**JUDE**

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**Chapter One**

**The Great Apostasy**

**Jude** is an epistle dealing specifically with “apostasy” in the latter days and with “judgment” that follows this apostasy. The present dispensation had its beginning in the book of **Acts** with the *Acts of the Apostles*;and the dispensation will end, as described in the epistle of **Jude**, with the *Acts of the Apostates*.The book of **Acts** introduces *the beginning* and progression of the history of the early Church (from the inception of the Church [in 33 A.D.], during the time of the reoffer of the kingdom to Israel [from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.]); and the epistle of **Jude** reveals how this history will *end* (almost 2,000 years later, as the dispensation draws to a close).

The exact positions that the book of **Acts** and the epistle of **Jude** occupy in the canon of Scripture are in perfect keeping with their respective contents. The book of **Acts** immediately precedes twenty-one epistles directed to Christians, providing a smooth, transitional flow from the gospels into the epistles; and the epistle of **Jude** appears as the last of these twenty-one epistles, introducing the book of **Revelation** by *the great apostasy* that precedes the removal of the Church into the Lord’s Day at the end of the present dispensation (**Revelation. 1:10ff**; cf. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:10**).

Apostasy

The word “apostasy” is itself not used in the epistle of **Jude**. Rather, this word is taken from the Greek text of several corresponding Scriptures appearing elsewhere in the New Testament, referring to “the apostasy,” seen as *a departure from the faith*.

*This apostasy*, *this departure from the faith*, actually began very early in the history of the Church, foretold by the Lord Himself in **Matthew 13:33**. According to this verse, set within Scriptures having to do with the course of the present dispensation, a woman placed *leaven* in three measures of meal (a substance used in the symbolism of Scripture to depict “sin,” “deterioration,” “corruption”). And this leaven has not only been working throughout the dispensation but will continue to work until the whole has been leavened, corrupted.

This leavening process provides the reason for the existing conditions in Christendom today, very near the end of the dispensation — the absence of the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom in the churches of the land. And this leavening process also provides the reason why, when the Son of Man returns, He will not find “*the faith on the earth* [‘faith’ is articular in the Greek text, showing a specific faith, peculiarly related to the Word of the Kingdom]” (**Luke 18:8**).

Relative to *apostasy*, Paul states in **2 Thessalonians 2:3**:

*Let no one deceive you by any means*; *for that Day* [the Day of the Lord] *will not come unless the falling away* [*the apostasy*] *comes first* . . . .

Paul, again in **1 Timothy 4:1** states:

*Now* [But] *the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart* [*apostatize*] *from the faith*, *giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demon*.

The writer of **Hebrews** calls attention to this same thing in **Hebrews 3:12**:

*Beware*, *brethren*, *lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing* [*apostatizing*] *from the living God*.

In the preceding verses, the words “falling away,” “depart,” and “departing” are translations of either the Greek noun *apostasia* or the verb *aphistemi* (the verb form of *apostasia*), meaning “apostasy.”

The English word “apostasy” is actually a transliterated form of the Greek word *apostasia*,a compound word formed from *apo* and *stasis*. *Apo* means “from,” and *stasis* means “to stand,” or “standing.” When used together, forming the word *apostasia*,the meaning is “standing away from.” This “standing away from” pertains to a position previously occupied and refers more specifically (drawing from contexts where the word is used) to *a standing away from* “*the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*” (cf.**1 Timothy 4:1**; **Jude 3**).

In the true sense of the word, no one can stand away from something with which he has never been affiliated. This can be illustrated by the use of the Greek word *apostasion* (neuter form of *apostasia*) in **Matthew 5:31**; **19:7**; **Mark 10:4**. In each instance the word is translated “divorcement.” It is one person “standing away from” another person. There could be no “divorcement,” “standing away from,” unless a marriage had previously occurred.

In like manner, no one could “stand away from” *the faith* (apostatize) unless he had previously been associated with *the faith*.Believers alone occupy a position of this nature from which they can “stand away.” Unbelievers have never come into such a position, and, in the true sense of the word, are not associated with the *latter-day apostasy* in Scripture.

Reason for Apostasy

Christians familiar with that which Scripture teaches will have no difficulty understanding why the present dispensation will end in apostasy. As previously stated, the entire matter stems from an incident occurring very early in the history of the Church. In **Matthew 13:33**, in the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, a woman took leaven and hid this leaven “*in three measures of meal till it was all leavened*.”

(Note also *the parable of the Sower*, *the parable of the wheat and tares* and *the parable of the mustard seed* which immediately precede *the parable of the leaven*. The first three parables show different facets of the results of the working of the leaven in the fourth parable [vv. **3-8**, **18-32**].)

All seven parables in this chapter have to do with the course of Christianity throughout the present dispensation and/or with events at the conclusion of the dispensation after the Church has been removed from the sphere of activity, with the last three parables having to do with events immediately preceding and leading into the Messianic Kingdom itself. Once this woman had placed leaven in the three measures of meal, *the course of Christianity was set*. The leaven would work in the meal throughout the dispensation, climaxing its work at the end of the dispensation with the entire three measures of meal being completely saturated with leaven.

“Leaven” in Scripture, as previously noted, always refers to that which is *false* or *corrupt*.The “*leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees*” was *false doctrine* (**Matthew 16:6-12**); and “leaven” associated with Christians, in like manner, can only refer to that which is false or corrupt in their lives (cf.**Exodus 12:14-20**; **1 Corinthians 5:1-8**).

Leaven in **Exodus** chapter **twelve**, because of that which it symbolized, could occupy no place in the house of an Israelite following the issues surrounding the death of the firstborn in Egypt; and that which leaven symbolizes must, in like manner, *never* be allowed to occupy a place in the life of a Christian today.

“Three [the ‘three’ measures of meal into which the leaven was placed]” is the number of *Divine perfection*.The number “three,” for example, is used of the Godhead — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is used concerning the time of Christ’s resurrection. Christ was raised from the dead on the third day, which points to the coming third day (the third one-thousand-year period dating from Calvary) when all of God’s firstborn Sons (“Jesus,” “Israel,” and “the Church” following the adoption [another triad]) will be raised up, i.e., *elevated to their proper positions on and over the earth*. In that day, *Divine perfection* in God’s plan for the ages will be worked out to perfection in its fullness.

God has forbidden the placing of leaven in meal (**Leviticus 6:14-17**), as this woman did in **Matthew 13:33**. Meal is made from crushed wheat. “Wheat” is sown by *the Sower* in **Matthew 13:3** (the Lord Jesus Christ [**Matthew 13:37**; **John 12:24**]) and has to do with *that which is sown in the field* in **Matthew 13:24** (the sons of the kingdom [**Matthew 13:38**]). The three measures of meal, in the light of related Scripture, could only point to doctrine emanating from the triune God. This doctrine, in the light of the context, must pertain particularly to “*the Sower*,” “*the sons of the kingdom*,” and “*the word of the kingdom*.”

Result of Apostasy

The woman in **Matthew 13:33**, a propagator of that which is false or corrupt, can only be associated with Satan and his false system of doctrine. This woman inserted leaven into the three measures of meal very early in the history of the Church, as evidenced by the rampant apostasy which began to exist in the early Church even during the first century.

The leaven has been working for over nineteen centuries, it is presently working, and it will continue to work until “*all* [KJV: *the whole*]” *has been leavened.* Scripture places the completion of the leavening process at the end of the present dispensation, exactly where we are living today. The latter days in Christendom, prophesied in Scripture, will be marked, not by great revivals or a widespread teaching of the Word of God, but by the completion of a leavening process, resulting in *apostasy.*

Conditions in Christendom throughout the dispensation are set forth in the seven letters to the seven Churches in **Revelation** chapters **two** and **three**. These are seven epistles to seven churches existing in the first century during John’s day, which portray the history of the Church throughout the dispensation. The leaven placed in the three measures of meal was already at work in these churches; and one church, the Laodicean Church (**3:14-21**), had, even before the end of the first century, become *completely corrupted* by the leaven. This church, the seventh and last of the named churches, depicts the final form of Christendom at the end of the dispensation after the leaven has permeated all of the meal into which it had previously been placed.

In this respect, the epistle to the Laodiceans corresponds to the epistle of **Jude**. As in 2 Timothy and 2 Peter, the apostasy had already set in during the opening several decades of the dispensation; but conditions in both epistles portray Christianity more particularly at the end of the dispensation (when the leaven will be doing its most damaging, end-time work), immediately before the removal of the Church and the beginning of the Tribulation (**Revelation 4:1ff**; **6:1ff**).

Several things distinguish the Laodicean church from the others:

1. Nothing good was recorded about this church.
2. Only a form of godliness remained within this church (vv. **15**, **16**; cf. **2 Timothy 3:5**).
3. Materialism had permeated this church to such an extent that it was spiritually destitute (vv. **17**, **18**).
4. Christ stood on the outside, not within (v. **20**).

To some individuals it is inconceivable that Christians can apostatize from *the faith* to the extent that they become as the Laodiceans — “*wretched*, *miserable*, *poor*, *blind*, and *naked*.” But this is exactly the biblical picture of the Church in the latter days, after the leaven has been at work for almost two millennia.

The “lukewarmness” of the Laodicean church in John’s day fostered the working of the leaven (v. **16**), for leaven works more rapidly in a place where the temperature is not too hot or too cold. And the “lukewarmness” of the Laodicean church of today (where the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom is all but absent) is allowing the leaven to do its most rapid and damaging work of the entire dispensation.

Because of this, apostasy is not only presently abounding but it will increasingly continue to abound on every hand as the Church moves even closer to the end of the present dispensation; and conditions wrought by the leaven within these lukewarm confines, will continue to rapidly deteriorate the mass until “fire” stops the working of the leaven after the dispensation has run its course (cf. **1 Corinthians 3:11-15**).

The message to each church throughout **Revelation** chapters **two** and **three** concerns conditions existing among Christians in these churches. Then, at the conclusion of each message is an overcomer’s promise to Christians within these churches, even to Christians in the most corrupt church of all, the Laodicean church: “*To him who overcomes* . . . .” (**2:7**, **11**, **17**, **26-28**; **3:5**, **12**, **21**).

Overcomers’ promises of this nature can only be for Christians alone, for only Christians are in a position to overcome and be recipients of the things promised in these two chapters — things which, in their entirety, are *millennial in their scope of fulfillment*.

(For additional information on the seven parables in **Matthew 13** and the epistles to the seven churches in **Revelation 2**, **3**, refer to the author’s books, Judgment Seat of Christ and Mysteries of the Kingdom.)

Apostasy and the Mysteries

*Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience* . . .

*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness* . . .

*Now* [But] *the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart* [apostatize] *from the faith*, *giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons*,

speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.

(**1 Timothy 3:9**, **16a**; **4:1**, **2**)

1)“*the mysteries of God*” (**1 Corinthians 4:1**)

Two mysteries are mentioned in **1 Timothy** (**3:9**, **16**), and both appear immediately before the reference to apostasy in the latter days (**4:1**, **2**). A “mystery”refers to *a truth previously seen in the Old Testament but not fully opened up and revealed*, and teachings within all mysteries in the New Testament move toward the same end (an end, in reality, toward which all Scripture moves) — the termination of this dispensation and the ushering in of a new dispensation. The “*mystery of God*” will be brought to completion immediately prior to the Messianic Era (**Revelation 10:7**); and all revealed mysteries, within their framework of completion, move toward this same point in time.

Mysteries in the New Testament begin with the “*mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens*” in **Matthew** chapter **thirteen**. These mysteries (seen in seven connected parables) provide a chronological sequence of events during and following the present dispensation, which will be culminated at the beginning of the Messianic Era.

