

Jude

Context: Acts of the Apostates...the Church begins with the Acts of the Apostles and is quickly attacked by the Acts of the Apostates

Author: written about 66-69 AD under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by Jude, half-brother of Jesus and brother of James

Theme: This letter sounds a great deal like 2 Peter (especially Ch 2)
It has an urgency: apostasy, heresy, false teachers
so...ties right into the next book, too!

Outline:

v1-2 Introduction (from whom, to whom, greeting)
v3 Purpose
v4-23 Body
 v4-19 attack on apostasy, heresy, and false teachers
 v20-23 marching orders/exhortation to the troops
v24-25 Salute to the Victor from the victorious

Jude pulls no punches...neither did his brother James in his letter...

The letter is very timely...and very relevant

- ferocious hostility to the Word of God – the Bible has been declared to be “hate literature” in Canada due to its uncompromising stand on moral issues
unbelieving man wants classified as human rights
- terrible apostasy in the Church – sexual perversion, homosexuality, and heretical teachings have crept into the Church

According to the Barna Research Group:

- More than half of all adults (54%) believe that if a person is generally good, or does enough good things for others during their life, they will earn a place in Heaven. About one-third of born agains (38%) believe that if a person is good enough they can earn a place in Heaven. (2004).
- A majority (61%) agree that the Holy Spirit is a symbol of God's presence or power but is not a living entity. (2001)
- A majority of all born again Christians reject the existence of the Holy Spirit (52%). (2001)
- 39% of Americans say that Jesus Christ was crucified, but He never had a physical resurrection. Nearly the same proportion of born again Christians (35%) embrace this thinking. (1997)
- 31% of born agains agree that "while he lived on earth, Jesus committed sins, like other people," compared to 44% of all adults. (2004)
- In 2004 three out of five adults (60%) say that the devil, or Satan, is not a living being but is a symbol of evil, compared to 58% in 2001.
- In 2004 50% of born again Christians deny Satan's existence compared with 45% in 2001.
- Slightly more than seven out of ten Catholics (73%) say the devil is non-existent and only a symbol of evil. (2004).
- About one out of four (26%) born again Christians believe that it doesn't matter what faith you follow because they all teach the same lessons; a belief held by 56% of non-Christians. (2000)

- 12% of adults believe that the name of Noah’s wife was Joan of Arc. (The Bible does not provide her name.) (1997)
- A majority of adults (56%) are convinced the Bible proclaims that the single, most important task in life is taking care of one's family. (1997)
- Three-quarters of Americans (75%) believe that the Bible teaches that God helps those who help themselves. (2000)
- 30% of all adults consider having a sexual relationship with someone of the same sex a morally acceptable behavior. (2004)

v1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James:
notice how the author identifies himself and presents his credentials

Jude (Judas, Judah) is

- The bondservant...willing slave...of Jesus Christ
- The brother of James (Jacob, first leader of the Church in Jerusalem)...therefore also the half-brother of Jesus
Matt 13:54-56
- NOT “the younger brother of Jesus”
- “slave of Jesus Christ” is a higher order relationship and a weightier credential than “brother of James”

to them that are:

to whom is Jude writing? The Church...the Bride of Jesus Christ

1. sanctified by God the Father
“set apart from”
John 17:17-19

2. preserved in Jesus Christ

- “guarded” – so who is able to steal us from Him?
Rom 8:35-39 (who can separate us from the love)
John 10:27-30 (neither shall any pluck out of hand)
- “to keep the eye upon” – so how can we wander away from His watchful eye to places of eternal death?
Matt 28:20b (with you even to end of the age)
Heb 13:5b (never leave nor forsake)
John 6:37 (all Father give shall come, cast none)
- “prevented from escaping” – escaping from the all-powerful, all-knowing God is an impossibility
John 17:20-23
1 Thes 5:21-24
1 Peter 1:1-5

3. called

“appointed”

John 15:16 chosen
Rom 1:7a saints
Rom 8:28 the called

in the identification of the addressee is a very clear message:
the assurance of salvation

but obviously, the Church is deceived, confused, ignorant (Matt 7:21-27)

v2 Mercy...peace...love:
not just a greeting, but a reminder

because we are

- sanctified by God the Father
- preserved in Jesus Christ
- called

abounding to us are God's

- mercy – kindness and compassion
- peace – spiritual rest and prosperity (eternal.....starting now!)
- love – selfless, sacrificial, unconditional

God is love...

