



JUDE

**THERE IS A
FESTERING
CANCER
IN
THE WAY**

By Want Cates

Who was Jude?

He opens his letter with a simple statement that uses his relationship with James as a validation of who he is. “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James.” As usual this issue has been debated since the third century AD. There were those who proposed that Jude was one of the “12”. However, this seems to be quite easily countered by Jude’s own words in verses 17 and 18. In these two verses he refers to the apostles as *they* and not *us*.

What was the ‘WAY’?

The Way was the Jewish followers of Christ. The ruling body was the fellowship in Jerusalem. Many members of the way promoted the idea that you must convert to Judaism to be saved. The Way dissolved after the Temple was destroyed in 70AD. There were no more sacrifices, healing pools or priesthood. Writers from the second century have blurred the distinctions between the Way and the Christians.

Who was the letter written to?

Although the message is clearly germane to all Christians, I believe it was written to groups of Jewish believers. This is supported by the repeated use of scripture passages that would not be familiar to Gentile believers. The writer uses a wide spectrum of quotes from scripture. He also uses quotes from sacrosanct Jewish literature not included in scripture, i.e. the prophecies of Enoch and the dispute over Moses’ body. Note also no specific Church was mentioned.

What inspired Jude to write the letter?

A **false gospel** was growing in the *Way* (messianic jews). This false gospel took teachings of Paul, Luke, James and John out of context. Namely, the law and grace. That is, once you accept Christ as your lord and Savior, the law no longer applied to you. Then there was Grace, all your sins are forgiven. With the exemption from the law and the forgiveness of Grace you could live in any manner you elect.

Key points of the letter

He starts out with a short statement of the blight that has infected the **Way**, “certain men”.

He then goes into the history of God’s saving grace, rejection by the people and the punishments they endured for their waywardness.

Next, he goes into a lengthy description of “these men” (verses 8 – 16) who were prophesied about just 7 generations from Adam.

He closes the body of the letter with a plea to hold to the truth of the Gospel of Christ and protect fellow believers from the fires of the false gospel.

The letter is closed with an eloquent prayer.

