2 Peter and Jude

Let’s go ahead and get started. I know this is such a nice day it is hard to be inside. I'll make it worth your while if you showed up. I’ll have a piece of paper up here and you sign your name on it after class you'll get extra credit for being here. I do that once in a while just to reward the faithful remnant. Alright, now after that I can't change my mind. What I want to do today is we are actually getting very near the end. I want to leave a couple days, at least one day perhaps to look at Revelation in a little bit of detail. Although obviously we’re running out of time for that but I want to look at two documents today. This is another time when we'll go out of canonical order. That is we will look at two books that are separated from each other in their canonical order in the New Testament.

The two books that are close resemblance suggests that there is some kind of a relationship between them just as we did with Colossians and Philemon. We suggested there was a close relationship between them in that they were probably addressed to the same location sent during a similar time. If you recall the New Testament is not arranged chronologically. The books do not occur in the order in which they were necessarily written. Even when you see a First and Second Corinthians or First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Peter, First and Second Timothy, is what we can't assume necessarily that that's the order in which they were written.

Paul did not write First and Second Timothy on the top of his letter. Peter did not write First and Second Peter. Those are designations we've given to them according to the order in which they occur in the New Testament, which is roughly by length and at times are logically ordered not necessarily chronologically. But there are times when even though the letters may not be arranged chronologically there may be clues in the letters that help us to determine when they would've been written. We'll look at one of those examples today, with 2 Peter and Jude.
Jude is one of those letters I can't remember the last time I've ever heard a sermon preached on one. A sermon preached on Jude let alone a reference to it or anything like that and you'll see why when we look at it and in just a little bit of detail.

Let's open with prayer and then we'll look at 2 Peter and Jude. Father thank you for bringing us to this point in the semester as we anticipate the last couple weeks. Lord we pray for energy and endurance. Lord that the ability to persevere and not to feel too burnt out to discouraged and tired from all that we’re doing, but that we’ll be able to finish well. Lord, I pray that despite the nice weather and other places we'd rather be and things we'd rather be doing, help us to focus our attention for just a brief time on a small portion of what we confess is your very revelation to us. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Second Peter is again one of those documents that like a number of Paul's letters, that we have seen, could be categorized. This is important when you're thinking in terms of exams especially the final exam a lot of my questions sometimes ask you to relate letters, or documents across the New Testament as far as similarity. What similarity do they have with each other?

Second Peter is one of those documents that shares features with some of Paul's letters that we've looked at. It addresses some kind of a false teaching or some kind of a deviant teaching, such as we saw in First and Second Timothy. In books like Colossians and Galatians Paul was dealing with threats to the gospel that he preached. Now in the 2 Peter unlike 1 Peter which was addressing a very different situation, Second Peter is addressing the problem of teachers who basically were a little bit differently than some of the other letters that we've looked at. Teachers that were promoting a sort of antinomianism that is promoting and teaching that absolved one of any authority or responsibility to live life in a certain way. It is from some of the examples we see in 2 Peter we’re going to see also that they were promoting this by questioning and calling into question that God was actually going to return and judge.

One of the ways they did this is by calling into question the teaching of the apostles and the Old Testament prophets. If you remember your Old Testament survey class one of the dominant messages of the prophets was one of both salvation, but
judgment as well—that God would return and judge the earth. It seems that these teachers whatever their precise identity in 2 Peter were calling into question particularly the fact that God was going to return and judge the earth. Therefore if that's the case, they could live whatever kind of lifestyle they wanted to. Especially they can indulge in whatever type of pleasures, particularly sexual immorality, with no fear that God was going to return and judge.

So that seems to be that the primary issue or problem that these teachers were calling into question: the fact that God was really going return and judge humanity and judge wickedness and sin. In fact, if he isn't and they are free to live their lives in whatever terms they want. They're free to indulge in any kind of sexual morality or any pleasures they want because God is not going to return and judge. That seems to be the issue or the problem that the author is addressing.

