

CRITICAL INTRODUCTION TO JUDE

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The three main issues in Jude are (1) its canonicity, (2) its relationship to 2 Peter, and (3) its use of extra-canonical literature.

I. External Citations

- A. Hermas in *Similitudes* (5:7) has much to say about defiling the flesh (Jude 8).
- B. Polycarp speaks of “*building you up in that faith which has been given you*” (*Epistle to Philippians* 3). See Jude 3, 20.
- C. Athenagoras seems to refer to Jude 6 in chapter 14.
- D. Theophilus of Antioch speaks of the planets as a type of fallen man, a figure that occurs only in Jude 6.
- E. Omitted in Old Syriac
- F. Muratorian Fragment recognizes it
- G. Tertullian says, “*To these considerations is added the fact that Enoch possesses a testimony in the Apostle Jude.*”
- H. Eusebius says that Clement of Alexandria in the *Hypotyposes* “*has made abbreviated narratives of the whole testimony of Scripture and has not passed over the disputed books—I mean Jude and the rest of the Catholic epistles and Barnabas, and what is called the Revelation of Peter*” (*Ecclesiastical History* 6:14). In the *Instructor* (3:8) he cites Jude 5, 6 as by Jude. In *Stromateis* (3:2) he cites Jude 8-17. Eusebius puts Jude among the disputed, not among the spurious.
 - I. Thiessen says that Jude has stronger external attestation than 2 Peter.
 - J. Zahn says that Jude is better attested in the canon of the church than 2 Peter or James.
 - K. The reason Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine, and the early Church Fathers long rejected the book was that Jude copied from several apocryphal books.
 - L. Jude was accepted by A.D. 200 without question in Alexandria, Rome, and North Africa.

II. Internal Evidence

- A. Jude claims to be author.
- B. A brother of James: “*the brother of the Lord*” (Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 show that James had a brother named Jude.)
- C. The writer is not an apostle; he distinguishes himself from the apostles in Jude 17. That may be questionable since Peter does the same: 2 Peter 3:2; see also Hebrews 2:1-4. Furthermore, apostles may have the more generalized sense of “missionary.” Especially is that possible since apostles is plural.
- D. Jude and James both show they are not apostles in that they omit the apostolic title.

This may be of doubtful significance since John does likewise in Revelation and in 2 and 3 John as well as in 1 John, where no name is given. Paul also omits it in the Thessalonian epistles (but see 1 Thessalonians 1:6) and Philippians.

III. Relation to Pseudepigraphical Works

- A. Jude 9 from *Assumption of Moses*
- B. Jude 14ff from *Book of Enoch* 1:9; 5:4
- C. Answers

1. Philippi: Jude merely wrote from oral tradition.

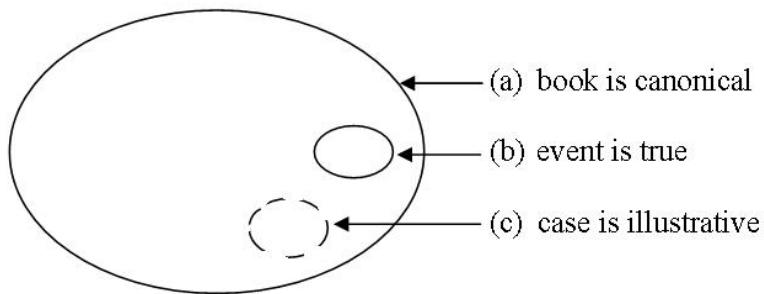
Perhaps, but since this document was not written till A.D. 44, one wonders whether there would be much point in referring to it since it had to be written from a traditional memory, which others besides its author had.

2. Morehead: Jude quoted from Enoch and others, but that does not mean he accepted the whole *Book of Enoch*. We do not suppose that Paul agrees with everything in the Greek poets he quotes. He merely pronounces as true the part he cites.

- a. From Aratus: Acts 17:28
- b. From Menander: 1 Corinthians 15:33 (perhaps Euripides)
- c. From Epimenides: Titus 1:12-13
- d. *Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach*: Ephesians 6:13-18

3. Citation of an example of his point regardless of its historicity: citation means

- a. The whole book is inspired; the book is canonical.
- b. The fact cited is true (reference to Enoch); a factual reference is true in a book that is not canonical as a whole.
- c. The idea behind the statement is true (illustrative usage in the reference to Michael the archangel); a non-historical event is illustrative of a principle that is true.



One observation that weighs against Jude's citing the *Assumption of Moses* for purely illustrative reasons is that Peter says, "*Angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring railing accusations against them before the Lord.*" He refers to this as a fact rather than as a literary reference, and there is no canonical reference to such an incident.

