

**JUDE'S LETTER**



**— WORTH —  
FIGHTING  
— FOR —**

# HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

## 1. Personal Reading

- Use this guide to help you read your Bible every day.
- Scribble down your thoughts and questions each day.
- The 5 daily studies for each week are *in preparation* for the upcoming sermon on Sunday.
- Although some days you will be focussing on just a couple of verses, it is always great to read the whole chapter again to help put what you are reading into context.
- Each devotion should take approximately 10 minutes - if you would like to dive deeper: ask more questions, read back over yesterday's points, or read the surrounding text. If you can make and take more time, go for it!
- By spending weeks studying this book, the goal is that you will have read it many times and have studied it in depth.
- Take your time and enjoy God's word.

## 2. Prayer

- In some places, prayer ideas are given as a suggestion. In other places, the prayer has been left blank. This is for you to complete with your own requests, confessions and thanks. At times your prayers may be prompted by the passage, but there is room to pray for whatever is happening in your life each day.

## 3. Church

- Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided after each week.

Sermons and digital booklet available at:

**[www.narweebaptist.org.au](http://www.narweebaptist.org.au)**

# JUDE. WORTH FIGHTING FOR

## THE AUTHOR: *WHO IS JUDE?*

Few have heard of Jude, aside from knowing it is the name of that little book just before Revelation. However, the Greek word behind our English 'Jude' occurs forty-three other times, usually translated 'Judah' or 'Judas'. But who wrote this book!? Generally speaking the name of a New Testament book refers to either the author or the recipients.<sup>1</sup> On this occasion Jude is the author.

The author characterizes himself as 'a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James.' (v.1) Many others claim the 'servant' characterisation but only Jude that he is the brother of James. The James mentioned here most certainly refers to James, a prominent leader in the early church (Acts 15.13-21; 21.18; Gal 2.9) and the 'brother of the Lord' (Gal 1.19; Mark 6.3; Matt 13.55; John 7.5). We can then declare that Jude was also a brother of Jesus (see Mark 6.3, 'Judas').

Why would he not mention this? It is most likely a matter of focus. Jude, like his brother James, sees no point in claiming a physical relationship with Jesus for there is no spiritual benefit or authority given through this. So, as Clement of Alexandria thought, Jude may have deliberately avoided the title in order to focus on the more significant for his ministry, that of a 'servant of the Lord.' He writes more like a preacher in a skilled literary style. He uses a wide vocabulary with verbal or rhetorical skills with a good grasp on the Old Testament and other Jewish literature, further characterising him as a Jewish man preaching in Greek.

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<sup>1</sup> The book of Acts, and Revelation are two that fit outside this generality. Also, there is obviously more

## **THE LETTER ITSELF: WHEN WAS IT WRITTEN?**

Knowing that Jude was a brother of Jesus aids in the dating process. The other helpful link is drawn through the similarities between Jude and 2 Peter. Many scholars have sought to establish which letter preceded the other, and if they were dependent upon one or the other. But given the dating of 2 Peter, toward the end of Peter's life, in the middle 60's, we can safely date Jude at about the same time. For these reasons along with other internal reasons, such as the description of the false teachers and language and themes (suggesting an early dating), the letter was most likely written between A.D. 40 and A.D. 80.<sup>2</sup>

## **STRUCTURE AND FORM**

We must remember that the letter of Jude is a 'real letter' although it may not so clearly read as one.<sup>3</sup> We can't be confident of the specific recipients (see below). However, the letter was written for and sent to specific addressees. The opening, v.1-2 conforms to the style of the ancient Jewish letter and this is followed by the occasion and theme of his message in the 'body opening', vv.3-4. The body itself, vv.4-23 presents more like a homily – a sermon rather than a letter, which is why it is often thought to be a general tract against heresy. Finally, Jude closes this epistolary sermon (letter sermon) with the famous doxology of v.24-25.

It appears that it was the Hebrew Bible that Jude was most familiar with, fitting nicely with the description of the author (see previous) and subsequently the 'recipients' (see below). There will be times that Jude refers to or quotes things from extra-biblical material, specifically and including the Apocryphal books, the *Assumption of Moses* and the *Book of Enoch*, and most probably, the *Testament of Naphtali* (v.6) and the *Testament of Asher* (v.8). This should not concern us, as an inspired man could use

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<sup>2</sup> By early I mean soon after the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ but long enough that there had been time for the false teaching to develop.

<sup>3</sup> Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 16.

contemporary ideas and stories that are not contrary to revelation, for the purposes of his writings.

