

INTRODUCTION AND JUDE

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Introduction

I. Author

A. The author's name, given at the very beginning of the letter, is the Greek name Ἰούδας (*Ioudas*). Here it is traditionally translated into English as "Jude," but elsewhere in the NT it is translated as "Judah" when it refers to the patriarch and "Judas" everywhere else. The translation "Jude" presumably was intended to distinguish him from the one who betrayed Jesus.

B. D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo state:

In addition to the Old Testament patriarch (and the territory named after him), five men with the name *Ioudas* are mentioned in the New Testament: "Judas Iscariot," Jesus' betrayer; "Judas the Galilean," an infamous revolutionary (Acts 5:37); "Judas son of James," one of the Twelve (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13); "Judas, also called Barsabbas," an early Christian prophet (Acts 15:22, 27, 32); and a brother of Jesus named "Judas" (Mark 6:3; Matt. 13:55).¹

C. The *Ioudas* of v. 1 is described as a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, the latter almost certainly being the James who was a prominent leader of the early church (Acts 15:13-21, 21:18; Gal. 2:9) and the brother of the Lord Jesus (Gal. 1:19). That is why he needs no further identification. So Jude is the (half) brother of Jesus, the one whose name is translated "Judas" in Mk. 6:3 and Mat. 13:55. This is consistent with the fact the writer appears to be a Jew, as indicated by his quoting from Jewish pseudepigraphal works. Few non-Jews would have had that level of familiarity with those writings.

D. Jude identifies himself as the brother of James presumably because James was a significant figure in the church(es) to which he was writing. It was more important for his purposes that he describe himself as a *slave* of Jesus Christ rather than appeal to their physical kinship.

E. Jude generally was accepted as Scripture in the early church (Muratorian Canon, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria). The resistance of some was probably due to his references to the Jewish pseudepigraphal writings rather than any doubts about the authorship. Though many scholars today deny that Jude wrote the letter, Carson and Moo conclude: "Since the arguments against Jude's authorship are so weak, there is no reason not to take the claim of the letter at face value and to conclude that the author was indeed Jude the brother of the Lord."²

F. We know little about Jude's life. John notes in Jn. 7:3-8 that at one time Jesus' brothers did not believe in him. Jude probably was in the upper room before the giving of the Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 1:14), and if Paul's reference to "the brothers of the Lord" in 1 Cor. 9:5 includes Jude, then he was married and had an evangelistic ministry. "Eusebius cites a tradition from Hegesippus to the effect that c. 95 two grandsons of Jude, the brother of Jesus, were brought before the emperor Domitian because their Davidic descent made them potentially dangerous as political agitators. But since they were determined to be simple farmers, these men were released (*H.E.* 3.19-20.7; 3.32.5-6)."³

II. Relationship to 2 Peter

A. There are quite a few parallels between Jude and 2 Peter. They occur almost without exception in the same order in the letters, and many of them involve words or expressions found nowhere else in the Bible. These include:⁴

¹ D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 690.

² Carson and Moo, 692.

³ This paragraph is from Barry D. Smith's [notes](#).

⁴ Carson and Moo, 655-656.

<u>Jude</u>	<u>2 Peter</u>
4 the false teachers' "condemnation" from the past	2:3
4 [they] "deny" the "Sovereign [and] Lord"	2:1
6 angels confined for judgment (note the rare word ζόφος [<i>zophos</i> , "darkness"])	2:4
7 Sodom and Gomorrah as examples of judgment of gross evil	2:6
8 [they] "reject [Jude]/despise [2 Pet.] authority"	2:10
9 "the archangel Michael . . . did not . . . condemn him for slander" [Jude]/ "angels . . . do not heap abuse" [2 Pet.]	2:11
12 [the false teachers are] "blemishes"	2:13
12 "clouds without rain, blown along by the wind" [Jude]/ "springs without water and mists driven by a storm" [2 Pet.]	2:17
18 ungodly [Jude] desires/"scoffers" following their own evil [2 Pet.]	3:3

B. This similarity in order and rarity of the language in the Bible suggests that Jude borrowed from 2 Peter in composing Jude, or that Peter borrowed from Jude in composing 2 Peter, or that both Jude and Peter borrowed from some other source in composing Jude and 2 Peter, respectively. This poses no threat to inspiration, as God is able to produce precisely what he wanted written through inspired authors using sources. Luke, for example, specifies in Lk. 1:1-3 that he researched matters in writing his Gospel. The process of inspiration is often more complex than an author taking dictation from God, but the end product is no less from God; he superintends the entire process.

