

Jude Outline

Introduction: Jude's short length and pugnacious attitude has made it one of the least appreciated of all the books in the New Testament. But, at least historically, Jude may be one of the most important. It is now widely argued that Jude is one of the earliest letters in the New Testament, if not the first letter to be written, and is dated between 60 and 70 CE.

Although Jude is a fantastically brutal attack upon teachers the writer sees as enemies, the letter is really one of encouragement and not one of criticism. Jude writes to an unknown Christian community urging them to "contend" for the faith against teachers who have infiltrated who only shepherd themselves and are introducing division and luring people into wordly, sensual ways. It's not entirely clear what these leaders were teaching, but in Jude's eyes they represented a terrible threat.

Jude's descriptions of these enemies are worth noting simply for the poetry. Jude describes them as being waterless clouds carried away by the winds; autumn trees with no fruit; wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; and wandering stars, for whom the darkness is preserved. In other words these teachers are all show and no substance, here today gone tomorrow, and only interested in their own gratification- not in the health of the whole community.

In the end, though, it's important to remember Jude's final words are positive. He tells the community to focus not on the negative, but on their hope in Jesus Christ- that in him all will find mercy, even those who have wavered.

Chapter 1: An appeal to contend for the faith; examples of judgment; the ones falling away like

Like animals; like waterless clouds/wild waves/wandering stars;
A reminder of the last days

Stories to know: 1.10-13 Description of the people falling away