

# JUDE

**Author :**

A younger half brother of the Lord Jesus Christ and the brother of James.

**Date :**

Somewhere between 68 and 80 AD.

**Themes :**

Jude writes of those in the Church who reject the truth of Christ and teach their own false doctrines. By the inspiration of God's Spirit he severely condemns their teaching and their life style. A key thought is in v 3 – "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."

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1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called: 2 *May* mercy, peace, and love be ever increasing toward you.

3 Dearly loved ones, while I was fully prepared to write to you about *our* common salvation, necessity drew me to write to you and urge *you* to

**1** Jude means "praised." It is the same name as Judah in the Old Testament and Judas in the New Testament. There are several men named Judas or Jude in the NT. This one, it seems sure, was a half brother of the Lord Jesus (Matt 13:55; John 7:3). Before the death and resurrection of Jesus Jude did not believe in Him, but afterwards we see him among the believers in Acts 1:14; 1 Cor 9:5.

"Servant" - Rom 1:1.

"James" - Jam 1:1.

"Sanctified" - Acts 20:32; 26:18; Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2; 6:11; Heb 10:10,14.

"Preserved" - John 6:37-40; 10:27,28; 17:11,12; Rom 5:9,10; 8:28-30,35-39; 1 Cor 1:8,9; 1 Pet 1:5.

"Called" - Rom 1:6,7; 8:28,30; 9:24; 1 Cor 1:9; Gal 1:6,15; Eph 1:18; Phil 3:14; 2 Thess 2:14; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 2:9; 3:9; 5:10; 2 Pet 1:10.

**2** "Mercy" - Rom 9:15,16; 11:32; 12:1; 15:9; Eph 2:4; Titus 3:5. When believers were helpless in their sin and ignorance and weakness God saved them by His mercy. It was all an act of kindness and grace to the undeserving. Now God's mercy continues to be available to us, and this mercy of God is the foundation of peace.

"Peace" - Rom 1:7. The meaning is peace of mind and heart that comes from a right relationship to God, and harmony among believers.

"Love" - divine love (agape - see John 13:34; Rom 5:5; 1 Cor 13:1; Eph 3:17). This comes because we have received God's mercy and peace. It is the greatest of all qualities (1 Cor 13:13). Its source is God, who is love (1 John 4:7,8).

**3** "Salvation" - note at Rom 1:16. Jude wanted to write about something very great and glorious. But he saw the need of writing on another subject not so pleasant as that.

"Necessity drew me" - the need of the church demanded it and there was a great danger threatening the Christian community. God's Spirit was at work in him and compelling him.

"Contend" - the Greek word suggests combat on a battle field, which is where believers are. Compare Eph 6:11-18; 1 Tim 6:12. On the earth in general and in the Christian world there is a war going on concerning the truth God has revealed.

"The faith" - Jude does not mean here the inner experience of faith, but the body of truth God has given through Christ. He and His apostles taught us what we should believe and how we should live. This is "the

faith." It is not enough to hold right doctrine (important as that is). We must also live according to these doctrines (Eph 4:1; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 2:12). Jude's emphasis in this letter is not on doctrine alone, but on right behavior and right doctrine together. The error he warns about is unholiness which comes out of false doctrine.

4 For there are certain men *who have* crept in secretly, who were long before *this* marked out for this condemnation. *They are* ungodly men *who have* turned the grace of our God into uncontrolled lust, and denied the only Lord God and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

5 So I want to remind you, for you once *came*

"Once delivered" - the "faith" God has revealed through Christ and His apostles is complete. Nothing should be added to it, nothing taken away. Compare Deut 4:2; Prov 30:6; Rev 22:18,19. God will not make any further revelation of any truth to be added to "the faith", not through anyone, anywhere. Any new doctrine is sure to be false. God has given the truth to believers to keep, practice and defend when it is attacked. Compare 1 Cor 4:1; 1 Thess 2:4; 1 Tim 1:11; 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14.

"Saints" - Rom 1:7.

**4** Here was the danger Jude saw. A terrible heresy had been introduced among Christians. That false teaching was this: since salvation comes entirely by God's grace and does not in any way depend on good works, Christians may live as they please; however they live, whatever they do, grace will forgive them. Compare Rom 6:1. This false teaching still exists today.

"Secretly" - 2 Pet 2:1. Often false teachers do not come openly and honestly. They slip in like thieves. They mix their errors with truth to make it more deceptive.

"Ungodly" - they professed to be Christians and followers of Christ but their behavior proved otherwise.

