

Paul's Letter to Philemon (c. 60)

Philemon

Salutation

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
 To Philemon our beloved *brother* 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 of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints;
 6 *and I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.
 7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Paul's Appeal to Philemon to Accept Onesimus

8 Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you *to do* what is proper,
 9 yet for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—
 10 I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment,
 11 who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me.
 12 I have sent him back to you in person, that is, *sending* my very heart,
 13 whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel;
 14 but without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion but of your own free will.
 15 For perhaps he was for this reason separated *from you* for a while, that you would 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 then you regard me a partner, accept him as *you would* me.
 18 But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account;
 19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it (not to mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well).
 20 Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.
 21 Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.
 22 At the same time also prepare me a lodging, for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you.

Greetings and Benediction

23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,
 24 *as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, 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 bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,
 To those who are the called, beloved 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 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.
 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Examples of God's Past Judgment

5 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.

6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

The Sins of the Intruders

8 Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties.

9 But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

10 But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

Woe Oracle Against the Intruders

11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;

13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

Enoch’s Prophecy of God’s Eschatological Judgment

14 *It was* also about these men *that* Enoch, *in* the seventh *generation* from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,

15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their *own* lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of *gaining* an advantage.

Exhortation to Believers

17 But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

18 that they were saying to you, “In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.”

19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

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

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting;

23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

Closing Doxology

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

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

Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation La Habra, Calif. Used by permission. All rights reserved. For Permission to Quote Information visit <http://www.lockman.org>.

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

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

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 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.