- Mercy is His gift
- resulting in our peace
- and His love becomes our response, our motive

v3 when I gave all diligence...it was needful:
a Holy Spirit Detour!
Jude had originally intended to write a letter about salvation...
but the Holy Spirit had another purpose

the Church was in trouble...(1 Tim 4:1, 2 Tim 4:1-4)
a major seduction of the Bride of Christ was in full swing...
the faith of many was getting shipwrecked...
it was necessary to vehemently warn God's children

So the Holy Spirit put a heavy burden on Jude's heart and inspired him to
write a very strongly worded exhortation to the Church to implore
her to wake up and get into the fight

ye should earnestly contend for the faith:
this is the only place in NT that "contend" appears
"to earnestly struggle for"

the Holy Spirit exhorts us to vigorously, uncompromisingly struggle for
the pure and simple Gospel of Jesus Christ...
Acts 4:12 no other name under heaven given whereby
we must be saved
Rom 10:13 whosoever shall call on the name of the
Lord shall be saved
Eph 2:8-9 saved by grace thru faith, not works...it is
the gift of God lest any man boast

Matt 16:18 is an offensive statement, not a defensive one...
all the armor of God is on our front side...
so our contention is to be on the offensive, not on the defensive

This letter is a rallying cry to the saints to speak and live the truth at a time
when a great pressure was being applied to depart from the truth

apostasy was rampant in the form of

- blatant denial of the Gospel and of the Lord Jesus Christ
the "gospel" of self...the counterfeit gospel of the devil
(today, we call this religion science – psychology)
- the "gospel" of Jesus Christ Plus (works-based salvation)
faith in man...things man must do to add to work of Jesus
faith in a church...saved by being a member of a church
rather than faith in Jesus Christ alone

which was once delivered unto the saints:

once = “one time” either numerically **or** conclusively

Paul, James, Peter, and John wrote many times about the Gospel of Jesus Christ...so when was the Gospel delivered one time, both numerically **and** conclusively?

On the Cross...and at the Resurrection...when I AM, the Lamb of God, the Seed of the Woman delivered on the promise to Adam

Gen 3:7-8, 21

John 19:30 with Matt 27:50-54

Acts 1:1-3

Heb 1:1-3

Heb 2:14-17

Heb 9:24-28

...not each time a man-made ritual called the Mass is held

and we are made “blameless”...saints...by grace thru faith in the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world, for God so loved the world that He sent His only Begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life

this faith was being ruthlessly, relentlessly attacked...so the Holy Spirit “interrupted” Jude to speak these words to the Church

Q: Is this letter relevant for today or is it only historical?

Heb 4:12

v4 For there are certain men:
 as a stark contrast to the “beloved” and “called” are these “certain men”...
 the subject of a stinging rebuke in v4-19

the father of lies and the slanderer was using men who did not believe that
 simple and pure Gospel to sow tares among the wheat, to make the
 Lord’s field unfruitful

these counterfeits “stealth-ed” their way into the church to deceive and
 destroy the saints...not to seek and save the lost

they were...and are...wicked men without God who

- pervert the grace of God to pursue their filthy and shameless
 immorality (Rom 6:1-2a)
- deny the Lordship of God
 “husband” Hosea, Eph 5:32
 “master” John 13:3-9, 13-17
- deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ
 “supreme authority” Matt 28:18
- deny that God is Jesus Christ and that Jesus Christ is God

for their

- rejection, denial, and unbelief in the true Gospel
- corruption with a false gospel (which was foreknown and
 foretold by God)...
- sowing seeds of destruction

they reap their own destruction (Gal 1:6-9)

v5 I will put you in remembrance:
as a reminder of how He feels about these certain men, the Holy Spirit thru Jude gives us 6 examples of apostasy not tolerated by the holy and just God (3 groups, 3 individuals)