As previously stated, the body itself, vv.4-23, presents like a homily, consisting of a midrash (a commentary or exegesis of Scripture) on a series of scriptural references and texts (vv.5-19) and a moral exhortation (vv.20-23). This gives the letter the sermon like feel, a work that could have been delivered in a sermon if he and his readers were able to meet.

Jude's form and style of writing is exciting. He often uses catchwords, linking his exposition to the 'quoted' texts.<sup>4</sup> His sentence construction is simple, and yet his vocabulary is rich and varied. The whole work is carefully composed. Through close and careful study, the modern reader gains a greater level of appreciation for this short but lively letter.

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<sup>4</sup> His texts aren't always actual or direct quotations.

## ***WORTH FIGHTING FOR***

### **Greeting – v.1-2**

### **Reason for the letter – v.3-4**

*Fighting for the Faith against false teaching*

What he did not write (v.3)

What he did write (v.4)

### **Warnings Against False Teachers – v.5-16**

*Historical examples (v.5-7)*

three warning reminders from history:

1. unbelieving Israel
2. angels who fall
3. Sodom and Gomorrah

*The false teachers of Jude's day (v.8-16)*

three connections in his day:

1. Their speech is slanderous
2. Their character graphically deplorable
3. Their destruction has been prophesied

### **Closing Appeal and Exhortation – instructions for the fight! – v.17-23**

*Holding fast to the faith – Concerning the false teachers (17-19)*

*Holding fast to the faith – Concerning one another (20-23)*

### **Doxology – v.24-5**

## **WHY AND TO WHOM WAS IT WRITTEN?**

The theme of Jude's letter is well stated in v.3-4. He writes appealing to the people to continue in their fight for the faith, for it is most certainly worth fighting for (v.3). He didn't want to write what he does, but he felt he needed to, due to the threat of false teaching within their midst (v.4).

Jude writes this letter for a specific situation, not simply as a general tract against heresy. There was a specific group of false teachers troubling a specific church. We can only presume beyond these particulars regarding both the recipients and the false teachers. Neither one are specified within the letter. However, by identifying the similarities between 2 Peter and Jude, considering the dating (between A.D. 40 and 80) and the content itself, many have acknowledged the false teachers heresy as an early

form of Gnosticism. Bauckham suggests they are antinomian teachers, people who reject the moral law. They are 'libertines' presuming that the grace of God gave them liberty to do as they please (v.4; 2 Peter 2.19-20). So, they have no need for authority (v.8-9; 2 Peter 2.10-11) they commit all manner of sins of the flesh, divide, grumble and boast, following their own evil desires. What is of great concern is that they have 'slipped in among' the called, the Christians (v.4) and so have influence and need to be responded to (v.20-23).

Due to the way Jude writes, the evidence points toward a predominant Jewish-Christian community within a Gentile society.<sup>5</sup> Where were they located? We really cannot say.

Despite not knowing the specifics, this letter has great relevance for the church today; each and every one of us is responsible for fighting for the faith. We were entrusted with this truth, and in our age many seek to take liberties with this truth. But, it is a truth worth fighting for. As we consider the way the grace of God was changed by the false teachers in Jude's day, we will be able to critique our times. We can evaluate the way false teachers and others deny Christ by changing the grace of the gospel, and consider how we put up the good fight.

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<sup>5</sup> His texts aren't always actual or direct quotations.

**WEEK ONE – JUDE 1:1–4**

**THERE IS A FIGHT FOR ALL THE SAINTS**

**MONDAY**

**Read Jude 1**

- i. Write down your first impressions of this book.
- ii. What stands out? If you had to express what you believe the letter to be about in one short sentence, what would it be?
- iii. Are there any parts that didn't make sense to you, what questions do you have?

*Pray that God may reveal to you a fresh understanding of this letter, that he may communicate with you and draw you closer to him as you delve into his word.*

**TUESDAY**

**Read Jude 1:1-2**

- i. From his introduction, what do we learn of Jude?
- ii. The overview explains that Jude is most likely the brother of Jesus (have a read if you haven't already) and yet Jude clearly avoids this title. He uses the word for slave, *doulos*, to describe his relationship to Jesus. What does this tell you of how he views his relationship?



- iii. What might the term slave express?
  
- iv. If you have time, look up:  
Rom 1.1; Gal 1.10; Phil 1.1; Titus 1.1; Jas 1.1 and 2 Pet 1.1  
How do these authors express their relationship?