1. The early Christians generally held that Jude borrowed from 2 Peter, whereas most modern scholars think that Peter borrowed from Jude. The matter cannot be decided with any confidence, but with Douglas Moo, I think a comparison of 2 Pet. 3:3 and Jude 17-18 offers some support for the idea that Jude borrowed from Peter.

2 Pet. 3:3 – ³Know this first [of all] that in the last days scoffers will come with scoffing, proceeding according to their own lusts.

Jude 17-18 – ¹⁷But you, beloved, remember the words foretold by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁸that they were saying to you, "In [the] last time there will be scoffers who live according to their own desires for godless things."

2. If Jude borrowed from 2 Peter, he was extracting points that were relevant to a similar false teaching with which he was dealing. If Peter borrowed from Jude, he was expanding on Jude in a way suitable to the situation his readers were facing.

III. Date

A. Reliable early tradition records that Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome between A.D. 64-66 during Emperor Nero's persecution of Christians. 2 Peter was written shortly before Peter's execution (1:13-14), so it was almost certainly was written from Rome around A.D. 64-66.

B. If 2 Peter used Jude as a source, then Jude was written before A.D. 64-66. If Jude used 2 Peter as a source, then Jude was written after A.D. 64-66. "In either case, the similar descriptions of the false teaching in the letters suggests that they were written at about the same time. We should probably date Jude also in the middle-to-late 60s."⁵

IV. Origin, Destination, and Occasion.

A. Jude was written to a church or group of churches that had been infiltrated by false teachers. He provides no geographical information about the recipients, so we cannot be sure where they were located. Neither do we know where Jude was when he wrote the letter. Though many commentators assume Jude resided and served in Judea, as I indicated, some of the Lord's brothers traveled extensively (1 Cor. 9:5).

B. The key error of these false teachers was that they perverted the grace of our God into licentiousness. Christianity had become for them a license to sin. They resemble the false teachers of 2 Peter. Carson and Moo conclude, "Probably, then, Jude and 2 Peter are writing about the same general 'movement' of false teaching, with some possible difference in emphasis between the two factions they deal with."⁶

V. Recipients

A. Most scholars are convinced the recipients were predominantly Jewish Christians. They believe so because Jude assumes a familiarity with Jewish apocalyptic tradition (*I Enoch* and *Testament [Assumption] of Moses*) that seems unlikely for a strictly Gentile audience.

B. Carson and Moo state:

A few scholars have argued that the antinomianism of the false teachers suggests a Gentile audience. But antinomianism is not confined to Gentiles; and the degree to which the author assumes that his readers are familiar not only with the Old Testament but also with Jewish traditions points to a Jewish-Christian audience – perhaps set in the midst of a Gentile culture.⁷

Text

I. Greeting (1-2)

¹Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: ²may mercy be multiplied to you and peace and love.

⁵ Carson and Moo, 692.

⁶ Carson and Moo, 690.

⁷ Carson and Moo, 693.

A. Jude identifies himself as "a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James." He is *that* Jude, a member of the Lord's physical family, but it is not his familial relationship with Jesus that is most important here. It is the fact he is a slave of Jesus Christ, meaning not only that he trusts in and submits to him as the Christ, God's anointed one, but also that he is acting on behalf of his Master in writing to them.

B. He is writing to "the called ones," meaning those who have been called by God through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14) into a community with a destiny and purpose. Peter says in 1 Pet. 2:9, "But you [are] a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for [God's] possession *in order that you may* proclaim the praises of him *who called you* out of darkness into his marvelous light." The church truly is "on a mission from God."

