THE QUESTION

What did the early church say about the opening of Jude (Jude 1:1–4)?

Asked by a THF member on August 30, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 5 numbered quotations · the 16 early Christian passages and 117 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-church-say-about-the-opening-of-jude-jude-1-1-4

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

Clement of Alexandria read Jude's greeting as a sign of humility: though related to the Lord, Jude called himself Christ's servant. He also said the intruders of verse 4 were judged because they were already ungodly, not made so. Other early writers urged believers to hold the faith handed down and avoid false teachers.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

IN THIS STUDY

1	Jude chose to call himself a servant	2
2	Jude was counted among the Lord's brothers	2
3	The intruders were judged, not made ungodly	3
4	Return to the word handed down	3
5	Keep away from false teachers	3
	What these passages don't tell us	4
	The Sources: 16 early Christian passages and 117 Bible verses, with links	4

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

POINT 1 OF 5

Jude chose to call himself a servant

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Alexandria says Jude knew he was closely related to the Lord. Yet he did not call himself the Lord's brother. Instead he called himself a servant of Jesus Christ, treating Jesus as his Lord, and named himself only as the brother of James.

1

“Even though he knew his close family relation to the Lord, he still did not say that he himself was His brother. Instead, what did he say? "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ"—of Him as Lord—"but the brother of James."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Fragments* 1 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 8, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**

THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 5

Jude was counted among the Lord's brothers

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen notes that the Gospel lists a Judas among the brothers of Jesus. He reports a tradition that these brothers were sons of Joseph by an earlier wife. Clement likewise calls Jude a son of Joseph. Both link the writer of the letter to the Lord's family.

2

“And, belittling all who seemed to be His nearest relatives, they said, "Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us?" in”

later in the same passage

“But some say, basing this on a tradition in the Gospel according to Peter, as it is titled, or The Book of James, that the brothers of Jesus were sons of Joseph by a former wife, whom he married before Mary.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on Matthew* 10 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 11, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**

THF's updated English

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

POINT 3 OF 5

The intruders were judged, not made ungodly

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Jude 4 says certain ungodly men slipped in, long ago marked for judgment. Clement explains this carefully. God did not make them ungodly. Because they already were ungodly, they were appointed to judgment. Their own choices brought the sentence.

3 “This does not mean that they were made to become ungodly, but that, since they were now ungodly, they were appointed to judgment.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Fragments* 1 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 8, page 5** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 5

Return to the word handed down

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Jude urges readers to contend for the faith once delivered. Polycarp gives a similar call. Against those who twist the Lord's words and deny the resurrection and judgment, he tells believers to turn back to the word handed down from the beginning.

4 “Therefore, forsaking the vanity of many and their false doctrines, let us return to the word which has been handed down to us from the beginning; watching unto prayer, and persevering in fasting; beseeching in our supplications the all-seeing God not to lead us into temptation, as the Lord has said: 'The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Polycarp,** *Epistle to the Philippians* (c. 100–155 AD) **Source 6, page 5** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 5

Keep away from false teachers

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Ignatius warns about people who mock the cross and the resurrection. Like Jude, he treats such people as a real threat to believers. He tells believers not to talk with them, to hold to the prophets and the preachers of salvation, and to flee divisions.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

5 “It is fitting, therefore, that you should keep away from such persons, and neither in private nor in public talk with them; but pay attention to the law, and the prophets, and to those who have preached to you the word of salvation.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 2, page 4** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- Only one passage here comments line by line on these verses; the others speak to similar themes.
- These passages do not settle exactly how Jude was related to Jesus beyond the views they report.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 16 early Christian passages and 117 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–16, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 17–53, in Bible order), then 80 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *16 passages from 11 writers*

Mathetes, *c. 80–200 AD · source 1*

1 *Epistle to Diognetus* (on point 4) been a disciple of the Apostles, I have become a teacher of the Gentiles. I minister the things delivered to me to those who are disciples worthy of the truth… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 2–5*

