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Article 65: Jude at a Glance

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JUDE AT A GLANCE

This book is totally given over to the subject of apostasy, listing examples of historical apostates, giving the causes, godless characteristics, tragic results of apostasy, and concluding with some safeguards against it.

BOTTOM LINE INTRODUCTION

THE ARROGANT APOSTATE, DESCRIBED AND DENOUNCED

FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK

1. Who? **Jude**. He was the half-brother of Jesus and full brother of James (Matt. 13:15) who wrote one of the final New Testament books.
2. What? The book of Jude.
3. When and where? 85 A.D., from (?) Jerusalem.
4. Why? To warn against apostasy.
5. To whom? All believers.

KEY EVENTS

1. Facts about apostasy

KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **Jude**, half brother of Jesus, full brother of James (who wrote the Book of James), and author of the Book of Jude
2. **Michael**, archangel of God, protector of Israel (Dan. 12:1), referred here regarding his confrontation with Satan over the body of Moses
3. **Cain**, killer of his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8), here called an apostate for refusing to offer God a blood sacrifice
4. **Balaam**, false and greedy Old Testament prophet, here called an apostate for his attempts to curse the nation Israel (Num. 22-24)
5. **Korah (or Core)**, Old Testament troublemaker (Num. 16), here called an apostate for his denial of and rebellion against the authority of Moses
6. **Enoch**, Old Testament father of Methuselah who was removed from earth without dying (Gen. 5:21-24), referred to here for his stern pre-flood warning against apostate teachers

KEY PLACES

1. **Egypt**: nation that had enslaved Israel for centuries until God delivered them but eventually could not enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief
2. **Sodom and Gomorrah**: wicked cities near the Dead Sea, destroyed by God, and referred to here as a warning against apostasy

UNIQUE FEATURES

1. Three scholars have written the following in regard to the epistle of Jude:
 - "A little book, but one filled with healthful words of heavenly grace" (Origen)
 - "It is without a parallel in the New Testament for its vehement denouncing of libertines and apostates" (D. Edmond Hiebert)
 - "The most neglected book in the New Testament" (Douglas Rowston)
2. Jude was the brother of James (author of the book of James and first pastor of the Jerusalem church in Acts 15) and half brother of Jesus (see Mk. 6:3).
3. Along with his brothers, Jude did not believe in the ministry of Jesus until after the resurrection (Jn. 7:3-8). But sometime between the resurrection and ascension both men were gloriously saved. They were present (along with their mother Mary) in the Upper Room just prior to Pentecost (Acts 1:13).
4. Jude was apparently married and was accompanied by his wife as he performed missionary work (1 Cor. 9:5).
5. "The beginning of the age of the Church is described in the Acts of the Apostles. The end of the Church Age is set forth in the Epistle of Jude, which might well be called the Acts of the Apostates. Jude is the only book in all God's Word entirely devoted to the great apostasy which is to come upon Christendom before the Lord Jesus Christ returns. This brief message of 25 verses is the vestibule to the Revelation ... without Jude, the prophetic picture which begins with the teachings of Christ in the gospels and develops throughout the epistles would be incomplete. (See Lk. 18:8; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:1; 3:3). Jude brings the teachings of the entire Bible about apostasy to a tremendous climax. He takes us back to the very dawn of human history. We are reminded of apostasy at the gate of Eden and within God's ancient people Israel. Our thoughts are turned to princes and prophets, to saints and sinners, to eternal fire and everlasting darkness, to the sea and to the stars, to past judgments and future glory" (Dr. S. Maxwell Coder, *Jude, the Acts of the Apostates*, pp. 3-4).
6. Jude can be compared to 2 Peter.
 - Both epistles give the marks of false teachers.
 - a. See 2 Pet. 2:1-3, 10-22.
 - b. See Jude 4, 10-19.
 - Peter placed the ministry of false teachers in the future (2:1), whereas Jude saw them as already present (v. 4).
 - Both epistles refer to fallen angels (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
 - Both mention Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7).
 - Both use Balaam as an example of apostasy (2 Pet. 2:15-16; Jude 11).
 - Both liken apostasy to waterless clouds (2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 12).
7. Jude has been called the Judges of the New Testament.
8. Jude refers to two noncanonical books. These are:
 - The Assumption of Moses (Jude 9)
 - The book of Enoch (Jude 14-15)—Paul had previously also done this. (See Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12.)

9. "Jude was intending to write an epistle regarding 'our common salvation' (v. 3), when the Spirit detoured him to write concerning the apostasy. It is a graphic and striking description of the apostasy. What was a little cloud the size of a man's hand in Jude's day is, in our day, a storm of hurricane proportions—because we are in the apostasy of which he foretold. It is a question now of how much worse it can become before genuine believers are taken out by the rapture" (J. Vernon McGee, *Through the Bible*, p. 293).
10. It is the first of two New Testament books referring to Michael the archangel. Both deal with his encounter with Satan (Jude 9; Rev. 12:7).
11. The book of Jude is the only New Testament book to provide for us a sample of the kind of preaching pre-flood sinners once heard. (See Jude 14-15.)
12. It is the only biblical book which begins and concludes by reminding believers in regards to God's preservation of His people.
13. A key characteristic of this epistle is the author's fondness for employing combinations of three. Thus:
 - Three-fold description of believers (v. 1)
 - a. Sanctified
 - b. Preserved
 - c. Called
 - Three-fold greeting (v. 2)
 - a. Mercy
 - b. Peace
 - c. Love
 - Three Old Testament apostate groups (vv. 5-7)
 - a. Unbelieving Israel
 - b. Fallen angels
 - c. Citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah
 - Three Old Testament apostate individuals (v. 11)
 - a. Cain
 - b. Balaam
 - c. Core (Korah)
 - Those needing special help (vv. 22, 23)

"Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh" (N.I.V.)

Jude concludes his epistle with one of the New Testament's greatest doxologies:
"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, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."
 (vv. 24, 25)

COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS

1. James, because of its style
2. Second Peter, because of its contents

TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS

1. Jesus Christ (v. 1)
2. Lord Jesus Christ (v. 4)
3. The only wise God our Savior (v. 25)