"Turned. . . grace. . . into uncontrolled lust" - it seems that some professing Christians in Corinth had this same idea (1 Cor 5:1,2; 6:9,12). In Titus 2:11-14 see what God's grace really teaches. See also Eph 4:19-24.

"Denied" - 2 Pet 2:1. Denial can be by actions as well as by word. These men rejected Christ's Lordship over them, but they may have said they believed He is the Lord.

"Only Master" - the Greek word here is "despotes" and means owner and possessor of absolute authority. In Luke 2:28,29 and Acts 4:24 it is a title given to God. Since Christ is our "only" Sovereign this means that Christ is God, as the whole last phrase of this verse makes clear. The above translation brings this out accurately.

"Our God and Lord" - compare 2 Pet 1:1.

**5** "Remind" - 2 Pet 1:12-15.

"The Lord" - this is a title (Greek - kurios) given to Jesus everywhere in the New Testa-

to know this, that the Lord, after rescuing the people out of the land of Egypt, destroyed those who did not believe.

6 And the angels who did not keep their first position but left their own dwelling place, he has kept in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them, *which* in the same way gave themselves up to sexual immorality and went after unnatural flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 In a similar way also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of honored ones. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, when

ment. And Jude calls Him Lord in the preceding verse. In this one he says He delivered His people from Egypt. In the historical record it was Jehovah who delivered the people. See Ex 3:7-12; 18:10; 19:2. This means that Jude is equating Jesus with Jehovah. See note and references on "Lord" at Luke 2:11.

"Destroyed" – Heb 3:16-19; 1 Cor 10:1-6; Num 14:11,22,23; Ps 78:22,32,33; 106:15,18,24-26,29.

6 "First position" – 2 Pet 2:4.

"Dwelling place" – heaven.

"Day" – the day of final judgment (Rev 20:11-15).

7 "Just as. . . in the same way" – this seems to mean that the sin of the people of Sodom mentioned here and the sin of the angels in v 6 was the same sin. Compare Gen 6:1-4.

"Unnatural" – Genesis chapter 19.

"Fire" – 2 Pet 2:6; Mal 4:1; Matt 3:10,12; 25:41.

8 "Dreamers" – they were out of touch with reality, behaving as if they were stupefied with lust. The word dreamers may suggest also that these men claimed to get revelations from God in visions (Deut 13:1-3; Jer 23:25,26).

"Defile the flesh" – Rom 1:24; 1 Cor 6:18.

"Reject authority. . . honored ones or "heavenly beings" – 2 Pet 2:10.

9 "Michael" – Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; Rev 12:7. An archangel is an angel of the highest rank.

"Devil" – note at Matt 4:1.

"About the body of Moses" – this event is not recorded in the Bible. We do not know what this dispute was about. It is not important for us to know – Deut 29:29.

"The Lord rebuke you" – see how careful Michael was in his language even when speaking to Satan. He left judgment and condemnation of others in God's hands, as we should do.

10 "Speak evil of" – 2 Pet 2:12. This shows their arrogance and wickedness.

"What they know naturally" – they know nothing of spiritual things, only the things of the body.

he contended with the devil, disputing about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him an abusive accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." 10 But these speak evil of those things which they do not know; but what they know naturally, like brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe to them! for they have gone in the way of Cain and for reward have run greedily after the error of Balaam, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are blots in your love feasts, when they feast with you, looking after themselves without fear. *They are* clouds without water, carried about by winds; trees whose fruit withers, without

11 "Woe" – Isa 3:11; Matt 18:7.

"Cain" – see Gen 4:1-12. The way of Cain is to ignore God's instructions about sacrifice, and to hate those whom God accepts. See also Heb 11:4; 1 John 3:12.

"Balaam's error" – see 2 Pet 2:15.

"The rebellion of Korah" – Numbers chapter 16. These godless men bring destruction on themselves, as Korah did, by rebelling against God. In this verse we see that at the heart of these godless men are three things – hatred of the truth and those who practice it, greed for anything they can get, and rebellion against God.

12 "Love feasts" – note at 1 Cor 11:20-22.

"Looking after themselves" – greed, selfishness, and lack of consideration for others was at the heart of all they did. Compare Ezek 34:1-10; Jer 10:21; 12:10; 23:1.

"Without fear" – their conscience does not bother them, God's warnings are as nothing to them. Compare 1 Tim 4:2.

"Without water" – like clouds which promise refreshing showers and give nothing (Prov 25:14).

"Carried about" – 2 Pet 2:17.

"Without fruit" – without good fruit (they produce plenty of bad). Compare Matt 21:18,19; Luke 13:6,7.