C. He notes that they are "beloved *in* God the Father," probably meaning that in their relationship with God through Christ, in their being "in God" (1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Jn. 3:24, 4:16), they are loved in a distinctive sense. God loves all mankind, but he loves Christians in a special way. We are his children (Jn. 1:10-13; Gal. 3:25-27; Rom. 8:15-17). It is possible (but less likely) to translate the preposition here as "by" instead of "in," in which case it is a declaration that they are loved *by* God (e.g., HCSB, CSB).

D. He also notes that they are "kept for Jesus Christ." God is at work in the life of Christians protecting them from overpowering hostile forces and circumstances so that they can maintain their faith and thus celebrate Christ's return. This does not mean God will nullify one's freewill and make it impossible to abandon the faith; it means he will prevent anything that would make it impossible *to maintain* one's faith. No external power will be allowed to have the last word on one's faith. We must *keep ourselves* in God's love (v. 21).

E. Jude's desire, indeed his prayer, is that mercy, peace, and love will be multiplied to them. He wants them to overflow in these blessings from God. Thomas Schreiner writes:

Jude prayed for mercy because his readers would resist the opponents only by God's mercy and because they needed to experience God's mercy so that they could extend the same to those captivated by the false teachers (vv. 22-23). They needed peace because the interlopers caused division (v. 19) and introduced strife and grumbling wherever they went (vv. 10, 16). They needed love because the intruders cared only for themselves and abused the very purpose of the love feasts (v. 12). Jude prayed that mercy, peace, and love would be multiplied because an abundance of these qualities was needed at a stressful time in the church's life. He also prayed because he knew that only God can produce these virtues in the lives of his people.⁸

II. Purpose (3-4)

³Beloved, although being very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I had a compulsion to write to you urging [you] to contend for the

⁸ Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 432.

faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. ⁴For certain men slipped in stealthily, the ones having been marked out long ago for this condemnation, godless men who have perverted the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

A. Jude was eager to write to them about their common salvation, but that desire was overridden by the need to urge them to contend for the faith once for all entrusted to the saints. That urging became necessary because he learned that certain false teachers had slipped in among them and were teaching things contrary to the faith that had been entrusted to the saints. This was a spiritual emergency.

B. Here "the faith" clearly refers to the content of the Christian faith rather than to the subjective act of believing. Douglas Moo remarks, "It describes what Christians believe – such things as Jesus' atoning death and resurrection, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, salvation by grace through faith, and (especially in Jude's situation) the holy lifestyle that flows from God's grace in Christ."⁹

C. Jude says this faith, this set of truths, was "once for all entrusted to the saints." It was finally, for all time, given by God to the church, his new-covenant people, to preserve and pass on without alteration. He *entrusted* that body of teaching to us. Therefore, we are obligated to contend for it, to defend and assert it, whenever it is under attack, whenever people claim that something contrary to and incompatible with the Christian faith is acceptable and consistent with it. Of course, some contradictions and incompatibilities are clearer than others, and we need to proceed with care and humility, but we cannot abdicate our responsibility to contend for the faith by combatting false teaching.

D. The false teachers, who had slipped in without disclosing their heretical views and intentions, had perverted the grace of God into licentiousness. They turned God's gracious forgiveness into justification for indulging in sinful, sensual pleasures.

1. Andreas Köstenberger comments:

They taught and practiced a form of "cheap grace," contending that because God is gracious, they were free to do as they pleased – an utter perversion of the true meaning of grace. As Paul wrote to the Romans, "What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Rom. 6:15-16).¹⁰

2. The Apostle John makes the same point in 1 Jn. 1:5-7: ⁵*And this is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.* ⁶*If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not do*

⁹ Douglas J. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 229.

¹⁰ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Handbook on Hebrews through Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020), 208.

the truth. ⁷*But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

E. This theology not only marked them as "godless" but constituted a denial of "our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."

1. Any justification of sinful conduct, whether from false ideas about grace or other rationalizations, has no place in the church or in the life of a Christian. Anyone who *lives in sin*, meaning accepts, justifies, or embraces sin, is rejecting Jesus. Any teaching that supports or justifies sinful living must be combatted as incompatible with the Christian faith.

2. In our culture, we have many who profess allegiance to Christ but who claim that premarital sexual relations, homosexual conduct, and abortion are compatible with the Christian faith. That is nonsense, the fruit of politics and cultural Christianity, and would come as a complete and horrifying surprise to Christians throughout history.