Let me for just a moment talk about the genre or literary type of the 2 Peter and 2 Timothy seem to resemble a last will and testament. Much like we said that 2 Peter was actually Peter's last will and testament to his readers where we said a testament which was a sort of a common literary type in the first century. Leading up to the first century and during that time a testament basically was the last words of a dying hero. Someone who is ready to die was passing on their final instruction. 1 Peter resembles that as well. Especially verses 12 to 15 listen to these verses: Peter says, "Therefore I intend to keep on reminding you of these things though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. I think it is right as long as I am in the body to refresh your memory, since I know that my death or my departure will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things." That statement has all the earmarks of a testament, that is, the last words of a dying hero. The hero faces now passes on his parting instructions to remind his readers of what he has said to them and what he has taught them. So Peter is writing a testament much like 2 Timothy.

We'll return to this in a moment, but as I said the primary force behind the false teachers is that they are trying to convince the readers to deny future judgment or that
there will not be a future judgment therefore they can live however they want, pursue any kind of immorality that they want. So that the purpose of 2 Peter is then Peter writing to encourage his readers to pursue holy living in the world by maintaining their confidence in Scripture, primarily, and in the fact that God is going to come and both judge and save.

So in one sense Peter's message is very prophetic by that I mean he tries to motivate his readers by reminding them and communicating a message of both salvation for those who are faithful, but judgment for those who refuse.

The other thing that's important about this and this will crop up again in Jude, we've seen this a couple of other times, when we think about false teaching today we usually think of it in intellectual or theological terms that someone who is engaged in false teaching is one who deviates theologically, or one that deviates from the clear scriptural teaching. However, it's interesting that the biblical authors were just as interested in ethical deviation as well. We're going to see it in 2 Peter. 2 Peter is not only concerned that they don't believe the correct things but they acted incorrectly as well. Where some would say he's not only concerned with “orthodoxy” but “orthopraxy.” That is so all false teaching is just as much a deviant lifestyle as it is a deviant manner of living.

That would be, “The purpose” in your notes. Now the way Peter accomplishes his purpose is this, it appears that in the rest of his letter Peter is going to take objections to these teachers. Again remember these teachers are calling into question the fact that God is going to judge and therefore they can live their lives however they want. What it seems is going happen is Peter is going to take up a series of objections to the fact that Christ is not going to return and God is not going to come back and judge. Peter is going to answer these objections.

So objection number one, and again you'll notice the chapters and verses don't correspond with the entirety of 2 Peter but I'm just focusing on the heart of the section so. We’ll just move through 2 Peter simply looking at the objection that the false teachers were raising to Christ coming to judge and then Peter's response to that.
So the first objection was that the apostles were teaching myth in chapter 1 verses 16 through 19. So in these verses Peter is not necessarily quoting the teachers but I think summarizing what is at the heart of one of their objections. So he says "for we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his Majesty." Now that phrase, “we did not follow cleverly devised myths,” probably is summarizing one of the accusations of the teachers. That is that the apostles such as Peter and Paul and others were accused of simply teaching myth. What is important about that, is one of the messages of the apostles was that indeed Jesus was going to return one day and he was going to judge the world. So by discrediting the apostolic message that Christ was going to return, that is, the “not yet” part of our “already but not yet” tension. But by the apostles teaching the “not yet” that Christ is one day going to return to judge, by calling that into question, the false teachers then would promote their antinomianism, that is, they are not responsible to any kind of code of conduct or or ethical conduct.

So the teachers are calling into question the apostolic teaching. The answer of Peter is "No." The apostles were eyewitnesses of God's glory. Listen to this, this is interesting. Peter says "For he received" referring to Christ "for Jesus received honor and glory from God the father when that voice was conveyed to him by the majestic glory saying 'this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven while we were with him on the holy mount. What is that event referring to? Does anyone remember, now you have to go back to the Gospels where did at least some of the apostles go up on a mountain and hear a voice "this is my beloved son listen to him in him I am well pleased.”

