

# The Letter of **JUDE**

## Theme:

*“Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” Jude 3*

## Why?

*“For certain men have crept in unnoticed ...ungodly men...who reject authority...corrupt...are rebellious...complainers...flatterers...mockers...sensual...and cause divisions...” Jude 4-19*

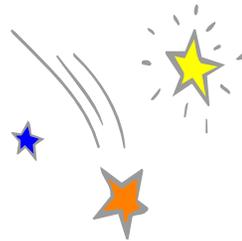
## False teachers are like...



*“clouds without water”*



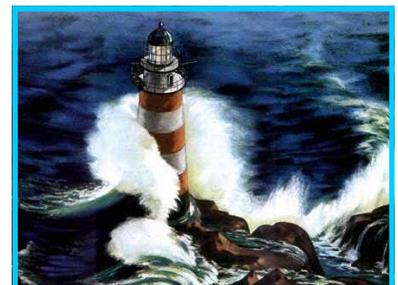
*“carried about by the winds”*



*“wandering stars”*



*“autumn trees without fruit”*



*“raging waves of the sea”*

# THE LETTER OF JUDE

## An Introduction

### I. General **Remarks** About Jude:

- A. Jude is one of the *general epistles* dealing primarily with false teachers (4-6).
  - 1. It resembles 2 Peter in this respect (2 Peter 2:1-22).
  - 2. Jude urges them to “contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” Jude 3.
  - 3. His language is extremely strong against heretics.
  - 4. He denounces and warns rather than refuting them.
- B. Jude also pleads with them to maintain their life with God (20-25).
  - 1. He urges them to build their faith.
  - 2. He urges them to keep themselves in the love of God.
  - 3. He urges them to have compassion.
  - 4. He urges them to save others.
  - 5. He urges them not to be defiled.

### II. The **Author** of Jude:

- A. The letter itself testifies that it was written by “Jude...brother of James,” v. 1.
  - 1. James was one of the brothers of Jesus.
  - 2. Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 indicate that Jesus had a brother by the name of Jude.
  - 3. There are six other Judes or Judases referred to in the New Testament.
    - a. He differentiates himself from them by making reference to his brother rather than his father.
    - b. His brother was much better known to his readers.
- B. Jude was not an apostle.
  - 1. Almost nothing is known about his life.

2. He was apparently convinced of the deity of Christ after the resurrection and is numbered with the disciples in the upper room after the ascension (See Acts 1:14).

### III. The **Authenticity** of Jude:

- A. Hermas, Polycarp, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius give early attestation to the authority of the book.
- B. It was early accepted as an inspired letter that should be a part of the canon of the New Testament.

### IV. The **Occasion and Date**:

- A. The occasion is to combat the inroads of apostasy.
  1. Jude cites important examples of defection in the Old Testament and the result.
  2. Jude concludes the epistle with words of comfort and reminders of their duty to live faithfully.
- B. This letter has been difficult to date.
  1. The estimates are from 66 A.D. to 75-80 A.D.
  2. It is commonly dated around 75 A.D.

# THE LETTER OF JUDE

## Major Outline

- I. Jude Identifies Himself and The Recipients of His Letter.
  - A. He is a bondservant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James (v. 1)
  - B. The recipients are those who are called and sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ (v. 1).
    1. Those who are Christians are first **called** by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-15).
    2. The meaning of the word *church* is “an assembly of people who have been **called out** for a purpose.”
    3. Those who answer the call of the gospel and obey God’s plan of salvation are **sanctified**, which means “set apart.”
      - a. Christians are sanctified by the truth (John 17:17-19).
      - b. Christians are sanctified by the washing of water by the word (Ephesians 5:26).
      - c. Christians are sanctified by being born again of the water and of Spirit (John 3:5).
    4. Those who answer the call of the gospel and obey God’s plan of salvation are also **preserved in Jesus Christ**.
      - a. Christians are preserved (kept) by the power of God through faith (1 Peter 1:5).
      - b. Christians are preserved by the continual cleansing of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7).
  - C. He prays that mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to them (v. 2).
    1. Mercy is multiplied among Christians when it is exercised.
    2. Peace is multiplied among Christians when it is practiced.
    3. Love is multiplied among Christians when it is demonstrated.

## II. Jude States That He Wants To Write To Them About Their Common Salvation.

- A. The “common salvation” is delivered the same way to all, by the preaching of the gospel.
- B. The “common salvation” is from the same source, by the grace of God from the Father above.
- C. The “common salvation” is the result of obeying the same commands; belief, repentance, confession and baptism.
- D. The “common salvation” is made possible by the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

## III. Jude Exclaims That It Will Be Necessary Instead For Him To Write About Apostasy In The Church.

- A. He finds it necessary to exhort them to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (v. 3).
- B. He finds it necessary because certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation (v. 4).
  - 1. False teachers do not usually let themselves be known immediately (v. 4)
    - a. They do not at first draw attention to their false beliefs.
    - b. They are subtle.
    - c. They come in as wolves in sheep’s clothing (Matthew 7:15-20).
    - d. They can be known by their fruits and by examining what they teach and preach in comparison to the written word of God (Matthew 7:15-20; Acts 17:11-12).
  - 2. False teachers were marked out for condemnation long ago (v. 4).
    - a. They are of their father the devil who is the father of all lies (John 8:44).
      - 1) The devil does not stand in the truth.
      - 2) There is no truth in the devil.
      - 3) The devil speaks according to his own nature, as a liar and as a father of all lies.
      - 4) The devil works in the sons of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2).

