

INTRODUCTION TO Jude

READ ALONG

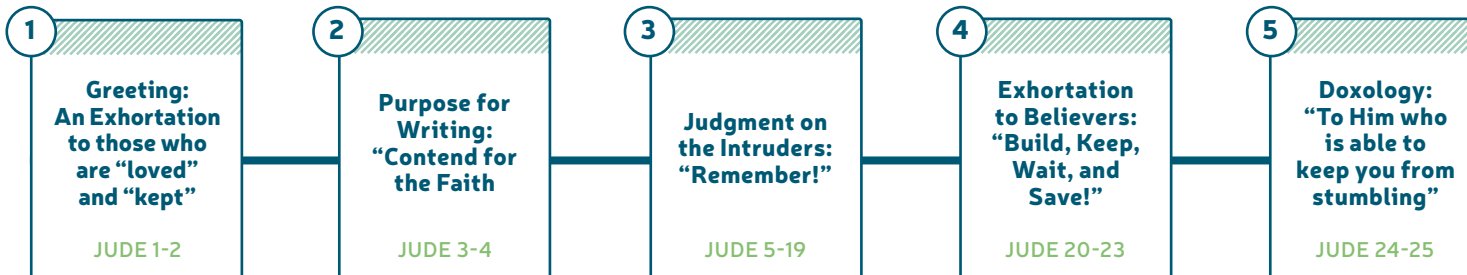
08/13 Jude

WHERE IS IT IN THE BIBLE?

- 60. 1 PETER
- 61. 2 PETER
- 62. 1 JOHN
- 63. 2 JOHN
- 64. 3 JOHN
- 58. **JUDE**
- 59. REVELATION

BASIC STRUCTURE

25 VERSES



KEY VERSE

- **Jude 1:3b** "...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints."

KEY THEMES

- **Grace and Holiness *not* Grace or Holiness:** Jude uses vivid imagery from the Old Testament, nature, and even literature outside of Scripture to describe his opponents as those who "turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." In sum, they are "antinomian," meaning, they reject the applicability of God's holy law to the life of the believer." Yet holiness (i.e. Godly living) and grace (God's unmerited favor) are two sides of the same coin. Hence, Jude encourages his readers to "keep yourselves in the love of God (v21.)"
- **Judgment on Sin (Past, Present and Future):** Jude recounts the history of God's judgment on sin from the Old Testament comparing the present opponents, for example, to "Sodom and Gomorrah (v7)." In the same way, these individuals "defile the flesh, reject authority, and revile angelic majesties (v8)." And their fate, and those who follow them, will be the same if they persist, namely, eternal judgment (v13). Yet one should not miss Jude's heart for those caught up in such sinfulness. He exhorts his readers to "have mercy on some who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire."
- **The Centrality of Christ:** In this short letter Jude refers to Jesus Christ no less than six times (1 [2x], 4, 17, 21, 25). Indeed, at the core of the opponent's sin is a denial of Jesus and his Lordship (v4). One cannot know Jesus as Savior without also submitting to him as Lord. Like grace and holiness, they are two sides of the same coin. Jude's final hymn of praise captures this truth: "to the only God our **Savior**, through Jesus Christ our **Lord** be glory, majesty, dominion and authority...(v25)."

G. K. Beale and Benjamin L. Gladd. *The Story Retold: A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament*. IVP, 2020.
 Robert H. Gundry. *A Survey of the New Testament*, 4th ed. Zondervan, 2003.
 Michael J. Kruger, ed. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament*. Crossway, 2016.
 Thomas R. Schreiner. *1, 2 Peter, Jude*. NAC Vol 37. B&H Academic, 2003.
 N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird. *The New Testament in Its World*. Zondervan, 2019.

BOOK BASICS



DATE
50s-90s AD



TYPE
Epistle



AUTHOR
Jude or Judas (Greek)

The date of Jude hinges on its relationship to 2 Peter, where one finds significant, and even verbatim, overlap in content. If Jude used Peter then it would put his letter later in the First Century. If Peter used Jude, then the treatise would be earlier. One must also allow sufficient time for heresies to develop putting a likely date, perhaps, in the late First Century.

Jude is a letter of exhortation reminding his readers, on the one hand, to hold fast to the common Apostolic faith and, on the other hand, to stand firm against false teachers who would undermine that faith through a self-indulgent lifestyle.

The author identifies himself as the "brother of James." James the Apostle was martyred by Herod Agrippa I at an early date, so the most likely candidate is James, the leader of the church in Jerusalem. The Gospels attest to a half-brother of Jesus named James (Mt 13:55) so, by implication, Judas would also be a half-brother of Jesus.

Jude was likely written to a Jewish-Christian community within a Gentile environment, perhaps Syria, Asia Minor, or Egypt. Jude warns the church against false teachers and urges them to remember and defend the pattern of early apostolic faith and discipleship.