The Transfiguration—Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the Transfiguration as a time when Jesus went with Peter, James and John up a mountain and was transfigured before them. They indeed were enveloped in a cloud. It was a rather supernatural event. They heard the voice from heaven, “this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased” which comes out of the book of Isaiah.
But, why do you think Peter quotes that. How is this a response? How is this going to prove that when, the apostles said that Jesus is going to come back and judge they were not teaching falsity or teaching myth? How does this prove that? I mean why would Peter allude to this event?

Okay. It's the Transfiguration event in the Gospels it is actually filled with all kinds of Old Testament imagery. It was basically in a sense a kind of the glimpse, it was almost the prefiguring or a glimpse ahead of time of Jesus coming in all his glory in his kingdom to judge and to save.

So the reason Peter quotes it he says, “No, we were eyewitnesses of God's glory during the Transfiguration. That is, we saw a glimpse. We had a snapshot or a glimpse into what it would be like when Christ will return in all his glory to set up his kingdom and to judge and to save.” So they kind of had a glimpse of the “not yet already” in the present when they saw Jesus transformed in all his glory and power as the son of God that would return and judge and provide salvation. So Peter says, “No, we were eyewitnesses of the fact that Jesus is going to come back and judge. When the apostles taught that Christ is going to come back and judge they were not teaching myth or falsity. But instead it was based on an eyewitness account. They themselves saw Christ, the snapshot a pre-judgment glimpse of Christ coming in all his glory when he was transfigured on that mountain in the Gospels.

Objection number two: the prophets were simply wrong. Chapter 1 in verses 20 and 21 first of all Peter says, "You must understand this that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation because no prophecy ever came by human will or decision but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit who spoke from God." Now most likely then this is a response to or a summary of the false teachers’ objection, that is, the prophets are simply wrong. Again when you go back and read the Old Testament prophetic texts one of the common features of the prophet Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah, etc. it is that they also envision the day when God would intervene and set up his kingdom and bring both salvation and judgment. So now by calling that into question the false teachers were calling into question their message of judgment. So again if it the
prophets were wrong and there's no judgment and if there's no judgment, you can live however you want. Therefore we will not be responsible for our immoral actions.

Peter's response, as we just read is, “No, the prophets were not speaking on their own they were not wrong. They were not simply cleverly devised prophecies but instead they were men and women speaking as those moved along by God.” Theologians often described prophets as the mouthpiece of God. This is one of the texts that they get that idea from. However much their own style and communication was involved, Peter makes it clear that ultimately God’s spirit was moving the prophets to speak this message of judgment and salvation. So, when the prophets said that God was coming back to save and to judge they're to be trusted because Peter says their message is not one that is from their own decision and human will in their own. It's not of their own doing but they are proclaiming the message that God's spirit has moved them to proclaim. Therefore, if the prophets were correct and right, then their message that there is a judgment is correct. Then, therefore, it doesn't matter how the readers live. Right so objection number two answered.

Objection number three: judgment simply will not happen. In chapter 2 is Peter's response to that, and I won't read the section but it's basically just that it seems to suggest the teachers were simply arguing that it's just logically and theoretically impossible and pragmatically impossible that judgment won't take place. What Peter does in chapter 2 is, Peter actually accumulates a number of Old Testament stories, if you go back and read Peter you'll just see one story after another from the Old Testament, almost an Old Testament survey. What it is, is a story of how God has intervened and judges in the history of Israel. You can see Peter's point for doing this. He says, “No, it isn't unlikely that God will judge. It is not theoretically impossible. He has done so in the past look at Israel's history. God has judged in the past so it's entirely conceivable and it's certain that he will judge in the future. So, once again the false teachers are wrong by calling into question the plausibility of judgment. Peter says one only need look at the Old Testament to see that God has frequently intervened to judge in the past, so he will in the future as well.
Objection number four: chapter 3:1-10. The false teachers also seem to be saying that the fact that God has delayed and has not intervened to judge suggested there's not going to be a judgment. In other words, the fact that that Christ has not come back for some time, despite what the apostle said despite what the prophets said, it demonstrates that there's not going to be a judgment otherwise why the delay.