Teachings within these mysteries have to do centrally with the present work of the Spirit among Christians (present dispensation) and the Son’s future work on behalf of Christians (during the Tribulation, during the last seven years of the preceding dispensation). And the counter-work of Satan has to do with the “*doctrines of demons*,” associated with the “*mystery of iniquity*,” as he seeks to subvert the work of God.

The mystery dealt with more than any other in the New Testament was revealed to the apostle Paul by Christ Himself via “*revelation* [personal appearance]” and is called in Scripture simply “*the mystery*” or “*the mystery of Christ*” (**Romans 16:25**; **Ephesians 3:3**, **4**, **9**; **Colossians 1:26**, **27**; **4:3**). This mystery is defined by Paul as “*Christ in you* [lit., ‘Christ (the One who will rule and reign) being proclaimed among you’], *the hope of glory*”(**Colossians 1:27**), pointing to that future day when “*Christ who is our life appears*,” and Christians will “*appear with Him in glory*” (**Colossians 3:4**).

This mystery has to do with the fact that believing Jews and believing Gentiles, forming the “one new man” *in Christ*,will, after being approved at the judgment seat of Christ, be the recipients of heavenly promises and blessings as joint-heirs with Christ in His kingdom (**Ephesians 3:6**; cf.**1 Corinthians 9:24-27**; **James 1:12**; **1 Peter 1:7-9**). This mystery has for its end *the realization of the Christians*’ *present hope*.

Another mystery is that of *Israel*’*s present blindness*, awaiting “*the fullness of the Gentiles*” (**Romans 11:25**). This mystery, as the others, has to do with events during the present time that will be completed immediately preceding the coming kingdom. The purpose for Israel’s blindness is to allow for “*the fullness of the Gentiles*,” and the purpose for “*the fullness of the Gentiles*” is that God may, in the coming dispensation, have “*a people for His name* [a people separate from Israel — namely, the Son’s wife, who will rule as consort queen with Him].”

After “*the fullness of the Gentiles has come in*,” Israel’s blindness will be lifted (**Romans 11:26**). God will then have a people for His name here on earth (*Israel*,following the nation’s repentance, conversion, and restoration) and a people for His name in the heavens (the *Church*,following this new nation’s removal from the earth, adoption, and establishment in heavenly places).

Another mystery concerns the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living “*in Christ*” (**1 Corinthians 15:51-58**; **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**). This mystery has to do with the removal of the saints (body, soul, and spirit) from the earthly sphere to a heavenly sphere, with a view to the coming reign of Christ from the heavens.

Certain things concerning the resurrection of the dead, the translation of the living, and saints occupying heavenly places were revealed during Old Testament days (**Genesis 5:24**; **2 Kings 2:11**; **Job 19:25-27**; **Ezekiel 37:12-14**, **23-25**; **Daniel 7:25-27**). But that which was not fully opened up to saints of preceding generations, “*the mystery*,” focuses on a people separate from Israel, comprised of those “*in Christ*,” who are to be associated with a separate resurrection, experience translation, and occupy heavenly places.

Other mysteries, such as those in **1 Timothy 3:9**, **16**, have to do with the present activities of the saints, with a view particularly to events during the coming millennial day. The “*mystery of the faith*” (v. **9**) and the” *mystery of godliness*” (v. **16**) have to do with the present faithfulness on the part of Christians, with a view to their receiving the “*end* [‘goal’]” *of faith*, *the salvation of their souls* (**1 Peter 1:9**; cf.**Hebrews 10:38**, **39**; **11:1ff**).

The word translated “*godliness* [‘mystery of godliness’]” in the Greek text is *eusebeia*,which is a term used of men alone, not of God. This word refers to Christians exercising “*piety*,” “*godliness*,” “*reverence*” in their lives.

Both the“*mystery of the faith*” and the “*mystery of godliness*,” as they relate to the salvation of the souls of those “*in Christ*,” were seen in the types dealing with the subject, though not fully opened up and revealed in the Old Testament.

