

## Who wrote the book?

## JUDE overview

Like most of the other general epistles, the title of this little book takes its name from its author. Most scholars identify the writer as Jude the half-brother of Jesus for at least two reasons. First, he identified himself as the “brother of James” ([Jude 1:1](#)), meaning he was probably not the apostle named Jude, a man who was called “the son of James” ([Luke 6:16](#)). That the author of the book of Jude identified himself as the brother of James likely aligns him with the family of Jesus. Second, [Matthew 13:55](#) records the names of the brothers of Jesus as James and Judas. Whereas the gospels record his name as Judas, English translations shorten it to Jude—probably for the same reason no one in the present day wants to name a child Judas, because of the association it has with Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus.

Like his older brother James, Jude did not place his faith in Jesus while the Lord was still alive. Only after the crucifixion and resurrection did the scales fall from Jude’s eyes and he become a follower of his half-brother, Jesus. [First Corinthians 9:5](#) offers a tantalizing piece of information, noting that the Lord’s brothers and their wives took missionary journeys. From this scant portrait, we begin to picture Jude as a man who lived in scepticism for a time but eventually came to a powerful faith in Jesus. And as he travelled on behalf of the gospel—telling the story in city after city with his name Judas butting up against that of Judas Iscariot—he would stand as a living example of faithfulness, a stark contrast to the betrayer.

## Where are we?

The book of Jude is notoriously difficult to date, primarily because the Bible and tradition reveal so little about the personal details of its author while the book itself refrains from naming any particular individuals or places. The one clue available to present-day readers is the striking similarity between the books of [Jude](#) and [2 Peter](#). Assuming Peter wrote his letter first ([AD 64–66](#)), Jude probably wrote his Epistle sometime between AD 67 and 80.

## Why is Jude so important?

Jude’s edgy briefness communicates the urgency of his notion that false teachers needed to be condemned and removed from the church. Few words meant that Jude would not waste space dancing around the issue. He saw within the church people and practices that were worthy of condemnation, including rejecting authority and seeking to please themselves. In response to these errors, Jude marshalled much biblical imagery to make clear what he thought of it all—anything from Cain killing his brother Abel to the punishment of the sinful people who populated Sodom and Gomorrah ([Jude 1:7, 11](#)).

## A basic look at the idea?

Jude’s purpose in his letter was twofold: he wanted to expose the false teachers that had infiltrated the Christian community, and he wanted to encourage Christians to stand firm in the faith and fight for the truth. Jude recognized that false teachers often peddled their wares unnoticed by the faithful, so he worked to heighten the awareness of the believers by describing in vivid detail how terrible dissenters actually were. But more than simply raising awareness, Jude thought it important that believers stand against those working against Jesus Christ. Believers were to do this by remembering the teaching of the apostles, building each other up in the faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and keeping themselves in the love of God ([Jude 1:17, 20–21](#)).

## How do I apply this?

Fight for the truth! Stand up against error! The book of Jude is the very definition of punchy and pithy proclamations—with its short commands and statements popping off the page like machine-gun fire. But in our day and age, punchy has become rude or unacceptable. In many circles the forcefulness of Jude will not be tolerated, the crowds preferring a softer and gentler side of the Christian faith. But Jude reminds us that there is a time and a place for the aggressive protection of the truth from those who would seek to tear it down. How can you participate in defending the truth from error?

## The Epistle General of

### JUDE

Lord's Words Red Old Testament reference blue man's words pink

**1:1** Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:

**1:2** Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied

**1:3** Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

**1:4** For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1:5** I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

**1:6** And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

**1:7** Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

**1:8** Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

**1:9** Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

**1:10** But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

**1:11** Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

**1:12** These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withers, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

**1:13** Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

**1:14** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

**1:15** To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

**1:16** These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaks great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

**1:17** But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

**1:18** How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

**1:19** These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

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**1:20** But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

**1:21** Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

**1:22** And of some have compassion, making a difference:

**1:23** And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

**1:24** Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

**1:25** To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.