In Peter's answer in chapter 3:1-10, he says, I'll start with verses 8 to 10 "but do not ignore this one fact beloved that with the Lord one day is like 1000 years and 1000 years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise as some of you think about slowness, but is patient with you not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance. But the day the Lord will come like a thief." This uses a metaphor that Jesus himself used "he will come like a thief and the heavens will pass away with a loud noise and the elements will be dissolved with fire and the earth and everything that is done on it will be revealed or disclosed." So basically Peter's answer is to God a day is like 1000 years 1000 years like a day. Slowness to God is not like slowness to us. But then he also adds he's giving humanity a chance to repent. So whatever we precisely make of this the least Peter is saying is that the delay has a reason that does not call into question the fact that God is indeed going to return to judge. What might seem like a delay us may not necessarily be a delay. He says, by the way, God may be delaying so that others may have a chance to repent prior to the coming judgment.

So, that's basically Peter and the book of 2 Peter in a nutshell. Again it seems to me that's what Peter’s strategy is in combating these teachers that are trying to call into question the fact there's going to be a future judgment and therefore the readers can do whatever they want. What Peter does is he seems to take up a series of objections or possible objections by the false teachers and replies to them. So that the conclusion then is if there is going to be a judgment it does matter how the readers live. So he asks them and he motivates them to live holy lives in view of the fact that there indeed is a coming judgment and not be duped by these false teachers that are calling that judgment into question and suggesting that they can live antinomian type lives.

Any questions on 2 Peter?
There's one other thing I want to say about it, and that is, 2 Peter is one of the books that perhaps more than any other book in the New Testament has been disputed as far as whether Peter wrote it or not. Even many that would agree that Peter wrote 1 Peter a number of them would disagree that he wrote 2 Peter for a number of reasons. When you compare First and Second Peter even in English translation sometimes, but especially if all of you were able to read the Greek text of First and Second Peter If I gave you a Greek New Testament and you were fairly fluent in your ability to read it, you'd have a lot easier time with First Peter then you would with Second Peter. I guarantee it.

So some have suggested that the writing style, that the type of Greek vocabularies are so different in 2 Peter than it is from 1 Peter that Peter could not have written it. Another reason is because we just said that the 2 Peter resembles very closely, in form, a testament. We said there in from roughly the second century into a couple centuries before the first century and the first century and beyond there is a common form known as testamentary literatures. A testament that is a record of the last words of a dying hero that would include both ethical and sometimes prophetic or Eschatological type of instruction which you find in First and in Second Peter.

Interestingly most of those Testaments tended the pseudonymous. That is, written in the name of. For example, we have a number of books titled: The Testament of Abraham, The Testament of Isaac, The Testament of Jacob, The Testament of the 12 Patriarchs, The Testament of Moses and The Testament Elijah. The thing is they're obviously not written by those persons. The Testament of Abraham was not really written by Abraham it was written by someone after Abraham's life, writing in Abraham's name. The assumption is that the readers would've understood that, they would not have been tricked or deceived into thinking that Abraham was really writing this, but they would've known this was just a recognizable genre or literary form and they would've known that Abraham, or whoever, did not write this.

Some have argued, because 2 Peter is a form of the testament like other Testaments it too is probably pseudonymous. That is that so close after Peter's death now to write in Peter's name as someone did in Abraham's name or Moses name or Isaac's
name some well-known figure from the past. Now someone writes in Peter's name to instruct the present-day readers. Again the assumption is the readers would not have been deceived into thinking that Peter actually wrote this, that author was not trying to trick them, but he was following the standard literary convention of writing in the name of someone else. For that reason some think that 2 Peter is pseudonymous.