*As you pray today, consider your relationship to Jesus, for we are 'slaves' of Christ Jesus. This is both a humbling and uplifting reality. Pray that we will always regard our relationship to Jesus as the defining factor in how we describe ourselves.*

## **WEDNESDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:1-2**

Most Greco-Roman letters started with the sender, recipients and greeting all stated very concisely. For an example see Acts 23.26. Jude, however, includes rich theological substance in his greeting. Yesterday we considered 'the sender,' Jude. Today and tomorrow we will look closely at the recipients.

- i. Jude could be included within his description of the recipients. With a first glance of the description, why could we say that?
  
- ii. What are the three things that describe the people Jude writes to?  
Explain what each one means
  - 1.
  
  - 2.
  
  - 3.

## **WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

- iii. Who is the active agent? Who then does ‘the work’ and do you believe this means that we are completely passive? Why/why not?

Jude by describing the recipients this way, reminds them from the start, that it is God who has set his love upon them, called them to Jesus and will preserve them until the end.

*All Christians, like Jude and his recipients, are slaves of Christ Jesus, called, loved and kept. Pray that you would know and experience this truth. Pray for someone who is yet to be called, loved and kept, that God might do his work in them.*

## **THURSDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:3-4**

Verses 3-4 parallel to the ‘body opening’ of a Greek letter, that is, they introduce the body of the letter. This tends to be the moment where the occasion or the purpose of the letter is indicated.

- i. Why is Jude writing? In v.3 he explains what he wanted to write, but then what he felt he had to write. What were these two things?
- ii. Explain what it is Jude wants them to ‘contend for’? What could he be referring to?

- iii. How does the end of v.3 detail why they are the ones to be contending for ‘the faith’?
  
- iv. There is great weight to the reality that once for all ‘the saints’ were entrusted with the faith. What responsibility does that give us as saints?

*Praise God that he as used faithful men and women to contend for the gospel, to contend for the faith in such a way that we are beneficiaries of that same gospel! Pray that we might be a people who are willing to contend for that same gospel.*

## **FRIDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:3-4**

- i. Yesterday we saw that Jude explains his *purpose* for writing. What *reason* does he give for writing in v.4?
  
- ii. There are four things noted about these ‘certain men,’ what are they and what does each teach us about their approach to God?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.

## **WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

- iii. What might 'license for immorality' mean? Paul's words in 1 Cor 6.12-20 may help you consider what the false teachers we doing.

*It appears that these people are demonstrating their rejection of Jesus by the rejection of his moral demands regarding their bodily existence. Pray that we would regard Jesus, not ourselves as Lord, and so demonstrate that in how we use our bodies.*

Sermon notes

***Jude 1:1-4***

**WEEK TWO - JUDE 1:5-7**

**THERE ARE REMINDERS FOR ALL THE SAINTS**

**MONDAY**

**Read Jude 1**

- i. Write down your first impression of this passage
- ii. Are there any verses which stand out to you?
- iii. Which parts of this passage don't make sense to you?

*Pray that God would overturn any distractions in your life at the moment, and that his word may sink into your heart this week.*

**TUESDAY**

**Read Jude 1:5**

Jude has just made it clear that there are ungodly people in their midst who are 'perverting the grace of...God' (1:4).

In vv. 5-7, he is going to give a short history lesson. There are three examples which he uses to remind the church what happens to false teachers.

Example 1. Jude quotes from the story of Israel's unbelief (Numbers 14).

- i. Read Numbers 14:1-23. What was the reason for Israel's unbelief? What was God's first response to Moses in verses 11-12?
  
- ii. What do we learn about God from his second response in verses 20-23?
  
- iii. Jude's purpose in writing is to encourage faithfulness to God (v3). How does Jude's reference to the account in Numbers help him make his point?

*God established Moses as a mediator for Israel. This was to foreshadow the work that Jesus would do for us. Praise God for Jesus our mediator! In your prayers, consider that God is a God of love and a God of justice. He desires us to trust in him in all things.*

## **WEDNESDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:6**

It was commonly thought that the Angels in v6 were Satan and his followers being removed from Heaven. However, most commentators believe that Jude is referencing the old Jewish myth of the *Watchers* from 1 Enoch.

The story goes a little like this: Before the flood, some angels became infatuated with human women. Their lust was so great that they left their places in Heaven to be with these human women. In turn, this corrupted the people of earth to the point where God sent a great flood (Gen 6).

Example 2. Jude quotes from the story of the fallen angels.

- i. Read Genesis 6:1-8. What was the reason for God's troubled heart? What did he decide to do?

