

29.5

Keeping and Being Kept: A Motif in the Letter of Jude

In just twenty-five verses, the letter of Jude refers six times to a motif of *keeping* or *being kept*:

- The readers are kept safe by God for Jesus Christ (v. 1).
- Angels did not keep their proper position when they left heaven for earth (v. 6).
- The rebellious angels are now being kept in eternal chains (v. 6).
- The deepest darkness is being kept (reserved) for false believers (v. 13).
- The readers should keep themselves in the love of God (v. 21).
- God is able to keep them from falling (v. 24).

The overall impression is that God is in control of all things and that, unlike rebellious angels or false believers, the readers should accept what God has ordained. The goal is preservation, not innovation.