Another reason is what some scholars call early Catholicism. That is, that there's a sense that we can determine, and kind of tease out of the literature, in the first and second century a movement within Christianity that scholars call early Catholicism. Basically what it is a label for the belief in thinking and the state of the church late in the first entering into the second century as it begins to settle into life and prepare for the long run. That is that they realize that Christ was not going to come back right away and so they begin to settle in prepared to live out their lives in the world. They become more institutionalized, etc. etc.

But that usually it's not that early catholicism, by catholicism I'm not using that term in reference to the Catholic Church Roman Catholic Church as we think of it. Catholicism was a term that simply referred to the church universal, the church more generally and broadly hence you often find as we said that the collection of books that we're looking at now are often labeled the “General Epistles.” Another name for them is the “Catholic Epistles” because they're addressed to the church more broadly, the catholic universal church. That's what I mean by early catholicism that is that the church has now spread out and now begins to settle in and establish itself.

It has often been thought that there are three characteristics of early Catholicism. That is the church towards the end of the first entering into the second century A.D. Number one is a fading of a belief in the soon return of Christ. I shouldn't say a fading of the soon return. So the assumption is very early on perhaps based on Jesus’ teaching and the apostles’ teaching such as we read in 1 Thessalonians, that the church had a vibrant expectation that Christ was coming back soon. But now as it becomes apparent that he delays it becomes apparent that Christ is not coming back right away, the church and
their expectation of the soon return of Christ, begins to fade into the background and again they begin to settle down to live life in the world.

Another feature of early catholicism that goes along with this institutionalization of the church. That is, as the church begins to settle in the world for the long run and realize Christ is not coming back immediately then there's a need for the church to become more institutionalized and more structured with bishop, deacons, and bishops, in the hierarchy.

A third one is the crystallization of the faith. There's more of a need to have a fairly set kind of body of beliefs that the church will now hold to and subscribe to. And so it's thought that all three of these can be found in 2 Peter. Therefore the reasoning is wherever you see these ideas, if they indicate a church that has been around for a while late into the first into the second century and if these are all found in 2 Peter then this must be a later document that Peter himself could not have or did not write.

Again I don't want to go into this, but number one, I would really question whether the church really changed this substantially. In fact, I doubt that the first one is necessarily the case. You still, it seems to me throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament you find both delay and the immanence of God's return balanced with each other. We already saw it all seem to him back in 2 Thessalonians who thought that there could be a delay. That Christ might not come back immediately. Remember he warned the Thessalonians not to think that they are already in the Day of the Lord. So, to me it doesn't seem like in some of these documents that are thought to be much much later. It doesn't seem like that the soon return of Christ has necessarily faded out of view. These two seem to me to be more a matter of extent then their presence because I again think you can find both institutionalization of the church and crystallization of the faith in some of the early New Testament documents. So I really doubt the presence of any three of these are good enough to tell that this document must be much later.

So, in conclusion, it seems to me that although 2 Peter is a difficult book to demonstrate that the Peter definitely wrote it, I don't think that there's really good reason the question it. Why couldn't Peter, for example, write his own Testament? There may be
other reasons why 2 Peter looks so different from 1 Peter but there's really not enough evidence to be 100% certain that Peter wrote it. There is really not good evidence to deny that he wrote it as well. The early church's testimony was that Peter did indeed write it. So I'm going operate with the assumption that the Peter, Jesus’ apostle, the same person who wrote 1 Peter wrote this book also.

Yes, you're right. That is another issue. There's even less than we have what we all basically have is First and Second Peter, we really don't have enough again to say well Peter couldn't have written this. Remember we said even the statistics are difficult with Paul's letters. Even though we have a number of letters of Paul there's still not enough to definitively conclude this is how Paul always wrote or Paul couldn't have written like this. So probably we are even less certain with Peter since we only have basically First and Second Peter to go on as far as how Peter would have written or could have written.

