

## **“Hey Jude”**

The Book of Jude

John Gratner

June 16, 2023

**John:** Almighty God Most High, we look to You. We come to You and we ask for Your help. We ask for Your Spirit to be with us, in us, to illuminate us, that we might see You in Your glory and know You in Your power and give praise to You, Father. We thank You for Your word; we thank You for this time together and pray that You'd move amongst us. Give us understanding and insight into Your wisdom. And we pray this for Your glory. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen.

**John:** Michael, I'm glad you're here; this is your fault. In your teaching a couple of months ago or a couple of weeks ago, whenever it was, near the end of “The Necessity of Sound Doctrine” you said, “Never avoid the more profound things of Scripture.” So I'm confident that I've bitten off more than I can chew for the next 45 minutes. I should have stuck with “*Jesus Wept.*” (*Laughter*) And pondered that instead. That's coming out to be a very perfect sneak preview. (*Laughter*)

So I thought Jude—you know, a simple, small book; we'll just get into it and go through it. Then I read it. (*Laughter*) So let's read it, and then we'll hopefully make some comments on it. I'm going to read it, and I'm going to read it out of the ESV. Sadly my children's Bible does not have any pictures in Jude. That's really a shame.

**Don Maurer:** I'm really heartbroken over that.

**John:** I knew you would be. All right, so Jude.

*“Jude, a 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.*

*“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 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, until the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.*

*“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*

## **“Hey Jude”**

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 fest 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, wondering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.*

*“It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh 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 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 said 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, building yourselves up in the 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.*

*“And now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority before all time, now and forever. Amen.”*

**Brave Men:** Amen.

**John:** This is the word of the Lord.

**Brave Men:** Thanks be to God.

**John:** I want you to think about how the hearers of this when it was read would be reacting. We have a disadvantage and an advantage. Our advantage is that we have the tools at our disposal to look back at all kinds of history—near, ancient, really ancient. But I think that sometimes we forget that this wasn’t written to us as the original hearers. So I think we need to stop and think. What did they hear when this was written to them?

I want to start at the end and kind of frame a little bit of Jude’s take on Jesus, because to me that’s always the most important thing. The whole book—not just this letter but the whole book—would point to Jesus. So let’s read the doxology again and look at that for a second. What if anything do you notice here that is pointing to something specifically about Jesus? I’m going to ask questions. And if there isn’t an answer I’m going to ask somebody for an answer. *(Laughter)* And forgive me. I look at the back of your heads every week. Tell me your first name, sir.

**Gary Craig:** Gary.

**John:** Gary. Thanks, Gary.

**Gary:** You know, I’m not going to be at the end of the book. But I’m around verse 4.

**John:** Oh, we’ll get to that. *(Laughter)*

**Gary:** Our Lord and Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## ***“Hey Jude”***

**John:** Yeah. So if we look at the last two verses—and we’ll come back to that; thank you, Gary—what is he talking about? What does he have to say about the people here?

**Brave Man:** He’s talking about a church that’s losing its way.

**John:** The church is losing its way, yes. Then he addresses the power that can keep the church from losing its way here in 24 and 25.

**Don Maurer:** Well, obviously I think this is a half-brother of Jesus, right?

**John:** Yes.

**Don:** And so obviously Jude believes that Jesus is God, because only God can present us faultless before the presence of His glory. He calls Him our Savior who alone is wise. He attributes glory and majesty and dominion and power. I’m reading from the New King James.

**John:** Sure.

**Don:** So obviously he believes that Jesus is coequal and coeternal with the Father, that He’s God.

**John:** Yes. So as Don is pointing out, it’s through Jesus Christ that he is proclaiming this majesty and dominion and authority before all time. Do you see that there at the very end? As we start to read, boy there is a lot in here that we just kind of skim over and go, “I know what those words are.” But what do those words mean? And what is Jude meaning by those words? What are the allusions that he is assuming that his hearers are thinking of at that point?

So here is this idea of “*before all time.*” This is a statement of the eternity of Jesus—the eternal word from John 1. So back to the actual outline here. We may or may not follow this real closely. So this was Jude. Yes, sir?

**Don Rimbey:** May I ask a question?

**John:** You may.

**Don:** Verse 24 says, “*To him*”—little h, right?

**John:** Yes.

**Don:** “*Who is able.*” This is the NIV.

**John:** Mm-hmm.

**Don:** And then later it says, “*And to present you before His glorious presence.*” So who is the him and who is the his?

**John:** So I think it would seem to be contextually rather obvious that it’s the Father.

**Don:** So to Him would be Jesus.

**David Miller:** So I think that in verses 24-25 the whole doxology is about God—the Trinity.

**John:** Yes.

**David:** He brings up “*through Jesus*” because Jesus is our way to God.

**John:** Right. So it’s an implied reference to John 1:18, that it’s through Jesus that we know the Father.

**Transcriber’s Note:** John 1:18, NKJV. “*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*”

**Don:** So in verse 25 it also says: “*To the only God our Savior.*”

**John:** Yes.

**Don:** So to those who say that Jesus never claimed to be God,--

## ***“Hey Jude”***

**Ted Wood:** But what does it say? 25 says, *“To the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ.”* So he’s talking about two things. I mean, we have a pretty well-formulated, full-blown understanding of the Trinity. But that didn’t get completely hammered out until about three hundred years after this was written. It was believed, but they were saying, “What do we really mean by that?”

**John:** And so with that, yes. His audience would not have had an issue with this idea, because there is significant evidence within the Old Testament that there is the almighty God who does not have a presence humans can see. And there is almighty God who has a presence that interacted with people that they could see.

**Ted:** That’s good.

**John:** And that’s where it’s tied in with John 1:1.

**Transcriber’s Note:** John 1:1, ESV. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”*

**John:** And we do not have time to go down all these roads, but at some point we may try to do that. This was not an uncommon thought to them. It’s the idea of kind of having two powers in the heavens. This was a Jewish thought. Obviously Jesus very clearly came and said, “I’m that Guy,” right?

So this was Jude. Jude was close with Jesus: a brother, the brother of James, likely written before the destruction of the temple. So now we’re back to verse 3, right? It’s sort of a standard greeting in verse 2. I’m sorry. Yes, Michael?

**Michael Rush:** I want to say too that whenever I read this I always look at that as the Holy Spirit. We know that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit to the day of redemption. It says: *“To Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* God the Father saved us through Christ through glory and majesty. So to somebody’s point—I don’t know if it was Gary or it was Don; it would be unfair to guess—the whole Trinity is highly represented not in word but in action.

**John:** Sure, we’ll take that, absolutely. So *“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 for all delivered to the saints.”* Now what does that mean? So again this was likely written before the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. So this was written before the Canon was complete. This was written before Augustine. This was written before Luther. This was written before Calvin. This was written before whoever you want to cite today. It says *“once for all.”*

**Ted:** That’s interesting.

**Don Maurer:** Well I don’t know if this is too early in church history, John. But the Gnostics were certainly beginning to have an influence.

**Ted:** That happens more in the early second century, but even then there were Gnostic tendencies.

**Don:** Right. And even Paul writes some of his epistles against their teachings. So certainly he may have had that in mind. And you had the Judaizers too. But one of the tenets of the Gnostics was that the flesh really doesn’t matter anyway because it’s evil to begin with. So just have at it and do what you want. That could be part of it.

**John:** I think it’s big, right? I think we think now—2,000 or so years later—that these people that lived then in Jesus’ day were just a bunch of people living out in the middle of

## “Hey Jude”

nowhere watching some sheep, and they had no sophistication whatsoever. Never mind Rome. Never mind the pyramids—Egypt, Babylon—the history of the world that was significant, right? I don’t mean that everyone then was well educated. But look around: not everyone is well educated now either, right?

So they had a world view, right? What was their world view? I think it was much bigger than we think their world view was.

**Gary:** Yes. For example, take the Gospel of John. It talks about the Word. A lot of that is taken from Phyllo and Alexander. They had a foothold all over the world as far as their philosophies.

**John:** Yeah. I think that’s a useful point to bring up. There was all this teaching out there. There were all these ideas. For lack of a better way to put it, there were all these other gods, right? When Paul goes to the Areopagus and says, “Look, I want to argue with you about these things. You have your god for this, you have your god for that. And then you’ve got this one to the unknown God; I want to tell you about that one. That one is different. He’s the Creator of everything.” And he didn’t say these gods were false in the sense that they weren’t real. We can get into that if you want. But he did say that there’s a God who is the Most High God. “That’s the One that you aren’t worshipping that you need to worship.” That’s the One who was the Word. That’s the One who was in the beginning. That’s Jesus Christ; through Him eternally dominion, power and authority to the Father. All right; keep that context in mind, and let’s move on to verses 4 and 5.

So people “*crept in unnoticed, who long ago were destined for this condemnation; ungodly people who pervert the grace of God into sensuality, and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it.*”

I think that’s interesting, because now there’s a reading here. If you have a newer translation like the ESV they use a different word here than some of the older ones. Don, what do you have in the New King James there?

**Don Maurer:** In verse 5?

**John:** In verse 5.

**Don:** “*But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.*”

**John:** Okay. Does anyone have an ESV? What does yours say?

**David:** It says, “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.”

**John:** All right. So the consensus today—and this is one of the benefits of Bible study and Bible study tools and that magical thing called the Internet that can synthesize all that stuff and help us figure out what the consensus is, based on all the manuscript evidence—the best reading, the harder reading, which is why they prefer it, the evidence here says that “*Jesus*” is the proper reading for this text. I think that it’s fascinating when it says: “*Although you once fully knew it*”, speaking to his hearers then who wouldn’t have had an issue with this.

What’s the implication for us who might have read this as “*Lord*” for many years, and now read this as “*Jesus*?” What does this say? I mean, if you haven’t thought about this, this could shock you. What does it say? He boldly, plainly states that “*Jesus, who saved a*

## **“Hey Jude”**

*people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.”* What does that mean? If that’s the reading, if that’s what he’s saying, what does that mean?

**Gary:** It speaks about the eternality of Jesus.

**John:** And His action amongst His people, right? And His authority and His dominion and His judgment. Who does it say was doing the doing here in verse 5? Look at the end of verse 5. Who were those people? What does that mean?

**Don Rimbey:** He destroyed the Egyptians.

**John:** Right. So that would mean that Judas is saying that Jesus is the death angel, right?

**Don Maurer:** Yes, the Angel of the Lord.

**John:** Right. So don’t mistake that. Jude is saying boldly and plainly that that’s Jesus. If you missed it previously, don’t miss it anymore. He’s saying to his hearers, *“Although you once fully knew it.”* But to us, if you missed that before, let your eyes and your heart think about that. These things have implications for how we look back at the Old Testament. What is it saying to us? What is this story—God’s story—all about?

And it’s not that oh, we’re New Testament Christians. Yes we are; by grace we are. But that doesn’t mean that the Old Testament doesn’t very much inform how we need to think and how we need to understand what the writers of the New Testament are saying, because that was what they were referencing, right? Yes?

**Ted:** I’m looking at 1 Corinthians 10:5. I mean, here it’s saying that the Angel of death was Jesus in the desert. And here it says in 1 Corinthians 10<sup>5</sup> that *“they drank the same spiritual drink when they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.”* It’s the same kind of idea.

**John:** Mm-hmm.

**Ted:** If Christ was in the wilderness in some supernatural fashion, then He was the Rock or the Angel of death, or whatever.

**John:** I think that if you go back and read one of those passages about the Rock, and if you read it clearly, it seems to indicate that He, in some kind of visible embodied form—at least visibly—was standing on the rock. I think that if we start to look for Jesus we see Him everywhere. And we see Him not as—we don’t have time for this one. But if you go back to Genesis, He’s in the garden. They were interacting with a Person that they could relate to, right? Jeremiah was interacting with the Lord and the Lord touches him. A Spirit—something you can’t see or whatever—doesn’t touch anything.

Go back into the Old Testament. “It’s good that you all are here. Stay and let me have a meal with you.” Well, we’re told that one of them is the Lord.

**Don Maurer:** Yes.

**John:** And He took in a meal, right? So there is something going on here; there is more to this than we might have thought previously. But his hearers said, “Okay, right; that was Jesus that led the people out of the land of Egypt.” That connection is made very clearly here.

