

# The Epistle Of Jude



## A Study Guide With Introductory Comments, Summaries, And Review Questions

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## Table Of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Chapter One</i>	<b>5</b>

This study guide was designed for adult Bible classes, though it might be suitable for junior and senior high classes as well. Some have used it for personal devotions, and others in small study groups.

- **Points to ponder** for each chapter are things I emphasize during the class.
- **Review questions** are intended to reinforce key thoughts in each chapter. That you might know what answers were intended by the questions, I have included them in this guide. There is a “student edition” available with answers deleted.

# The Epistle Of Jude

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## Introduction

In several passages throughout the New Testament, we find serious warnings about impending apostasy...

- Jesus warned that false prophets would arise, the love of many would grow cold, and only those who endure to the end would be saved - **Mt 24:11-13**
- Paul foretold of many disciples being drawn away - **Ac 20:29-30**
- Peter warned about the rise of false teachers, and how many would follow their destructive ways - **2Pe 2:1-3**

By the time the epistles of John and Jude were written, the danger was no longer pending, it was very much in existence...

- Antichrists were present, and false prophets were in the world - **1Jn 2:18; 4:1; 2Jn 1:7**
- Jude was forced to change his original purpose to deal with the crisis - **Jude 1:3-4**

If the danger of apostasy was already present in the 1st century A.D., we should not be surprised that the danger exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We would do well to pay close heed to those epistles written to tell us how to deal with apostasy, and that makes **The Epistle Of Jude** especially relevant.

## Author

**Jude**, as stated in the salutation (**Jude 1:1**). That he does not identify himself as an apostle, and appears to distinguish himself from the apostles (**Jude 1:17**), suggests he was not the apostle Jude (cf. **Lk 6:16; Ac 1:13**). His self-identification as “the brother of James” leads many to believe the author to be Judas, brother of James and also of the Lord Jesus (cf. **Mt 13:55**). Like James, Jude chose not to accentuate his physical relation to Jesus, but his spiritual one (“a bondservant of Jesus Christ,” cf. **Jude 1:1; Jm 1:1**).

## Recipients

The letter is addressed “to those who are called” (**Jude 1:1**) without any specific designation as to who they were or where they lived. The references to Old Testament incidents and extra-biblical sources (cf. **Jude 1:5-7,9,11,14**) strongly suggests that the original readers were **Jewish Christians**, perhaps living in Palestine.

## Date

Similarities between the **Epistle of Jude** and the **Second Epistle of Peter** indicate one author may have influenced the other. Since Peter wrote of false teachers who were to come (cf. **2Pe 2:1**) and Jude warned of those who had already “crept in unnoticed” (cf. **Jude 1:4**), it is possible that that Jude wrote after Peter.

Peter’s death in during the reign of Nero (which ended in 68 A.D.) places his own epistle sometime before 67 A.D. The lack of any mention of the destruction of Jerusalem (which

occurred during the fall of 70 A.D.) suggests that Jude wrote before that notable event. If so, then the date of composition may have been **between 67-70 A.D.**

## Purpose and Theme

Jude's original purpose in penning this epistle was to write of the common salvation he and his readers shared (**Jude 1:3**). But the presence of ungodly men and the danger of them leading Christians astray forced a change in **purpose**:

- To encourage his readers to contend earnestly for the faith that had been delivered to the saints (**Jude 1:3**)

As for the **theme**, Jude's first admonition serves us well:

**Contend earnestly for the faith**

## Outline

Here is a simple outline of the book...

Greetings (**1-2**)

1. Purpose for writing (**3-4**)
2. God's judgments in time past (**5-7**)
3. Character and doom of false teachers (**8-19**)
4. Exhortations to build their faith (**20-23**)

Concluding doxology (**24-25**)

## Review Questions

### 1) Who is author of The Epistle Of Jude? (1)

- Jude, brother of James (likely the half-brothers of Jesus, **Mt 13:55**)

### 2) Who were the recipients of this epistle?

- "Those who were called", possibly Jewish Christians

### 3) When was it written?

- Most date it between 67-70 A.D.

### 4) What has been suggested as its purpose?

- To encourage his readers to contend earnestly for the faith that had been delivered to the saints

### 5) What has been suggested as its theme?

- Contend earnestly for the faith

### 6) What are the main divisions of this epistle as outlined above?

- Greetings (**1-2**)
- Purpose for writing (**3-4**)
- God's judgments in time past (**5-7**)
- Character and doom of false teachers (**8-19**)
- Exhortations to build their faith (**20-23**)
- Concluding doxology (**24-25**)

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## Chapter One

Following his salutation (1-2), Jude explains the purpose for writing (3-4). He reminds his readers of God's judgments in the past (5-7), then describes the character and ultimate doom of false teachers (8-19). Exhorting them to build up their most holy faith (20-23), he concludes with praise to God (24-25).

### Points To Ponder

- The faith revealed once for all (literally, one time for all time)
- The character of false teachers
- How to build up our most holy faith

### Review Questions

**1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- Greetings - **Jude 1:1-2**
- Purpose for writing - **Jude 1:3-4**
- God's judgments in time past - **Jude 1:5-7**
- Character and doom of false teachers - **Jude 1:8-19**
- Exhortations to build their faith - **Jude 1:20-23**
- Concluding doxology - **Jude 1:24-25**

**2) How does Jude describe the recipients of his epistle? (1)**

- Called, sanctified, preserved

**3) What did Jude find necessary to exhort his readers? Why? (3-4)**

- To contend earnestly for the faith delivered once for all to the saints
- Some were turning God's grace into lewdness, denying God and Jesus

**4) List both biblical and extra-biblical examples given by Jude. (5-7,9,11)**

- Israelites, angels who sinned, Sodom and Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam, Korah
- Michael contending with the devil, Enoch and his prophesy

**5) List the qualities of the false teachers are condemned in this epistle. (8-19)**

- Defile the flesh, reject authority, speak evil of dignitaries
- Speak evil of what they do not know, corrupt themselves in what they know naturally
- Serve only themselves, grumblers, complainers, sensual, devoid of the Spirit

**6) What counsel does Jude give to build oneself up in the faith? (20-21)**

- Remain in the love of God, pray in the Holy Spirit, look for mercy unto eternal life
- With compassion and fear try to save others

**7) In his doxology, what does Jude say God is able to do? (24)**

- Keep us from stumbling, present us faultless before His glory with exceeding joy