
Biblical Insight

Verses 17-18

- **Spoken before of the apostles** - Here Jude distinguishes himself from the Apostles.
- **they told you** –
 - See 2 Peter 3:3 and 1 Tim. 4:1, among others.
 - It is impossible here to tell whether Jude speaks of the 12 or includes Paul, but both would be true.
- **mockers** –
 - This word literally means "childlike," but in usage is "mocker," since a child will often "mock" others by mimicking them.
 - In 2 Peter 3:3 (a parallel verse), the same word is translated **scoffers**.
- **in the last time** –
 - The phrase "in the last time" (Jude 18) is repeatedly used in the New Testament in similar forms.
 - The phrase has brought about much discussion among both dispensational and covenant theologians.
 - It is used by writers who wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.
 - The period between Pentecost and 70AD was the Apostolic Age and appeared to be the conclusion of prophecy.
 - However, the "last days" were permanently postponed (an unforeseen event) after the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - After 70AD, God was no longer working with the nation of Israel, but His work was now exclusively with individuals (neither Jew nor Gentile).
 - The Age of Grace has no prophetic events which give an indication of its conclusion, so for those of us who live in the Age of Grace to know whether we are in the last days is fraught with challenges.

Verse 19

- **they who separate themselves** –
 - How does this align with 2 Cor 6:17, which instructs believers to "come out from their midst and be separate?" or even with the description of Paul who was "set apart for the gospel" (Rom 1:1)?
 - It is actually an intensification of the word that is used here.
 - The root word is *horizo* (from which we get *horizon*). The "horizon" is the ultimate separation point.

- The word used in 2 Cor and Rom 1 is ἀφορίζω [aphorizo], which is "from the horizon."
- The word in Jude 19 is ἀποδιορίζω [apodiorizo] which includes both the prefix *apo* (from) and (di) (through, or thoroughly). That is, these in v. 19 have thoroughly separated themselves so much as to no longer be part of the believing Jewish community. In this light, Ezek 14:7 is a good comparison.
- **sensual** - The Greek word is ψυχικός [physicos] - physical (natural) as opposed to spiritual.
- **having not the spirit** - After Pentecost, all believers have the Spirit. These men do not.

Verses 20-21

- These verses describe three activities to perform continuously while fulfilling one imperative: **keep yourselves in the love of God.**
- The activities to perform while keeping yourselves in God's love:
 - **building up yourselves on your most holy faith.** The Greek word for **building up** is ἐποικοδομέω [epoikodomeo], which has the prefix *ep* (upon) *oikos* (house) and *domeo* (roof). That is, "start at the bottom and work all the way to the top."
 - **praying in the Holy Ghost** - Jesus prophesied of a time when people would worship in spirit (Jn 4:24-25). We pray "in the Holy Spirit" but not actually in the presence of the Lord. To pray **in the holy Ghost** is simply to pray in the *absence of the physical presence of the Lord* but in the *reality of our spiritual presence with Him*.
 - **Looking for the mercy of our Lord** - this statement reflects both the early date of writing and the Jewish nature of the book. The recipients were not looking for the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) of the rapture but the **mercy** of the Lord toward Israel in the Second Coming.

Translation Comparison

Verse 18

- **mockers** - *The Message* says, "people who don't take things seriously anymore."

Verse 19

- **who separate themselves** - Most translations make this something similar to "cause divisions" (NKJV). That is, the men do not separate themselves, but separate others.

Verse 21

- **...unto eternal life** - *The Message* says that the things described in vv. 20-21 are eternal life: "This is the unending life, the *real* life!" This is the most unacceptable "translation" possible.