## **WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

- ii. What do we learn about God from verse 8?
- iii. Jude reminds the church that these fallen angels are being kept for judgement. What does this tell you about leaders in the church who cause others to go astray?
- iv. Do you think such leaders are present in the church today? If so, how do you know?

*God takes sin very seriously. However, even though he was acting justly when he cleansed the earth, he spared Noah and his family. In your prayers, thank God for the mercy he demonstrated to you in Jesus Christ.*

## **THURSDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:7**

Jude now offers his third and final example. He draws upon the familiar account of God's judgement upon Sodom and Gomorra. Like the second example, this is also an example of sexual sin which led to judgement.

It was actually very common to refer to the events of Sodom and Gomorra to warn others against sin. Let's examine this warning and another like it from the Old Testament.

Example 3. Jude refers to the account of Sodom and Gomorra.

- i. Read Deuteronomy 29:19-23. What behaviour / attitude was Moses warning the people about?



ii. What are some of the similarities between Moses' warning here and Jude's warning in Jude 1:7?

iii. In verse 7, Jude sums up the examples by saying 'They serve as an example...'. What is Jude's purpose in offering these three warnings? Consider verse 3.

iv. Are these warnings still relevant in today's church? If so, how? Give examples.

*Jude offers these warnings to those who already know the truth and are walking in obedience (v3, 5). He reminds them of previous judgements in order to 'urge [them] to contend for the faith' (v3).*

*In your prayers, thank God that he sends us reminders and encouragements to help us remain strong in the faith.*

**Read Jude 1:5-7**

This week we have had a short history lesson through this letter of Jude's. Take some time to go back over the three examples from history.

- i. Which example was most striking and why?
- ii. What do you believe Jude's main purpose was in using the examples from Israel's history for ALL the saints?
- iii. How are we at risk of not learning from 'our history'? What are some of the false teachings that make us question a faithful obedience to our Lord?

*Ask God to give you a greater insight and perception of the truth that he may guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Pray for those who continually fall into the same patterns as those of the past and ask that we might heed the warnings and reminders.*

Sermon notes

***Jude 1:5-7***

**WEEK THREE - JUDE 1:8-16**

**LOOK SAINTS & BEWARE FALSE TEACHERS**

**MONDAY**

**Read Jude 1:8-16**

- i. List all of the people mentioned:
- ii. What are your first thoughts after reading these paragraphs?
- iii. What questions do you have?

*Pray that God might reveal more of Himself to you this week as you dive deeper into these 9 verses.*

**TUESDAY**

**Read Jude 1:8-16 then re-read v8-10**

- i. In verse 8, Jude writes, “in the same way...”. Who is he referring to? (Go back to last week’s passage)
- ii. As you read v8-10, list what the “ungodly people” do:

The dispute about the body of Moses that is mentioned in verse 9 is not in the Old Testament (but, see Deut 34:5-6, Zech 3:1-5). Michael telling the devil, “The Lord rebuke you” demonstrates the exclusive power and authority of the Jesus Christ, something the false teachers deny (remember Jude 4?).

iii. Why might we try to reject this authority?

iv. In what areas does this power and authority affect your life?

*Confess anything you feel convicted of. Praise God that Jesus is the Truth and that he has exclusive power and authority.*

## **WEDNESDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:11**

We have seen that the false teachers are motivated by greed. Today we are going to look a little deeper at the 3 examples that Jude gives:

#### **i. Cain**

Read Gen 4:5-8 and summarise what God says to Cain:

#### **ii. Balaam**

Read Num 22:5-7 and 2 Pet 2:15 - Is Balaam a false prophet/teacher?

#### **iii. Korah**

Read Num 16:1-3 – What did Korah do?

Read Num 16:31-35 – What happened?

## **WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

Each of these people were characterised by their dissatisfaction with the place they occupied, and so they engaged in rebellion against God, greedily seeking selfish gain at any cost.

*Reflect on each of these people, and pray that you will become increasingly selfless as you follow Jesus. Explore Philippians 1.27-2.11 as you reflect.*

## **THURSDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:12-13**

- i. Jude uses quite a few comparisons for the false teachers. Jot down a little comment about what each means:
  - a. Hidden reefs
  - b. Shepherds feeding themselves
  - c. Waterless clouds
  - d. Fruitless trees
  - e. Wild waves
  - f. Wandering stars

How does knowing this about false teachers enhance your discernment?

*Pray that the truth will be proclaimed at church, in your home group, and in your own life. Praise God that His word helps us to discern what is right.*

**FRIDAY****Read Jude 1:14-16**

Jude uses 1 Enoch 1:9, an extrabiblical Jewish work, as an example to focus back on judgement. It's important to note that this doesn't mean that any of these other literary works are authoritative words of God in the same category as Scripture.

