

ment of the Church of Rome. Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 2: 7 that the mystery of this iniquity was already at work when he was writing, and he evidently was referring to such characters as Diotrophes. (See "General remarks at 2 Thessalonians 2: ")

Verse 10. John expects to come and when he does he will consider the deeds of Diotrophes, namely, his opposition to the apostle. *Prating* means to use false accusations against John in an effort to defend himself. *Malicious words* are the kind uttered with the intent of doing harm. *Not content therewith* is said because he not only opposed John, but opposed the brethren whom he sent to the church as messengers. He also forbade others who would have accepted the messengers, and if they showed friendship for the apostolic messengers, they were excluded from the church.

Verse 11. This whole verse is a kindly exhortation for Gaius to continue in the good life that he is now following which will demonstrate that he is of God.

Verse 12. This Demetrius is not found in any other place that I have seen. He was a disciple well spoken of by all who knew him. *Of all, and of the truth itself*. A man could have a good name without deserving it, but the report for Demetrius was a truthful one. John adds his testimony for the good name of this brother by saying *we also bear record*. It is probable that he was to be the bearer of this epistle.

Verse 13. This has the same meaning as 2 John 12.

Verse 14. The usual friendly salutation from *friends*, just another affectionate title from the mind of the loving John. *Greet the friends by name*. This denotes a personal recognition of the faithful messengers who are coming to see the congregation.

Jude

Verse 1. The writer of this epistle calls himself *brother of James*, no doubt because of the prominence of James in the Jerusalem church, the man who wrote the epistle of that name. Neither of these men was one of the twelve apostles as is shown in remarks at James 1: 1. This epistle is addressed to *them that are sanctified* which means Christians. (See the comments at 1 Peter 1: 1.)

Verse 2. To be *multiplied* means the blessings are to be very abundant.

Verse 3. The definition "thoughtful activity" has been offered the readers for the word *diligence*. Jude says he used it in writing this epistle which indicates its importance, also the trustworthiness of him as an author. *Common salvation* means a plan of salvation that is offered to all people alike, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. *Earnestly contend*. Both words are from EPAGONIZOMAI, which Thayer defines with the single word "contend"; it means that Christians should "face the foe" wherever he is met. *The faith* means the New Testament in which the *common salvation* is revealed. *Once delivered to the saints*. This denotes that the plan was put into the hands of men (who are saints; Christians) and that once is as often as it had to be revealed.

Verse 4. *Crept in unawares* means they came in some underhanded manner to get advantage over the disciples. *Ordained* is from a Greek word that means they were predicted in old times, that they would do the things that would bring *this condemnation*. They misused the grace (favor) of God by making it seem to support their *lasciviousness* (filthy desires). It would be expected that such characters would deny Jesus Christ because he would condemn their wicked deeds.

Verse 5. The importance of reminders is again indicated, for these brethren had known of the history of the Israelites. The point is that it is not enough to start serving the Lord, but it must be continued or He will judge his people.

Verse 6. This has the same point as the preceding verse. These angels had a favorable *estate* at first, but left their *own habitation* (their proper domain). These are the angels that *sinned* in 2 Peter 2: 4, and they are kept in *everlasting chains under darkness* which means Hades; they will be judged at the last day.

Verse 7. *Even as* denotes that the people of Sodom and Gomorrha will also be punished at the last day. *Suffering the vengeance* refers to the future judgment day. The last word means a sentence unto punishment the same as 2 Thessalonians 1: 9. The destruction of those cities was for this world only and did not constitute the *eternal fire*, for that is to come at the day of judgment. But their destruction in Genesis was intended as an example

for the warning of others, and when that calamity came upon them they were given this sentence to be carried out at the last day. *Strange flesh* refers to their filthy immorality as described in Romans 1: 27.

Verse 8. *Filthy dreamers* means they had visions of depraved indulgencies which defiled the flesh. *Speak evil of dignities* is explained at 2 Peter 2: 10.

Verse 9. The reference to Michael is for a contrast on the same principle as 2 Peter 2: 11. *Devil disputed about the body of Moses*. All we know about this dispute is what is said here, but we learn from Deuteronomy 34: 6 that no man knew his burying place; that does not say the devil and the angels did not know. We are not told what was the point in their discussion; the important thing is the mildness of Michael in contrast with the false teachers.

Verse 10. This means they act more like beasts than men. (See 2 Peter 2: 12).

Verse 11. *Way of Cain* refers to his life of wicked selfishness, and they are compared to Balaam because of his willingness to be bribed. *Gainsaying* means contention for one's personal desires. Such a person is like Core (Korah in Numbers 16).

Verse 12. *Spots* is a figure of speech drawn from a hidden rock in the sea that wrecks the vessels. Jude says they will come to the feasts of charity (love feasts, 2 Peter 2: 13) for the purpose of *feeding themselves*. *Clouds without water* is explained at 2 Peter 2: 17. *Trees . . . twice dead* is another figure, indicating something utterly useless; the same is meant by being *plucked up by the roots*.

Verse 13. *Raging waves* is used because such things make great disturbances but accomplish nothing but threatening appearances. *Wandering stars* refers to the planets that seem to have no fixed position and these men are like that. *Blackness of darkness* refers to the "outer darkness" awaiting the wicked.

Verse 14. The Bible does not record this prophecy of Enoch, but Jude was an inspired man and knew what he was talking about. *Seventh from Adam* means he was in that numerical place in the genealogy of Christ. The *ten thousand saints* include those mentioned in Matthew 27: 52, 53. For complete comments on this subject see those at Romans 8: 29, 30 in the first

volume of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 15. This verse describes some of the work Jesus will do when he comes at the last day. *Convince* means to convict and punish these ungodly persons. All their *ungodly deeds* and *hard speeches* are considered as being *against Him*.

Verse 16. *Murmurers and complainers* are usually those who wish to walk *after their own lusts*. They speak *great swelling words* for their effect upon those whom they think they can deceive. Having men's *persons* (desirable appearances) in admiration. That is, they become "respector of persons" for their own personal advantage. The whole passage describes people extremely selfish.

Verse 17. Another reminder, but this time it is of things spoken before by the apostle. In referring to those who spoke before and mentioning *apostles* with them, it strengthens the conclusion that Jude was not one of them.

Verse 18. A *mock*er is one who makes fun of that which he cannot meet otherwise. The motive they have is their desire to *walk after their own ungodly lusts*.

Verse 19. *Separate themselves*. They put themselves in a different class from the faithful disciples by their wicked deeds. *Sensual* denotes being interested only in things that gratify the senses whether good or bad. *Having not the Spirit* because its teaching is against the kind of life they are following.

Verse 20. *Building up* means to edify themselves by the word which is the source of the *most holy faith* (Romans 10: 17). *Praying in the Holy Ghost* (or Spirit) means to pray according to its teachings in the scriptures.

Verse 21. All who *keep* the commandments will have the love of God, and such persons may expect the mercy of the Lord when he comes to judge the world.

Verse 22. People should be dealt with according to their ability, and also their opportunity for knowing right from wrong. (See Galatians 6: 1.)

Verse 23. *Save with fear* denotes a feeling of terror over the wilful doing of wrong by others. Those deserve no mercy especially and should be dealt with sternly in the hopes they may possibly be rescued, just as we would

snatch a person from drowning even if we had to grasp him by the hair of his head. *Hating even the garment* denotes that we should abhor anything that has been near fleshly sin. James 1: 27 says that pure religion consists in one's *keeping himself unspotted from the world*.

Verse 24. This and the next verse are a form of praise to the Lord that is most impressive. *Keep you from falling* will be done according to 2 Peter 1: 10. Christ will present us faultless if we serve him in this life (Luke 12: 8), and He will do this *with exceeding joy* to Him and us.

Verse 25. Transferring the praise to God directly Jude says He is *only wise*. That means that God is the First Cause of wisdom as He is of all things. *Glory* means grandeur and *majesty* means greatness. *Dominion* means domain and *power* means authority. Jude ascribes these dignities to God to last *now and ever*.

Revelation I

General remarks. In approaching this book for the purpose of writing comments thereon, I am resolved not to resort to speculation or guesswork. True that should be one's purpose regarding every part of the Bible. But the various extremes to which so many would-be interpreters have gone make it especially important to observe this safety principle with this book. One extreme has the position that the book is a deep mystery that the Lord never intended to be understood. The fact that it is a part of the Sacred Volume and that He pronounces a blessing on those who *read and hear and keep* the things written therein (chapter 1: 3) shows the error of this position. An opposite extreme is that it is "just as simple and easy as any other part of the Bible." At first thought one might not realize the evil of the statement, but it will be manifest by the manner of reasoning that is resorted to, in order to carry out what is thought to be required by the law of consistency. In pursuing such a course it is claimed that the prophecies of the book are literal and attempts are made to find such facts in the history of the world. This theory ignores the statement in chapter 1: 1 which says the book was revealed by being "signified" or by signs and symbols, which rules out literalism in explaining the book as a whole.

We should avoid both extremes mentioned above and seek an explanation that will be consistent with the facts and other truths that are available to us. A sign or symbol must stand for something that is literally true or else its use can accomplish nothing. We should understand, therefore, that the ones in this book point forward to facts that were destined to occur literally in the then future years of the world. Since God knows the future as well as the present or past (Isaiah 46: 9, 10) it was possible for Him to look forward from the time of John and see the events that would occur in the world, including those of the religious and political domains of human activities. It would be unreasonable to suppose that He would direct a man to write a book with symbols which were not in harmony with the facts of history. The business of the student, therefore, is to read the symbols and then seek the explanation in the statements of authentic history. That is the task I have set for myself in writing a commentary on this book.

I shall here write a brief outline of the facts of history, to show the general program that has been and is now and will be carried out, in fulfillment of the predictions that John was told to write in the language of symbols. Many of the specific and detailed incidents of history will be reserved to be cited as the particular passages are reached in our studies. Among the sources of my information are the following: *Ancient Monarchies*, by George Rawlinson; *Mommsen's History of Rome*; *Josephus' History of the Jews*; *Myers' Ancient History*; *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon; *Mosheim's Ecclesiastes History*; *Jones' Church History*; *Eusebius' Church History*; and many others. Due to the wide field of historical material, it will not be expected that I can cite the actual text of the sources except in particular cases. The Roman Empire was at the height of its power in the time of Christ and the apostles, and continued so through several centuries. Religion was a state affair, being protected and regulated by the government under the direction of the emperor. That of Rome was the pagan or heathen and its worship was in devotion to idolatry. Other religions were tolerated as long as they did not become too conspicuous and did not show signs of interference with the state religion.