2 *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* **Quote 5, page 4** “whom the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver us, who prayed that the faith of the apostles might not… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (1885 English; on point 5) “to their blasphemies your earnest prayers; while they go astray, stand ye stedfast in the faith… [continues online] **read ›**

4 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (1885 English; on point 5) your prayers; in contrast to their error, be ye stedfast in the faith… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English; on point 4) therefore, the prisoner of Christ, who am driven along by land and sea, exhort you: “stand fast in the faith… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · source 6*

6 *Epistle to the Philippians* **Quote 4, page 3** forsaking the vanity of many and their false doctrines, let us return to the word which has been handed down to us from… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · source 7*

7 *Against Heresies: Book V* (1885 English; on point 4) “then, are the perfect who have had the Spirit of God remaining in them, and have preserved their souls and bodies blameless, holding fast the faith of God, that is… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · source 8*

8 *Fragments* 1 **Quotes 1, 3, pages 2, 3** “who wrote the Catholic Epistle, was the brother of the sons of Joseph and a very devout man. Even though he knew his close family relation to the Lord, he… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · source 9*

9 *On Prescription Against Heretics* 14 (on point 4) “faith has been deposited in the rule… [continues online] **read ›**

Caius, *c. 200–220 AD · source 10*

10 *Fragments* 1 “Epistle of Jude, and two epistles belonging to the John named above, or bearing the name of John, are counted among the Catholic Epistles. Also, the book of Wisdom, written… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 11–12*

11 *Commentary on Matthew* 10 **Quote 2, page 2** “1. With regard to Joseph and Simon, we have nothing to tell… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Commentary on Matthew* 13 me from my mother's womb," and, "Upon you I was cast from my mother," and in the Epistle of Jude, "To those who are beloved in God the Father… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 13–14*

13 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 5) “this sort are they who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, which are led away with various lusts… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 4) “as faith itself and saving birth makes alive, not by being received, but by being preserved… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 15*

15 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 5) “if we have omitted any, be so prudent as to select the most valuable out of the Holy Scriptures, and confirm yourselves with them, rejecting all things that are evil… [continues online] **read ›**

Alexander of Alexandria, *c. 313–328 AD · source 16*

16 *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* 1 (1885 English; on point 5) “therefore, who have been anathematized by the brotherhood, let no one of you receive, nor admit of those things which are either said or written by them… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *37 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

17 **Matthew 13:55** Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary, and his brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? **read ›**

18 **Acts 2:1** Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in one place. **read ›**

19 **Acts 5:23** “We found the prison shut and locked, and the guards standing before the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside!” **read ›**

20 **Acts 20:29** For I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

21 **Acts 20:30** Men will arise from among your own selves, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. **read ›**

22 **Romans 5:1** Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; **read ›**

23 **Romans 7:2** For the woman that has a husband is bound by law to the husband while he lives, but if the husband dies, she is discharged from the law of the husband. **read ›**

24 **1 Corinthians 16:13** Watch! Stand firm in faithfulness! Be courageous! Be strong! **read ›**

25 **2 Corinthians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and God of all comfort, **read ›**

26 **Galatians 2:4** This was because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who stole in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into slavery. **read ›**

27 **Galatians 3:23** But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, confined for the faith which should afterwards be revealed. **read ›**

28 **Philippians 1:27** Only let your conduct as citizens be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together for faithfulness to the gospel, **read ›**

29 **Philippians 1:30** having the same struggle that you saw in me and now hear that I have. **read ›**

30 **Colossians 1:4** having heard of your faithfulness in Christ Jesus and your love toward all the saints, **read ›**

31 **Colossians 1:23** if indeed you continue in faithfulness, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister. **read ›**

32 **1 Timothy 1:19** holding faithfulness and a good conscience, which some have thrust away and so made shipwreck concerning the faith, **read ›**

33 **1 Timothy 6:12** Fight the good fight of faithfulness; take hold of eternal life, to which you were called, and you made the good confession before many witnesses. **read ›**