Alright. As the transition into the next book, which now we’re going to skip ahead to the next to the last book of the New Testament and that is Jude. But it is interesting when you compare 2 Peter and Jude, you soon noticed a number of similarities. Similarities are often to the same extent of agreement as Matthew, Mark and Luke were. There's a similarity of ideas, there's a similarity in even down to vocabulary and wording between certain sections of 2 Peter and Jude. The similarities are great enough that we need to raise the question: What might be the relationship between 2 Peter and Jude? It's doubtful that they’re just coincidental. Most likely there is some kind of a relationship either 2 Peter and Jude were borrowing on a similar tradition or similar stories that they both had at their disposal or one of the documents borrowed and was aware of the other. Again, I don't want to go into a lot of detail, but it seems what is commonly becoming more agreed-upon now is probably Jude was written first and 2 Peter then utilized most of Jude. In fact, much of Jude you find in 2 Peter but then 2 Peter has a lot of material not Jude. so most likely 2 Peter or the author 2 Peter had access to Jude and utilized Jude or at the very least had access to the exact same collection of stories that Jude had and then uses those stories and then adds his own material as well.
So I would suggest probably Jude is written first and then 2 Peter utilizes Jude but adds other material.

I again see it's possible but it could be the other way around that Jude could have borrowed from 2 Peter and that would explain the similarities. The difficulty is on that reading you might have a little bit more difficulty explaining why Jude had been written. If it resembles 2 Peter so closely but then leaves out a lot of Peter, why would Jude just pick up part of Peter and not follow the rest of it. It does make a little bit more sense the other way around to say Peter used all of Jude then and wanted to expand and add some of his own material.

But again you can see the order in which the books occur in the New Testament are not necessarily indicative of the order in which they were written. But the common view seems to be Jude was written first and then 2 Peter but certainly it still could be the other way around.

The next obvious question is why the book of Jude? First of all why do you think, just to raise a question that is not necessarily in your notes but just to think a little bit why a book like Jude would be included in the New Testament. Especially since a lot of it is already as we said already in the 2 Peter. You can find virtually everything in Jude already in 2 Peter. Why would why would a book like Jude and as you're going to see in a moment that Jude is one of the most strange books you've ever read, at least I've ever read in the New Testament. I used to think Revelation was strange and it still is in some respects, but Jude has some very weird material. In fact, listen we'll talk more about this one. But this is what Jude says, "Now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord, who once for all saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgment of the great Day. Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the
glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael contended with the devil and disputed about the body of Moses, he did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander against him." What in the world is that about? This whole section of Jude has a couple of rather strange stories like this. So due to its brevity, due to the fact that much most of it all is already in 2 Peter anyway, why do you think a book like this may have been accepted into the New Testament canon?

Part of the issue is: who is Jude? I heard somebody said it. Jesus' brother Jude, this is one of Jesus's brothers. That is probably one of the reasons why it would make it into the New Testament canon. Being much like James who was Jesus' brothers Jude being a relative of Jesus' being one of Jesus brothers it is likely that his book would get consideration for being included in the New Testament.

The purpose of Jude then, because as much of the same material 2 Peter, however, you understand Jude also seems to be combating an antinomianism type of teaching as was true with 2 Peter. That is the teaching that one can pursue all kinds of sexual morality and indulge in any kind of desires and pleasures that one wants with no responsibility or are under no impunity at all. That seems to be the heart of the false teachers behind Jude. Yet there's questions. Exactly where was Jude written? Who was Jude written to? Who were the precise readers where were they? What was the nature of this teaching? Some have suggested gnostic type teaching. I have no idea. It could've been more of a Jewish type although it would be hard to see why they would be promoting the kind of lifestyle you read about. Apparently the verse that I just read he said "yet in the same way these dreamers," that's Jude's label for the teachers "these dreamers also defile the flesh reject authority and slander the glorious ones."

