

One Chapter Wonders: Jude

Introduction to this Bible study (Pathways course description):

Singers or musical groups who have recorded only one recognizable song in their career are sometimes referred to as “one hit wonders.” In the Bible we might adjust and apply that phrase to those books of Scripture that consist of only a single chapter. There are five of them: Obadiah in the Old Testament, and Philemon, 2nd John, 3rd John, and Jude in the New Testament. While they may be short in length, like all of God’s Word, they are long in truth, and there is much we can learn from them. In this 6-week Bible study we will examine what God has to teach us through each of these “One Chapter Wonders.”

General Overview

- Jude: Who? What? When? Where?
- *The Bible Project*

The Backstory

- Review of life in the early church from previous “One Chapter Wonders” we have studied: house churches with a mixed bag of itinerant missionaries and church leaders
- Identifying the inspired author. Passages that shed light and paint a progression:
 - *Matthew 13:53-57*
 - *John 7:1-5*
 - *Mark 3:20-21; 31-34*
 - *John 19:25-27*
 - *Acts 1:12-14*
- Similarities and differences between Jude and 2 Peter 2
- Unusual features/sources in Jude
- Luther’s thoughts on Jude

A Closer Look: Verse by Verse Exposition

¹ **Jude**, a **servant of Jesus Christ** and a **brother of James**,

To those who have been **called**, who are **loved** in God the Father and **kept** for¹ Jesus Christ:

² **Mercy, peace and love** be yours in **abundance**.

The Sin and Doom of Ungodly People

³ Dear friends, although **I was very eager** to write to you about the salvation we share, **I felt compelled** to write and urge you to **contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people**. ⁴ For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have **secretly slipped in among you**. They are **ungodly** people, who **pervert** the grace of our God into a **license for immorality** and **deny Jesus Christ** our only Sovereign and Lord.

⁵ Though you **already know all this**, I want to **remind** you that the Lord at one time delivered **his people** out of Egypt, but **later destroyed those who did not believe**. ⁶ And the **angels** who **did not keep their positions** of authority but **abandoned** their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for **judgment** on the great Day. ⁷ In a similar way, **Sodom and Gomorrah** and the surrounding towns **gave themselves up** to sexual immorality and perversion. **They serve as an example** of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

⁸ In the very same way, on **the strength of their dreams** these ungodly people **pollute** their own bodies, **reject** authority and **heap abuse** on **celestial beings**. ⁹ But even the archangel **Michael**, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, **did not** himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰ Yet **these people slander whatever they do not understand**, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them.

¹¹ Woe to them! They have taken the way of **Cain**; they have rushed for profit into **Balaam's** error; they have been destroyed in **Korah's** rebellion.

¹² These people are **blemishes** at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed **only themselves**. They are **clouds without rain**, blown along by the wind; autumn **trees, without fruit** and uprooted—twice dead. ¹³ They are wild **waves** of the sea, **foaming up their shame**; **wandering stars**, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

¹⁴ **Enoch**, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, **the Lord is coming** with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵ to **judge** everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." ¹⁶ **These people** are

grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own **evil desires**; they **boast** about themselves and **flatter** others **for their own advantage**.

A Call to Persevere

¹⁷ But, dear friends, remember what **the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold**. ¹⁸ They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." ¹⁹ These are the people who **divide** you, who follow mere natural instincts and **do not have** the Spirit.

²⁰ **But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,** ²¹ **keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.**

²² Be **merciful** to those who **doubt**; ²³ **save others** by snatching them from the fire; to others **show mercy, mixed with fear**—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Doxology

²⁴ **To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—** ²⁵ **to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.**

Romans 15:4: What is God Teaching Us Through This One Chapter Wonder?
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1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Related Issues, Applications and Discussion Items

1. *What is your first and/or general impression of Jude? When and under what personal conditions could you see yourself turning to it?*

2. *What does it mean for us personally as 21st Century Christians to “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people?”*

3. *Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13. What commonality does this section of Scripture have with the letter of Jude? What relevance do they both have for us today?*

4. *What is our responsibility to those within our personal or Christian family who are weak, wounded or struggling with doubt? How do we carry this out?*

5. *Commentator: “The examples may change from Jude’s day, but the principle is exactly the same.” What principle? What are the modern-day counterparts to the issues and influences Jude warns against?*

6. *Commentator: “The pure church of one generation faces the very real danger of becoming the heretical church of the next.” React to this statement. How can this be prevented?*