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# THE HOLY BIBLE **NKJV** REFERENCE GUIDE

**NEW TESTAMENT**

**BOOK 65**

**JUDE**



**The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci**

## SUMMARY

Like most of the other general epistles, the title of this little book takes its name from its author. Most scholars identify the writer as Jude the half-brother of Jesus for at least two reasons.

First, he identified himself as the brother of James, meaning he was probably not the apostle named Jude, a man who was called the son of James. That the author of the book of Jude identified himself as the brother of James likely aligns him with the family of Jesus.

Second, Matthew 13:55 records the names of the brothers of Jesus as James and Judas. Whereas the gospels record his name as Judas, English translations shorten it to Jude, probably for the same reason no one in the present day wants to name a child Judas, because of the association it has with Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus.

Like his older brother James, Jude did not place his faith in Jesus while the Lord was still alive. Only after the crucifixion and resurrection did the scales fall from Jude's eyes and he became a follower of his half-brother, Jesus. He is also known as the Saint Jude (Judas) Thaddeus.

First Corinthians 9:5 offers a tantalizing piece of information, noting that the Lord's brothers and their wives took missionary journeys. From this scant portrait, we begin to picture Jude as a man who lived in skepticism for a time but eventually came to a powerful faith in Jesus.

And as he traveled on behalf of the gospel, telling the story in city after city with his name Judas butting up against that of Judas Iscariot, he would stand as a living example of faithfulness, a stark contrast to the betrayer.

The book of Jude is notoriously difficult to date, primarily because the Bible and tradition reveal so little about the personal details of its author while the book itself refrains from naming any particular individuals or places.

The one clue available to present-day readers is the striking similarity between the books of Jude and 2 Peter. Assuming Peter wrote his letter first (AD 64–66), Jude probably wrote his epistle sometime between AD 67 and 80.

Jude's edgy brevity communicates the urgency of his notion that false teachers needed to be condemned and removed from the church. Few words meant that Jude would not waste space dancing around the issue. He saw within the church people and practices that were worthy of condemnation, including rejecting authority and seeking to please themselves.

In response to these errors, Jude marshaled much biblical imagery to make clear what he thought of it all—anything from Cain killing his brother Abel to the punishment of the sinful people who populated Sodom and Gomorrah.

Jude's purpose in his letter was twofold: he wanted to expose the false teachers that had infiltrated the Christian community, and he wanted to encourage Christians to stand firm in the faith and fight for the truth.

## SUMMARY Continued

Jude recognized that false teachers often peddled their wares unnoticed by the faithful, so he worked to heighten the awareness of the believers by describing in vivid detail how terrible dissenters actually were.

But more than simply raising awareness, Jude thought it important that believers stand against those working against Jesus Christ. Believers were to do this by remembering the teaching of the apostles, building each other up in the faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and keeping themselves in the love of God.

Fight for the truth! Stand up against error! The book of Jude is the very definition of punchy and pithy proclamations with its short commands and statements popping off the page like machine-gun fire. But in our day and age, punchy has become rude or unacceptable.

## NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 1:5** But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.
- 1:6** And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;
- 1:7** as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.
- 1:17** But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:
- 1:18** how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.
- 1:19** These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.
- 1:20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
- 1:21** keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
- 1:22** And on some have compassion, making a distinction;
- 1:23** but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.
- 1:24** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
- 1:25** To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

## CHARACTERS Definitions

**SAINT JUDE THADDEUS** - The origins of devotion to St. Jude as the patron of difficult or hopeless cases are nearly as obscure as details of the life of the great Apostle. These origins seemed to have been a spontaneous rising of interest among the faithful themselves, prompted possibly by the fact that according to tradition, St. Jude was a near relative or cousin of Jesus and that as a child, he was a playmate of the Lord.

Confusion of the names of St. Jude and the traitor, Judas, effectively discouraged devotion to the saint for many centuries. Devotion to him, consequently, has been of relatively recent origin although there is evidence that this devotion was held in high esteem during the Middle Ages.

Impetus to this devotion was undoubtedly given by Our Lord Himself who directed St. Bridget of Sweden to turn to St. Jude with great faith and confidence. "In accordance with his surname, Thaddeus' the amiable, loving," said Our Lord, "he will show himself most willing to give help."

St. Jude, known as Thaddaeus, was a brother of St. James the Less, and a relative of our Savior. Ancient writers tell us that he preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Idumaea, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Lybia. According to Eusebius, he returned to Jerusalem in the year 62, and assisted at the election of his brother, St. Simeon, as Bishop of Jerusalem.

He is the author of an epistle to the Churches of the East, particularly the Jewish converts, directed against the heresies of the Simonians, Nicolaites, and Gnostics. This Apostle is said to have suffered martyrdom in Armenia, which was then subject to Persia. The final conversion of the Armenian nation to Christianity did not take place until the 3rd century of our era.

We are told that St. Jude's father, Alphaeus, was murdered because of his forth-right and outspoken Devotion to the risen Christ. The mother of St. Jude and St. James the Less, also named Mary, was a cousin of the Virgin Mary. After her death, miracles were attributed to her intercession.

St. Jude is shown, traditionally, as carrying the image of Jesus in his hand. This represents, according to tradition the imprint of the Divine Countenance that was entrusted to him by Jesus.

The circumstances were these: King Abagaro of Edessa, who suffered from leprosy, sent word to Jesus asking Him to come and cure him. With his request, we are told, the King sent an artist to return with a picture of the Master.

Impressed with his great faith. Our Lord pressed his image on a cloth and gave it to St. Jude to bring to the King of Edessa and cure him. The King was cured by St. Jude and together with most of his subjects was converted to Christianity.

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, St. Jude travelled throughout Mesopotamia for a period of ten years preaching and converting many to Christianity.

## CHARACTERS Continued

He probably returned to Jerusalem for the Council of the Apostles, and then he and St. Simon visited Libya and Persia where many more converts were made, St. Jude died a martyr's death.

Tradition tells us that he was clubbed, possibly into insensibility, and his head was then shattered with a broad ax. Sometime after his death, St. Jude's body was brought to Rome and placed in a crypt under the principal altar of St. Peter's Basilica.

## BIBLE TIMELINE

68 AD

Jude Writes his Letter

Jude 1

## MAP REFERENCES