So I am not entirely sure exactly who the teachers were or where they would've been located but from best we can tell from reading Jude again, like the teachers in 2 Peter, they were questioning, they were calling into question the need to live responsibly and instead promoting an antinomianism, that is, living under no authority, indulging in all the lust and pleasure that one wants and not having to worry about judgment or anything like that as a consequence. That seems to be what Jude is addressing. Something
very very similar to 2 Peter. Though it's not as clear in Jude that they're denying a coming judgment or anything like that in 2 Peter may have been addressing. When you start reading a lot of the documents even outside of the New Testament in early Christianity one of the problems clearly the church faced was kind of itinerant preachers and groups of individuals who we would go from town to town and promote different teachings and actually teach things such as one might find in Jude. So there's some suspicion that Jude, whoever he's addressing that his readers may be subject to these itinerant preachers. They were kind of moving from place to place traveling around teaching this antinomian idea that one is not responsible and you don't have to worry about judgment and one can live however one wants and pursue all the pleasures that you choose. And so like 2 Peter then Jude is going to respond to that and to convince his readers not to give in to that.

So, for example, in verse three the purpose of the purpose of Jude seems to be summarized in verse three, "Beloved that while eagerly preparing to write to you about the salvation we share," which suggests Jude apparently is going to sit down and write a letter but now has received this information that is troubling. Now he's going to switch courses and write something else. It says, "Beloved while eagerly preparing to write to you about the salvation we share, I find it necessary to write an appeal to you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the Saints." That seem to summarize Jude's purpose. He wants them to contend for the faith. But that he will make it clear though as we’ll see in the letter that the faith that he talks about is not only an assent to some body of belief but it has everything to do with their ethics and the way they live as well.

So Jude then writes to address this problem of false teaching, perhaps against these itinerant teachers who are teaching this antinomianism, to warn them not to give in to that. But instead to contend for the faith both theologically, morally and ethically to contend for the faith that has been delivered to them. The way Jude does this, and this is how you understand the letter, the way you would have them resist this antinomian influence is to contend for the faith. He is like 2 Peter in chapter 2, he is going to tell a number of stories. What these stories all have in common are two things: number one they come from the Old Testament. So almost the whole book of Jude is this list stories
from the Old Testament. Number two, they all have to do with God judging evil and wicked behavior especially immorality.

So, for example, notice the first one we looked at starting in verse five, verse five and Jude only has one chapter so there is no chapter 1, chapter 2 it’s all verses. It begins, "now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord who once for all saved the people out of Egypt afterwards destroyed those who did not believe, although he saved his people out of Egypt, because of their rebellion and disobedience he destroyed them when they wandered in the desert.” He basically killed them off and raised up a new generation who would now enter the promised land. So Jude is saying they are in the same way because God did not spare his own people whom he delivered out of Egypt because of the rebellion. Then he goes on and says "and the angels who did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling he has kept in the eternal chains and judgment.” But this one, “like Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities which in the same manner as they indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." That really summarizes the heart of Jude’s examples that he sees giving examples of those who have rebelled in the Old Testament especially in that the area of it immorality and that God has judged them. The implication being that he readers better be aware of giving in to these antinomian false teachers because of God as judge in the past he certainly can and he certainly will bring judgment for the same kinds of behavior that people were judged for in the Old Testament. That's his whole argument.

However, you'll notice in the notes that I have given you a couple of interesting examples that are kind of intriguing in verse 6 “angels who did not keep their positions of authorities.” We already looked at this example in 2 Peter, I suggested that remember the 2 Peter 3 passage that we spent some time on this idea of Christ’s going to the spirits in prison who had rebelled in the days of Noah and now were in prison awaiting judgment. That probably comes from this tradition in Jewish literature that interpreted Genesis chapter 6 “sons of God” who came down and had relations with the daughters of men
interpreted the sons of God as angelic beings, who now according to Jewish literature, who now are in prison in chains awaiting the day of judgment.

Now I think 2 Peter is repeating the same stories. 2 Peter verse 6 is repeating that same story in slightly different wording as we found in 2 Peter. So 2 Peter verse six then alludes to Genesis chapter 6 as interpreted in Jewish literature which read it as angelic beings who transgress who abandoned their positions and transgress God's boundaries. Therefore they were locked up in judgment, in chains, awaiting the final day of judgment. Peter again alludes to that and obviously it is a very good example for what he wants to prove and that their immoral actions or their actions have dire consequences, that is judgment.

