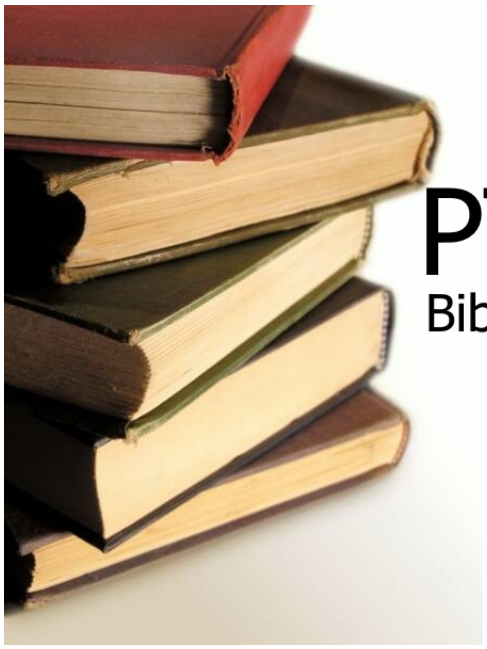

PT Butler
Bible Study Notebooks

Study of JUDE

prepared by P. T. Butler Th.D

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These Bible study notes are provided for your use in the preparation of teaching the holy scriptures. They were meticulously prepared over many years to serve the Kingdom of God and aid in the growth of Christians of any age. Please use them in combination with prayer and diligence to promote the clear and honest declaration of God's word.

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Teacher's notes

prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

JUDE

Introduction

Jude says in the salutation of his book that he was "servant of Jesus Christ," and "brother (Greek, adelphos) of James who was martyred when Herod had him slain." Most scholars believe there is good evidence that both Jude and James were "brothers" in the flesh of Jesus Christ by the same mother, Mary (Matt. 13:55; Mark. 6:3). None of Jesus's brothers believed in him (and thus were not apostles) until after the resurrection. It is not clear where Jude was when he wrote this book. It could not have been written later than A.D. 81, the year of the accession of the Roman emperor Domitian because Hegesippus, early church historian (ca. A.D. 110-180), says that two grandsons of Jude were brought before Domitian as descendants of David, but were dismissed as harmless peasants, and it is most likely that if Jude were still alive he would have been brought before the emperor. Some ask, if Jude was the brother of Jesus and wrote the epistle, why didn't he mention that in his epistle. Jude no doubt believed his relation to Jesus as "servant" was more significant than brother-in-the-flesh. In humility and for the sake of proper testimony it is only natural that he would prefer to call himself a "servant" of his Lord. Jude probably believed James was so well known that identifying himself as "brother" of James was sufficient to have his letter received with proper deference. James was undoubtedly the well-known James who was the Lord's "brother-in-the-flesh" and also the James who wrote the epistle of "James."

The Muratorian Canon, dating ca. A.D. 200, includes it among the books of Scripture and it was undoubtedly part of the Christian canon for many believers long before this. Some, but not all, earliest church fathers quote from it.

A feature of the book is the alleged use made of apocalyptic literature. There appears to be a quotation from the apocryphal "Book of Enoch" (1:9) in verses 14 and 15, and Jude 9 allegedly refers to something recorded in the "Assumption of Moses." The epistle also has "echos" from the "Testament of Moses." These 3 are apocryphal books , i.e., non-canonical, not accepted by ancient Christians as a part of Holy Scripture. It is not necessary to assume Jude quoted from these apocryphal books (see answers to questions #3 & #5).

The occasion for the writing of the epistle was the appearance among Jude's readers of an alarming Gnostic heresy and its immoral tendencies, rebuked elsewhere in the NT. Jude's aim was to save his brethren from its inroads. How he had received information about this is not told, but it is obvious that he was deeply disturbed about it. A word needs to be said about Gnosticism which was the prevailing apostasy in the church near the end of the first century. Several epistles refer to Gnosticism and condemn it as apostasy (e.g.

John's Gospel—especially the first chapter, John's epistles, 1, 2, & 3, the Book of Revelation in the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor, 2 Peter, and Jude). Jude's condemnation of the doctrines and practices of Gnosticism is the strongest. Jude traces apostasy from before the beginning of time (with the angels who "abandoned their own place") to the "last times."