All right, so there is more to see: the hard things. Wait; this opens up lots of cans of worms here. Maybe we have to dig deeper and do more study, and try to figure it out. I don’t know; you can’t just blow past that; that has implications.

All right, verse 6. *“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*

## “Hey Jude”

*darkness, until the judgment of the Great Day.*” All right, someone tell me what that means because that’s pretty confusing.

**Don Maurer:** Well, there are different interpretations. One I don’t really buy; one is from Genesis. Some people maintain that the sons of God were angels, and they cohabitated with the daughters of men. I personally don’t believe that’s what that means. I think the sons of God were people from the godly line marrying people from the ungodly line. I think that what is being referred to here is the rebellion of Satan. This is tricky because some people say it’s the king of Tyre. But in Isaiah 14 says, “I will ascend; I will be like the Most High”—you know, that kind of thing. So Satan and 1/3 of the angels fell from their godly position, and He has reserved them in chains of darkness for the judgment of the Great Day. I know that confuses a lot of people. *(Laughter)*

**John:** So can we at least admit that there’s the potential for confusion here in this verse? Michael?

**Michael:** Yes. To Don’s point, there are several respected Bible teachers who look at these. What do they call them, the Nephilim?

**Ted:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Being from the fallen angels. I remember Hank Hannegraff talking about the impossibility of that, because angels are noncorporeal beings and they couldn’t cohabitate. I’ve never seen an angel do coitus, so I can’t dispute this. *(Laughter)* But there is definitely a mystery to this. So I am kind of more for Don’s interpretation that he follows. But some guys I really respect have very different views as well.

**John:** So there’s sort of a parallel passage here in 2 Peter. Let’s look at that just to see what that has to say. So in 2 Peter we’ll read 2 to 11 or so, maybe. I think that’s worth looking at. Would someone like to read that?

**Don Maurer:** I have it here, John.

**John:** Go for it.

**Don:** *“For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them to chains of darkness to be reserved for judgment, and did not spare the ancient world—“ Do you want me to go on?*

**John:** Sure; why not?

**Don:** *“And God spared the ancient world to save Noah—one of eight people; a preacher of righteousness—bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly, and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked.” I don’t know if you want me to go on there. “Then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. “*

**John:** So this sounds a lot like verse 6 of Jude. And what I want to point out here is not that I know the answers, because I don’t. But again I want to push us back to Peter’s hearers and Jude’s hearers. What were their reference points? Because their reference points were not someone’s conjecture of today.

**Michael:** Right.

**John:** And I don’t mean that’s right or wrong as far as the conjecture goes. But what were their reference points? What were their world views? What were they thinking when

## “Hey Jude”

these references were made by the writers of these books? And I think that’s worth at least pondering for a moment. It just sounds weird, right? “*The angels who did not stay within their position of authority but left their proper dwelling, He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the Great Day.*” And then back to Peter. “*For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment.*”

**Transcriber’s Note:** ESV.

**John:** I mean, we blow past that. And let’s not deal with that; that just sounds confusing. All right. Well instead, using Michael’s thing, why don’t we deal with that a little bit? What does that mean? Not that I know the answer, but let me say it this way. There’s something here in 2 Peter 2 verse 4. It says “*thrown into hell*” in the ESV, which is an interpretive translation move there.

And I would encourage all of you to use the tools that are available to you. Everyone has the Internet today. Look to see if you’re reading through something. Is there a note? A Good Bible has notes too. When you can click on things you get somewhere faster. What does that say? Or what does that link to? Or what’s this?

So when it says that “they were cast into hell,” that’s an interpretive move there. There’s a verb here; it’s only used once in the New Testament. It’s called *tartarao*, and it means “thrown into Tartarus.” What does that mean to you? It sounds like I’m going to Wholey’s to get some tartar sauce for a fish sandwich, right? (*Laughter*) I love that stuff!

**Ted:** It sounds to me like what the dentist would remove. (*Laughter*)

**John:** Right. And so I think that for translators today there isn’t a reference point for that that makes any sense to us. And so metaphorically they were thrown into hell. So that’s a fine reading, but it isn’t what it says. And so it’s worth looking at what it does say. And so it says that they were cast into Tartarus.

Now the issue here I have is that we can’t import our idea of what that means, or use the New Testament to interpret itself based on other word usages, because it’s only used once. Now Peter probably didn’t make up this word. He probably didn’t make up this word to mean something that he was creating a new meaning for. Does that make sense? I’m not trying to confuse you; I’m trying to do what Michael said, which is to dig into it deeper. That generally just leads to more questions, not more answers. But I think that’s useful to do to expand our understanding of this.

Tartarus was a known thing in the ancient world. It’s the abyss; it’s where these evil spirits went. There’s an underworld. They had this concept, unlike we who live in this world of science. We don’t believe that anything we can’t see is real. And then we use our phones; there’s no line between the telephones anymore, or between the cans, right? (*Laughter*) And we forget about all this unseen stuff that must be there for everything to go on. So this concept of oh well, there are these angels in chains of gloomy darkness in Tartarus; yeah, yeah, yeah. You don’t want to go there.

**Don Maurer:** John?

**John:** Yes?

**Don:** Would Tartarus and Hades be synonymous? I’m thinking for example of Jesus in the parable or account—whatever it may be—of Lazarus and the rich man. The rich man is taken to Hades. And so this is presumably the intermediate state before the final judgment and the resurrection. Is there anything to that?



## **“Hey Jude”**

**John:** There certainly could be. And I think that when Jesus makes references like this, again it’s worth trying to figure out what did they think that meant then, as opposed to what we think it means now and informing the text that way, but rather the other way around. Go ahead, Gary.

**Gary:** I just want to say that the reference I have—Strong’s number—says *“to thrust down to Tartarus or Gehenna. Tartarus is the deepest abyss of Hades; to incarcerate into eternal torment.”*

**John:** Yeah. And certainly John uses this idea of the abyss in Revelation to talk about a place of eternal punishment. We don’t have time to try to pick apart all these words and see how they do overlap or don’t overlap, or how they’re used here and there. But I just think it’s worth noting. The usage of this verb to do something must have connoted something to the hearers then that we just skip over now.

So look at Matthew 8, verses 28-33, because while this word is not used here the concept is used here. And I think the people who are interacting are pretty fascinating; it ties us back to Jude, who is giving Jesus the appropriate place as the physical representation of the Most High God. So in Matthew 8, verses 28-33, Jesus is interacting with Legion.

It says that when he—the man that was possessed by these demons—*“When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before Him and said with a loud voice.”* Think if you were standing around Jesus and witnessing what’s going on here, right? There’s this man that has broken these chains that could not be bound and was just a menace to society. Jesus and His entourage walks up, and this is what happens.

*“When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before Him and said with a loud voice, ‘What have You to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?’”*

Now keep this in mind. If this guy was possessed by demons, those are spiritual beings, right? You know, we can call them whatever we want to call them. We can get into whether or not they’re eternal. If they’re eternal, are they like gods with little g’s? Maybe, maybe not; we don’t need to parse that at the moment. But we’re talking about things in a cosmic world that we couldn’t see, other than the fact that this guy was embodied with these beings, right?

**David:** What verse are you at now?

**John:** This is Matthew 8:28.

**David:** Oh 28; okay.

**John:** *“Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!”* “Well, where did he get that idea? “Don’t torment me!” *“For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many a time it had seized him and he was under guard, bound with chains and shackles. But he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.*

*“So Jesus asked him, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion,’ for many demons had entered him.*

*“Now they begged Him not to command them to depart into the abyss.”* That’s the same concept here, right? “We don’t want to be like the other angels that sinned that You judged, and that You”—meaning Jesus—“are holding in these eternal chains under gloomy darkness, being cast into Tartarus.” They had this concept, right? And so the demon had the concept. The hearers were aware of the concept. And so Jesus relents.

## *“Hey Jude”*

That kind of seems odd. He casts them into the pigs, and then I guess they were freed to roam and do whatever they do. A comment from the man in the back there?

**Jordan Obaker:** I’ve been reading from Luke 8.

**John:** That’s right, Luke 8. My fault; that would be very confusing to all of you. *(Laughter)* Luke 8; sorry about that. Thank you.

**Jordan:** Hey, John? There’s something that I don’t think I appreciated the first time we read through this. I’ll just come back a little bit to verse 5.

**John:** Sure.

**Jordan:** Where it says, *“I want to remind you that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.”* I think that the first time we read through that I was thinking that “those” were the Egyptians. With the second reading I think this is referring to the Israelites who were in that period in the desert, where with anyone who was over twenty years old it was basically decreed that “you are not going to enter the Promised Land.” And I think that when you look at that, and you look at the angels that he’s talking about here, and you go back to the purpose of the letter, which is that *“I found it necessary to write to you to contend for the faith,”*—

**Ted:** Yeah.

**Jordan:** Because there were people who perverted this. He’s reminding them that just because Israel was a chosen people, God didn’t preserve some of the Israelites who weren’t called.

**Don Maurer:** Good point.

**Jordan:** Just because the angels were created by God to serve Him, He did not preserve those who fell away.

**Ted:** Amen.

**Jordan:** So I think that maybe what he’s trying to do here—and I’m not necessarily into the details—but I think that in general he’s just reminding the people that there are those who would pervert the faith. You need to contend for the faith. And just because you see someone around you who claims to be a Christian or claims to follow Christ, if they’re blaspheming, or if they’re not following what was delivered to you—the faith that was delivered to all the saints, what Jesus gave to the apostles and what the apostles gave to the saints,—this is the gospel. If they aren’t following that, you need to contend; you need to stand firm. And he’s reminding them with some of that stuff in 5-7. Don’t forget that just because you claim that you are the chosen of God, that’s not always true. It’s only those who are called.

But I don’t think I appreciated that the first time I read this. It almost makes it seem like they’re just talking about the judgment of God’s enemies. Again I read verse 5 that God punished the Egyptians. And there are all these angels; He punishes those. I don’t know if there’s anything there or not. But I don’t think I was appreciating the first three verses.

**David:** Afterward. After what? After He led them out of Egypt.

**Jordan:** After He saved them, right. That’s why I think he’s referring to the Israelites themselves, not just to the Egyptians.

**David:** I agree.

**John:** Well it certainly could be both, right?—that being the judgment in the Red Sea of the Egyptians; that certainly is a fair reading also. But certainly those that did not

## **“Hey Jude”**

believe, what was the issue there? Their issue was “Well, we want to go back to Egypt,” right?

**Jordan:** Right.

**John:** “We liked the way their gods provided for them better. We liked it better over there.” Yes, there’s always judgment for that, and I don’t disagree. All I’m saying is, we have to deal with the examples that Jude is using to point to these. Watch out for the false teachers like these examples, these types. So now okay, all right. That’s where we have to deal with these angels. That’s where we have to deal with Sodom and Gomorrah, because again we can easily look at the world that we’re in today and read back. Oh, he’s obviously talking about us today. And I’m not saying he isn’t. But don’t miss that his hearers would not have thought it was talking about today. They thought he was talking to them then.

**Michael:** Yes. This is a really powerful book, in contrast especially to where we are in our world today and our society. We live in a world where anything goes. The way it starts, we’re given choices that God is okay with; He gives us some freedom. But now as you see, the choices have gotten into sacred things: into gender and things like that. And so throughout the book of Jude he hits on these things. He starts out and says that it’s a common salvation. It’s “the faith,” not “a faith.” It’s “*the faith that was given once for all to the saints,*” right? So there’s a rock, a solidity, in being a narrow way. There is one thing that’s truth, right?

And then, as John pointed out, he goes on to say, “*I want to remind you, although you once fully knew this.*” We forget too. That’s why we study; that’s why we go to church; that’s why we listen to the Word. There are things that we have to be reminded of.

So to think through all this, in Hebrews we have the urgency of what has happened to those who have strayed away from truth—those things that have been either forgotten, ignored or just rebelled against. We see it so clearly just like today. People will say, “Well you know, that’s your opinion,” or “I don’t believe that.” And we take it kind of lightly, but we really can’t. That’s the importance of sound doctrine, as was taught a while ago when I was up here. So he’s bringing these things in line, and there’s such an urgency to it—to contend for the faith—because we have to understand that Satan’s main purpose—or one of his main purposes—is to deceive us, and to get us to thinking, well He didn’t really say that, or that’s not important.