F. Jude refers to the false teachers as "ones having been marked out long ago for this condemnation." He most likely is referring to the evidence of their condemnation from the OT examples he is going to provide.

III. Judgment of the False Teachers (5-16)

A. OT examples of sin and judgment (5-7)

⁵Now I want to remind you, though you have known all [these] things, that [the] Lord, having once for all saved a people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed the ones who did not believe. ⁶And the angels who did not keep their own domain but deserted their own dwelling, these he has kept in eternal chains under utter darkness for [the] judgment of [the] great Day. ⁷Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, in similar manner to these [angels], having indulged in sexual immorality and gone after different flesh, are set forth as an example of eternal fire by suffering punishment.

1. Jude reminds the readers of examples of sin and judgment from the OT, examples with which they were familiar. The first example is that the Lord, after having delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage in the Exodus, destroyed the unbelievers who had been part of that deliverance.

a. There is a question whether Jude wrote the word "Lord" (*kurios*) or "Jesus" (*Iēsous*) in v. 5. Most standard English versions read "the Lord," but NET, ESV, and CSB read "Jesus." Moo comments, "But the flow of the passage shows that whoever delivered and destroyed the people (v. 5) also kept the disobedient angels in darkness (see 'he' in v. 6). It is

unlikely that Jude identifies Jesus as the one who did all these things. Probably, then, we should read 'the Lord' and identify him as 'Jehovah' God."¹¹

b. This appears to be a reference to the events of Numbers 13-14, where all the spies except Joshua and Caleb brought back an evil or false report about the land and faithlessly claimed Israel was unable to go up against the inhabitants of the land. The people then complained against God, Moses, and Aaron and wanted to go back to Egypt. God says to Moses in 14:11, "How long will they *not believe* in me?"

c. God "destroyed" the adult generation that did not trust him in the sense he consigned them to wander in the desert until they died off in the wilderness. The fact they had been delivered did not spare them from the consequences of their subsequent unbelief. Moo remarks, "God's deliverance of his people seemed to be decisive and final, yet God still "destroyed" them because of their lack of faith. Jude intends this as a warning to his readers. Don't think, because God has decisively rescued you from your sins, that you can presume on his grace and mercy."¹² This is what the false teachers had done and were urging them to do.

2. Jude next reminds them of "the angels who did not keep their own domain but deserted their own dwelling." As another example of divine judgment, he says that God has kept those angels "in eternal chains under utter darkness for [the] judgment of [the] great Day." This is paralleled in 2 Pet. 2:4 which states, "For if God did not spare angels who sinned but delivered into chains of gloomy darkness those being held for judgment, casting them into Tartarus; . . . " God's confining a group of sinning angels to darkness while awaiting the final judgment is not described in Scripture, but since Jude and Peter assume their audiences know and accept this assertion, it obviously is a story of notoriety and weight.

a. Virtually all scholars are convinced that Jude, like Peter, is here referring to the traditional Jewish understanding of Gen. 6:1-4. According to that understanding, the "sons of God" in Gen. 6:2, 4 refers to certain angels who married and procreated with human women and who consequently were confined by God to a dreadful spiritual realm awaiting final judgment, the realm Peter refers to as Tartarus.¹³

b. This was the consistent understanding of Gen. 6:1-4 in first-century Judaism. It is frequently reflected in extrabiblical Jewish literature of the period, nowhere more extensively than in *1 Enoch* (relevant portion dating from 3rd-2nd B.C.), which book is expressly cited by Jude in vv. 14-15. Since Jude without question knew *1 Enoch* and speaks in v. 6 of an angelic judgment that is consistent with that reported in *1 Enoch*, Moo says, "we are almost

¹¹ Moo, 240.

¹² Moo, 240.