But what about this one in verse 9 that we just read, “but when the Archangel Michael contended with the devil and disputed about the body of Moses. He did not dare bring a condemnation or slander against him but he said ‘the Lord rebuke you.’” Now my question is what in the world is that referring to? First of all where do you read about the death of Moses in the Old Testament. Anyone remember where that is just roughly? In Deuteronomy towards the end of Deuteronomy, in fact the you don't read a whole lot about the death or the actual burial Moses or anything like that. But I would challenge you to read Deuteronomy. Read the Old Testament and find the story in there. It’s not there. There's no mention anywhere, especially in Deuteronomy, there's no mention anywhere of the Archangel Michael. You read about him in the Old Testament you read about him in Revelation and some other Jewish literature. But you will not find anywhere in Deuteronomy or the Old Testament the story of Archangel Michael disputing with Satan over the body of Moses after his death. You will find that nowhere. So the question is what in the world is Jude doing? Did he make this up? Are we missing part of the Old Testament? Where does he get this? Actually there is a Jewish work that is not in the Old Testament or New Testament. We've already referred to Testaments and testamentary literature like the testament of Abraham, the Testament of Isaac and we said 2 Peter and 2 Timothy are testaments. We do have a work called “The Testament of Moses.”
According to some other literature written around that time the Testament of Moses at one time had an ending that is now apparently been lost an ending that did have the story of the Archangel Michael disputing with Satan over the body of Moses. It had that exact story. So most likely Jude is probably relying not just in the Old Testament but some of the stories from other Jewish literature outside the Old Testament. Again go to Deuteronomy you'll never find that, or the Old Testament you'll never find that story of the Archangel Michael disputing over the body of Moses anywhere. But apparently it was in a work called “The Testament of Moses” that you can actually read in English translation but you won't find the story because apparently that part of it has been lost. The other literature written from the time does tell us that at one time the Testament of Moses apparently had this ending and had the story about the devil and Archangel Michael disputing and arguing over what to do with the body of Moses. And unless some other evidence turns up that's most likely where Jude got it.

But again more importantly as I said is to understand the purpose and the function of all these stories is simply, even if some of them are a little bit strange to us and hard to understand, the overall function of all the stories in Jude is to demonstrate that just in the same way that God has judged evil and wickedness in the past he will do so again. Therefore the readers need to do everything they can not to give in to this antinomian teaching but instead as Jude ends in verse 24 Jude's final call is: "Now unto him those able to keep you from falling" that is the falling away from the faith they are to contend for which includes their obedience and their ethics and their holiness." Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing." So that's his goal for the readers that they don't give in to these antinomian teachers but they take to heart these Old Testament examples of God judging evil and wickedness. Instead they should pursue holiness and instead of standing before God in judgment they will one day stand without blemish in his presence and in his glory.

Alright, any questions about Jude. It’s a very short book. Has anyone ever heard a sermon preached on Jude? I don't think I ever have. You can, see when we read the book, some things were not sure what to do with but overall I think the message is pretty
clear. I think the primary reason again for including Jude was mainly in the credentials of who Jude was as Jesus' brother. But again I think one of the things it does within the broader canon is reinforce the message that the church should not tolerate antinomianism and not reject authority. And that God's people are called to pursue holiness and to live lives of holiness so that as Jude ends that we’ll stand without blemish in God's presence rather than facing his wrath and judgment. It more or less I think reinforces what Peter does in a little bit different way. But mainly is I think a lot of it was on the laurels of who Jude was as Jesus’ brother that insured that it got into the New Testament.

Alright, have a great weekend and I'll see you Monday. By the way, I'll send you an e-mail for sure but, next Thursday I am planning on having another extra credit review session.

Transcribed by Claire Bennett
Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt