



BIBLE IN A YEAR 2020

JUDE



**ACCESS ALL
AREAS**

Wednesday 18 November: Jude

Access all areas. Owen Lynch writes:

What did I like about today's reading?

Jude is written by one of Jesus' half-brothers named in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 - there were four of them - James, Joseph, Simon and Judah - or Jude to his brothers! Sometimes it is easy to forget Jesus the human, since we readily think of Jesus as God! Yes, Jesus had a mother, Mary, and effectively a stepfather (due to the immaculate conception!) Joseph; and they had four more sons - Jesus' younger brothers!

Can you imagine being Jesus' younger brother - what was that like? Was older brother Jesus the perfect child? That would have been a hard act to follow right? Well in reality, Jesus' brothers weren't always happy with Jesus (Mark 3:21), but after the resurrection they realised that their brother Jesus was not out of his mind and all of them embraced him as the Jewish Messiah (1 Corinthians 9:5).

Only James and Jude are mentioned by name in the rest of the New Testament and they are clearly respected leaders of this Jewish sect that celebrate Jesus of Nazareth as the Jewish Messiah.

Jude's letter seems to be written to a pre-dominantly Jewish community, because he assumes that they have a deep knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures quoting two Jewish sources - the Testament of Moses and the first book of Enoch (verses 5-16), which might be as unfamiliar to you as they are to me!

So Jude writes to this community to warn them about some people in their midst who are twisting Jesus' gospel to justify their behaviour. It seems that they are Jews who feel released by Jesus from the law of Moses to behave as they wish especially when it comes to money and sex.

For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a licence for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

Jude's examples (5-16) would have made sense to the Jews, even if they don't resonate with us. But his point will be familiar to you if you have been following our box-set series on Paul - that our actions speak louder than our words. Jude's older brother James makes the same point in James 2:14 - 14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds?

What did it show me about Father God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

It shows me that Jesus' brothers understood their big brother really well. They knew that faith meant not just mental agreement, but whole-hearted trust in Jesus. Jesus was not just another religious figure, a statue on a plinth, an idol fashioned from wood or gold. No, Jesus was a real person who wants real relationship with every single person on the planet - a relationship of unconditional love and trust.

What am I going to do differently as a result?

I'm going to try and be mindful that Jesus loves to be involved and invited into every area of my life, not just some parts of my life!

Who am I going to share this with?

My community group of three other guys who I share life with every week.