

Jude.

The author identifies himself in verse 1 as “Jude, a slave servant of Jesus the Anointed One and brother of James”. This makes him the brother of Jesus. Some declare that the Greek is too good for someone who was a peasant, but there is no evidence that Jude was a peasant. In fact, as Jesus’ brother, he would have been quite wealthy. As Jude was the younger brother of Jesus, it is likely that he died around or prior to 70 - 80 AD. The three main dates proposed for Jude are: (1) sometime during the apostolic age (c. 50s-60s), (2) the latter part of the first century, and (3) the first half (usually the first two decades) of the second century.

Jude was widely accepted in patristic literature, but doubts came about later mostly due to its use of the pseudegraphical 1 Enoch, a point commented upon by Tertullian who considered that 1 Enoch should be included in the canon.

Jude speaks of angels who came to earth and went after different flesh, that is, had sex with human women. There is a parallel account in 2 Peter 2:4-8. See also Genesis 6:1-4, “When humankind began to increase on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, those associated with God¹ saw that the human women were beautiful and so they took wives for themselves from any they chose. ... The Nephilim were on the earth in those times, and also afterwards, when those associated with God were having sexual relations with the human women, who gave birth to their children. They were the mighty heroes of ancient times, the famous ones.” The *Septuagint*, Philo of Alexandria, Josephus, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Lactantius, Eusebius, Ambrose of Milan, Jerome, Sulpicius Severus, and Augustine of Hippo all identified the “Sons of God” of Genesis 6:1-4 with the angels who came to earth and had sex with human women.

Jude.

1-2 From: Jude, a slave servant of Jesus the Anointed One and brother of James.

To: Those who are loved and invited by God the Father, those who have been held firmly by Jesus the Anointed One.

2 May mercy, peace and love be increased for you!

3-4 Dearly loved friends, while I was eagerly writing to you about the salvation we share, a necessity came upon me to write to you and to urge you to contend for the faith that was once and for all handed over to the people devoted to God. **4** For certain people have crept in unnoticed, people whose judgment was written down beforehand a long time ago. They commit sacrilege, and they use God’s favor as a license to commit vice. They disown our only Master and Lord, Jesus the Anointed One.

5-7 Although you already know all about this, I want to remind you that the Lord saved his people out of Egypt, but the next time destroyed the ones who didn’t believe. **6** And as for the Messengers who did not uphold their own office but deserted their own places, he has held them firmly in eternal ropes down in the

¹ Often translated as “sons of God” (but the word sons/children with a noun indicates an association with the noun and should be translated thus), this occurs only elsewhere in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7, where it is clear these are angels.

gloom, waiting for the Judgment of the Great Day.² 7 Just like these, Sodom and Gomorrah as well as the surrounding cities, which in a similar way committed *porneia* and went after different flesh, serve as an example of those who undergo punishment in the eternal fire.³

8-9 In the same way, however, while these dreamers⁴ on the one hand foully pollute the natural realm, on the other hand they reject realms of power, and on the other hand they slander visions. **9**⁵ But Michael the Chief Messenger, when he was deciding the dispute, discoursing with Slanderer-Liar about Moses' body, did not dare to impose an abusive sentence on him, but said, "May the Lord impose the penalty on you!"⁶

10-13 But on the one hand, these people are abusive about whatever they don't know about! And on the other hand, the things they do know about by instinct, like wild animals, these are the very things that cause their ruin! **11** Alas for them, because they have traveled on the road of Cain - they were spread out as they wandered off the path like Balaam did for a reward⁷ and they were destroyed in Korah's rebellion.⁸ **12** These are stains in your fellowship meals. They are the stains who feast along with you, with no scruples, looking out for themselves. They are clouds without water, late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots, **13** raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own disfavor. They are stars wandering about for whom the gloomy underworld of darkness is reserved forever.

² *1 Enoch* 10 says the main angel who was responsible was bound hand and foot and cast into in darkness where he would remain until the Great Day of Judgement.

³ Parallel account in 2 Peter 2:4-8 about the Messengers (angels, the Watchers) who came to earth and had sex with human women, including those of Sodom: "God didn't spare the Messengers who sinned but handed them over to Tartarus in ropes in the underworld's gloom where they are firmly held for judgment. God did not spare the ancient world, but guarded Noah, a preacher of justice, and seven others, when he brought the flood upon those who committed sacrilege. God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, reducing them to ashes and a sudden end, as an example of what's in store for those who commit sacrilege."

⁴ ἐνυπνιαζόμενοι, *enupniázomenoi*. This refers to the "certain people who have crept in", literally "dreamers" in some sort of a spiritual sense, not in our English sense of daydreamers or people in the process of using their imagination.

⁵ Jude quotes from the pseudegraphical *The Assumption of Moses*.

⁶ This sentence is packed with technical courtroom terms. διακρίνω, *diakrino*, "to decide a dispute" does not mean "to argue". It means to discourse with someone or to discourse particularly with the Socratic dialectic method, in which the conclusions were not drawn directly by the speaker, but were elicited by questions. In the first half of the 20th century it was thought also to mean "argue" but this view is no longer held. From the Greek we may conclude either that Slanderer-Liar was asking Michael questions about Moses' body, or Michael was discussing the point with Slanderer-Liar by way of question and answer to point out the facts to Slanderer-Liar in a logical debate. The "sentence", κρίσις, *krisis*, that Michael did not dare impose on him was a judicial sentence of a law court.

⁷ ἐπιφέρω, *epiphero*, "impose", was a legal term meaning to impose a legal penalty.

⁸ Balaam was offered money to curse Israel. Although he was a prophet, he used sorcery. See Numbers 22-24.

⁸ Korah and his brothers led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, and then were swallowed up by the earth. See Numbers 16:1-24.

σαρκὸς ἑτέρας, *sarkos heteras*, different flesh, flesh of another kind.

This is nothing to do with homosexuality, but rather, the sexual union of angels (“The Watchers”) with humans. Jude states that Messengers (angels) did not uphold their own office, are held with ropes in darkness, and just like these, Sodom and Gomorrah went after strange flesh (angels having sex with human women). The *Testament of Naphtali* 3.3.4-5 states that the women of Sodom had sex with angels. The passage here in Jude goes on to speak of “these dreamers” (see below note) and then then Balaam who used sorcery. In the same verse, he speaks of Korah who rebelled against God. Significantly, Jude states in verse 9 that Michael, the Chief Messenger (angel) did not dare impose a sentence upon Slanderer-Liar (Satan). All Jude’s statements are related. The context is the Watchers (angels) (see *Background Notes on Romans 1*) who came down to earth and rebelled against God’s ordinances by “whoring after” human women, and as a consequence God sent down angels with specific instructions to punish The Watchers. The *Book of Jubilees* 5 sets out the punishment by God upon The Watchers. Magic is also associated with The Watchers. *2 Enoch* states that the people of Sodom committed abominable acts, child-corruption, magic-making, enchantments and devillish witchcraft. The Church Father Irenaeus stated, “And wickedness very long-continued and widespread pervaded all the races of men, until very little seed of justice was in them. For unlawful unions came about on earth, as angels linked themselves with offspring of the daughters of men, who bore to them sons, who on account of their exceeding great were called Giants. The angels, then, brought to their wives as gifts teachings of evil, for they taught them the virtues of roots and herbs, and dyeing and cosmetics and discoveries of precious materials, love-philtes, hatreds, amours, passions, constraints of love, the bonds of witchcraft, every sorcery and idolatry, hateful to God; and when this was come into the world, the affairs of wickedness were propagated to overflowing, and those of justice dwindled to very little.”⁹

The 2nd c. theologian Tatian, *2 Apology* 5, stated, “God committed the care of people and of everything under heaven to angels whom he appointed over them. But the angels disobeyed this appointment, and were captivated by the love of women, and produced children who are those who are called demons; and not only that, they later subdued the human race for themselves, partly by magical writings, and partly by fears and the punishments they induced, and partly by teaching them to offer sacrifices, incense, and libations, as it was these things they stood in need after they were enslaved by lustful passions. And among humanity they sowed murders, wars, adulteries, immoderate deeds, and all wickedness.”

Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 5.1.10 stated, “To this also we shall add, that the angels who had obtained the superior rank, having sunk into pleasures, told the women the secrets which had come to their knowledge.”

Jude mentions the three elements that are linked in accounts of The Watchers, sorcery, going after a different flesh, and punishment of angels. Furthermore, it is

⁹ Irenaeus, *Demonstration*, 18. Joseph P. Smith, *St. Irenaeus: Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, London, 1952, p. 58.

accepted that Jude was heavily influenced by *1 Enoch*, a fact commented upon by Tertullian in the 2nd c. AD. Jude quotes *1 Enoch 1:9* in verses 14-15. *1 Enoch* 6-10 states that 200 angels (The Watchers) came to earth, lusted after human women causing “defilement” and producing progeny. *1 Enoch* states that the Watchers taught to humans, among other things, sorceries, enchantments, and the binding of enchantments. Tertullian, *Women*, 1.2 stated that angels fell through lust for women and referred to their progeny as a “more wicked demon-brood”.

The *Testament of Naphtali* 3.3.4-5 states that the women of Sodom had sex with angels. It states, “In like manner also the Watchers changed the order of their nature, whom also the Lord cursed at the flood, and for their sakes made desolate the earth, that it should be uninhabited and fruitless.” Note the term “changed the order of their nature” which is similar to Jude’s term, “went after different flesh” and to Paul’s statement, “for the females exchanged natural sex for what is other than nature. And the same goes for males too,” in Romans 1:26.

14-16 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied to these people too. He said, “The Lord comes with tens of thousands of his devoted people, **15** to carry out judgments on everyone, to cross-examine every soul among them who has committed sacrilege, about their sacrilegious acts, and about all the harsh things that sacrilegious sinners have said about him.”¹⁰ **16** These people are complaining grumblers going the way of their own wants and wishes. They boast excessively about themselves, and flatter other people for their own benefit.

17-21 But you, dearly loved friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One foretold. **18** They said to you, “In the last age there will be scoffers who will follow their own sacrilegious desires.”

19 These people cause divisions, and are soulless, as they don’t have the Spirit. **20** But you, dearly loved friends, build up your most sacred faith, praying by the leading of the Holy Spirit. **21** Keep yourselves within the sphere of God’s love, and receive the mercy of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One which gives eternal life.

22-23 On the one hand be merciful to those who are undecided – **23** on the other hand save others by snatching them from the fire - and on the other hand be merciful to others while being extremely careful, hating even the coating which has been foully polluted by the natural realm!

24-25 Now to him who is able to guard you from harm and to stand you in the presence of his splendor without stain but with great happiness, **25** the only God, our Savior through Jesus the Anointed One our Lord, be the splendor, majesty, forceful power and authority as it was before the ages, as well as now and forever! Amen!

¹⁰

1 Enoch 1:9.