34 **2 Timothy 3:6** For some of these are people who creep into houses and take captive gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, **read ›**

35 **2 Timothy 3:13** But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. **read ›**

36 **2 Timothy 4:7** I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have remained faithful. **read ›**

37 **Titus 1:9** holding firmly to the trustworthy word that accords with the teaching, so that he may both exhort by sound doctrine and rebuke those who contradict it. **read ›**

38 **1 Peter 1:5** who by the power of God are guarded through faithfulness for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **read ›**

39 **1 Peter 1:9** receiving the goal of your faithfulness, the salvation of your souls. **read ›**

40 **1 Peter 5:9** Resist him, firm in faithfulness, knowing that your brotherhood in the world is undergoing the same sufferings. **read ›**

41 **2 Peter 2:3** And in covetousness they will exploit you with fabricated words. Their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction will not slumber. **read ›**

42 **Jude 1:1** Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to the called, sanctified in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: **read ›**

43 **Jude 1:2** May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. **read ›**

44 **Jude 1:3** Beloved, while making every effort to write to you about the common salvation, I found it necessary to write and urge you to contend earnestly for the faith delivered once for all to the saints. **read ›**

45 **Jude 1:4** For certain men have slipped in, long ago written about for this judgment, ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny the only Master, God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. **read ›**

46 **Jude 1:5** Now I wish to remind you, though you already know this, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. **read ›**

47 **Jude 1:13** wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness has been reserved forever. **read ›**

48 **Jude 1:15** to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly among them concerning all the works of their ungodliness in which they have acted ungodly, and concerning all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

49 **Jude 1:17** But you, beloved, remember the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. **read ›**

50 **Jude 1:18** They said to you, “In the last time there will be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts.” **read ›**

51 **Jude 1:21** keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life. **read ›**

52 **Jude 1:24** Now to him who is able to keep them from stumbling and to present them blameless before his glory with great joy, **read ›**

53 **Revelation 14:12** Here is the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and faithfulness to Jesus.” **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *80 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Genesis 1:1

Exodus 25:11

Jeremiah 8:4

Daniel 6:16

Malachi 1:11

Matthew 5:21 · 5:22 · 6:13 · 6:24 · 9:29 · 10:20 · 12:42 · 13:56 · 15:13 · 15:14 · 16:6 · 18:10 · 19:30 · 20:16 · 22:13 · 22:21 · 26:41 · 27:46

Mark 13:32 · 14:38

Luke 1:35 · 1:46 · 3:11 · 6:46 · 15:22 · 18:42

John 1:14 · 4:3 · 4:14 · 5:30 · 7:15 · 15:15 · 15:26 · 20:28

Acts 2:37 · 8:9 · 13:48 · 20:24

Romans 8:6 · 8:17

1 Corinthians 2:6 · 3:3 · 10:4 · 11:10 · 12:8 · 15:32

Galatians 1:1 · 1:8 · 1:19 · 2:8 · 3:11

Ephesians 3:18 · 4:4 · 4:5 · 4:6 · 4:11

Philippians 2:3 · 3:18

1 Thessalonians 5:23

2 Thessalonians 1:9

1 Timothy 3:16 · 6:3

2 Timothy 2:24 · 3:4

Titus 3:5

1 Peter 2:2 · 2:23 · 3:20 · 4:7

1 John 1:1 · 2:22 · 4:2 · 4:3

2 John 1:7

Revelation 5:8

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early church say about the opening of Jude (Jude 1:1–4)?” on August 30, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

How it was made. Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.

How to cite this study. The Historic Faith, “What did the early church say about the opening of Jude (Jude 1:1–4)?” Early Church Questions, published November 9, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-church-say-about-the-opening-of-jude-jude-1-1-4. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 8.”

© 2026 The Historic Faith. Selection, arrangement and editing by THF; machine-compiled text and public-domain quotations are not claimed. For personal study; please don’t republish.

THEHISTORICFAITH.COM

THE END OF THIS STUDY