Gnosticism was a "sect" within the church of Christ attempting to mix oriental and Greek philosophies with Biblical Christianity. It was, in fact, a perversion of the Christian faith. It almost destroyed the church in the 2nd century A.D. That is why John is so adamantly against it in the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor and why Jude is so strong in condemning it. In Gnosticism evil was identified with material existence. Anything involving the physical was inherently evil, this was everything in this earth, including the flesh of both animal and man. This meant that human beings lived in an evil world within an evil body. The flesh was totally corrupt and therefore, what human beings did with their bodies was irrelevant--they could practice a self-righteous, ascetic, monastic "rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body" (Col. 2:20-23) but that would "be of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh." Or, they could indulge their every physical urge, "eat food sacrificed to idols and practice immorality" (Rev. 2:14,20,24) and boast that they "had learned the deep things of Satan." Gnosticism led to such wickedness as described in 2 Pet. 2:1-22 which degraded humans to the level of "irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed" (2 Pet. 2:12; Jude 10).

Another doctrine of the Gnostics was that flesh was so evil that God could not possibly having anything to do with it—much less inhabit a fleshly body. Some claimed that God only symbolically came in the person of Jesus Christ. Others claimed that God was not incarnate in flesh, but he only came to dwell in the man Jesus for a short period of time during his life. They claimed that the "Logos" was a sort of semi-god which emanated so far away from the Creator that he inhabited Jesus only at his baptism and then left Jesus before he was crucified. That was because, according to Gnostic doctrine, birth and death were inseparably connected with the nature of human flesh that God could never consent to go through these stages of the flesh. The apostle Paul emphatically declares that "in Jesus dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 1:19; 2:9). John begins his Gospel by stating that the Logos was with God and was God, and that all things were made through the Logos, and that the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us and his glory as the only unique Son of God was beheld (John 1:1-18). The writer of Hebrews states that Jesus Christ reflected the glory of God and bore the very stamp of his nature (Greek, character) and upholds the universe the word of his power (Heb. 1:1-3).

Teacher's notes

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JUDE 1-25,

Those who are kept by Jesus Christ, must also keep themselves in the love and most holy faith. The Greek word translated preserved or kept here in verse 1 is teteremenois and is a perfect tense participle which is a verb meaning they (Christians to whom Jude is writing) had been kept and were still being kept in Jesus Christ. When you are kept--watched over--guarded by--by Jesus, no one can snatch you out of the Father's hand (John 10:28). However, there is a keeping that the Christian must do also. The Greek word translated keep in Jude 21 is teresate and is in the imperative mood. This verb means observe, as in do. The imperative mood means it is a command from Jude to the Christians. And how do Christians keep themselves? By doing what Jude exhorts and contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints! Jude found it necessary to exhort these Christians to keep the faith. The Greek word translated contend is epagonizesthai is an infinitive verb middle present, and it is from this word we get the English word, agonize. In its middle present form it means the Christians were being exhorted to do something precisely to themselves—agonize, wrestle, struggle, fight for the faith once for all delivered. Analysis of Jude 3 is important. Notice first, it is the faith, not just faith in general. The faith means the apostolic word and doctrine as recorded in the New Testament Scriptures (for the faith see 1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:16; 3:23; Eph. 4:5,13; Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:23; 2:7; 1 Tim. 1:2; 4:1; 5;8; 6:10,21; 2 Tim.3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:13; 3:15; Rev. 14:12). THERE IS ONLY ONE FAITH (Eph. 4:5) and that is the one preached and written down in the NT. Notice, second, the faith has been once for all delivered to the saints. The faith (doctrine of Christ) was delivered--not discovered! It was revealed--not thought-up by human beings. And it has been delivered once for all time. THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE ANY FURTHER REVELATIONS ABOUT THE FAITH THAT SAVES AND SANCTIFIES (i.e., KEEPS). THE FAITH IN THE NT SCRIPTURES IS FINAL, COMPLETE, THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Nothing needs to be added to it or taken away from it. The exceeding precious promises of Christ have granted to us all that pertains to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3-11)—we need nothing else! Robert Richardson, in his book, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, vol. ii, p. 495, quotes Mr. Campbell: "The Bible alone must always decide every question involving the nature, the character or the designs of the Christian institution (church)....On this, and on this only, can we safely found the Church of Jesus Christ, whether we contemplate its doctrine, its discipline or its government...nothing less authoritative and divine can fully satisfy the conscientious of all parties, or withstand the assaults of the adversaries of our most holy faith." Jude found it necessary to write to these 1st century Christians to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints because the best defense is a good offense! THAT WAS THE IDEAL OF THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT OF WHICH WE, TODAY, IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH HAVE AS A HERITAGE! The followers of Barton W. Stone, Thomas Campbell, and his son, Alexander, Walter Scott, Elder "Raccoon" John Smith and Moses Lard were called people of

the Book because they read it, studied it and memorized it and could quote large portions of it to their neighbors and friends in the denominations. There is little more important than educating the members of the 21st century Christian Churches in the propositions and principles of the 19th century Restoration Movement. Hardly any member of a Christian Church under the age of 60 knows anything at all about the Restoration Movement--unless the younger ones have attended a Bible college. We certainly hear nothing about it from the pulpits or Sunday School classes in the Christian Church of the 21st century! It is almost as if we were ashamed of it! I have a series of 3 or 4 short lessons on the Restoration Movement which would be extremely applicable and teachable to a modern Sunday School class. Just write me or contact me if you are interested.

Because Jude loved the Christians to whom he was writing! He addressed them, "May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you." v. 2. It sounds strange to an indulgent, self-centered, pleasure-seeking society of any century that someone could love another and still speak stern words of warning to them! But Jude is a realist and an historian, as well as a preacher of the gospel. Jude knew that history as recorded in the divinely inspired word of God contains literally, millions of words of warning against wickedness and apostasy! Certain men, about whose condemnation was written long ago (i.e., by other earlier apostles like Paul in Colossians, etc.) had crept (Greek, pareiseduesan, "enter by the side, or insinuated into") in among them. These creeper-inners were godless men who had made a pretext (i.e. rationale) for wantonness (Greek, aselgeian, lasciviousness KJV). They had persuaded some that Christian freedom meant no restraint of the flesh and its urges because the flesh was evil anyway (Rom. 13:3; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 1 Pet. 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:2). These creeper-inners had denied the Lordship of Jesus Christ. They were rebels. An extended description of them and their rebellious attitude and actions is found in 2 Peter the 2nd chapter. They were bold and willful and promised freedom but were slaves of corruption. Words of warning began in the Garden of Eden even before the fall of man! God warned Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And God has been warning mankind ever since not to eat of the tree of rebellion and sin against his deity and sovereignty! Christians are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (his character) and make no provisions for the flesh to gratify its desires (Rom. 13:14). These Christians to whom Jude wrote were aware once for all, and fully informed of the historical judgments of God against rebellion and wickedness. The OT Scriptures were full of such warnings. The Jews had suffered the wrath of God because they murmured and rebelled against him during the very act of their being delivered from the bondage of Egypt. Paul uses the same history to warn the Christians at Corinth against apostasy (1 Cor. 10). But, even more significant, angels, those creatures who surround the throne of God in heaven, are not exempt from the condemnation and wrath of God if they choose to rebel against him! (See 2 Pet. 2:4). Just when these angels sinned by not keeping their positions of authority and abandoning their proper dwelling we do not know. But we do know what happened to them as a result of their rebellion! They are kept by God in eternal chains in the under-gloom (Greek, hupo zophon, thick blackness)--Peter calls it Tartarus--infernal damnation. Jesus called it the outer darkness (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30)--in Revelation it is called the abyss or the lake of fire and brimstone. IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ALL WENT TO HELL! That is where apostates

(those who leave the faith) go! Evidently some of these creeper-inners had indulged in fornication (Greek, ekporneusasai, from which we get the English word, pornography) and even in unnatural sexual perversion (Greek, heteras sarkos, different flesh, i.e., homosexual acts, bestiality, pedophilia—Seutonius in his Lives of the Twelve Caesars, records that many Roman citizens and provincials practiced these abominable "different-flesh-acts"). Jude warns his Christian brethren about what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah as an example of such lasciviousness as these creeper-inners were practicing and advocating. The creeper-inners were behaving like animals, practicing animal instincts AND TRYING TO SEDUCE THE BRETHREN BY TEACHING THEM TO ABANDON THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS. How important is indoctrination in the faith (Scriptures) once for all delivered to the saints? IT IS IMPERATIVE!

It is not the identity of Michael, the archangel, that is the problem. Michael's existence is well documented in Scripture (Dan. 10:13,21; 12:1; Rev. 12:7). The problem for some people is the fact that only Jude mentions the event at which Michael is arguing (Greek, diakrinomenos, contending, and dielegeto, dialoging, disputing as in a court procedure) about the body of Moses. The documentation of this event is not to be found anywhere in the Old Testament scriptures or the New Testament scriptures, except here in Jude. As Don Fream said in his commentary on Jude, pub. College Press, "There is no cause to even hint that Jude received his ideas about Michael from the book of Enoch or from the Rabbinical traditions....God certainly had a message for Jude to deliver, and it comes as no surprise should we discover that Jude contains some information regarding biblical history or regarding God's will for us that is not duplicated elsewhere in the Scriptures." Some have suggested that the apocryphal book, The Ascension (or Assumption) of Moses may have had this event recorded in it. The first mention of this apocryphal book is by Origen (A.D. 185-254, i.e., 2nd century), and the earliest fragment now extant of it dates to the 6th century A.D. and there is no mention in the fragment of this event. There is no evidence, whatsoever, that in the 1st century Jude would have had The Ascension of Moses from which to copy this event. Later Jewish traditions refer to such an event--but they must have copied from Jude and not Jude copying from them! Jude's book was accepted as canonical by the 1st century church--therefore it had apostolic sanction as the inspired word of God and this event actually happened--but Jude learned it from the Holy Spirit, not from Jewish apocryphal writings!" So, what's Jude's point in relating this incident? It is to warn the creeper-inners about their unholy apostasy and railing accusations against God's faith once for all delivered to the saints. These Gnostics railed against God and his holy word such blasphemous things as even the archangel of God would not rail against the devil! The Gnostic's philosophy claimed they had knowledge that God had not revealed in the New Testament scriptures and they knew truth that the inspired writers of the whole Bible did not have. They presumed to add ungodly doctrines to "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" and that is making judgments that God never made! It is a crime against God to add or subtract from his word (Deut. 4:1-2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18-19)! The Roman Catholic Church has added traditions of the "Holy See" (i.e., the Vatican) to the word of God and made their traditions even superior to the Bible. Protestant denominationalism as we know it today is an addition to God's word--nowhere in the word of God do we find the church

divided in name, belief and practice as we find it today! And these denominational differences are actively perpetuated! While the practicing denominations may not be as lascivious as were the Gnostics, many of them claim to have extra-Biblical revelations and as a consequence believe and practice a Christianity that is foreign to "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." They, therefore, stand condemned along with the Gnostics!

There are three causes which directed these reprobates within the church to act so animalistic and wicked: (a) they reviled (i.e., they blasphemousin, blasphemed) what they did not understand, i.e., they did not know what the true doctrine of Christianity was and, as a result, they spoke evil of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints"--they slandered the true word of God; (b) they abandoned themselves to gain (indulgence of the flesh) and taught false doctrines like Baalam; (c) they looked only after themselves and paid no attention to any one trying to correct them. It is certainly surprising that the Christians of Jude's day would allow these carousers to participate in their love feasts. These animals and creeper-inners were blemishes (Greek, spilades, or rocks, reefs), twice dead (dead mentally and spiritually) carousing when they participated in Christian's "love feasts." These love feasts were some kind of a church supper as described in 1 Cor. 11 directly connected to the time when the Christians gathered to observe the Lord's Supper. Paul even admonished the Corinthians that there were some among them who were making a mockery of the Lord's Supper by carousing and taking the Lord's Supper when they were drunk (1 Cor. 11:21). There is a great deal of discussion of these love feasts in the writings of the early church fathers. Clement of Alexandria said the suppers were pitiful misapplications of the name agape that dishonored the good and saving work of the Word of God. Tertullian defends the feasts, saying they are "an act of religious services, permitting no vileness or immodesty, beginning and ending in prayer, they are a school of virtue rather than a banquet." Evidently, these love feasts could be good or bad depending on what the participants believed about them and how they conducted themselves. These creeper-inners and carousers were like rocks in a bowl of beans--they were like dangerous reefs to the ship of Zion! Where were the elders among these Christians to whom Jude wrote? Why were they not on the job shepherding the flock and excommunicating those who were flagrantly sinning and impudently refusing to repent (cf. 1 Cor. 5)? Perhaps some of the elders were among the Gnostics! It could happen and it does happen, even in the 21st century that some of the leadership of the church is among the carousers! MAY GOD, DELIVER THE CHURCH FROM UNGODLY MEN WHO CREEP IN AND BECOME ROCKS IN HER LOVE FEASTS. It is incumbent upon every congregation to choose from among them holy, godly, Scripture-believing men who hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that they may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it...to rebuke such false teachers sharply (Titus 1:5-16).

The Books of Enoch is a collection of apocalyptic (crisis literature), but apocryphal books written by various Jewish rabbinical authors and circulated under the name of Enoch. I Enoch is an Ethiopic version made in the Greek language from the original Hebrew text that had been written by the Hasidim or by the Pharisees between 163-63 B.C. II Enoch was written ca. A.D. 1-50. They are the best source for the development of

rabbinical doctrine in the last two pre-Christian centuries. There is no recorded prophecy in the Bible of Enoch saying what Jude quotes. Evidently the old patriarch, Enoch, did make a prophetic statement. There is no need to insist that Jude copied from apocryphal Books of Enoch. That Jude does include the patriarch's prophecy as fact establishes the existence of the prophecy, but Jude's quotation of Enoch's actual (but unrecorded) prophecy has nothing to do with the Books of Enoch as literature inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. Enoch got his prophecy directly from God. Remember, the apostle Paul quoted a statement of Jesus (Acts 20:35) that is not recorded in any of the 4 Gospels. Enoch was the 5th great grandson of Adam and father of Methuselah (Gen. 5:21-22). Of Enoch and Noah alone it is written that they walked "with God" (Gen. 5:24; 6:9). "Walking and talking with God" is said of those who lived while the Garden of Eden existed before the Flood. Jude's quotation from the mouth of Enoch merely establishes one additional bit of information about the ancient patriarch Enoch we would not otherwise have from the Scriptures. What Jude quotes from Enoch about God's judgment on rebellion, apostasy and licentiousness is stated in Gen. 2:16; 3:8-24; 6:5-21. So, there's nothing new except for the fact that Enoch preached it, too! The prophecy from Enoch is given to verify the fact of the coming judgment of God upon such reprobates. IT CAME OFTEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, EVEN AS ENOCH PROPHESIED IT WOULD! And it will ultimately come upon all of mankind like those Jude describes here just as surely as it did in OT times! Those upon whom Jude pronounced the coming judgment of God were definitely ungodly (Greek, asebeis, impious) people because Jude described them with that same Greek word 4 times in one verse! They were grumblers, faultfinders following their own evil desires boasting about themselves and flattering others for their own advantage. THEY HAD NOT ONE OUNCE OF THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IN THEM! They should have been delivered unto Satan, and driven out from the Christian community (1 Cor. 5:5,13).

Contextually, Jude is writing of something contemporary with the apostolic age. The last times (Greek, ep eschatou tou chronou, literally, at the last of the time) are easily determined, if we let the Scriptures interpret themselves. The last days (Acts 2:16-17--Greek, en tais eschatais hemerais, literally, in the last days, plural) began with the coming of Christ the first time, the redemptive work he accomplished on the cross and the establishment of the church. Every time the OT prophets predicted anything as to come to pass in the last days or in the time of the end, they were always (without exception) referring to the Christian dispensation--the first advent of the Messiah and his kingdom. There are occasions in the NT where the last day, singular, is spoken of to mean the second coming of Christ (e.g. John 6:39,40,44,54; 11:24;12:48; perhaps 1 Pet. 1:5). The apostle Paul defined the end of the ages as the Christian dispensation (1 Cor. 10:11). Paul wrote in Hebrews 1:2 that the last days are those in which God has spoken to the world through his Son, Jesus Christ. The apostle John defines a last hour (not the last hour) as lasting through the Christian dispensation (1 John 2:18). The following references unquestionably refer to the Christian dispensation (the Messianic age (2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:3; Eph. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:20; 1 Tim. 4:1). We can, therefore, look for creeper-inners who will seek to pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ for the rest of the time until Jesus comes the second time once for all (Heb. 9:24-28). Could this refer to the Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco, CA (the homosexual congregation)? IT

COULD INDEED! Could it refer to evangelical congregations where wife-swapping and all sorts of sexual and doctrinal perversions prevail? IT COULD INDEED!

Clearly, to pray in the Holy Spirit means to pray according to the will of God for if we pray for anything contrary to the will of God we are instructed that we shall not receive it (1 John 5:14-15). To pray in the Holy Spirit is the same as abiding in Christ by keeping his commandments (1 John 2:24-25; 3:24). It also means that when we abide in him and in his word we are Christians and we are given his Spirit (1 John 4:13). So, simply praying as a Christian according to the faith once for all delivered is praying in the Holy Spirit. If we are Christians we know that we must listen to the apostolic doctrine and abide in it--for if we do not we are not of God (1 John 4:1-6). Jesus told the apostles that if they would abide in him, and his words abode in them, they might ask whatever they wanted and it would be done for them (John 15:7). THE GREAT QUALIFIER IN THIS PROMISE, EVEN TO THE APOSTLES, WAS THAT THEY MUST HAVE HIS WORD ABIDING IN THEM. That is the parameter by which they, and we, pray in the Holy Spirit. They, the apostles, could ask for revelations of all truth, and expect to receive it because that was his word and will for them--but that is not his word and will for us! All redemptive truth has been once for all delivered unto the saints through the apostolic New Testament. There is, therefore, no need to pray any more for special miraculous gifts of tongues or prophecy. These were to validate the inspiration of the speaker and reveal to him things that had not yet been written down in human language by the apostles. When that which (neuter gender) is perfect (i.e., complete) is come, that which is in part will pass away (1 Cor. 13:10). The perfect/complete will of Christ for his New Covenant has come--that which is in part, (tongues, prophecy) is no longer necessary and those who claim them today are teaching what is contrary to the Bible. Praying in the Holy Spirit is to pray intelligently, according to the Scriptures, and not in some self-induced trance-like gibberish. If we can't find the human words by which to pray, we know that the Holy Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Rom. 8:26-27). John simplifies Christian doctrine about prayer in his epistles for the benefit of those who might be listening to the Gnostic teachings that contact with God had to be done according to their extra-Biblical "superior, mystic--esoteric--knowledge." BELIEVE ME, WE HAVE LOTS OF CHRISTIANS TODAY WHO ARE 21ST CENTURY GNOSTICS WHO CLAIM THAT UNLESS YOU HAVE THE GIFT (BY THAT THEY MEAN SOME EXTRA-BIBLICAL, MIRACULOUS, TONGUES-SPEAKING "ANOINTING" OF THE HOLY SPIRIT) YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY IN THE SPIRIT. That is all balderdash! Even all the 1st century Christians did not have the gifts (miraculous tongues, prophecy, etc.)--yet Jude is exhorting all Christians (even in his own day) to pray in the Spirit. You will notice that Jude did not (nor does any of the rest of the NT) say we to pray to the Holy Spirit!

The Greek word translated snatch is harpazontes and might be translated "seize". The same word is used in John 6:15 and translated by force in Matthew 12:29 and translated plunder, in 1 Corinthians 5:11 and translated "greed or grasping". Harpazontes is more emphatic and forceful than "pulling" in the KJV translation,. Of course, a person with a free will cannot be forcibly made to repent and thus snatched from the fire if they do not wish to be. Jude first said, "Be merciful (Greek, eleate, pity) or have compassion on some who

are wavering or doubting (Greek, diakrinomenous). Christians are to have compassion for those who are sincerely wavering, doubting, or disputing, and try to convince them that the creeping-in-Gnosticism is wrong, wrong, wrong! Some may have to be rescued by more severe means--like the man in 1 Corinthians 5 who was to be delivered to Satan for the mortification of the flesh (i.e., excommunicated so that he would repent). The New Testament (even the Gospels) are filled with verbal rebukes, reprimands, reproofs, and corrections. There are occasions and situations where Christians have to speak a truth that grabs the thinking and willing of a person! Jesus often scolded his 12 apostles to bring them to a more spiritual-mindedness (e.g., Matt. 16:23; 17:20; 20:20-28; Luke 24:25-26; John 13:6-20; 14:8-11, etc.). The apostles were not bashful about speaking with sarcasm, satire and just plain rebuke, to the churches in their epistles (e.g., 1 Cor. 2 Cor. Gal., etc.). THERE IS TOO MUCH "PUSSY-FOOTING" AROUND THE PLAIN WORD OF GOD IN MANY OF OUR CHRISTIAN CHURCH PULPITS TODAY--TOO MANY PREACHERS ARE AFRAID OF OFFENDING SOME "SEEKER" BY SIMPLY READING WHAT THE WORD OF GOD PLAINLY SAYS ABOUT UNBELIEF AND SIN! Some apostates and reprobates have to be seized, snatched, and emphatically yanked verbally from the fires of hell! NO PREACHER SHOULD EVER FEAR TO READ WHAT THE WORD OF GOD SAYS TO THOSE WHO ARE IN DANGER OF HELL! Jesus's preaching to the Pharisees and Sadducees, and Paul's preaching to Felix, Festus, and Agrippa should be our examples! Yes! We are to speak the truth in love--but we are to speak the truth. And in doing so, we may occasionally make enemies. Jesus did, Paul did even when he spoke the truth in love to Christians in Galatia (Gal. 4:16). Often, the most loving thing that can be done for a person is to speak the truth!

God keeps us (i.e., guards us) from the evil one when we abide in him. God will allow nothing to separate us from his divine love which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:37-39)--not angels, nothing in this life, not Satan, not even death. BUT WE MUST DO SOME OF THE "KEEPING" OURSELVES BY WANTING IT. Jude writes literally, "Yourselves keep in the love of God," Jude 21. The Greek phrase here is, heautous en agape theou teresate and significantly puts the word "Yourselves" (heautous) at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that WE must do our part in order to be "kept" by God. The verb in the sentence (teresate) is in the imperative mood and thus this sentence would read as a command, "You keep yourselves in the love of God." Paul wrote the Philippians that "the peace of God which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." The "peace of God" is an objective message in the Scriptures that Christ accomplished for us by his vicarious death (Eph. 2:11-22). "Peace" is also something objective God has done for us and gives us the assurance that everything is alright between us and God and thus between us and our fellow man. God's peace in which we are kept is a conviction (2 Cor. 5:14) based on what Christ has done for us. Get your concordance and look up the word "keep" in the NT (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:2; 2 Thess. 3:3-4; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12,14; 1 Jn. 2:3; 3:22; 5:2,3,21; Rev. 1:3; 3:10; 12:17; 14:12; 22:9) and see how often God's keeping of us depends upon our keeping of his commandments! GOD KEEPS US IF WE KEEP OURSELVES IN HIS WORD OF LOVE. And where does one find God's love? In God's commandments (John 14:23; 15:10; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 6). No one can snatch us out of the Father's hand, but we can (as is illustrated by Judas) willingly jump out of the Father's hand (will).

Introduction to Paul T. Butler Th.D

Paul was born in Springfield Missouri and graduated from Conway High School prior to enlistment in the US Navy. He began serious bible study with correspondence courses from San Jose Bible College. He later enrolled in Ozark Bible College and acquired his Bachelor of Theology degree June of 1961. He received a Master of Biblical Literature degree from Ozark in May of 1973. He received a Doctorate of Theology from The Theological University of America in October of 1990.

Paul taught at Ozark Christian College from 1960 to 1997. He also served many years as registrar for the college.

Introduction to the Sound Bible Study project.

The Sound Bible Study project is a cooperative effort of Christian educators and Jordan Media Enterprises LLC to provide the serious examination of the Scriptures for the conscientious student. All the teachers are experienced educators who have spent countless hours in the classroom on both sides of the lectern. The audio recordings and written notes are made available for those who wish to learn God's Word at a collegiate level but have been unable to matriculate. There is no intention to compete with the many faithful Bible schools, but rather to serve along side and strengthen both the student and the teacher for a stronger and more effective Kingdom of God that knows how to properly divide the Word of God.

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