IV. Date

- A. If Jude was written after 2 Peter, then not before A.D. 66-67.
- B. Jude may have been several years younger than Jesus, especially since he is placed last (Matthew 13:55) and next to last (Mark 6:3) in the listing of Jesus' brothers; so the epistle may have been written as late as A.D. 75.

V. Jude Not a Forgery

- A. A forger would certainly have chosen a more prominent person than Jude to hang his letter on.
 - 1. Jude's name does not appear once in the writings of early Christian authors down to the year 200 (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6:7)
 - 2. Scripture says little about him.
 - 3. Jude probably had not labored outside Palestine (see John 7:3-8; Acts 1:14; 1 Corinthians 9:5).
- B. Why would the writer assume any character at all? Nothing he says requires any authority. He condemns certain men in the church, but only in a way that any earnest Christian would do. We could say that he would thereby give it more authority, but again, why not choose a more outstanding person for that purpose?
- C. He claims no authority.
- D. Would a forger have been content with the mild and general hints at writings that he refers to? Would he not have specified the apostle he quotes to give strength to his claim?
- E. Why would he have referred to an intended or presently-being-produced letter?

VI. Jude's Relation to 2 Peter

The amount of similarity, the degree of similarity, and the sequence of the similarities show a connection between the writings.

- A. Jude follows Peter only as far as he records the fulfillment of what 2 Peter prophesies. In fact, Jude seems to have two purposes in identifying their false teachers as the ones Peter spoke about; so the quotation. (Zahn, p. 267: "*Jude may be thought of as a working over of an apostolic writing in light of more recent events to suit the spirit of the age and in order to make it more effective.*") It deliberately attempted to indicate that fulfillment of Peter's prediction by using even some of the same language and examples that Peter used to drive home his point. This is also important as an argument that Peter wrote first, or Jude is citing 2 Peter, not copying him as the shorter length of his common material shows. Quotation is not necessarily plagiarism. Greek had no quote marks, and the speed-power of this precipitous denunciation would be lost if he kept interrupting with formulae and

quotation marks. Furthermore, Jude has already (v. 4) noted a letter previously written to them and anticipates indicating his knowledge of its content and authorship (17-18).

- B. Jude follows 2 Peter in time (also 2 Peter under “Date”).
1. Peter was less likely to borrow from a non-apostle than Jude was to use Peter.
 2. Jude pronounces fulfilled what Peter warns about.
 3. Jude 17-18 comes from 2 Peter 3:3.
 4. Jude 9 spoils 2 Peter 2:11 (see Biggs, p. 217). Jude, of course, omits “to the Lord”; the false teachers did not bring railing accusations.
 5. It is easier to suppose that κλητός (Jude 1) and ἄγιος (3) as well as πνεῦμα and ψυχικός in Jude 19 slipped in unawares as Pauline words into Petrine material than that 2 Peter cut these words out on critical grounds.
 6. Jude may be referring to 2 Peter in Jude 17 and 4.
 7. Peter had probably died, because Jude implies that the temple was already destroyed. Does the fact that the catholic epistles are written to a common Asia Minor destination imply that Peter and Jude are no longer in Jerusalem?
 8. Why would Peter write as future what Jude describes as historical? Even a writer of 2 Peter would not have. Note Jude’s phrase *put you in remembrance*.

C. Outline of common material following Peter’s order

1. Most of it is in same order.

2 Peter	Jude
1:2 Grace to you and <u>peace be multiplied</u>	2 Mercy to you and <u>peace and love be multiplied</u> .
1:10 if you do these things you will never stumble	24 To him who is able to keep you from stumbling
1:12 <u>I will always remind you</u> of these things <i>though you know . . .</i>	5 <u>I want to remind you</u> , <i>though you know everything</i>
2:1 false teachers who will privily bring in destructive heresies	4a There are certain men who crept in privily
denying the Master that bought them	4d <u>denying our only Master</u> and Lord, Jesus Christ
2:2 and many will follow their lascivious doings	4c ungodly men, turning the grace of God into <i>lasciviousness</i>
2:3 In covetousness they will with feigned words make merchandise of you	16 showing respect of persons for advantage

