

Paul's Letter to Philemon (c. 60)

Philemon

Salutation

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon, our dear friend and fellow worker,
2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your 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, always making mention of you in my prayers,
5 *because I* hear about your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints.
6 *I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective in the knowledge *of every good thing that is* in us for Christ.
7 For I have great joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Paul's Appeal to Philemon to Accept Onesimus

8 Therefore, *although I* have great confidence in Christ to order you *to do what* is proper,
9 instead I appeal to *you* because of love, *since I* am such a one as Paul, now an old man and also a prisoner of Christ Jesus.
10 I am appealing to you concerning my child whom I became the father of during my imprisonment, Onesimus.
11 Once he *was* useless to you, but now *he is* useful to you and to me,
12 whom I have sent back to you himself, that is, my heart,
13 whom I wanted to keep with me, in order that he might serve me on behalf of you during my imprisonment for the gospel.
14 But apart from your consent, I wanted to do nothing, in order that your good *deed* might be not as according to necessity, but according to *your own* free will.
15 For perhaps because of this, he was separated *from you* for a time, in order that you might have him back forever,
16 no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.
17 If therefore you consider me a partner, receive him as *you would* me.
18 But if in anything he has caused you loss or owes *you anything*, charge this to my account.
19 I, Paul, write *this* with my *own* hand: I will pay it back, lest I mention to you that you owe me even your very self besides.
20 Yes, brother, I ought to have some benefit of you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.
21 Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you *because I* know that you will do even beyond what I say.
22 At the same time also, prepare a guest room for me, for I hope that through your prayers I will be restored to you.

Greetings and Benediction

23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,
24 *and so do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, *and* Luke, my fellow workers.
25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit.

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

Jude

Salutation

1 Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to *those who are* called, loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.
2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

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

3 Dear friends, *although I* was making every effort to write to you concerning our common salvation, I considered *it* a necessity to write to you to encourage *you* to contend for the faith delivered once and for all to the saints.
4 For certain men have slipped in stealthily, who were designated long ago for this condemnation, ungodly ones, who change the grace of our God into licentiousness and who deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

Examples of God's Past Judgment

5 Now I want to remind you, *although* you know everything once and for all, that Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe.
6 And *the* angels who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling place, he has kept in eternal bonds under deep gloom for the judgment of the great day,
7 as Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns around them indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire *in* the same way as these, are exhibited as an example *by* undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

The Sins of the Intruders

8 Despite that, in the same way also these *men, because of their* dreams, defile the flesh and reject authority and blaspheme majestic beings.

9 But Michael the archangel, when he argued with the devil, disputing concerning the body of Moses, did not dare to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

10 But these persons blaspheme all that they do not understand, and all that they understand by instinct like the irrational animals, by these *things* they are being destroyed.

Woe Oracle Against the Intruders

11 Woe to them! For they have traveled in the way of Cain, and have given themselves up to the error of Balaam for gain, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are the ones feasting together without reverence, hidden reefs at your love feasts, caring for themselves, waterless clouds carried away by winds, late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted,

13 wild waves of the sea foaming up their own shameful deeds, wandering stars, for whom the deep gloom of darkness has been reserved for eternity.

Enoch’s Prophecy of God’s Eschatological Judgment

14 And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, also prophesied about these *people*, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with tens of thousands of his holy ones

15 to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they have committed in an ungodly way, and concerning all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These *people* are grumblers, discontented, proceeding according to their desires, and their mouths speaking pompous *words*, showing partiality to gain an advantage.

Exhortation to Believers

17 But you, dear friends, remember the words proclaimed beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

18 for they said to you, “In the end time there will be scoffers following according to their own ungodly desires.”

19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly, not having the Spirit.

20 But you, dear friends, *by* building yourselves up in your most holy faith, *by* praying in the Holy Spirit,

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

22 And have mercy on those who doubt,

23 and save others *by* snatching *them* from the fire, and have mercy on others with fear, hating even the tunic stained by the flesh.

Closing Doxology

24 Now to the one who is able to protect you from stumbling and make *you* to stand before his glory blameless with exultation,

25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time and now and for all eternity. Amen.

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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

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

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 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.