In this respect, these types could not be properly understood apart from the antitypes. The antitypes would unlock the types, and the types would then shed a world of light on the antitypes. (cf.**1 Peter 1:10-12**). And, because later revelation was required to open up and explain this material in the Old Testament, these are termed “*mysteries*” in the New Testament.

2)“*the mystery of lawlessness* [KJV: *iniquity*]”(**2 Thessalonians 2:7**)

To counter the work of God within His revealed mysteries, Satan, in connection with his activities among Christians, has what Scripture calls, “*the mystery of lawlessness*” (**2 Thessalonians 2:7**, **9**, **10**). In **Revelation 2:24**, “*the depths of Satan*,” as opposed to “*the deep things of God*” in **1 Corinthians 2:10**, is mentioned as well. And the construction of the Greek text in both Scriptures is identical.

These opposing doctrines are literally called, “*the deep things of God*,” and “the deep things of Satan.”

*The deep things of God* reveal the things that God would have His people know; and we’re told that “*the doctrines of demons*” emanate from *the deep things of Satan*, as Satan seeks to mislead God’s people (**1 Timothy 4:1ff**).

Thus, God has His “*deep things*,” associated with His “mysteries” (cf.**1 Corinthians 2:7**); and Satan, the great counterfeiter, has his “deep things,” associated with “*the mystery of lawlessness*.”

Satan’s great objective today, within the scope of “*the mystery of lawlessness*,” is to counter teachings (through false doctrine) within “*the mysteries of God*.” Note how teachings concerning “*the mystery of the faith*” in **1 Timothy 3:9** are countered through “*the doctrines of demons*” in 1 **Timothy 4:2**. The “*mystery of the faith*” is to be held with “*a pure conscience*”; and in **1 Timothy 4:2**, out of “lies in hypocrisies and lying words,” demons, through their doctrines, “sear one’s conscience” (literal thought from the Greek text).

*Conscience* has to do with “spiritual awareness.” The word was used earlier in **first Timothy** concerning the spiritual warfare and faithfulness as they relate to “*the faith*” (**1:19**, **20** [the second use of “*faith*” in v. **19** is articular in the Greek text]). *The doctrine of demons* is designed *to scar one*’*s spiritual awareness*, adversely affecting one’s faithful, godly walk in the present world.

Satan, above everything else, does not want “*the mysteries*” proclaimed. These “*mysteries*” all pertain to some facet of the “*word of the kingdom*,” which speaks of that future day when Satan and His angels will be put down, with Christ and His co-heirs then moving in and taking the kingdom, i.e., moving in and taking over the government of the earth.

Christ has already shown Himself fully qualified to replace Satan as the Ruler over this earth, and Satan can do nothing about Christ and His present status. However, Christians are presently in the process of qualifying (or being disqualified) to replace the fallen angels ruling under Satan; and if Satan could prevent this from happening, he could prevent Christ from taking the kingdom, for Christ would have insufficient, qualified personnel to occupy the necessary positions of power and authority in the kingdom. Thus, in one respect, Satan’s present activity is directed against Christians toward this end.

The entire present dispensation is an interval during which God is taking out of the Gentiles “*a people for His name*.” And those whom God is removing from the Gentiles are the ones who are being offered positions with Christ in the coming kingdom. These are the ones who will replace the incumbent rulers. That’s what “*the mysteries of God*” are about; and that is also what “*the mystery of lawlessness*,” in a counter respect, is about.

The great *apostasy in the Church* during the latter days, brought into existence through the “*leaven*” placed in the three measures of meal and associated with the “*doctrines of demons*,” is being accomplished through one central means: *taking the truth of the Word of God and twisting*, *perverting*, *this truth* (**1 Timothy 4:1**, **2**). And this is being done with one central goal in view: *the destruction* (*the leavening*) *of all sound doctrine pertaining to the coming kingdom of Christ*.