"Twice dead" – dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1), with their death confirmed by the kind of life they live (1 Tim 5:6). They were spiritually dead and dead to the truth they had rejected. And they were heading for the second death (Rev 20:14). Jude indicates that they brought it on themselves as surely as they exist. By their arrogance, unbelief and rebellion they cut themselves off from the possibility of eternal life in Christ. They were like trees not planted by God, so they were lacking spiritual life; and they were uprooted so there would never be any hope of spiritual life.

"Plucked up by the roots" – see Matt 15:13. God had not planted these people. They had no contact with anything that could produce good fruit in their lives. They were the exact opposite of what true believers should be, and, to some extent, are – Eph 3:17; Col 2:7.

fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these *people*, saying, "Look, the Lord is coming with ten thousands of his saints, 15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all the ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed *in an* ungodly way, and of all their hard *words* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking after their own lusts. And their mouth speaks great swelling *words*, flattering people for the sake of *getting some* advantage.

17 But, dearly loved ones, remember the words which were spoken previously by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, 18 how they told you there

would be mockers in the last time, who would walk after their own ungodly desires. 19 These are those who separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit.

20 But you, dearly loved ones, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

22 And have compassion on some *people*, making a distinction; 23 and others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 to God our Saviour, *who alone is wise, be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

**13** "Raging waves" – restless, tossed by their raging desires. Compare Isa 57:20,21.

"Foaming out their own shame" – the filthiness of their hearts coming out in filthy actions.

"Wandering stars" – they have no fixed orbits around Christ, and are not heading for the goal set before Christians (Phil 3:14).

"Darkness" – 2 Pet 2:17; compare Phil 2:15; Dan 12:3.

**14,15** Gen 5:18,21-14. This quotation is not from the Bible. The Holy Spirit inspired Jude and gave him words spoken by Enoch thousands of years before. (There is a book called the "Book of Enoch", but it is not inspired by God and it contains some ridiculous legends. It cannot be proved that Jude used it for this quotation). Apart from Jude we would not know that Enoch was a prophet. Ungodliness was exceedingly common in Enoch's day, as it is in ours. So he condemns it very strongly.

"These people" – Enoch's prophecy was about people in this age.

"Execute judgment" – Acts 17:31.

**16** There are five marks of these godless men given in this verse.

"Flattering people for . . . advantage" – they are not straight and truthful in anything. They tell others what they think they would like to hear. Their aim is to get some benefit or profit. Do we not see this on every hand today? On flattery see Job 32:21,22; Ps 12:2,3; Prov 26:28; 28:33; 29:5; Rom 16:18; 1 Thess 2:5.

**17** "Remember" – v 5; 2 Pet 1:12-15.

**18** Compare 2 Pet 3:3.

**19** "Not having the Spirit" – again he tells us that these professing Christians are not real Christians at all. See Rom 8:9. Observe that not all people even in churches have God's Spirit. See John 14:17; Rom 8:9,16; Eph 4:18.

**20** Jude now shows how believers can be

safe from apostasy and apostates.

"Building up yourselves" – compare Acts 20:32; Rom 15:2; Eph 4:12,13; 1 Thess 5:11 – it is by studying God's Word and putting the truth into practice that we can build ourselves up. It is the responsibility of every believer to do this.

"Praying in the Holy Spirit" – Eph 6:18.

**21** Christ keeps believers in a state of salvation (v 1). Believers must keep themselves in God's love. This can be done only by obedience to His Word – John 14:21,23; 15:9,10.

"Mercy" – no matter how much we obey and keep ourselves in a condition where God can express His love toward us, the fact is our salvation from beginning to end is all of His mercy.

"Eternal life" – here means the final entering into that which believers already have (John 5:24; Titus 1:2; 3:7; 1 Pet 1:5).

**22** Do not be hard and unsympathetic toward them. Try to understand them and help them to believe.

**23** "Others" – we have to be able to discern the condition of people and act accordingly. Some are struggling with doubts and want to believe. Others are in grave danger and need swift action to save them. They are in danger of the fire of God's judgment. With some others we should fear lest we be dragged down into their sins (compare Gal 6:1). We should show love to the sinner but hate his sin.

**24,25** One of the greatest doxologies in the Bible.

"Keep you from falling" – or "stumbling" – God can keep us from either one – Ps 37:23,24; Rom 8:37.

"Present you faultless" – Eph 1:4; 5:26,27.

"Exceeding joy" – instead of sorrow over many failures.

"Who alone is wise" – Rom 11:36; 16:27.