1. the nation of Israel (post-exodus, pre-Promised Land)
2. the fallen angels
3. Sodom & Gomorrah
4. Cain
5. Balaam
6. Korah

the Lord, having saved...destroyed:
Example #1: unbelief

after God saved them and delivered Israel out of Egypt, they refused to walk by faith in His deliverance into the Promised Land

they were fearful of giants, not faith-full to the promise of God
(there are no giants in the presence of God)

result: the unbelievers...an entire generation minus 2...were destroyed in the wilderness

v6 angels which kept not their first estate:
Example #2: unfaithfulness

the angels that were unfaithful to their calling and rebelled against the supreme authority of God (Gen 6:1-6)

they rejected the power of love for the love of power

2 Peter 2:1-4

kept not: "not preserved"
reserved: "preserved"

result: they choose to not preserve their appointed place, so God has preserved them a different place – bound with chains in hell until all things are judged by the Lord Jesus Christ

v7 Sodom and Gomorrah:

Example #3: sexual perversion and defilement

(a manifestation of gross spiritual perversion)

in total perversion and mockery of

- God's foundational building block of society
- God's order (1 Cor 11:3)
- God's blessing of man ("Go forth and multiply, fill earth")
- God's gift of intimacy God gave to man and wife...

Sodom & Gomorrah and the cities near them fell into the gross immorality of sodomy...man with man and woman with woman

2 Peter 2:5-9

Rom 1:24-28

result: sudden destruction by fire and brimstone...to this very day.
a nation that approves and promotes sodomy will be judged and destroyed

Today

- "The Church" in USA is deceived, confused, and ignorant... and asleep or lukewarm!
- This nation is legalizing, promoting sodomy...

How can we avoid v5 and v7?

Billy Graham: "If God does not judge USA, He owes an apology to Sodom & Gomorrah."

Tough message on July 4th !

But we had better listen!

Why did Jude write this letter?

v3-4

Because the Church is in trouble – deceived, confused, ignorant

The matter is urgent so the Holy Spirit interrupts Jude

last time we looked at some Christian research results from Barna Research Group
what caught my attention was the ignorance and the deception in those who call
themselves born-again Christians in USA...

- About one-third of born agains (38%) believe that if a person is good enough they can earn a place in Heaven. (2004).
- A majority of all born again Christians reject the existence of the Holy Spirit (52%). (2001)
- 39% of Americans say that Jesus Christ was crucified, but He never had a physical resurrection. Nearly the same proportion of born again Christians (35%) embrace this thinking. (1997)
- 31% of born agains agree that “while he lived on earth, Jesus committed sins, like other people,” compared to 44% of all adults. (2004)
- In 2004 50% of born again Christians deny Satan's existence compared with 45% in 2001.
- About one out of four (26%) born again Christians believe that it doesn't matter what faith you follow because they all teach the same lessons; a belief held by 56% of non-Christians. (2000)

In addition to the spiritual ignorance and deception ravaging the Church in this nation, a philosophy has become part of the fabric of this nation...and it has certainly infected the Church as well

Relativism has taken USA by storm in the last quarter century, permeating every aspect of our society.

Percentage of adults who view certain behavior as morally acceptable (2003)

- Living with someone of the opposite sex without being married 60%
 - Having an abortion 45%
 - Having a sexual relationship with someone of the opposite sex to whom you are not married 42%
 - Using profanity (36%)
 - Getting drunk (35%)
 - Having a sexual relationship with someone of the same sex 30%
-
- By a 3-to-1 margin (64% vs. 22%) adults said truth is always relative to the person and their situation. (2002) (aka “situational ethics”)

The consequence of Relativism is that

- although many people are personally opposed to a particular behavior..
- they feel compelled to allow that behavior to take place legally...
- because they also contend that there are no moral absolutes...
- and, “I can’t impose my beliefs on someone else.”
- “truth” is defined by every individual (Judges 21:25)

If there are no moral absolutes...if truth is relative...

- there is no absolute authority...
- there cannot be apostasy
- there will be a lukewarm-ness toward the absolute truths of God

Apostasy is a dominant characteristic in the world before Jesus Christ returns...

it is one of the tell-tale signs we are to look for

The last phase of Church history is characterized as lukewarm

Jude is very directly rebuking apostasy and apostates

starting with 3 groups...