Introducing Apostasy in Jude

*Jude*, *a bondservant of Jesus Christ*, *and brother of James*, *to those who are called*, *sanctified* [loved] *by God the Father*, *and preserved in Jesus Christ*:

*Mercy*, *peace*, *and love be multiplied to you*. (**Jude 1**, **2**)

1)“*Jude*”

Jude begins his epistle with his own name, which is literally “Judas” in the Greek text. The name “Judas” is derived from the Greek form of the Hebrew name for “Judah” (cf.**Matthew 1:2**, KJV). This was a common name in Israel during the days when our Lord was upon the earth, but this name, understandably, is seldom used today. Through the actions of another person named “*Judas*” (Judas Iscariot), the name has become a synonym for *traitor* or *apostate*.

Judas Iscariot, numbered among the twelve, betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Judas was appointed to the apostolate by the Lord (**Matthew 10:1-4**), and from this position he “*by transgression fell* [‘turned aside,’ ‘fell away’]” (**Acts 1:25**). Judas “*stood away from*” the other eleven. Insofar as the apostolate and the message being proclaimed were concerned, Judas became an *apostate*.

The fact that the epistle of **Jude** was written by an individual whose name has become associated with traitorous actions (apostasy) is no mere coincidence. Nor is it coincidental that his name is the very first word that appears in the epistle. The epistle of **Jude**, by the very name of the writer itself, begins with the mark of *apostasy*.

Jude was the brother of James (v. **1**), apparently the same as the writer of the epistle of **James** and a half-brother of the Lord (**Galatians 1:19**). In this respect, the writer of the epistle of **Jude** would be the same Jude (“Judas,” “Juda”) mentioned in **Matthew 13:55** and **Mark 6:3**, one of four half-brothers of Jesus (cf.**Psalm 69:7**, **8**). None of the half-brothers of Jesus were numbered among the twelve apostles, but two (if this is the same Jude from **Matthew 13:55** and **Mark 6:3**) were later singled out by the Lord to write New Testament epistles.

James, in his epistle, deals specifically with the great doctrine of *the salvation of the soul*;and Jude, in his epistle, also deals with this same doctrine, but from a different perspective — from the perspective of *apostasy* that will engulf the Church in the latter days (the same as Peter presented in his second epistle), producing a dark-age effect upon all correct Scriptural teaching pertaining to *the salvation of the soul*.

The fact that the writer of the epistle of Jude was apparently a family member of the Lord is itself, as the name “Judas,” not without significance. The latter-day apostasy, of which Jude writes, will be entered into by family members of the Lord — those within the family of God, the children of God, the saved. Thus, the name “Jude [‘Judas’]” and the apparent relationship of Jude to the Lord set the tone, at the very beginning, for the entire epistle.

2)“*Sanctified…Preserved…Called*”

Jude directs his epistle to “*to those who are called*, *sanctified* [loved] *by God the Father*, *and preserved in Christ Jesus*” (v. 1). Most of the better Greek manuscripts have the word for “love” rather than the word for “sanctify” in this verse, and this is the translation which one will find in versions such as the ASV, NASB, NIV, *et al*.

The word for “love” is in the perfect tense in the Greek text, indicating action completed in past time, with present, continuing results (results based on the past, completed action). By and through a completed act, *the love of God* has been manifested (past). God manifested His love at Calvary; and the perfect tense shows that the manifestation of this love, based on the Son’s past, completed work, continues uninterrupted. God is the One who loves, and man is the object of His love. God’s love is an active, continuing, ever-abiding love that exists during *all present time* and will continue to exist during *all future time.*

The recipients of God’s love will *never* be estranged from this love. Paul asks the question in **Romans 8:35**:

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ*? *Shall tribulation*, *or distress*, *or persecution*, *or famine*, *or nakedness*, *or peril*, *or sword*?

The question is then answered in verses **thirty-eight** and **thirty-nine**:

*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life*, *nor angels nor principalities nor powers*, *nor things present nor things to come*,

*nor height nor depth*, *nor any other created thing*, *shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*.