- b. They and all liars were condemned when Satan and his followers were cast into hell (Gk.--*Tartarus*) and reserved in everlasting chains for judgment (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).
- 3. False teachers are ungodly persons (v. 4).
  - a. They have no reverence for God.
  - b. They have the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them (Romans 1:18-32).
    - 1) They suppress the truth (Romans 1:18)
    - 2) They do not glorify God (Romans 1:21).
    - 3) Their thoughts are futile and their hearts are darkened (Romans 1:21).
    - 4) They exchange the truth of God for a lie (Romans 1:25).
- 4. False teachers turn the grace of our God into lewdness (v. 4)
  - a. They use the grace of God as an opportunity to teach and do wrong.
  - b. They make the mercy of God as an excuse for teaching and doing wrong.
- 5. False teachers deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (v. 4).
  - a. To teach false doctrine is to deny the word of Christ.
  - b. To teach false doctrine is to deny the Christ of the word.

#### IV. Jude Reminds Them of Examples of Apostasy (v. 5-6, 7b, 11).

- A. He reminds them of the apostasy of the Israelites who through their unbelief were destroyed after the Lord has saved them out of the land of Egypt (v. 5-6).
  - 1. Their main problem was unbelief in the truth of God's word (Hebrews 3:7-4:13).
    - a. They hardened their hearts and rebelled (Heb. 3:8).
    - b. God was angry with them and accused them of going astray in their hearts (Heb. 3:10).
    - c. They did not enter into the promised rest because of disobedience (Heb. 3:11-18).
    - d. They could not enter because of unbelief (Hebrews 3:19).
    - e. They could not enter because they did not allow the word of God to be mixed with faith (Hebrews 4:2).

2. Their problem can be our problem when we don't believe or act on our faith (Hebrews 4:1-16).
    - a. We need to fear lest any of us seem to have come short of entering the rest that Christ offers to His followers (Heb. 4:1).
    - b. We need to be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience which the Israelites experienced (Heb. 4:11).
    - c. We need to allow the word of God to go deeply into our minds and hearts (Heb. 4:12).
    - d. We need to remind ourselves that nothing is hidden from God, not even the intents of our hearts (Heb. 4:13).
    - e. We need to hold fast the confession we made about Christ (Heb. 4:14).
    - f. We need to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:16).
- B. He reminds them of the angels who because of their disobedience rebelled against God by attempting to go beyond their appointed and proper domain or level of authority (v. 6).
1. Their problem was that God had created and then appointed angels to serve in various ways and in different levels of authority (See Colossians 1:16).
    - a. Angels served God in various dominions, principalities and powers.
    - b. Angels were made as archangels, seraphim, and cherubim.
    - c. Satan did not keep his assigned dominion because of pride (1 Tim. 3:6). (See also Ezekiel 28:2-17 and Isaiah 14:12-14).
  2. Their problem can be our problem when we rebel against God and think that we know better than He.
    - a. Rebellious angels were cast down to hell (Greek.---*Tartarus*, a temporary place of punishment, 2 Peter 2:4).
    - b. Rebellious people are cast down into a place of torments (Luke 16:23).
    - c. Rebellious angels and people are waiting for the judgment of the great day.

- c. Rebellious people and angels will eventually reside in **hell** forever after the judgment of the great day (Greek.---*Gehenna*, an eternal place of punishment, Luke 12:5; Matt. 23:44).
- C. He reminds them of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them who gave themselves over to sexual immorality (v. 7).
  - 1. Their problem was that they had allowed every desire of their heart to be fed and satisfied (Genesis 19:5).
    - a. This was especially true regarding sexual appetites.
      - 1) They had given themselves over to sexual immorality.
      - 2) They had gone after strange flesh (homosexuality, sodomy, bestiality).
    - b. This led to their suffering from God's vengeance of eternal fire (Gen. 19:24).
  - 2. Their problem can be our problem when we turn from God's moral laws and begin attempting to satisfy our fleshly appetites (See Romans 1:24, 26-29, 32).
- D. He reminds them of those who dream about doing wrong (v. 8).
  - 1. They defile the flesh.
  - 2. They reject authority (celestial beings and God's ministers) (See Exodus 22:28 and Romans 13).
  - 3. They speak evil of dignitaries (See 2 Peter 2:10).
    - a. They walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness.
    - b. They despise authority.
    - c. They are presumptuous.
    - d. They are self-willed.
  - 4. They are not like Michael the archangel who dared not even to bring a reviling accusation (abusive and insulting words) against Satan, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (v. 9).
    - a. They, on the other hand, speak evil of whatever they do not know (v. 10).
    - b. They, on the other hand, speak whatever they know naturally (by instinct), like brute beasts (unreasoning or irrational animals).
    - c. They, on the other hand, corrupt themselves (prove their own undoing).

- E. He reminds them of Cain who killed his brother Abel because God did not approve of his offering (v. 11a).
    - 1. The way of Cain is rebellion (Genesis 4:3-8).
    - 2. The way of Cain is substitution (Hebrews 11:4).
    - 3. The way of Cain is perversion (Genesis 4:3-8).
    - 4. The way of Cain leads to cursing from God.
    - 5. The way of Cain leads to a warning of “Woe.”
  - F. He reminds them of the error of Balaam (v. 11b)
    - 1. The error of Balaam is financial greed (Numbers 22:5-7)
    - 2. The error of Balaam is to forsake the right way (2 Peter 2:15).
    - 3. The error of Balaam is to go astray.
    - 4. The error of Balaam is to love the wages of unrighteousness.
    - 5. The error of Balaam was rebuked by God.
  - G. He reminds them of the rebellion of Korah (v. 11c).
    - 1. The rebellion of Korah is to rebel against God’s plan (Numbers 16:1-3).
    - 2. The rebellion of Korah is to reject divine authority.
- V. Jude Defines the Characteristics of Apostasy (v. 4b-4c; 8-10, 16-19).
- A. Those who practice apostasy change God’s grace into a license for immorality (v. 4b).
  - B. Those who practice apostasy deny the deity of Jesus Christ (v. 4c).
  - C. Those who practice apostasy degrade the human body (v. 8a).
  - D. Those who practice apostasy reject authority (v. 8b).
  - E. Those who practice apostasy slander celestial beings (v. 8c-9).
  - F. Those who practice apostasy degenerate into brute unreasoning animals (v. 10).
  - G. Those who practice apostasy are guilty of constant faultfinding (v. 16a).
  - H. Those who practice apostasy flatter others only for their own advantage (v. 16b).
  - I. Those who practice apostasy are scoffers and divisive because they follow their own instincts, which are totally devoid of the Spirit of God (v. 17-19).

## VI. Jude Uses Metaphors To Illustrate Apostasy (12-13).

- A. The practice of apostasy is like having dangerous hidden reefs that can cause shipwrecks (v. 12a).
  - 1. The apostates produce beauty from afar, but when sailed through they produce disaster.
  - 2. The apostates are hidden in love feasts (fellowship, good times, amid laughter and seeming innocence).
- B. The practice of apostasy is like self-centered shepherds who without fear serve only themselves (v. 12b).
- C. The practice of apostasy is like waterless clouds (v. 12:c).
  - 1. They appear to give hope but give only disappointment.
  - 2. They are looked to for encouragement but because of their motives they leave the followers empty handed.
  - 3. They are swept along by every wind (See Ephesians 4:14).
- D. The practice of apostasy is like dead and fruitless autumn trees (v. 12:d).
  - 1. They are double dead.
  - 2. They are pulled up by the roots.
- E. The practice of apostasy is like the violent waves of the sea (v. 13a).
  - 1. They are foaming with shameful deeds.
  - 2. They are noisy, unstable, and dangerous.
- F. The practice of apostasy is like wandering stars (v. 13:b).
  - 1. They have wandered off course from God's way.
  - 2. They can not be depended on for sure guidance.
- G. The practice of apostasy results in living in the blackness of darkness forever (v. 13c).

## VII. Jude Foretells Judgment On Those Who Practice Apostasy (v. 7a, 14-15).

- A. There has been past judgment on those who rebelled against God's way (v. 7, 11c).
  - 1. God proclaimed judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sexual immorality (v. 7a).

2. God proclaimed judgment on the followers of Korah because they rebelled against divine authority (v. 11c).
- B. There will be future judgment on those who have practiced apostasy and led others astray (v. 7b, 14-15).
1. God proclaims judgment of suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (v. 7b).
  2. God proclaimed through Enoch that the Lord will come and execute judgment on the ungodly (vs. 14-15).
    - a. God will convict the ungodly for their ungodly deeds.
    - b. God will convict the ungodly for their ungodly way.
    - c. God will convict the ungodly for their ungodly spoken statements against Him.
- C. Jude predicts apostasy (v. 16-19); See Section V.

VIII. Jude Advocates Safeguards Against Apostasy (v. 20-25).

- A. The Christian must first safeguard himself (v. 20).
1. This is done by building on the word of God (v. 20a).
  2. This is done by praying in the power of the Holy Spirit (v. 20b) (See Romans 8:26-27).
  3. This is done by remaining in the love of God (v. 21a).
- B. The Christian must also safeguard others (v. 22-23).
1. This is done by having compassion on those in doubt (v. 22).
  2. This is done by having compassion on those are in danger of being lost (v. 23a).
  3. This is done by avoiding being polluted by the sins of others (v. 23b).
- C. The Christian must look to the Savior for strength and knowledge (v. 24).
1. He is able to keep us from stumbling (v. 24).
  2. He is able to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (v. 24)

**CONCLUSION:** The Christian must give the glory to God (v. 25).

1. He alone is wise.

2. He alone deserves the glory, majesty, power, and dominion, both now and forever.

**Amen.**