¹³ Michael Green states in *2 Peter and Jude*, TNTC, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 110, "Tartarus, in Greek mythology, was the place of punishment for the departed spirits of the very wicked, particularly rebellious gods like Tantalus. Just as Paul could quote an apt verse of the pagan poet Aratus (Acts 17:28), so could Peter make use of this Homeric imagery." The word was used in the LXX of Job 40:20 and Prov. 30:16 for some kind of netherworld or realm of spirits. Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 226.

certainly correct in identifying this story as the one he has in mind in v. 6."¹⁴ Schreiner similarly states, "We can be almost certain that Jude referred here to the sin of the angels in Gen. 6:1-4."¹⁵

c. That Gen. 6:1-4 referred to angels who had sinned was also the dominant view in the early church. According to Sydney H. T. Page, this view was held by Justin Martyr (c. 100-c. 165), Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215), Tertullian (c.160-c.225), Lactantius (c.240-c.320), and Ambrose (c.339-c.397). He states, "This view held the field in the East until early in the third century, when it was rejected by Julius Africanus (c.160-c.240), and in the West until much later."¹⁶

d. If Jude is indeed alluding to this common understanding of Gen. 6:1-4, when he speaks of the angels who did not keep their own domain but deserted their own dwelling he is referring to angels that married and procreated with human women. In that act, they crossed a line, transgressed their proper boundaries. And when he speaks of their being kept in eternal chains under utter darkness for [the] judgment of [the] great Day, he is referring to their being held for final judgment in an unpleasant spiritual realm as a consequence of doing so. But neither he nor Peter appeal to other aspects of the extrabiblical tradition. For example, they say nothing about *how* the angels carried out their sin and nothing about their offspring being giants or their sin being responsible for the flood.

e. The notion of fallen angels marrying and procreating with human women certainly strikes us as bizarre. We know that God sometimes dispatches *faithful* angels in human form (e.g., Gen. 19:1-2), but unless Gen. 6:1-4 is an exception, demons, fallen angels, never in Scripture become or appear to become physical so as to be visible to all.

(1) The serpent in the Garden was clearly *animated* by Satan, the prince of demons, but the serpent was one of the wild animals God had made (Gen. 3:1). Satan did not materialize as a serpent. The only other times Satan or demons are seen are in visions (Zech. 3:1; Mat. 4:9-10; Rev. 9, 12:7-9, 16:12-16, 18:1-3), and the only time we are told anything of their appearance is in Revelation 9 (nightmarish locusts and fiendish cavalry), 12 (Satan portrayed as a great red dragon), and 16:12-16 (frogs).

(2) In the popular Jewish understanding of Gen. 6:1-4, the fallen angels took human form to commit their sin, but as I say, neither Jude nor Peter specifies how they accomplished it. It is possible that the fallen angels married human women and procreated with them by possessing human males rather than by materialization. Perhaps that was sufficient to satisfy their lust for the women, which lust is implied in Gen. 6:2 (the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive). Page remarks, "The New Testament portrays demons as longing to possess human bodies, and one could understand what happened in Genesis 6 in terms of spirit possession."¹⁷ William Cook states:

¹⁴ Moo, 241.

¹⁵ Schreiner, 447-448.

¹⁶ Sydney H. T. Page, *Powers of Evil: A Biblical Study of Satan and Demons* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 47.

¹⁷ Page, 49.

Admittedly, these passages don't provide a definitive answer as to how spiritual beings could have sexual relations with women. But in light of examples we see in the New Testament, it seems best to assume that these evil spirits took possession of the bodies of wicked men and used them for their own sinful purposes.

The New Testament gives us clear examples of demons—and even Satan himself—indwelling human beings and causing them to act in horrific ways.¹⁸

(3) Jesus' indication in Mat. 22:30 that angels in heaven neither marry nor are given in marriage does not necessarily conflict with the angel understanding of Gen. 6:1-4. He may be referring only to faithful angels rather than fallen ones, may be referring only to what happens in heaven rather than on earth, or may be referring only to actions not carried out through possession of human beings.

f. These spirits illustrate how rejecting divine constraints in the pursuit of sensuality and lust results in suffering under divine judgment. That is true for any who would follow the false teachers down the path of licentiousness.

