

Paul's Letter to Philemon (c. 60)

Philemon

Salutation

1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer,
 2 And to *our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house:
 3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving for Philemon's Faith and Prayer for the Knowledge of Every Good Thing

4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,
 5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;
 6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.
 7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

Paul's Appeal to Philemon to Accept Onesimus

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,
 9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech *thee*, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.
 10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:
 11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:
 12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:
 13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:
 14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.
 15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;
 16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?
 17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.
 18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* ought, put that on mine account;
 19 I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it*: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.
 20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.
 21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.
 22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

Greetings and Benediction

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;
 24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-laborers.
 25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Jude's Letter to Those Who are Called (c. 61–62)

Jude

Salutation

1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:
 2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

Contend Earnestly for the Faith—Reject Those Who Pervert the Grace of God

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.
 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Examples of God's Past Judgment

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.
 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.
 7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after

strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

The Sins of the Intruders

8 Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

Woe Oracle Against the Intruders

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

Enoch's Prophecy of God's Eschatological Judgment

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Exhortation to Believers

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Closing Doxology

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

25 To the only wise God our Savior, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.

Chronological Notes

1) Philemon.

- A) "The date for Philemon depends largely on the date assigned to Colossians. The evidence for the close relationship between the two letters is as follows: (1) Colossians refers to Onesimus (Col 4:9); (2) both letters have Timothy as the co-sender (Phlm 1:1; Col 1:1); (3) both letters refer to Epaphras (Phlm 1:23; Col 1:7) and Archippus (Phlm 1:2; Col 4:17); and (4) both letters include Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke among Paul's companions (Phlm 1:24; Col 4:10, 14). Assuming the Roman provenance of Colossians, the letter should be dated to around the year 60."¹ As already mentioned, I follow Kostenberger's chronology for Paul's prison epistles and date Philemon to c. 60.

2) Jude.

- A) "The date for Jude depends in part on its relationship with 1 and 2 Peter, particularly the latter. A comparison between Jude's letter and 2 Peter suggests that Jude's letter was written first and that Peter in his second letter adapted Jude for his own purposes and circumstances. In light of the considerable number of parallels between the letters, a literary

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 623.

relationship between the two is more likely than the independent use of a common source by both writers. The probability Jude's having been written prior to 2 Peter can be illustrated by the way in which these writings used Jewish apocryphal literature. Jude included three such quotations or allusions: (1) to The Assumption of Moses in verse 9; (2) to 1 Enoch in verses 14–15; and (3) to an otherwise unattested saying of the apostles in verse 18. All three quotations are lacking in 2 Peter. It seems more likely that Peter avoided reference to these apocryphal works rather than that Jude added these references on the assumption of Petrine priority. Another factor is the question of a possible literary dependence between Jude and 2 Peter. If 2 Peter postdates and is dependent on Jude (a view held by most, though not all, commentators today), and 2 Peter is authentic, the fact that Peter died a martyr's death in circa 65–66 requires the early 60s as the latest possible date for the book of Jude. Since there is no good reason to question the authenticity of 2 Peter, and since it is probable that 2 Peter is dependent on Jude rather than vice versa, 55–62 as a date of composition is most likely. But it must be noted that the lack of clear internal evidence regarding the date of composition renders this estimate tentative at best."² I have chosen to date Jude to c. 61–62 and group it with Philemon in today's reading.

² Kostenberger, pp. 766–767.