

Jude

When we read Jude it is obviously Jewish, its references are such that only a Jew could understand them and its allusions are such that only a Jew could follow them.

It is very practical, vivid and pictorial and not the work of a theologian.

All above fits the Judas [or Jude] who was the brother of Jesus and who had a brother who was called James. [**Luke 6:16** King James Translation]. This with **John 14:22** we have strong evidence that it was this Judas who wrote this letter.

Jude 1 [King James] *“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ:”*

Few things tell more about a person than the way they introduce themselves to others.

Jude was a servant [Greek “*dōulōs*” meaning a bond slave with no personal rights only duties toward his master] of Jesus Christ.

Jude also takes second place to his brother James in this introduction as author of this letter.

In this introduction Jude uses three words to describe a Christian.

Sanctified – Greek “*hagiazō*” meaning set apart for God to use and separated from the culture of this world and society.

Preserved – Greek “*iēreō*” meaning watched over in totality of life, spirit, mind and body. [**1 Thessalonians 5:2**]

Called – Greek “*klētōs*” to receive an invitation to partake of the blessings of redemption. [**Romans 8:28-30**]

Jude 2 [King James] *“Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.”*

God’s calling brings to us His mercy through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Peace of mind [**John 14:27**] and love [**1 John 4:19**]

Jude 3 [King James] *“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.”*

Jude had been engaged in writing a treatise about the faith that all Christians share. But when news of what was happening in the churches with the spreading of false and destructive teaching, Jude decided that this letter was of greater importance.

Jude mentions three things about Christian faith we should be aware of.

a) **It was delivered to us** – the facts of the Christian faith are **not** something which we have manufactured and discovered for ourselves.

The Christian faith originated in Jesus Christ Himself and has been handed down from one generation to the next by people who have faithfully recorded the words of Jesus Christ and personally experienced the dynamic and wonder of the words.

b) The Christian faith is something which was once and for all time delivered to us – by Jesus Christ who was sent by God the Father with that mission.

There is an unchangeable quality in Christian faith that doesn't have to change to fit the changing cultures of this world.

The permanent unchanging centre of Christian faith is that Jesus Christ came into the world, lived, died and was resurrected to bring salvation to all humanity. [John 3:16-17]

c) The Christian faith is something that has been entrusted to God's consecrated, sanctified people.

The Christian faith is **not** the possession of any one person but the possession of the true Christian Church.

It is **not** a matter of private interpretation [2 Peter 1:20-21] but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. [John 16:13]

The truth of Christian faith is the person of Jesus Christ Himself. [John 14:6]

Anything outside of the words of Jesus Christ is **not** part of the Christian faith.

d) The Christian faith is something that must be defended by every true Christian.

Each generation has the God-given duty to pass on the truth of Christian faith uncorrupted and unperverted.

The Greek word translated “contend” is “*epagōnizōmai*” meaning a struggle and within it we have the English word agony indicating that our defence of the faith will be a costly thing.

Jude 4 [King James] “*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.*”

This is the peril that Jude was facing, one from within the Church.

These men were perverting the grace of God into an excuse for blatant immorality.

The Greek word translated “lasciviousness” is “*asēlgēia*” which means the absence of restraint. Most people when they sin, seek concealment, having enough conscience left to have some feelings of shame, **not** these men, they proudly flaunted their sin.

These men were teaching Gnosticism which believed that only spirit was good and that matter was evil, so our bodies were essentially evil.

Such ideas led to believing that what was done by the body didn't matter so you could give in to all the desires and lusts of the body.

Also, since the grace of God was wide enough to cover any sin, so people could carry on sinning, in fact the greater the sin the greater the grace, therefore there is no need to worry about sin, grace will look after that.

The other thing being taught was to downgrade the importance of Jesus Christ.

The major false idea that was held by Gnostics that since all matter was evil, Jesus as the Son of God had **no** real body, He was only a spirit in the shape of a man.

This is the same problem that Peter faced that he mentioned in **2 Peter 2:1**.

How can such false doctrine be accepted, even today, by professing Christians?

Too many people avoid study and meditation on God's Word, the Christian Bible, because they consider that theology is dry and boring. Those who refuse to learn correct doctrine wholly based on the Christian Bible open themselves up to false teaching. [2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17]

We must fully understand the basic doctrines of our faith so that we can recognise false doctrines and prevent wrong teaching from undermining our faith and that of others.

[Please download and study our articles under the heading 'Doctrines Of Christianity' to help your faith to have a firm foundation.]

Today some Christians minimise the eternal danger they are in when they sin, believing how they think and act has little to do with their faith.

Those whose faith is genuine will show it by their deep respect for God and their sincere desire to live in complete harmony with His Word and the principles it teaches us.

Jude then gives three examples of rebellion against God and His Word, well-known to his Jewish readers.

Jude first reminds his Jewish readers of the rebellion of the Israelites after God had delivered them out of slavery in Egypt [history told in **Numbers chapters 13-14**].

Jude 5 [King James] *"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."*

This rebellion led to their being forced to wander for 40 years in the wilderness until they all died, never reaching the Promised Land.

This same rebellion was referred to by Paul [**1 Corinthians 10:5-11**] and the writer of Hebrews [**Hebrews 3:18 – Hebrews 4:2**].

Jude then gives the dreadful example of the angels who rebelled against their Creator.

Jude 6 [King James] *"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."*

We can read about these rebellious angels in **Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17; 2 Peter 2:4**].

Jude's warning is clear, it was pride that brought about the downfall of these rebellious angels.

Although these angels had been in the presence of their Creator God, because of their sin they would end up in outer blackness far from the presence of their Creator, who had given them existence.

The evil men within the Church were proud enough to think they knew better than the scriptures as recorded by the apostles under direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. [2 Timothy 3:16]

Jude 7 [King James] *"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, 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 example of Sodom is told in **Genesis 19:12-28**.

The sin of Sodom was unnatural sexual intercourse, homosexual intercourse, condemned by God. [**Leviticus 20:14; Romans 1:27-28**]

Please download our article ‘*Does God Hate Homosexuals?*’ under main heading ‘*Homosexuals*’ for a balanced scriptural view of the subject.

These men, whom Jude was exposing, were condoning all types of sin, including perverted sexual practices.

Jude also reminded his readers that Sodom ended up destroyed by fire from heaven.

Many people **don’t** want to believe that God will sentence people to eternal death by fire for rejecting Him and His way of life.

But this is clearly taught in God’s Word the Christian Bible.

Sinners who do **not** seek forgiveness from God will face eternal separation from Him.

Jude gives this warning to all people who rebel against, ignore or reject their Creator God.

Jude 8-9 [King James] *“Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. 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.”*

The word translated “*dignities*” is the Greek word “*dōxa*” has a wide application from those who deserve honour as humans to God who is to be worshipped. These false teachers scoffed at any form of authority.

Peter expands on this subject as he faced the same problem in the Church. [**2 Peter 2:9-14**]

Michael was an archangel engaged in a task given to him by God. The devil was seeking to stop him doing it, and was making claims he had **no** right to make.

Satan had also originally been an archangel but Michael did **not** speak against Satan but referred him to an even greater authority, inspite of the fact that Satan had fallen from his former position.

Jude 10 [King James] *“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.”*

Jude is saying two things about these men he is attacking.

a) They are criticising things they do **not** understand, because they are only understood by the Holy Spirit giving them insight.

Spiritual things do **not** have a place in their lives because of their teaching and actions.

1 Corinthians 2:14 [NIV] *“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*

They could **only** understand things on the human level and even then they were **not** using the human spirit [**Job 32:8**] that would have given them reasoning minds.

b) These men had then allowed the only things they did understand, demands of human nature, to corrupt their whole lives.

Without spiritual standards a person can come to a state where they **cannot** see the necessity of self-control, **cannot** see the beauty of loving relationships and purity has **no** attraction for them.

All that matters to such people is to satisfy their personal impulses and desires.

This is the position that these men had reached.

Jude 11 [King James] *“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.”*

Jude then gives these three examples of men who *“did their own thing”* [v10].

