

Y'udah (Jude)

An Introduction

As I stated in my last post, I was not sure which way the Lord was leading me. We finished our journey through the **Brit Hadashah** on the life and letters of **Kefa** (Peter). **Kefa** referred to **Y'udah** several times in his second letter to the saints. So, it seems fairly logical to me to explore this writing of **Y'udah** (Jude).

Y'udah is classified as a "general" letter to the saints. As we will see, there is no specific audience geographically to which the letter is written as is the case with **Sha'ul's** letters.

***¹ From: Y'udah, a slave of Yeshua the Messiah and a brother of Ya'akov:
To: Those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept for Yeshua the Messiah: ² May mercy, love and shalom be yours in full measure. ~ Y'udah 1-2***

Who Was Y'udah?

The author's name is **Y'udah** in Hebrew, **Judas** in Greek, and **Jude** in English. In Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3, he is mentioned as one of four half-brothers of **Yeshua**.

Who was this **Y'udah**? Three possibilities exist. The author may be either:

Y'udah, a half-brother of **Yeshua** and the brother of **Ya'akov**, or
Y'udah, the **Emissary**, or
Y'udah, a leader in the early church of **Yerushalayim**.

This latter **Y'udah** was sent to **Antioch** with **Sha'ul**, **Bar-naba**, **Y'udah**, called **Bar-Sabba**, and **Silas** (Acts 15:22). **Bar-Sabba** could have been a brother of **Yosef Bar-Sabba**, who was one of two "nominees" to replace **Judas Iscariot** (Acts 1:23). Thus, he would have been known in the church. But little other evidence points to this individual as the author of this epistle.

As to whether he was the **Emissary Yehuda**, verse 17 in his letter seems to indicate that he did not consider himself to be an **emissary**, though modesty could have led him to write as he did. However, the important subject that he wrote about would probably have called for his identifying himself with the other **emissaries**, for authority's sake, if he really was an **emissary**.

The most probable identification is that the author **Y'udah** was a half-brother of **Yeshua**, a son of **Yosef** and **Miryam** after **Yeshua**. ¹

Date of Writing

Since **Y'udah** addresses a situation similar to that addressed by **Second Peter** and exhibits a literary relationship (probably as a source) to **Second Kefa**, the two letters are commonly dated in fairly close proximity. Therefore, while external evidence is sparse, **Y'udah** is best dated in the mid-60s CE. ²

Why Did He Write This Letter?

He was eager to write to the recipients about their salvation but changed his mind and instead wrote them to contend for the faith that was delivered to the saints. **Y'udah**, then, was open to the **Ruach's** adjustment of

¹ Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures.

² The ESV Study Bible.

his plans so he could address something urgent that came up. He wants believers to energetically **keep contending earnestly for the faith**, that is, for the body of scripturally based doctrine that is to be the authoritative guide for our belief and practice. **Believers** are to wage battle on behalf of the true faith as deposited in God's inerrant Word (see 2 Tim 3:14-17).

Y'hudah wrote with a heart of love and understanding, but with a note of concern and authority. He wanted to write on a joyful theme, **about the salvation we share** (v. 3), but was compelled to write a much more somber epistle. Like **Kefa** his love for **Believers** whom he saw endangered by encroaching adversaries moved him to turn from the more pleasant theme to sound a solemn warning about the false doctrine and teachers creeping into the community.

Canonical History

Y'hudah's heavy use of apocryphal writings retarded its canonical status in some quarters, but its relation to **Second Kefa** indicates the high prestige it enjoyed elsewhere. In the 4th cent. **Y'hudah** overcame most of its opposition, and was listed without qualification in Athanasius's festal letter, 367 CE. ³

In my next post, we will pick up our exploration of **Y'hudah's** letter beginning in verse 3.

³ The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised.