

AM Jude 1-2

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[0 : 00] Back of the Bible, book of Revelation, and then letter to Jude, or letter of Jude.! It's just one chapter, or there's not even really a chapter there.

! So, I'll read from verse 1 to verse 23. Letter of Jude.

That was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation.

Ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Now, I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness unto the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, likewise, endowed in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, served as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

[1 : 48] Yet, in like manner, these people, also relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke you.

But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

Woe to them, for they walked in the way of Cain, and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error, and perished in Korah's rebellion.

These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear. Shepherds feeding themselves, waterless clouds swept along by winds, fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted.

Wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame, wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

[3 : 02] It was also about these that Enoch VII from Adam prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds, of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires. They are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage. But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They say to you, In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions. It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

But you, beloved, build yourself up in your most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

And have mercy on those who doubt. Save others by snatching them out of the fire. To others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

[4 : 25] Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to the public reading of his holy and inspired word. Let's come before God once again in prayer. Let's pray together. And for this morning, we will look at Jude 1 and 2, which goes, Jude is servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James.

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ, may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. And this evening, God willing, we will look at verse 3.

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. So, today we will be looking at Jude. The episode of Jude is the first three verses. So, the first two verses can be kind of summarized or kind of, I give it a title, the Christian's blessings. The Christian's blessings. And this evening, we will look at the Christian's task. The Christian's task. So, today, this morning, the Christian's blessings. The life of a Christian, if you are a believer in Christ, you know that it is full of battles within, with our indwelling sin, and there are battles that are on the outside, whether it be challenged through, we're challenged because of error that we are facing, heresies that we face, that is the life of the believer in Christ.

[6 : 06] We're not immune for that. And part of the reason why there's so many challenges for the Christian is partly because the Bible is a very big book.

I know physically it is a very big book, but in many, many ways, the Bible is a big book because there's so many teachings in it. Majority of the teachings in the Bible are crystal clear to all of us. If you're a believer in Christ this morning, you know, the Bible, you read the Bible and you know that it's very, very clear. Most of the teachings are very clear. They're there to build up the people of God. And because the Bible is given to us by the inspiration of God, God has made it simple enough for a child to read the scriptures and understand it and to grow in it.

Which is why in the children's talk, I try and encourage the young boys and girls to read the Bibles, read their own Bibles every day. There are some teachings which are, however, a minority of it which are unclear.

[7 : 21] And partly because of our own indwelling sin, our own preconceived ideas, the baggage perhaps from a previous church, perhaps baggage from our unconverted life, we come with certain misconceptions of certain parts of the Bible.

And in the history of the Christian church, you can see in the book the letter to the Jude and in 2 Peter as well, that there are those who have come in to the church of Jesus Christ and try to exploit that, try to take advantage of that.

And some have taken advantage of even verses like verse 3, you know, and use it for wrong means and wrong purposes.

So, you know, so we have to be aware of this. So I just thought I'll put it up front that this letter of Jude and you see later on in the rest of the letter itself, there's quite a lot of very, very confusing statements which needs a bit of unpacking, but we're not going to look into that for today.

Who is the author? We read that this Jude is a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James. Now, the question can be asked, which Jude or which James?

[8 : 49] There are several Jude's mentioned in the New Testament and at least three James's mentioned in the New Testament. There's James the Elder, there's James the Less or James the Just, and then there's James the half-brother of Jesus.

Now, you know, some may say there's only two, some say three. Well, and then there's Jude and there's Jude, there's Judah and there's Judas. Well, I think probably the easiest thing to look at and you can see this in your own reading, we read in Matthew's Gospel chapter 13, we read when Jesus had finished the parables, he went on his way and some of them came to the synagogue and they were astonished at his teachings and they said, is not this the carpenter's son?

Is not his mother called Mary? Yes. And are not his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? And some have agreed and seems to me that some have said that this Judas is actually Jude. and so Jude is the half-brother of Jesus and brother of James.

Interestingly, we read that Jude described himself, first of all, before the brother of James, he described himself as a servant of Jesus Christ.

[10 : 21] literally, he described himself as Jude, a slave of Jesus. He's a slave of Jesus.

Why would he use that phrase? You know, he could have just said, I'm Jude, the brother of James. People would not have any problems with that. He could have said, I'm the half-brother of Jesus and brother of James. He could have even said, I'm Jude, an apostle.

I'm Jude, an apostle. After all, other apostles described himself as an apostle. Paul described himself as an apostle. So, why did Jude not use those words?

Instead, he starts off his letter by saying, I'm a servant, a slave of Jesus Christ. Well, some have pointed out that he didn't want to be known as Judas.

[11 : 25] Perhaps for obvious reasons, there was another Judas Iscariot who betrayed the Lord Jesus. And perhaps Jude didn't want to be associated with him.

But I think, another thing to note is, he called himself a slave of Jesus. You know, it shows a character, his character, it shows his humility.

It shows his humility. Now, to be fair, the other apostles also described himself as servants or slaves of Jesus Christ.

Simon Peter, in 2 Peter 1 verse 1, says, Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.

James, James 1 verse 1, James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul himself, in Romans 1 verse 1, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle. Jude knew that he could have mentioned that he is a half-brother of Jesus and it would be wonderful and glorious, but no, he knew his place.

[12 : 38] He knew his place and he said, I'm just a slave, a servant of Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry pointed out that while he could have esteemed being known as a half-brother, he felt that being a servant or a slave of Jesus Christ to be a most honorable title.

It is more honorable, according to Matthew Henry, it is more honorable to be a sincere and useful servant of Christ than to be an earthly king. You see that?

It is more honorable to be a sincere, useful servant of Jesus Christ than to be an earthly king. He might have claimed kindred to Christ according to the flesh.

And that's right. Jude could have claimed kindred to Christ according to the flesh, but he wavers this and rather glories in being his servant.

those of you with brothers and siblings and so on and sisters, you know, don't think you want to be known as a servant to your sibling.

[14 : 01] But with the case of Jude, he has no problem at all. He was a slave, a servant to Jesus Christ. And this again, you know, it sets the scene for us.

You know, we live in a day and age of the, as it were, the cult of personality, that phrase seems to have gone out of fashion. Okay, now we have the celebrity culture. We have the hero worship.

You know, everybody is a hero for doing even the most, even just doing their job. You know, they're called a hero. Sadly, this sometimes happens within the church.

And we have seen far too often nowadays in this day and age, within the church of Jesus Christ, when the great and the good, when those we put on the pedestal, you know, have a great fall.

You know, I think what we ought to think about the Christian life is the way Jude views himself. We should see ourselves as a servant of Jesus Christ.

[15 : 03] Whatever position we may be in, whether we are in the pulpit or in the pew, whether we are serving drinks or giving out the Bibles and giving out tracts or whatever, we are still, at the end of the day, servants of Jesus Christ.

Never ever forget that. Never ever forget that. But then we come to the purpose of this letter. The purpose of this letter.

Now you can see, when I read earlier that there is a, from the letter of Jude, we can see that there is a crisis going on within the church.

In the time of Jude, there is a crisis within the church. And so when Jude starts off his introductory statements in verse 1 and 2, after the so-called niceties and greetings and all the rest of that, he is going down this from verse 5 all the way to verse 19.

Yes, no, verse 16. He is going to go down this long, long description and statements of all the warnings and the accusations and all the various corrupt teachers that is coming in and already in the church of Jesus Christ in the time of Jude.

[16 : 29] And in fact, you can see even verse 18, that's a real, so much connected to Peter's epistle. In verse 18 we read, they say to you, in the last time there will be scoffers following after their own ungodly passions.

If you want to say plagiarism, well, this is divine plagiarism and it's all perfectly good, in a good way. 2 Peter 3 verse 3, knowing this first of all, that scoffers come in the last day with scoffing following their own sinful desires.

There's just so much connection between Jude and Peter and with Paul as well. We've got time, we can look into this, but Peter wrote, 2 Peter towards the end of his own life, around AD 60, about AD 68 and so on, and he wrote that there were false prophets coming in, false teachers amongst you, bringing about all these destructive heresies, even denying the master who bought them, bringing

upon themselves swift destructions.

Peter looking at the scene, the landscape of the Christian church around him realized they're infiltrating in, false teachers are coming in.

By the time we come to Jude, he's seen it, perhaps even close up, in their face, he's seen these false teachers, face to face, and Jude was a Jew, and so when he wrote, you can see there's a lot of references to the Old Testament narratives, in his appeal to the Jewish believers, he referenced a lot of Jewish history, you can see all that about verse 5, Jesus who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe, and so on, he brings in some of the Old Testament and Jewish history, but it is a letter to all Christians, let's be clear about this, it's not just for those days 2000 years ago, it's for us today, and it's for all

[19 : 05] Christians of all ages, and all nationalities, and we know that is the case because we read in verse 1, that these are to those who are called beloved God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ, it's a lot more open than the narrow focus of the Jewish believer, this is those who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, it's a great letter of warning, exhortation, and pleading, there's a sense of fighting language in this epistle, there's the need, the great need to combat against error, which leads to unholy living, let's be clear about this, the false teachings that are coming in, are not just false teachings in and of themselves, but they lead to certain sorts of behavior, certain sorts of lifestyle, lifestyles and behaviors which are inconsistent with the

Christian faith, so while twisting the scriptures is one thing, that in and of itself is bad, but the twisting of the scriptures leads to ungodly living, and you have that exactly what we have today, you see that today, people are using certain parts of the scriptures to justify certain lifestyle, certain ungodly lifestyle, which are contradictory to the rest of the scriptures, but by twisting a few words, a few verses, to justify the way of their living, they're doing just exactly what Jude is saying.

Never forget this, all of scriptures, Genesis to Revelation, the main author, the only author is God, yes, there are about 40 human authors, but the back of it all, superintending those 40 human authors is God himself, God the Holy Spirit.

And so we read, all scriptures breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, why? That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work, training righteousness, complete, equipped for good work.

If, after reading the scriptures and coming in contact with false teachers, our life is not in righteousness, incomplete, not equipped for every good work, we need to ask ourselves, who are these false teachers we are listening to?

[22 : 02] Peter, Paul, Jude are in agreement with each other. And so we need to ask, are these false, are these teachers that were watching on TV, or reading in books, listening to a podcast, are these genuine Bible believing teachers or not?

And, but we come to the Christian blessings. After thinking about the author and purpose of the epistle, we look at the Christian blessings, and the first two verses covers that.

And before Jude is going to talk about the Christian task of contending for the faith, and that's for our consideration this evening, he's going to first of ask the question, what is a Christian? what is a Christian?

And I think it's a good place to start. We cannot expect, and none of us should expect, somebody who is not a believer in Christ, to go along with the program of the Christian faith.

I know in this country, it's been tried before, when in the past, people have tried to impose the Sermon on the Mount in the national life of this country, and we know that it didn't really quite work, because you're expecting somebody who is not a believer, somebody who is not converted, to go along with the program of the Christian faith.

[23 : 40] It doesn't work that way. We would love to see this country to be a Christian country, but it can only work if the people who are in the country are genuine Christians.

And so we have here the need to define what is a Christian. And Jude starts this off by saying, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept in Jesus Christ.

You can see, first of all, a Christian is one who is set apart to be a Christian. None of us are born to be Christians. When we are born, we know we are born in iniquity and in sin.

When we are born, we are born as sinners. And perhaps we need to acknowledge that. But, if we are Christians, we know that we've been called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ.