Cain – who murdered his brother out of vengeful jealousy. [**Genesis 4:1-16**]

Balaam – who prophesied out of greed, **not** out of obedience to God’s command. [**Numbers 22:2-41; Numbers 23:1-30; Numbers 24:1-25**]

Korah – who rebelled against God’s divinely appointed leaders, wanting power for himself. [**Numbers 16:1-35**]

These examples illustrate attitudes that are typical of false teachers, pride, selfishness, jealousy, lust for power and disregard for God’s will.

Jude 12 [King James] *“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;”*

In the early Church the Lord’s Supper was a full meal in which the bread and wine was shared, following the example of Jesus and His disciples who shared a meal just before Jesus’ crucifixion.

The meal was called a *“love feast”* and it was designed to be a sacred time of fellowship.

However these false teachers were joining these *“love feasts”* and turned them into a time of gluttony and drunken revelry.

Paul had the same problem in the Church at Corinth. [**1 Corinthians 11:20-22, 27-30**]

These false preachers were *“twice dead”*, they were clouds that did **not** give needed rain and trees that did **not** produce fruit, hence only fit to be burnt up.

Jude 13 [King James] *“Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”*

All these men had produced was like the unsightly litter left on the shore after a storm.

“Wandering stars” is referring to angels who had forsaken their rightful position [**Jude 6**] and who would end up in outer darkness [could be the black holes already in the universe from which even light cannot escape – my personal thoughts that I cannot prove!!]

Jude 14-16 [King James] *“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 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. 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.”*

This quotation is from a book called the *‘Book of Enoch’* in the Apocrypha, and is referring to the judgement of all humanity by Jesus Christ. In particular, the judgement of false prophets and teachers who have led other human beings astray.

Jude 17-19 [King James] *“But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who*

should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”

The “*last times*” refers to the period between the first and second coming to this earth of Jesus Christ.

Other warnings by apostles can be found in **Acts 20:29-30; 1 Timothy 4:1-7; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 2 John 7]**

What such false teachers lack is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Jude 20 [NIV] *“But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.”*

To “*pray in the Holy Spirit*” means to pray in the power and revelation that the Holy Spirit will give us.

The Holy Spirit helps us in our prayers. [**Romans 8:26-27**]

The Holy Spirit will teach us by reminding us of the words of Jesus Christ allowing them to guide our life on a daily basis. [**John 14:26**]

The Holy Spirit will guide us into a deeper understanding of God’s Word, the Christian Bible. [**John 16:13**]

The Holy Spirit as He works in us will produce in us the very character of God as “*fruits*” of our close relationship with Him. [**Galatians 5:22-23**]

Jude 21 [King James] *“Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”*

We need to have a constant close relationship with our Creator God through prayer [talking to Him] and study of the Christian Bible [listening to Him]. Also when we do sin, which we will being human, always repent and seek God’s forgiveness and love which He has shown us through the birth, life, death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.

Jude 22-23 [NIV] *“Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear, hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.”*

What Jude is telling us is that you cannot be an inactive Christian, we must allow the Holy Spirit to work in us but also through us in love towards others.

John 7:38-39 [NIV] *“‘Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

This is how we can be what Jude tells us we should be to other Christians and non-Christians. [**Matthew 5:13-16**]

Jude 24-25 [NIV] *“To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy, to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen.”*

The end of the letter is the same as the beginning, that we can be assured that God will do all of His part to keep believers from falling prey to false teachers. [**2 Peter 3:9; Hebrews 13:5; Job 14:15; Philippians 1:6**]

Jude encourages believers to remain firm in their faith and trust in God’s promises for the future.

We also are living in the “*last days*”, a time of increased apostasy, and are also vulnerable to doctrinal error.

Satan will increase his hostile activity against all Christians for he knows his time is now short [**Revelation 12:12**] and will act even more in his attempt to destroy us as Christians. [**1 Peter 5:8**]

We must **not** take the warnings of Jude lightly as we face Satan and his hostile world [**2 Corinthians 4:4**] in these “*last days*” before he and his ministers are silenced at the return of Jesus Christ.

Our daily prayer should include the very last words in the Christian Bible. [**Revelation 22:20-21**]