wandering from the true path of the gospel, whose end is to be utterly extinguished in that storm of darkness, whither they are hurrying, reserved in punishment of their iniquities, for ever and ever.

## Commentary.

*ἄμωρ*, in your Agapes. The Apostle, most probably, alludes to their improper conduct at the AGAPES, or feasts of charity, so common in the infancy of the Church, preparatory to the holy communion, and to which the rich and poor were indiscriminately admitted (*vide* 1 Cor. xi.) These heretics insinuated themselves into the edifying meetings of the Christians, of which they were the disgrace, owing to their misconduct. The Greek word for "spots," also signifies "rocks" of scandal, but the other meaning assigned it accords better with the words of St. Peter (chap. ii. verse 13), which St. Jude closely follows in this Epistle. "Feasting together without fear," *i.e.*, without reverence for God or fear of man—"feeding themselves," while pretending to seek the spiritual good of their people, of whom they constitute themselves teachers, they, in reality, only seek their own gain and emolument. "Clouds without water," which, far from serving the earth by the wholesome irrigation of the waters of heaven, on the contrary, injure it by intercepting the genial warmth of the sun. "Which are carried about by the wind;" these words show the fickleness of heretics, and the ever varying inconsistency of their doctrines. "Trees of the autumn," *i.e.*, trees which produce leaves and fruit at the close of the autumn, which never come to maturity; "unfruitful," *i.e.*, it should rather be said they produce no fruit at all. The word "unfruitful," intensifies the word "autumnal;" "twice" (*i.e.*, altogether) "dead." "Twice," bears this meaning frequently in SS. Scripture (*v.g.*, Jeremias, xvii., xviii.; Proverbs, xli. 21; Isaias, lx. 2; 1 Tim. verse 17). Altogether dead, and without any hope of ever recovering life or vegetation, for they are "plucked up by the roots." The last words add in intensity to the words "twice dead." They strongly convey the utter hopelessness, nay, almost impossibility, of deriving any good from an heresiarch.

13. "Raging waves of the sea," shows the restless, boisterous, turbulent conduct of these heretics, "foaming out their own confusion," expressive of their impotent rage against the immovable rock of Christ's Church, and of their obscene, filthy language and conduct. Similar are the words of Isaias, lvii. 20. "Wandering stars;" pretending to give light to their followers, a false light, however, "wandering" from the unchangeable and fixed course marked out by the gospel.

"To whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever." In Second Epistle, ii. 17, of St. Peter, the same Greek words are translated in our English version, "to whom the mist of darkness is reserved." The Apostle, to express their eternal punishment, employs the words "storm of darkness," rather than eternal fire, in allusion to the spiritual darkness in which these heretics kept their duped followers, whereof eternal

## Text.

14. Now of these Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied: saying: Behold, the Lord cometh with thousands of his saints,

15. To execute upon all judgment, and to reprove all the ungodly for all the works of their ungodliness, whereby they have done ungodly, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against God.

16. These are murmurers, full of complaints, walking according to their own desires, and their mouth speaketh proud things, admiring persons for gain's sake.

## Paraphrase.

14. Now, of these, Enoch also, the seventh patriarch inclusively in a direct line from Adam, prophesied, when he said: "Behold the Lord cometh with thousands or myriads of his holy angels,"

15. To execute judgment upon all the reprobate and to convict the impious and ungodly of all their wicked deeds, and of all the blasphemous language, which they uttered against him and his holy mysteries.

16. These men are always murmuring against authority, always discontented with their own lot, finding fault with their neighbours, and especially their superiors; following their carnal desires, indulging in pompous, swelling, and empty words, flattering, and paying court to the wealthy, for the sake of private gain and emolument.

## Commentary.

darkness is the appropriate punishment. All the foregoing metaphors represent the corrupt morals of those heretics.