Nothing in God’s material universe, present or future, can separate Christians from His love. A Christian may appear in the presence of Christ *naked* and *ashamed* at the end of this dispensation (cf.**Romans 8:35**; **Revelation 3:17**, **18**), but this, although resulting in dire consequences, will not separate him from the love of God. Man’s unfaithfulness can have no bearing on God’s faithfulness (**2 Timothy 2:13**). A Christian can pass through any experience of life and pass out of life into death without effecting a change in the nature of God’s love toward that individual personally. God does not change, and His love toward His creature does not change. Based on a past, completed work, this love is *a present reality that will endure forever*.

The word “*preserved*,” also in the perfect tense, could be better translated, “kept.” Christians are “kept in Christ Jesus.” This is in association with our past salvation experience and its present, continuing results. The word “kept” is *unique* insofar as introductory remarks in New Testament epistles are concerned. Paul used words such as “faithful,” “beloved,” and “called,” but Jude alone used the word “kept.”

A similar word appears in **1 Peter 1:5** (also translated “kept” in the English text, but from a Greek word having a slightly different meaning):

*who are kept* [i.e.,guarded; lit., “who are being kept under guard” (passive participle)] *by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*.

Studying **Jude** in the light of this verse, it is not difficult to understand why *the guarding, keeping* power of God will be sorely needed by Christians in the latter days. Confronted with *apostasy* on every hand, Christians must be *guarded*, *kept by the power of God*, as they, “*through faith*,” keep their goal set on the “*salvation* [salvation of the soul] *ready to be revealed in the last time*.”

Not only were the Christians to whom Jude wrote “*loved*” and “*kept*,” but they were also “*called*.” The “*called*” were *the saved*. They had been saved for a purpose, and their calling had to do with that purpose.

. . . *God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth*,

to which He called you by our gospel [not the good news concerning the grace of God but the good news concerning the coming glory of Christ], *for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” (**2 Thessalonians 2:13b**, **14**)

Other Scriptures show that an individual must be “*called out*” of the “*called*” (cf.**Matthew 22:14**) in order to be a partaker of “*the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” The message in **Jude** is to the “*called*,” with a view to their being “*called out*” and realizing *the hope of their calling*, which is associated with *the glory to be revealed*.

3)“*Mercy . . . Peace . . . Love*”

Jude concludes his introductory remarks with, “*Mercy*, *peace*, *and* *love, be multiplied to you*.” A similar Divine order beginning every Pauline epistle, with the exception of three, is *“Grace to* *you*, *and* *peace . . . .*” “Grace” must always stand *first*,for, apart from God’s grace, all is *meaningless and vain*. When God deals with man in *grace* He considers neither man’s merits nor demerits. Grace is that which God is able to do completely apart from human intervention; and such dealings must always precede the manifestation of His *mercy, peace,* and *love.*

The fact that “mercy” is used in the salutations of **1 Timothy**, **2 Timothy**, and **Titus** possibly provides the reason for its usage in **Jude 2**. **First** and **Second Timothy** are epistles which also, to some extent, deal with apostasy (e.g., **1 Timothy 4:1ff**; **2 Timothy 3:1ff**); and **Titus** deals specifically with the “*blessed hope*” set before Christians (**1:2**; **2:13**; **3:7**), which has to do with life (salvation of the soul) in the coming age (cf.**Jude 21**). *Mercy* is “Divine compassion,” “Divine pity,” which presupposes helplessness and need. God is “*rich in mercy*” (**Ephesians 2:4**), and Christians are to “*come boldly to the throne of grace*, *that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*” (**Hebrews 4:16**).

*Helplessness* and *need* in the lives of Christians will be manifested as never before as Christians move deeper into the present, ever-increasing apostasy. And *mercy* (Divine help), *peace* (peace of God), and *love* (love of God) must be multiplied to see Christians safely through the dark days produced by this apostasy.