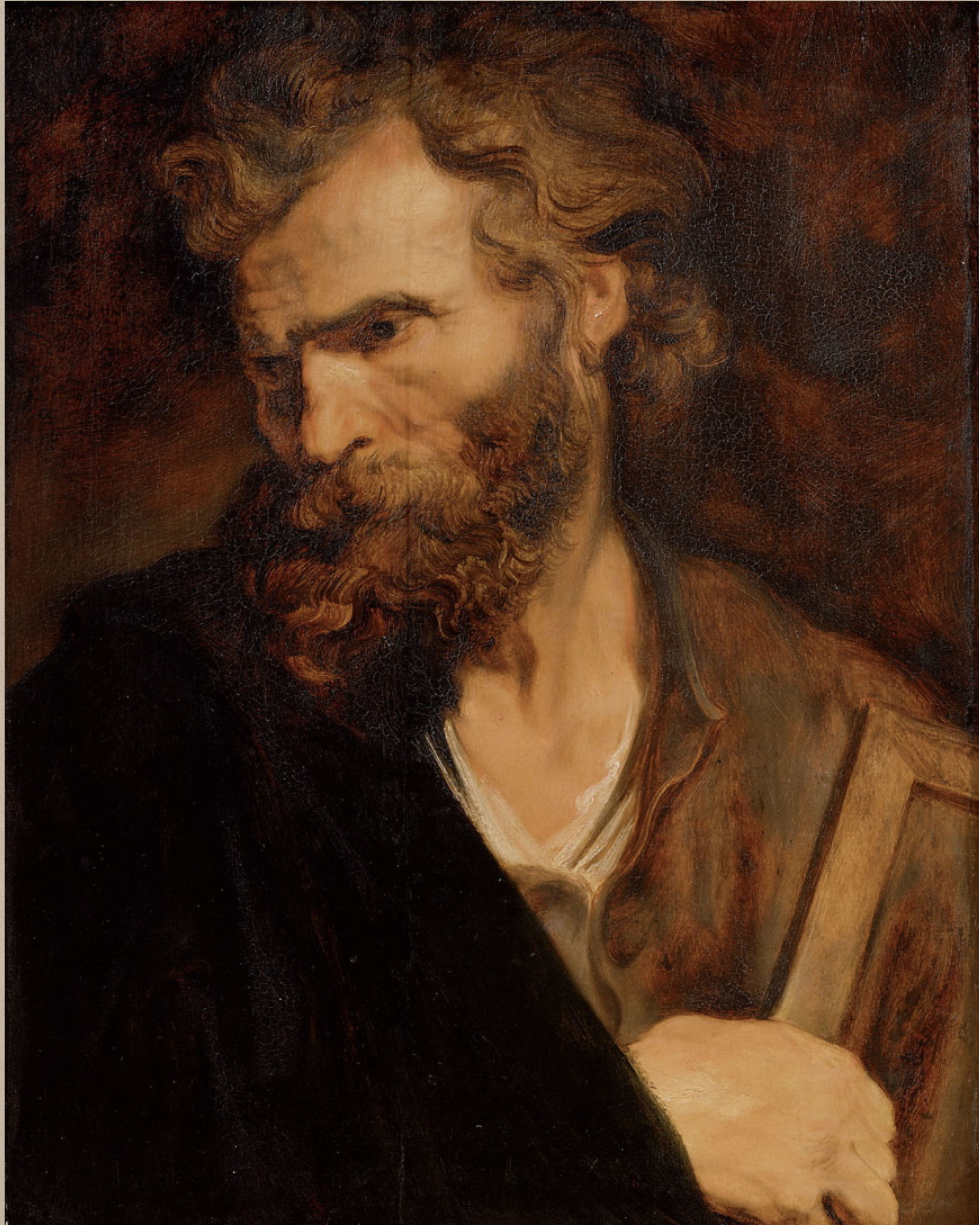




**St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church**  
Heliopolis, Egypt



**Commentary on  
The Epistle of Jude**



*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
the One and Only God,  
Amen.*

*An exegetical study of the Holy Bible*  
**"commentaries on the New Testament"**

**The Epistle of St. Jude**

*prepared and published by priests and servants of  
St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church  
Heliopolis, Egypt*

*Translated by George Ishack, Ottawa, Canada, 2025  
All biblical quotations are taken from the New King James version of the Holy Bible*



*His Holiness Pope Tawadros II  
118<sup>th</sup> Pope of Alexandria  
and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark*

## Prelude

### 1. The author:

It was authored by St. Jude, the son of Alpheus, James' brother, and Christ's cousin - thus, he was referred to as "*the Lord's brother*," since, in those days, a cousin was considered a brother in the Jewish community. He was one of the twelve disciples. He evangelized in Palestine, Arab countries, Iraq and Iran.

### 2. The epistle's intended audience:

It was addressed to believers anywhere in the world, both of Jewish and Gentile origin.

### 3. Timing of the epistle - where it was written:

It was written prior to Jerusalem's destruction, most likely in Persia in 68 A.D., where the saint's life ended. Its style bears similarities to Peter's second epistle.

### 4. The epistle's purpose and features:

- a- False teachers, their attributes and their punishment.
- b- Fundamental tenets of the Faith such as the Holy Trinity, the second coming, angels, and demons.
- c- The Church and the Faith received from the saints.

### NOTE:

This epistle uniquely mentions the following issues not addressed in other epistles:

- + The disagreement between Archangel Michael and Satan concerning the prophet Moses' body.
- + Enoch's prophecy.

### 5. The epistle's sections:

- a- Deviations from the Faith - examples (Verses 1 - 7)
- b- Attributes of false teachers (Verses 8 - 13)
- c- Prophecies concerning false teachers (Verses 14 - 19)
- d- Principles for a spiritual lifestyle (Verses 20 - 25)



*"Interpretation of the holy Bible - the New Testament"  
taken from the series: "Patristic expositions and meditations"*

*An exegetical study of  
**The Epistle of St. Jude***

***False Teachers - the Spiritual Lifestyle***

**1. Introductory greetings - verses 1 & 2:**

***"Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you."*** (Jude Verses 1 & 2)

**Verse 1:**

The name "Jude" derives from the Hebrew name "Yehudah," meaning "praised" or "thankful," highlighting its roots in celebration and gratitude. St. Jude humbly refrained from mentioning that he was the Lord's brother or cousin - rather, he referred to himself as ***"a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James."***

His message is sent to all believers around the world, whom God the Father has called, sanctified with His Holy Spirit, and preserved to be Christ's bride at His second coming. This demonstrates the relationship between the Holy Trinity and believers, Jews and Gentiles alike.

**Verse 2:**

The apostle prays for mercy to believers - unlike false teachers and their followers as will be seen later in the epistle. He prays for their peace and exhorts them to remain unperturbed by the heretics' deeds, to pity, love and pray for them, and, rather than judging them, to abhor their wicked deeds.

+ *Discern evil and reject all strange thoughts. At the same time, have pity on, and pray for, heretics.*

**2. Deviations from the Faith - examples - verses 3 - 7:**

***"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. 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. 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; 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.***" (Jude Verses 3 - 7)

### **Verse 3:**

The apostle's heart was fixated on the salvation fulfilled on the Cross, and shared by all believers. He desired to address, and meditate on, this topic, at all times. However, given the emergence of heretics in the Church, he felt obliged to talk about the sound Faith, which disciples and apostles had received from Christ, and delivered to their children. This Faith leads to salvation, it embodies the Holy Bible, and all Church Traditions and teachings, and protects against all heresies.

### **Verse 4:**

False teachers are hazardous, since they are Church members, and they spread their deceptive heresies to simple and unsuspecting congregants. God knows them, and He has prepared for them condemnation and eternal torment, to punish their audacity, wickedness, and their spread of evil ideas. They persist in unclean practices and fornication, while denying the existence of God and Christ's Divinity.

### **Verse 5:**

The apostle gives Old Testament examples of deceivers who had perished due to their wickedness after having acquired salvation. He gave those examples to warn believers against followers of heretics who feign salvation. The Israelites were the first example; they had been delivered from bondage in Egypt and, after crossing the Red Sea, they rebelled against Moses, and demanded to return to Egypt. Thus, they perished in the wilderness, except two, who made it to the promised land (see Numbers 14:29). God also destroyed them (see Exodus 32) after they had worshipped the golden calf.

### **Verse 6:**

A second example is given of the righteous who perished for failing to remain steadfast in the Faith, namely, those are ***"the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode"*** - their pride and failure to submit to God resulted in their fall from their heavenly abode; eternal perdition awaits them.

### **Verse 7:**

**"...strange flesh..."** - This refers to adultery, promiscuity, and rejection of the natural relationship between married couples.

The third example is that of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah and other towns in their vicinity; they abandoned the natural style of life in favour of lewdness and homosexuality. They were burnt and will suffer eternal hellfire.

+ *Do not be complacent when faced with sin, relying on your knowledge and external relationship with the Church; rather, repent speedily and humble yourself before the Lord and He will deliver you. Rest assured that your relationship with the Church should shield you from sin.*

### **3. Attributes of false teachers - verses 8 - 13:**

***"Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority [God's authority], and speak evil of dignitaries [either Church leadership, or angels and saints]. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."*** (Jude Verses 8 - 13)

### **Verse 8:**

Here, the apostle speaks about false teachers who lead a lifestyle of evil dreams, distancing themselves from the Church's reality, its sound Faith, and its purity. He mentions three significant sins in which they fall:

- a- the body's defilement - hence fornication - and associated wickedness,
- b- mockery of God's existence, rejecting the fear of God, and abandonment of the Faith received from our forefathers, and
- c- persistence in their pride, and rejecting, while making false allegations against, the Church's leadership, and judging departed saints.

### **Verse 9:**

The apostle mentions a story, taken from old traditions, namely, the disagreement between Archangel Michael and Satan, concerning Moses' body. Following Moses' demise, God had hidden his body lest the

Israelites should worship him, out of their extreme love for him. Satan tried to reveal the body, in order to keep people from worshipping God. Rather than judging or exposing Satan, St. Michael told him, "**The Lord rebuke you!**" That is the perfect example that God's children should follow.

**Verse 10:**

Contrasting St. Michael's conduct, we find heretics proudly judging angels and Church leadership, despite the latter's saintliness and sublimation. On the other hand, they fail to conduct themselves appropriately in matters of well-known natural instincts, which even animals follow; thus, they practise fornication and homosexuality, sinking to levels below animals'.

**Verse 11:**

God's punishment to those false teachers is declared, due to their indulgence in wickedness. Old Testament examples are given:

a- "**the way of Cain**" - This refers to lack of love for brethren: they deceived many by their corrupt ideas, and caused their perdition, akin to Cain's murdering his brother (see Genesis 4:5 - 12).

b- "**the error of Balaam for profit**" - Balaam the prophet advised king Balak the Moabite, in return for gifts, to send women to fornicate with the Israelites, in order for the Lord to disown His people (see Numbers 22 - 25). Thus, false teachers deceived believers.

c- "**perished in the rebellion of Korah**" - Korah and his company rebelled against Aaron and his sons for monopolizing the priesthood. Korah declared that priesthood was within the rights of all the Israelites. The ground split and swallowed all of Korah and his company (see Numbers 16:1 - 30). Thus, false teachers will suffer eternal perdition.

**Verse 12:**

False teachers are likened unto obstacles impeding spiritual life - akin to rocks obstructing ships' passage in the sea. Those deceivers brazenly participate in the church's congregation's love feasts for the purpose of spreading their venom in order to hinder the sound Faith's spread.

Deceivers also feign piety, but they resemble clouds which the farmer awaits, but is disappointed to find that they bore no water; they fail to deliver any constructive spiritual instruction.

They are also likened unto autumn trees, which abound in leaves yet fail to yield any fruit; they should be cut down. Deceivers persisting in their evil ways are hopeless - they fail to yield any spiritual fruit.

### Verse 13:

The apostle says that deceivers' rebellion against the Church is akin to sea waves spewing their waste onto shore. Through their rebellion they spread their corrupt notions among the church's congregants. Furthermore, they are like darkened stars which had strayed from their path and failed to give off any light; they lost Christ's light which had been within them, and are destined for the darkness of eternal perdition.

+ *Seize the opportunity of your presence in church to strengthen your ties to it, and to follow its teachings. Do not be satisfied with the outward appearance of piety, without applying God's words - in this way, you will lose the work of the Holy Spirit in you.*

### 4. Prophecies concerning false teachers - verses 14 - 19:

***"Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit [they reject the Holy Spirit]."*** (Jude Verses 14 - 19)

### Verse 14:

Here, the apostle mentions Enoch's prophecy, taken from ancient traditions, that the Lord would come on judgment day surrounded by all the saints. Enoch was the seventh generation grandson from Adam.

### Verse 15:

On judgment day, God will condemn evil-doers, especially those brazenly persisting in wickedness - not only for their evil deeds, but also for each evil utterance that offended others.

### Verse 16:

The apostle describes those ***"grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts"*** as having the following attributes:

- a- much complaining,
- b- being steeped in lusts,

- c- pride and arrogance, and
- d- hypocrisy, in order to gain advantages.

### **Verses 17 & 18:**

St. Jude alerts believers that, in addition to Enoch's prophecy, the apostles, after Christ's ascension, had also foretold the emergence of deceivers (see 2 Timothy 1:3 - 5, Hebrews 2:1, 1 Peter 1:20 and 1 John 2:18), who would indulge in lustful living, in defiance of any social or religious norms.

### **Verse 19:**

The apostle resumes his description of wicked heretics, saying that they isolated themselves from the Church, followed their own erroneous ideas, and refused submission to the Holy Spirit.

+ *Although you are entitled to your own views, they should not be at odds with the Church and its teachings. Make sure that you pray and submit your will to the Lord's prior to any undertaking - then you will hear the Holy Spirit's voice, and acquire the guidance of your confessor.*

### **5. Principles for a spiritual lifestyle - verses 20 - 23:**

***"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh."*** (Jude Verses 20 - 23)

### **Verse 20:**

After having warned believers against false teachers, the apostle brings to their attention the following positive aspects:

- a- ***"...building yourselves..."*** - This refers to the spiritual struggle and good deeds.
- b- ***"...on your most holy faith..."*** - This refers to steadfastness in the faith in Christ, transforming into a lifestyle ruling sentiments and conduct.
- c- ***"...praying in the Holy Spirit..."*** - This refers to prayer which preserves a person's life and all his virtues. Sound prayer must be through the Holy Spirit's work; He guides what to ask for, and teaches how to pray.

### **Verse 21:**

The apostle exhorts believers to keep themselves from the world's preoccupations - this will enable them to enjoy God's love through prayers and readings. Being filled with God's love enables us to love those around us, regardless of the extent of their wrong-doings. Hope in God's mercy will compensate for all hardships in this life.

### **Verse 22:**

Setting eternity as our goal, we should focus on our, as well as others', salvation. Thus, through good deeds of mercy and catering to their needs, we should help them draw closer to God. However, we should discern between tenderness and compassion for the weak and helpless, versus strictness and firmness towards those wallowing in wantonness.

### **Verse 23:**

Resuming his discourse about the significance of others' souls' salvation, the apostle indicates that some people need strictness, which may include, sometimes, warnings, or even punishment. The goal is to save them from evil's consuming fire, which leads to eternal perdition.

The apostle, furthermore, warns servants against complacency while belittling the risk of being defiled with evil-doers' wickedness; rather, they should distance themselves from all sources of evil.

+ *When dealing with others, remember that you are responsible for their souls' salvation. Be relentless in caring for them and in offering your love. At the same time, do not hesitate to proclaim the truth - for their salvation's sake - even at the risk of making them uncomfortable.*

### **6. The epistle's conclusion - verses 24 & 25:**

***"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, to God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."*** (Jude Verses 24 & 25)

### **Verse 24:**

Believers are encouraged to note that God is philanthropic, He will support them in their spiritual struggle, and will shield them against the world's evil, until they attain the joyful day of meeting with Christ in eternity; they will then experience His glory, forgiveness, and love, that He will grant them.

### **Verse 25:**

The apostle also encourage believers, saying that their wise God is capable of guiding them under all circumstances, delivering them from the world's wickedness. He is also the only God before Whom there can be no obstacles - He will deliver us from all evil, and we praise and glorify Him forever.

+ *Rest assured that your mighty God is capable of protecting you from all hazards, will deliver you from all evil, and will support you regardless of the extent of your helplessness. As long as you cling to Him, He will complete your struggle, until you enjoy the heavenly glories with Him.*