3. The third familiar example of sin and judgment from the OT is God's incineration of Sodom and Gomorrah because they "indulged in sexual immorality and went after different flesh."

a. You will recall from Genesis 19 that the men of Sodom demanded that Lot hand over the two men who were visiting him so that they could have sex with them. It was not known that those visitors were angels – they simply appeared to be men – so the sexual immorality of the men of Sodom was not in seeking to have sex with angels but in seeking to have sex with other men. Their pursuit of homosexual relations constituted going after "different flesh" in that male flesh was different from female flesh, which was natural for men to pursue.

b. This is the view of most commentators. For example, Davids writes, "In that none of the other [Jewish references to the sin of Sodom] is at all concerned that the 'strangers' involved were angels, it is more likely that Jude too is thinking of homosexual activity as the 'different type of flesh' (different, not from themselves, but from the women they were supposed to desire). This would be in line with the general Jewish rejection of homosexual relations."¹⁹ Douglas Moo concludes, "Probably, then, the usual interpretation is correct: Jude associates God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah with the homosexual practices of its inhabitants."²⁰ Thomas Schreiner states:

[I]t would be strange to designate a desire for angels as a desire for "other flesh" (*sarkos heteras*). The term more naturally refers to a desire for those of the same sex; they desired flesh other than that of women. For various reasons some are attempting today to question the view that homosexuality receives an unqualified

¹⁸ William F. Cook, [Who Are the Sons of God in Genesis 6?](#) (January 6, 2020).

¹⁹ Davids, 53 (see p. 52 for assertion that most commentators interpret "different flesh" as referring to the flesh of men).

²⁰ Moo, 242.

negative verdict in the Scriptures. Such attempts have been singularly unsuccessful. The biblical writers and the Jewish tradition unanimously condemned homosexuality as evil.²¹

c. But even if one understands "different flesh" to refer to angels that need not mean the men of Sodom were sexually immoral by going after angels. As Gagnon explains, "a paratactic construction in Greek can just as easily make the first clause subordinate; in this case, 'by (or: *in the course of*) committing sexual immorality they went after other flesh.' In other words, in the process of attempting the sexually immoral act of having intercourse with other men, the men of Sodom got more than they bargained for: committing an offense unknowingly against angels."²²

d. This was similar to the sin of the angels alluded to in v. 6 in that both were driven by an unnatural, out-of-bounds sexual desire. It differed in that one was angels lusting after human women and the other was human males lusting after other males.

e. My translation of the last clause of v. 7 takes "of eternal fire" with "example" rather than with "punishment." As Richard Bauckham notes, "'eternal fire' . . . could be taken with δειγμα [example] or with δίκην [punishment]."²³ The meaning is that in experiencing their infamous punishment of fire and brimstone, Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities serve as an example of the eternal fire of hell that awaits all the rebellious, the false teachers being Exhibit A.

B. The same fate awaits the false teachers (8-10)

⁸Yet in like manner, these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and revile glories. ⁹But Michael the Archangel, in disputing with the devil (he was arguing about the body of Moses), did not presume to pronounce a reviling judgment but said, "May the Lord rebuke you." ¹⁰Yet these men revile whatever they do not understand, but what they know instinctively, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

1. Jude indicates there is a similarity between the sins of the Israelites, the angels, and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah that he has just recounted and the sins of the false teachers who had slipped in among them. He refers to the false teachers as "dreamers," meaning they claimed to have received revelatory visions. Moo writes:

The verb he uses here (*enypniazomai*) often refers to the visions that prophets receive, as it does in its only other New Testament occurrence: "Your old men will dream dreams" (Acts 2:17, quoting Joel 2:28). The same verb is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament to refer to the visions that false prophets

²¹ Schreiner, 453.

²² Robert A. J. Gagnon, "[Why We Know That the Story of Sodom Indicts Homosexual Practice Per Se](#)," retrieved on 10/23/20.

²³ Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 55 (though he thinks it is "perhaps better" to take it with δίκην).

claimed to receive (e.g., Deut. 13:2, 4, 6). Apparently, then, the false teachers based their immoral behavior on revelatory visions that they claimed to have received.²⁴

2. The sins of the false teachers that he identifies are that they defile (or pollute) the flesh, reject authority, and revile glories. The first two are reasonably clear: they engage in prohibited sexual conduct and rebel against divine authority. The first is present in the conduct of the angels and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah (and the Israelites if their sexual sin with the Midianites during the wilderness wandering is considered [Num. 25:1-9]). The second is present in the conduct of all three.