- whose sentence from of old does not linger.
- 2:4 If God did not spare *angels* when they sinned but cast them down to Tartarus and committed them to pits of **darkness to be reserved for judgment** (note 2:9; 3:7)
- 2:6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes . . . having made them an example . . .
- 2:9 The Lord knows how . . . to keep the Unrighteous under punishment **for the day of judgment**
- 2:10 those who *walk after the flesh* in the lust of *defilement*
despise dominion
rail at dignitaries (glories)
- 2:11 angels . . . do not bring railing Judgment against them before the Lord
- 2:12 but these are *creatures without reason*
 born natural animals
 to be taken and destroyed
railing in matters of which they are ignorant
will in their destroying . . . be destroyed
- 2:13 *while they feast with you*
- 2:15 forsaking the right way they **went astray**
having followed the way of Balaam the son of Beor
 who loved the **hire** of wrongdoing
- 4b who of old have been written to this sentence
- 6 And *angels* that did not keep their own habitation he has kept in everlasting bonds under **darkness for the judgment of the great day.**
- 7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah . . . are set forth as an example
- 8 these . . . *defile the flesh*
set at naught dominion
rail at dignitaries (glories)
- 9 Michael the archangel . . . did not dare bring railing judgment against [the devil]
- 10 **these rail at whatever they do not know**
 and what they understand naturally
like creatures without reason
in these things they are destroyed
- 11 . . . they went in the way of Cain and ran riotously in the error of Balaam
 for **hire**.

- 12 These are hidden rocks in your love-feasts when they feast with you
 . . . clouds without water
 carried along by winds . . .
 for whom the blackness of darkness has been reserved forever.
- 2:17 These are springs without water
 mists driven by a storm
for whom the blackness of darkness
has been reserved.
- 2:18 *uttering great swelling (words)*
 of vanity, they entice in the **lusts**
 of the flesh
- 3:1 This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I am writing to you, and in both of them I am stirring up your sincere minds by putting you in remembrance
- 3:2 that you should remember the words spoken before by the holy prophets and the commandment of the **Lord** and Savior through your apostles,
- 3:3 knowing this first that *in the last days mockers will come with mockery walking after their own lusts*

2. Both Peter and Jude have material that the other does not have. Of course, the two writings are not independent at the literary level. The cultural milieu will not account for
- The amount of common material (three dozen parallels)
 - The similarity in sequence
 - The common wording
 - Common one-use words
3. Jude does not cite his examples in chronological order from the Old Testament: (1) Exodus, (2) Enoch examples.

D. Peter and Jude

- Generalizes a specific from Jude 9 (2:11). It is a simple matter to make a generality more definite by citing an example. But Jude may be summarizing 2 Peter here because he needs only refer to the former document his readers already have received.
- Generalizes into incoherence from Jude 13 (2:17). Note that the phrase *for whom* (οἵς) is masculine and that in neither 2 Peter nor Jude does the relative pronoun refer to the preceding noun. Hence it is not for the “stars” (Jude) that the blackness of darkness is

reserved for, nor for the “mists” (2 Peter), but for the persons that the figures of both authors stand. This is obvious from a general reading of both epistles, because directly after the series of figures in each, there is a return to masculine personal pronouns and/or the acts of animate persons. If we say that Jude copied 2 Peter or *vice versa*, we would have to say that the original of the two had people in mind, so the copyist was not generalizing or confusing into incoherence.

3. Simple and direct style precedes ornate style
(perhaps in one’s own development, but not when we begin crossing from one individual to another matter).

 - a. We may happen into each one’s life at a different stage.
 - b. Either writer may be ornate while the other is simple and direct.

VII. Reason Early Critics Were Slow to Acknowledgment It in the Canon

- A. Its negative character
- B. Its use of apocryphal literature (note Zahn’s comment, p. 269:
“The fact that the author makes use of two pseudepigraphic writings lessened for a time the ecclesiastical reputation of the Epistle; but this is no reason why we should question its genuineness.”

The point is the difference between credibility and genuineness, the difference between its truth and authorship.

- C. The difficulty of identifying its author
- D. The difficulty of identifying the churches it was addressed to
- E. The difficulty of identifying the heretics the Epistle of Jude referred to

VIII. Reason for Late Date

- A. His language is decidedly Hellenistic with 22 one-use words including the ones he and 2 Peter use alone.
- B. His salutation diverges from the common one in apostolic time: “grace and peace” (Paul, 1 Peter, Revelation) or 1 and 2 Timothy and 2 John: “grace, mercy, and peace.” Jude, however, uses “may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied” (like the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*).
- C. Refers to *the faith* as a deposit. *Faith* has that meaning in Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22.
- D. Speaks of post-apostolic times: “remember the predictions of the apostles”

IX. Concerning the Relative Destinations of 2 Peter and Jude

- A. Different destination. Letters so similar would not be sent to the same place by the second author. (Does this assume copying?)
- B. Same destination. Note Jude 17 and 2 Peter 3:1-3; the purpose of Jude was to call attention to 2 Peter.

X. Jude Did Not Contemplate a Previous Other Writing.

A. It is during his writing about a once-for-all faith that he gives the reason for denouncing apostasy or change in doctrine. Change is contrary to continuity.

B. The epistle contains much doctrine.

1. Judgment
2. Apostasy possibility is schism: 5.
3. Truth of the gospel is eternal.