

Subject: *Know Your Bible – Part 33*

Scripture: *Jude 1:1-4*

Time, Place, and Purpose of Jude

1. This epistle was written by Jude, one of Christ's four half-brothers (Mt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3). Another of Christ's half-brothers was James who wrote the NT book that bears his name. The name Jude is spelled "Judah" in Hebrew and "Judas" in Greek. Jude and his brothers at first rejected Jesus as the Messiah (Jn. 7:1-5), but they were converted after His resurrection.

2. This is one of the general epistles in the New Testament. These letters were written to a general group of readers rather than to a particular church or individual. Jude is also one of the non-Pauline epistles (along with Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John).

3. Jude wrote this epistle to readers with a Jewish background. The exact readers are not known, but they must have been familiar with the Old Testament. Jude does not quote the OT directly, but there are nine historical illustrations from it:

- A. The unbelief of Israel after the Exodus (vs. 5)
- B. The rebellion and judgment of fallen angels (vs. 6)
- C. The sin and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 7)
- D. The death and burial of Moses (vs. 9)
- E. The way of Cain (vs. 11)
- F. The error of Balaam (vs. 11)
- G. The rebellion of Korah (vs. 11)
- H. The prophecy of Enoch (vs. 14-15)
- I. The first man, Adam (vs. 14)

4. This epistle was probably written around 65-80 A.D. It may have been written in Jerusalem. The NT has no information about Jude's later years, so it is difficult to pinpoint the time and place of writing.

5. Jude wrote to address doctrinal and moral apostasy and his epistle could be called, "The Acts of the Apostates." Apostasy is a deliberate defection or turning away from the teachings and practices of genuine Biblical faith. Jude's epistle is like the epistle of 2 Peter, especially Jude 4-18 and 2 Peter 2:1—3:4. Jude quotes directly from 2 Peter 3:3, and confirms that it came from an apostle (Jude 17, 18). Peter placed the coming of false teachers into the future (2 Pet. 2:1) while Jude indicated that they were already present (Jude 1:4).

6. Jude wrote this epistle to contend for the faith (vs. 3) and call believers to fight for the truth in a time when false teaching was on the rise. Jude wanted to write a letter about salvation, but the current crisis moved him to write about apostasy. Although many of the NT epistles confront the problem of false teachers, Jude is the only NT book devoted entirely to confronting apostasy. With the exception of its salutation (vs. 1-2) and conclusion (vs. 24-25) the epistle addresses this alarming problem. In alerting believers to this danger, Jude followed the worthy examples of Christ, Paul, Peter, and John.

7. Jude focused on the corrupt character of the apostates rather than the content of their false teaching. Their sinful lives unmasked them as people who had left the faith.

8. Jude referred to two things not found in Scripture to support his points (vs. 9, 14). He referred to the archangel Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses and to Enoch's prophecy, which are not specifically mentioned in Scripture, but are found in non-Biblical writings, *The Assumption of Moses* and *The Book of Enoch*. Nevertheless, these are accurate and reliable truths because Jude was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

9. Jude wrote about God's preservation of believers in the midst of apostasy (vs. 1, 24-25). Although the influence of false teachers was a real threat, nothing could undermine the genuine faith and eternal security of God's people. Jude 1:21 and 24 reveal the harmony between the perseverance of believers (vs. 21, man's responsibility) and the preservation of the saints (vs. 4, God's sovereignty).

10. Jude made frequent use of triads (groups of three):

- A. His self-description (Jude, the servant of Christ, brother of James, vs. 1)
- B. His readers (sanctified, preserved, called, vs. 1)
- C. His blessing (mercy, peace, love, vs. 2)
- D. Examples of apostate groups (Israelites, angels, Sodom and Gomorrah, vs. 5-7)
- E. Apostate actions (defile the flesh, despise dominion, speak evil of dignities, vs. 8)
- F. Examples of apostate individuals (Cain, Balaam, Korah, vs. 11)
- G. End-time mockers (separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit, vs. 19)
- H. The Trinity and the believer's spiritual protection (vs. 20-21)

Outline of Jude

I. Salutation (1-2)

II. Purpose and Warning of Jude (vs. 3-4)

III. Examples and Judgment of Apostates (vs. 5-7)

- A. Israel after the Exodus (vs. 5)
- B. Rebellious angels (vs. 6)
- C. Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 7)

IV. Description of Apostates (vs. 8-16)

- A. Their actions (vs. 8-11)
- B. Their character (vs. 12-13)
- C. Their judgment (vs. 14-15)
- D. Their pride (vs. 16)

V. Defense against Apostates (vs. 17-23)

- A. Apostolic warnings (vs. 17-19)
- A. Antidote of faith, prayer, and the love of God (vs. 20-21)
- B. Mercy toward others (vs. 22-23)

VI. Concluding Praise and Blessing (vs. 24-25)

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