The authorized version has the word instead of called, beloved in God, the word sanctified. If you use the authorized version, I think you see the word sanctified. Christians are those who have been welcomed in, drawn in, called.

[25 : 03] We've heard the gospel proclaimed, and by the Spirit of God, we've been moved to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We've heard the gospel, perhaps some of us may have heard the gospel for many, many years.

Some of us may have heard the gospel maybe six times in our life. But, when we hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came into the world, lived that perfect, sinless life, and then died on the cross of Calvary, and then rose from the dead, and we see him for who he is, and that was proclaimed to us, that was preached to us, that was perhaps read to us, that this gospel, this good news of Jesus Christ, and how we can obtain eternal salvation into his kingdom by believing in him, and we're drawn to him, and we're drawn to the Lord Jesus, to those who are called, to those who are called, we hear the call, and we are moved by the call, some people may hear the call, may hear the preaching of God's word, and have absolutely no interest in it, those of you who know, I'm partly kind of involved in open air mission in Falkirk, and it's wonderful when you can do open air mission, because you see all these characters on the streets, and how they kind of reject the gospel, and you see the amazing excuses that they give, you know, I was doing it in, I was at Falkirk with some of you may know, Douglas, who leads the open air mission, and I was, he was speaking, and I was speaking to a lady who was trying to get in to speak to Douglas, and I, you know, I tried to interact, for, and all, everything that I said, you know, you know, about the gospel, the good news, you always have some, something to cover, divert the attention, you know, which denomination are you from?

I thought, what's the relevance? You know, I'm trying to tell you about heaven and hell, and about sin and salvation, and you want to know which denomination I'm from, I mean, what's, you know, what's what you call red herring?

Is it important? What about all the other denominations? Are they wrong? Who cares? And of course, you get the usual person who just walk by and kind of say some comment about, you know, I don't believe you, but what part do you not believe?

[27 : 48] You know, there will always be some kind of excuses, you know, that people give, but when you're truly called to those who are called beloved in God the Father, it's a big difference.

It's a big difference there. you see Christ as who he is, the son of God who loved us and gave himself for us. You see that you're no more just going to give excuses, no more excuses to the Lord.

You realize that the Lord is looking and talking to you, and you're called, and you cannot avoid it. You're under the scrutiny of God, but in a good way.

now you're called, you're drawn to him. You know that you're beloved in God the Father. You know Christians, being a Christian is wonderful. You're loved by him.

You're loved by the Lord. I don't know how else to describe it. to be loved by anybody, to be loved by your grandparents, to be loved by your spouse, to be loved by your child, wonderful, but to be loved by God.

[29 : 04] Beloved in God the Father, to be loved by God. It is amazing. It's an amazing thought that we who are sinners, cut off from God, far away from God, can not only be drawn and called by him, but we are going to be loved by him.

I don't know what else to say about that. And then we are kept for Jesus Christ. Or as one writer said, they're kept continually for Jesus Christ.

Kept continually. Not just kept once off, but kept continually because we are kind of prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love. But we need to be continually kept for Jesus Christ.

You know, that is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. To know that we are kept, preserved in Jesus Christ.

In fact, that's what the authorized version writes. Preserved in Jesus Christ. You know, it makes all the difference between one who is useful and fruitful and one who is doubting or presumptuous.

[30 : 19] It makes a big difference to know that you're kept for, kept by, kept in Jesus Christ makes such a big difference.

It makes you a fruitful person. It makes you a useful person. Christ is the source and the guarantee for the believer's salvation protection.

The Lord Jesus Christ is there for us and is there to protect us and not just there to save us but is there to also protect us. Kept for Jesus Christ.

And it's very important for Jude to raise this point, this one verse, or half a verse, second half of verse one. It's very important for Jude to raise this because there's going to be many who will be disheartened by the evils that Jude is going to mention from verse five to verse sixteen.

The big chunk of his letter is going to be warnings and criticisms and corruptions and all the rest. To start off, he's going to set the scene.