14. The Apostle quotes a prophecy of the patriarch Enoch, the seventh in a direct line from Adam inclusively, in proof of this assertion, that these impious men shall be subjected to everlasting punishment. "Behold the Lord cometh," or, *will come* (the present is, in a prophetic style, employed for the future, on account of the certainty of the predicted event), "with thousands of his saints." The Greek is, *ἐν αἰαῖς μυριάσιν αὐτοῦ, with his holy myriads*. The Vulgate has, *in sanctis millibus ejus, with his holy thousands*. He refers to the angels who will, at his second coming, to which reference is here made, accompany our Lord to judgment; for, the just men will be rapt up into the air, to meet him at his descent.

15. "To execute judgment upon all" the reprobate, "and reprove all the ungodly of all the works of their ungodliness." The Greek is, "*and reprove all the impious AMONG THEM of all the works of their impiety,*" according to which the meaning is, that although judgment would be executed on all the wicked, still against the impious in particular, such as were the heretics whom St. Jude addresses, a special judgment of more severe exposure and scrutiny would be instituted for their impious actions; "among them," is wanting in the chief MSS.; "and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken," *i.e.*, of all the words of unbelief, impiety and blasphemy, which they uttered against God and his precepts, and the truths of his heavenly revelation. "Against God," in Greek, *κατ' αὐτοῦ, against him*." This prophecy of Enoch must have been known by St. Jude, either from tradition, if it was merely verbally announced by the patriarch, or taken from some writing now lost, which the Apostle, from inspiration, knew to be true, so far as this prophecy is concerned; this, being quoted by St. Jude here, becomes a portion of divine Scripture, and is attested by the authority of the Holy Ghost; and even, though it were quoted from the apocryphal book of Enoch, it furnishes no argument against the inspiration of this Epistle, any more than quoting from Pagan writers (1 Cor. xv. 23; Titus, i. 12), does against the inspiration of these Epistles of St. Paul (*vide* verse 9).

16. The Apostle continues the description of their corrupt morals; "murmurers," *i.e.*, passing censure on their superiors. "Full of complaints," the Greek, *μεμψιμοῖροι*, means, *finding fault with and blaming their lot or condition*, probably finding fault with the disposition of Providence and the arrangement of their superiors in their regard; "walking according to their own desires," *i.e.*, indulging in passions, or pertinaciously adhering to their own opinions; "and their mouth speaketh proud things," (*vide* 2 chap. 2 Ep. verse 18, of St. Peter, where the same words are employed). "Admiring persons," *i.e.*, paying court to, and flattering persons in power and influence, "for gain sake," *i.e.*, from motives of selfish gain and private emolument.

## Text.

17. But you, my dearly beloved, be mindful of the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

18. Who told you, that in the last time there should come mockers, walking according to their own desires in ungodliness.

19. These are they, who separate themselves, sensual men, having not the Spirit.

20. But you, my beloved, building yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21. Keep yourselves in the love

## Paraphrase.

17. But do you, dearly beloved keep in mind the words which have been told to you beforehand, by the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

18. Who told you, that in the last age of the world, on which we have already entered, there would come men whose religion would consist in scoffing at everything sacred; and their morality, in freely indulging their own base and grovelling passions.

19. These are the men, who now are causing separation and exciting schisms, both in their own case and that of others, who lead a sensual and animal life, and are destitute of the spirit of God.

20. But do you, dearly beloved, rear yourselves into a spiritual edifice, of which the sure foundation will be your most holy faith, and the superstructure, prayer offered up with the proper dispositions, inspired by the Holy Ghost.

21. Persevere in the love and grace of God and

## Commentary.

17. The Apostle now enters on an exhortation to them to continue firm in the faith, by reminding them of the words of the Apostles. Reference is, probably, made to the words of St. Paul to Timothy (2 chap. iii. and iv.), and to St. Peter (2 Epistle, chap. iii.), whose words are perfectly the same with the following words of St. Jude himself.

18. The things which they predicted are, "that in the last time there should come mockers," (similar are the words of St. Peter, 2 Ep. iii. 3, the Commentary on which see) *i.e.*, men who would mock at everything sacred and hallowed in religion; "walking according to their own desires in ungodliness." These words point out the corruption of their morals.