- i. Ok, let's now look at the content of this example: in v14-15, what does Enoch prophesy? Try to put it in your own words:
  
- ii. Who are these people (v14) that will be judged and why are they being judged?
  
- iii. How does Jude describe the false teachers in v16?
  
- iv. When you consider false teachers, what do you first think of? How might Jude's description help us to remain faithful and pray for those who lead us to remain faithful?

*As you pray, spend some time reflecting on Jesus' second coming. Pray for wisdom in how to live in light of this. Pray for those who are false and the ones they have led astray.*

***WORTH FIGHTING FOR***

Sermon notes

***Jude 1:8-16***



**WEEK FOUR - JUDE 1:17-25**

**THERE ARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FIGHT**

**MONDAY**

**Read Jude 1:17-25**

- i. What are your initial thoughts and feelings about this passage?
- ii. The beginning of this next section in Jude is signaled with a major transition, 'but my dear friends or beloved.' However, how is this section still connected to what Jude has been explaining to his readers?
- iii. What was the source of the warnings in v.5-16 and what does the source now appear to be in v.17-19?
- iv. This is the end of the letter, as you reflect on the entire letter can you identify any links to previous concepts and themes? Take some time looking over the letter as a whole.

*Thank God that he can teach and warn us through the Old Testament types and prophecies as we are through what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. Ask that you might be able listen intently to God's word this week.*

**TUESDAY**

**Read Jude 1:17-19**

- i. What does Jude call the readers and what does that convey about his relationship to them and his care for them?

## **WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

- ii. How does v.17 signal that there is a contrast about to be shown between the false teachers and his readers? Can you find another in this weeks passage?
- iii. Jude calls them to ‘remember’ something. What is it? Does what was said match with anything previously spoken of? If so, who is being referred to here?
- iv. From v.18 and 19 describe the character and actions of the false teachers.

*Pray that we can remember there is a difference between teachers who follow the Lord Jesus and those who follow natural ungodly desires. Pray that our leaders might teach faithfully.*

## **WEDNESDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:20 & 21**

- i. Jude has started to contrast his brothers and sisters with the false teachers. With the help of yesterday’s passage (v.19-20), where do we see the contrasts in their actions?
- ii. At the beginning of his letter, Jude, addressed them as the called, loved and kept in Jesus Christ, read v.1 again. Is v.21 a contradiction to what Jude was communicating at the beginning of his letter? If it isn’t, what then is our role in continuing in God’s love?

- iii. 'Mercy' was a term used with reference to the eschatological (end-time) hope of God's people. How might the call to wait for mercy, help us understand the need to contend for the gospel until the end? Can you see a link to v.3? If so, how?

*Nobody escapes condemnation, except by the Lord's mercy. For that reason we are to build each other up, pray in the Spirit and keep ourselves in God's love – we are to remain faithful. Pray that you might build, pray and keep.*

## **THURSDAY**

### **Read Jude 1:22-23**

Jude continues to instruct his readers in how they are to contend for the faith (v.3).

- i. There are three different instructions, yet something is central to each of them. What is the central theme and how does that extend from 'the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints?' (v.3)
- ii. Read Zech 3.1-5, what two instructions could be illusions from this passage?
- iii. The doubters are those who won't listen to rebuke but follow the false teachers and those being snatched from the fire, members of the church who are indulging in sinful behaviour. Who do you think the final group could be?

## **WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

- iv. What are the people to fear? And why? How does this highlight our ability to become contaminated by sin, even the sin of others?

*Although we are to be cautious regarding false teachers and those who are influenced by their teaching, we are to respond with mercy! Pray for people who are under the influence of false teaching, that the Lord might have mercy and draw them to Himself.*

## **FRIDAY**

### **Read Jude (all of it!)**

- i. What is the biggest thing that you've learned over the past month?
- ii. What is one thing that you have changed/put into action over the last month?
- iii. What does Jude focus on for the majority of his letter? What do the last couple of verses (v.24-25) focus on and how would you describe them?
- iv. How does Jude finishing his message by reiterating some of God's qualities help us in our confident fight for the faith?

*Praise God for the security that we have in him and thank him that he keeps us from falling as you pray through vv.24-25*

Sermon notes

***Jude 1:17-25***

*WORTH FIGHTING FOR*

**PRAYER POINTS / UPCOMING FOR**

**PRAYER POINTS / UPCOMING FOR**



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