1. the nation of Israel (post-exodus, pre-Promised Land)
2. the fallen angels
3. Sodom & Gomorrah

now moving onto 3 individuals

v8 Likewise also these dreamers:

Equated with apostate Israel, the fallen angels, and Sodom & Gomorrah
are these false teachers!

dreamers

- not grounded in reality but floating in deception and relativism
- not in their right mind

Their apostasy

- abnormal, abominable immorality
- rejection of God’s authority over their lives
- reviling and vilifying spiritual things they do not understand
(because faith is required)

will not be tolerated any more than the examples just given

- v9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil:
Jude's letter is the only place in the Bible where we find
- Michael called the archangel ("chief angel")
 - this dispute over the body of Moses

Deut 34:5-7

Why did God Himself see to the burial of Moses?

Why would the devil fight Michael for the body of Moses?

- Moses still had a need for it!
Matt 17:1-3 (Jesus is always first...He had not been glorified yet so Moses had not yet been glorified)
Rev 11:3-13 (?)
- The Father was protecting His people...
from the apostasy of idolatry...of worshipping his body as they did the brass serpent

Num 21:9

2 K 18:1-4

- Q: is there is religion that worships the bones of dead men today? Yes! A Christian religion!
- Q: Such a practice was apostasy then...is it now?

Back to the wrestling match...what did Michael THE Archangel NOT do?

He did not dare to

- judge the devil...
- trash talk the devil...
- go anywhere near God's sovereign authority over His creatures...all of them

- Q: if Michael the Archangel were Jesus Christ as the JW's assert...why would he "defer to himself"?
Why didn't he just "handle it"?

v10 But these speak evil...know not...know naturally:
but these dreamers...these false teachers...DO presume to go where they
have no authority to go.

they vilify things they do not understand...
because they are not new creatures in Christ...
their minds have not been renewed by grace thru faith

Therefore, like the 2D animals, they defile themselves with the things they
do instinctively understand – the things of the flesh, in which there
is no good thing

2 Peter 2:1-14
Titus 3:2-3

v11a Woe unto them!:
Woe to the unbelievers, to the apostates
vs mercy and peace and love to the faithful, to the believers

Hebrews has a “Hall of Faith”...Jude has a “Hall of Shame”

v11b the way of Cain:
Apostasy-Not-Tolerated Example #4

- defiant and rebellious vs submissive and obedient
- self-willed and carnal vs God-willed and spiritual
- denial of sin and indulgence of self vs denial of and dying to self
- the gospel of Satan (self) vs the Gospel of Jesus Christ

result: eternal banishment

v11c the error of Balaam for reward:
Example #5

- mercenary prophet...a “county hunter”...for hire...out only for himself
- could not curse Israel...
- but counseled their enemy how to tempt them to behave immorally and get God Himself to curse them

result: died by the sword when Joshua led Israel in the conquest of the land

v11d perished in the gainsaying of Korah:

Example #6

- consumed with jealousy
- hungry for power and position
- accused Moses and Aaron of making a power grab
- disobedient to their God-given calling, they sought to take an office not theirs to have

result: swallowed up by the earth, cast alive into the pit

v12-13 These are:

the apostate teachers are further likened to 5 things

1. spots: hidden rocks that cause shipwrecks...
 - shipwrecking the faith of those who love the Lord,
 - not fearing the Lord while they do so
2. empty, dry clouds: teachers
 - devoid of the truth of the Word of God and the Living Water of the Spirit of God
 - carried wherever the winds of the doctrines of demons took them
3. unfruitful trees: worthless, dead
4. raging waves: unashamedly foaming with their own disgrace
“...the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace for the wicked.” (Is 57:20-21)
5. wandering stars:
 - lawless
 - following no course
 - rudderless lives
preserved for (“prevented from escaping”) outer darkness...the blackest darkness

2 Peter 2:15-18

v14-15 And Enoch also...prophesied of these:

this prophesy of Enoch is also unique in the Bible to Jude's letter

the foretelling of Enoch (who was "raptured")...of

- the judgment of all the apostates...
- the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ (Conquering King and Judge)

was given before

- the Flood...
- the 1st coming of Jesus Christ (Suffering Servant)...

the next time the world sees Jesus Christ will be when He comes in power to establish His kingdom and to judge the ungodly...