When John was talking about Paul with the Athenians, his technique was so amazing because he didn’t antagonize them. He said, “I see that you are religious people too.” And he talked about their gods. But then there was this unknown God. And he said, “Let me proclaim Him to you.” So he showed the difference between them and the one true God.

So I think that in the midst of all this in the mysteries and all that, the one thing to take away from this is the importance of being rooted and grounded in the truth. There are many things that we think are important, but they are not as important as this. And I think that’s the importance of the teaching of this book.

**John:** So I’m going to do two things. I’m going to say that we can find a time in the schedule to continue this in pulling it apart more, and if that’s desirable, let me know. Otherwise I’m going to try to at least make a few closing comments to make use of the time here. But I think it’s worth looking at.

## “Hey Jude”

Okay, what’s the sin here as an example that we’re working against? And there’s this sin of the angels, and what is that? I think it is worth considering that the only reference point for either Peter or Jude has to be Genesis 6:1-4 which we referenced earlier. And there is something going on there. And it gets real messy real fast, and I’ll just leave it at that for right now: how to rightly interpret that. We can come back and talk about that. Sodom and Gomorrah, the same thing. Yes, Don?

**Don Maurer:** I don’t know that I’d agree that the only reference point would be Genesis 6:1-4. I think that it might probably be Revelation 12, Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. If you use Genesis 6:1-4, I think that probably leans toward the interpretation that I’m not really comfortable with: that angels cohabitated with women.

**John:** Sure. But that may be a reading that is quite possible and is consistent with a lot of these ideas and something to consider. We don’t have time to go down that road at the moment. But the idea of a reference point of something that wasn’t supposed to happen happened. These angels stepped out of their bounds; that’s what it says, okay. And then people likewise have also stepped out of their bounds. And there was this sensuality of Sodom and Gomorrah that Lot is pulled out of because it was vexing him, right? We have a situation now that is very much like that. And then these false teachers are related to these examples, as this commandment was transgressed with the bounds that God has put in place. Go ahead.

**David:** I think the common thread in all of these examples is rebelling against God.

**John:** Bingo. And so there is this reality that rejecting authority is the common theme here, right? These angels rejected the authority that they were put under and transgressed in whatever way that was, for a later time. But they did transgress the authority, and then they were immediately punished for that. So those angels, unlike other ones that Jesus dealt with in Luke—not Matthew; a different judgment there—but think about it now. What is this rejection of authority? It’s the idea of wanting your own autonomy.

**Don Maurer:** And that is our culture.

**John:** That is our culture, which is where I’m going to try to bring this. We are told now, today, as Michael pointed out, through Jude that we must take a stand for truth. The truth is that there is only one truth and it’s a Person, that being Jesus the Most High, the Eternal. He is truth, right? When Pilate looked at Him he said, “*What is truth?*” He looked at truth embodied. And so that’s what we have to call ourselves and people to, and call out the untruth that you can’t just have it your way. I can’t just have it my way. He is the way.

Now lest we all get really bent out of shape about that, Jude rightly says, look. Now I’m in verse 20 of Jude. “*Beloved, building yourselves 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 which leads to eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt, saving others by snatching them out of the fire. To others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.*”

People who doubt, people who are confused, we are to be merciful to them and tell them the truth. The people that are propagating and perpetrating the untruth, the anti-truth, those are the ones that we call out. Those that are confused by those people, we’re supposed to love them, to be gracious and kind and merciful. They are caught up in all these things. And the world has gone so far in the way of rejecting this and saying, “You

## ***“Hey Jude”***

can have your own autonomy. You can be whatever you want. You can define the words however you want.” But we have an eternal Word. His name is Jesus and He is the truth, He is the way. And life is only in Him. So with all that confusion we’ll bring this to a close.

Let me pray. Almighty God, we look to You and give You thanks and praise. We thank You that You indeed are the way, the truth and the life, and that through You, Jesus, by the power of Your Spirit we may know You and live in You and be with You and our God and Father for now and eternity. And we give You thanks and praise. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen. (*Applause*)