19. The Apostle gives further marks of the impious and immoral men who were spoken of beforehand by the other Apostles; "who separate themselves," (*themselves*," is not in the Greek), men who cause schisms in the Church, from which they go out themselves, and influence others to do the same. "Sensual men, having not the spirit;" these words may, also, besides the meaning assigned them in the Paraphrase, have the same signification that the words "*sensual man*," have in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians (ii. 14), signifying, a man who regulates all his faith by reason, and rejects whatever he cannot see, according to reason. With such men those are contrasted who *have the spirit* ("spiritual man,") who, practised in the principles of faith, are always prepared to submit to authority—(see 1 Cor. ii. 14).

20. In this verse, the Apostle resumes his exhortation; "but you, building yourselves upon your most holy faith." He exhorts them to rear themselves into a spiritual edifice, of which "our most holy faith" is to be the foundation. He calls faith "most holy," because it emanates from the Divine mind, which is the fountain of all sanctity, and by saying, "your faith," he shows they should have no connexion with the impure faith of the Gnostics. The Apostles frequently represent the soul of each Christian in particular, as well as the entire assemblage of Christians in general, under the expressive image of a spiritual edifice (*v.g.* 2 Ephes. xxi.; 1 Cor. vi.; 1 Peter, ii. 1. "Praying in the Holy Ghost," the first part of the superstructure is prayer, accompanied with the requisite dispositions; "in the Holy Ghost," since, without, it, we cannot obtain the necessary graces, nor above all, the all necessary grace of *final perseverance*, which if we obtain, we are saved, if we fail to obtain, we are certainly eternally lost; and it can only be obtained by suppliant prayer, "*suppliciter emereri potest*."—St. Augustine. We should pray for this necessary gift unceasingly.

21. The next part of the superstructure in this spiritual edifice is "the love of God," in which he exhorts them to persevere. "Keep yourselves in the love of God," which

## Text.

of God, waiting for the of mercy our Lord JESUS CHRIST unto life everlasting.

22. And some indeed reprove being judged :

23. But others save, pulling them out of the fire. And on others have mercy, in fear ; hating also the spotted garment which is carnal.

## Paraphrase.

the patient hope in God's mercy until, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, you shall obtain life everlasting.

22. And reprove some, who by their pertinacious defence of false doctrines and obstinate perseverance in error, show that they are already condemned, and their conversion morally hopeless ; and make manifest to all the absurdity of their tenets.

23. But others, who are in the proximate danger of perversion and spiritual ruin, rescue from destruction in the eternal fire which is prepared for them ; and on others, who, through weakness have been entangled in the snares of these wicked deceivers, have compassion, by representing beforehand to them the terrors of the divine vengeance, which they have been treasuring, up for themselves ; at the same time taking care to hate and detest the errors of these impious men and their sensual and corrupt morals, which defile both soul and body.

## Commentary.

may either mean, the love of God for us, or our love for him, or both ; for one follows from the other. Hence, the words mean, persevere in the grace and love of God. "Waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ." This refers to patient, enduring hope, amid the trials and difficulties of life, until the reward of our sufferings shall be given us, viz., life everlasting, through the gracious merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, this spiritual edifice will have faith for its foundation ; hope and charity producing the good works which the grace of God, obtained by fervent prayer, will enable them to perform, for its superstructure.