[31 : 26] Know your place, know who you are. Know that you're kept by the Lord because it's going to be rough. the rest of the letter is going to be rough.

But if you know that you're kept by the Lord, it makes such a big difference. But you know, he's not going to stop there. In verse two, may mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you.

Another trinity of blessings, the trinity of blessings there, mercy, peace and love. In fact, one writer said that this is almost, it's not just a description of the trinity, but it's a testimony that the trinity does exist because there's going to be Father, Son and Holy Spirit as we think about mercy, peace and love.

love. And it's amazing because we read about the verse 20, but you beloved, building yourself up in your most holy faith, praying the Holy Spirit, keeping yourselves in the love of God, and waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

Verse 20, verse 21, there is the trinity there already, but in mercy, peace and love, that is echoing the trinity, mercy, mercy, mercy is from the Father, he is the one who pardons our sins, he is the one who makes us, who accepts us, that is one of these distinguishing attributes of God, God the Father, his mercy endures forever, Psalm 136, because God delights in mercy, in Micah 3, that is one of the enduring, lovely attribute of God the Father, he is God of mercy, and then there is peace, but where do we get our peace from?

[33 : 48] Well, through the Son, through the Lord Jesus Christ, in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, we read that he himself is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility, the wall between Jew and Gentile, in the sight of God, is broken down because of Jesus Christ, the wall between God and sinner is broken down because of the work of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, on his work of Calvary, peace, and in fact, we don't need to go even, we can go one step further, that Jesus himself has promised us peace, peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives, do I give to you, let not your heart be troubled, neither let them be afraid, John 14, peace, peace, peace, peace, and then there's love, and then there's love, love is from the

Holy Spirit, you know that famous verse in Romans 5, God's love will be poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us, love comes from the Holy Spirit, again Romans 15, I appeal to you brothers by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, love comes from the Holy Spirit, so there you go, mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you, so Christians every child of God we have, we've been shown mercy, by the Father, we've received peace from the Son of God and we have experienced love poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and then Drew doesn't end there, may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you, as if, as if, as if mercy, peace, and love isn't enough, as if that wasn't enough for any child of

God, he has to say, he has to end it by saying, be multiplied to you, Jude is effectively praying that these graces, these glorious attributes of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, would be multiplied in our lives, that the grace that we receive from the Lord, would be multiplied, we receive mercy, well, we have more than that, with peace, well, let's have more than that, multiplied to you, which tells us something about the Lord's dealing with us, the Lord is always willing to impart his best gifts, and has abundance of grace for us, if we are believers in Christ, Christ, you know, that is exactly what we've got, we've been shown mercy, peace, and love, and more, and more, and because this is, as it were, a prayer of

Jude for the Lord's people, through all ages, through all nations, that ought to be a prayer for all of us, one writer puts it this way, it might be Thomas Manton, this prayer has an eye to the glory of God, as well as to the comfort and peace of believers, this prayer, may peace, may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you, this prayer has an eye to the glory of God, as well as to the comfort

and peace of believers, peace of and I think that is very true, I think that is very true, that is what we need, when we think about going through this coming week, with all the challenges that we face, never mind the false teaching and the false ideas that is coming into the church of Jesus Christ, just the thought that we're going into this coming week, with all the different challenges that we will face in perhaps in our workplace, perhaps in our studies, or wherever, the thought that we are called, beloved, in God the

Father, and kept for Jesus Christ, and we have experienced mercy, peace, and love, and more of that, that ought to give us that comfort and that assurance that we need for the journey ahead.

[39 : 01] Well, we'll end there, and this evening we'll look at not just the Christians blessings, which is what we have now, but the Christians task. We've been blessed, not that we stay inactive or without any need of doing anything, but there's a task for us, and we'll consider that this evening in verse 3 and maybe a bit of verse 4.

Well, may the Lord bless these few thoughts to all our hearts, and who