1. behavior
2. deeds
3. motives
4. sinners...all unbelievers and all they have done and said against Him

v16 These are:

the Holy Spirit continues His displeasure with the apostates...who are

1. murmurers – God hates the murmuring of unbelief
2. complainers – those who blame others for all their problems and who claim to be "a victim" instead of a sinner (psychology has redefined "sin" as "sickness" and "sinners" as "victims")
3. walk after their own lusts – living like an animal, living for themselves vs for God
4. have a big mouth – bombastic, articulate, blasphemous
5. proud men-pleasers – vs humble God pleasers seeking the praises of men, seeking the things of men vs the things of God

v17-19 But, beloved, remember ye the words:
these things should not be a surprise...upsetting, but not a surprise...
if we know the Word of God...
because they were foretold repeatedly by Jesus and again by the apostles
(Peter, Paul, John James)...

that a departure from the apostle's doctrine (The Word of God) instigated
by scoffers and mockers of the truth who

- live like animals, walking in the corruption of the flesh
and not in the holiness of the Spirit of God
- are divisive in the Body of Christ
contrary to the unity of the Spirit (Eph 4:1-6)

2 Peter 3:3-7

thus concludes Jude's rebuke of apostasy...

now he shifts gears to exhort the Body of Christ...

v20-21 But ye, beloved, building up...praying...keep yourselves:

Now

- a call to arms
 - a call to fight
 - an exhortation to the troops engaged in the unending spiritual warfare
 - instruction on HOW to contend earnestly for the faith
1. building up yourselves on your faith
 - hear the Word of God (Rom 10:17, Neh 8:1-8)
 - meditate on the Word of God (Ps 1:1-3)
 - study the Word of God (2 Tim 2:15)
 - building on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3:10-15)...
The object of our faith
 - step out in faith...leaving your comfort zone to serve the Lord
 2. praying in the Spirit
 - along with the sword of the Spirit (Word), our offensive weapon (Eph 6:18)
 - receive from the heart of God that which He desires you to pray
 - be interruptible - yielding your intention for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Jude being an example here)
 3. keep yourselves in the love of God – preserved in (“prevented from escaping”) the love of God
 - Matt 16:24 deny yourself, pick up cross, follow Jesus
 - John 15:10 abide in the love of God...love as are loved
 - Rev 3:8-10 keep the Word, do not deny His name

we are preserved in Jesus Christ (v1) by the sovereignty of God...
but we also have free will, and our choices are seen in

 - obedience to the Word of God
 - submission to the will of God
 - abiding in Christ
 4. looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - watching for our snatching out of Sodom & Gomorrah...
with the same mercy given to Lot
(God’s mercy, not Lot’s merit)
 - looking and being ready for the Rapture of the believers

The Body must stay fit and be ever-combat-ready

v22-23 some have compassion...others save with fear:
the spiritual battle is about the hearts and minds of men

- deceived, confused, ignorant brothers/sisters in Christ
- the lost

effective fighting tactics may be either

- compassion...the love of God
- fear...fear of God

in order to pull doubters from the fire of eternal judgment
("I don't know" = "No")

hating even the garment spotted by the flesh:
the garment of our salvation, soiled by the flesh

The Church in USA is soft on sin and hell...
because they think people have worked themselves to a frazzle
during the week and they just want them to leave feeling
better than they came...
so they will come back and
so they will keep giving money to keep the "business" "afloat"

entertaining "fluff" is served, not the meat of the Word of God, which

- encourages, strengthens, edifies, comforts
- changes us

the Church is not an organization, it is an organism
it does not need to follow the American business model to succeed...
it needs to submit to and follow the Head of the Body!

v24-25 Now unto Him...the only wise God our Savior:
a Salute to the Victor...God our Savior...Jesus Christ...Who is

- able to preserve us...
to prevent us from escaping or falling out of His hands
John 10:28-30
- and present us...make us to stand with indescribable joy...
before the holy and just God (Eph 5:25)
- alone worthy of all
glory and majesty
dominion and power...

forever...from eternity to eternity

The Church is infected by apostasy.....

It is time to contend with the father of lies....to contend for the faith

To be on the offensive

To rescue the deceived, confused, and ignorant...the lost

in the Church

in our community

in this nation

in the world

It's time stand up and be counted!

It's time to stop playing church!

Time is of the essence...time is running out

Empower and embolden us, we pray

Next Study: The Revelation of Jesus Christ