22, 23. "And some indeed reprove, being judged," *i.e.*, the heresiarchs and others amongst them who obstinately persevere ; reprove," *i.e.*, publicly convict and show the absurdity of their errors, in order to render their teaching innocuous to others. "Being judged." Such persons are self-condemned by the notoriety and evidence of their perversity, and their conversion morally hopeless. Similar is the idea expressed by St. Paul (Titus, iii. 11) :—"*Subversus est, cum sit proprio judicio condemnatus.*" "But others save, pulling them out of the fire," *i.e.*, such as are in imminent danger of perversion and ruin, like a thing cast into the fire, and about to burn, these save and rescue from spiritual destruction. "Pulling them out of the fire," expresses the immediate risk, in which they are placed. "And on others have mercy in fear." This is a third class, who had been inveigled by false teachers. On this class he recommends them to have compassion, and to show them mercy, "in fear," *i.e.*, by pointing out the fear of divine judgment, in order that they may avoid it in time, which is the greatest mercy. The words "in fear," may be also understood to mean, with a spirit of mildness and consideration for their weakness, mindful of your own liability to fall, as is recommended by St. Paul (Gal. vi. 1). It is to be observed that there is a diversity between our reading and that of the present Greek copies. Instead of three classes of persons, regarding the treatment of whom the Apostle here speaks, and three members of a sentence, as in our Vulgate, the ordinary Greek only treats of two classes of persons, and contains only two members in the sentence. It runs thus : *καὶ οὓς μὲν ἐλεεῖτε διακρινόμενοι, οὓς δὲ ἐν φόβῳ σωζετε ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς ἀρπάζοντες*—*and on some have compassion, making a distinction, but others save in fear, snatching them out of the fire*, in which there is no reference made to the first class of persons mentioned in our Vulgate, viz., "others reprove, being judged." In some Greek copies, however, instead of "have mercy," we find "*reprove*" in the first member of the sentence, as in our Vulgate. Beza testifies that he found the Vulgate reading in three Greek copies, and Œcumenius, as appears from his Commentary, evidently found the same reading. In both the ordinary Greek and Latin Vulgate, the second member is the same, except that in the Greek, the words "in fear," are added to the

## Tert.

24. Now to him, who is able to preserve you without sin, and to present you spotless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy in the coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST,

25. To the only God our Saviour through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, be glory and magnificence, empire and power before all ages, and now, and for all ages of ages. Amen.

## Paraphrase.

24. Now to God, who alone is able, and knows how to preserve you unto the end without sin, and bestow on you the great gift of final perseverance, and to present you free from all guilt and stain of sin, when you shall appear with exceeding great exultation before the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he shall come to judge the world.

25. To the only true God our Saviour (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), through Jesus Christ our Lord, are due, glory and magnificence, dominion and power, from all eternity, and now, and unto the never-ending ages of eternity. So be it.

## Commentary.

second member, thus: "*But others save in fear,*" &c. The reason, then, why three members are found in our version seems to be, that the Latin interpreter, finding in one Greek copy the word, "*reprove,*" and in another, the words "*have mercy,*" united these several readings; and thus made out a third member by fusing these distinct readings into one. The reading of the *Codex Vaticanus* runs thus: *και ους μεν ελεατε διακρινομενους, σωζετε, εκ πυρος αρπαζοντες; "Ους δε ελεατε εν φοβω. And some, indeed, compassionate, being judged, save, snatching from the fire, but on others, have compassion in fear.*" "Having also the spotted garment which is carnal." In these words, the Apostle instructs them to observe circumspection and prudence, in their charitable intercourse with the deluded followers of the Gnostics, to shun and detest their errors and their corrupt morals—which is the external garment in which they appear—as they would the garment of one who had been suffering from an infectious distemper. Allusion is probably also made to the command of the Jewish law (Leviticus, xv.), prohibiting all contact with the clothes of a person infected with leprosy, &c. Some persons understand the words in their literal signification, as implying the avoidance of all unnecessary communication with the heretics in question.

24. The Apostle closes with a magnificent doxology, opposed to the errors of the Gnostics, in which he shows from what source we are to obtain the graces necessary for a holy life and final perseverance, and in which is also implied a prayer that God would bestow these gifts on us. "To preserve you without sin," so as to persevere unto the end, "and to present you spotless," &c., which refers to their being presented to our Lord Jesus Christ, when he comes in his glory to judge the world. "With exceeding joy," expresses the great exultation and transport of the blessed in meeting their Judge at the last day, when, exempt from all sin, and freed from all liability to temporal punishment, they are about to enter on glory, both as to soul and body. The words, "in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," are not in the Greek.

25. To the only God, our Saviour." In the ordinary Greek, *to the only wise God,* &c. *Wise,* is, however, wanting in the chief manuscripts, and is rejected by critics generally. The words, most probably, refer to the entire Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." These words are not in the ordinary Greek; they are, however, found in the chief MSS., and now generally received. "Be glory," &c., express the majesty and high dominion of God over all creatures, and the consequent glory and honour which are due him.

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The End.

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