3. The statement that they revile (or insult, slander, or blaspheme) "glories," which is paralleled in 2 Pet. 2:10b, is more obscure. As most commentators recognize, "glories" refers to an angelic being of some kind.

a. Angels are not referred to as "glories" in the OT, but as Moo notes, "some Jewish texts link angels with glory (see, e.g., Ex. 15:11 in the Septuagint; Philo, *Special Laws* 1.45; *Testament of Levi* 18:15; *Testament of Judah* 25:2; see the survey in "δόξα," TDNT, 2.251). And we have a few texts that use the term to denote angels (1QH 10:8; 2 *Enoch* 22:7, 10; *Ascension of Isaiah* 9:32)."²⁵ Thus, "glories" is rendered in some English translations as "angelic majesties" (NAS, NASU) or "celestial beings" (NEB, REB, NIV). Those translations that opt for "glorious ones" (RSV, NRSV, HCSB, NET, ESV, CSB) are referring "to angelic beings rather than mere human beings" (NET note).

b. More specifically, glories here refers to fallen, evil angels (demons). That is implied by the fact the next verse contrasts the archangel Michael to the false teachers in that they "revile glories" whereas he refused to bring a reviling judgment against *the devil*, the chief fallen angel, saying instead "May the Lord rebuke you." Applied to fallen angels, the label "glories" reflects the glory of their original state rather than their present condition.

c. Perhaps the false teachers were moved to mock, ridicule, or speak contemptuously of fallen angels in response to warnings by Christians that their immorality was playing into the hands of the spiritual forces of evil. Dismissing demons in that way is dangerous because it gives the false impression that they are irrelevant, that they are without any power or influence. Underestimating them that way may lead to dropping one's guard. It is one thing to recognize that Christ has won the victory and that no evil beings can deny a faithful saint his or her inheritance, that they are paper tigers in that regard, but it is another thing to open oneself to their assaults on one's faith because of a false notion that they are impotent in every regard.

d. In reviling fallen angels, the false teachers were echoing the disrespect and contempt shown to the *righteous* angelic visitors in the incident at Sodom. Heaven is so glorious by virtue of God's presence that beings from that sphere retain entitlement to some degree of respect from human beings, even if just for their origin and power, despite the fact they are to be resisted and opposed as enemies of God.

²⁴ Moo, 244.

²⁵ Moo, 121 (fn. 4).

4. This is exemplified in the archangel Michael's dispute with the devil about the body of Moses. In contrast to the false teachers who mock, ridicule, or speak contemptuously of fallen angels, even Michael did not speak that way about the devil. Rather, he called on *the Lord* to rebuke him, to vindicate Moses by rejecting whatever charges Satan had leveled against Moses in claiming a right to his body. He did not take it on himself to berate the devil for his action but appealed to the Lord to deal with him. (An example of the Lord rebuking Satan, vindicating the object of Satan's accusations, is in Zech. 3:1-5.)

a. The fact Michael is called an "archangel" (the only angel so identified in Scripture) and Paul refers to an "archangel" in 1 Thess. 4:16 suggests there is a rank or order among the angels. Daniel 10:13 says Michael is "one of the chief princes," which probably means he is one of a group of archangels. The reference in 1 Tim. 5:21 to "elect angels" seems to confirm the notion of varied status or rank.

b. This event is not mentioned in the OT. Deuteronomy 34:5-6 says only, "So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, ⁶ and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day."

c. The event was, however, known in Jewish tradition and apparently was expressed in an Aramaic or Hebrew writing titled the *Testament (or Assumption) of Moses* (there being debate about the origin and relationship of the writings bearing these titles). I say *apparently* because early Christian writers attribute Jude's reference to the *Assumption of Moses*, but the only surviving manuscript is a sixth-century Latin translation which is missing the ending that presumably included the material to which Jude referred. References from other works support the conclusion that the writing(s) included such a section.

d. So Jude, under divine inspiration, confirms that this event preserved in Jewish tradition was true. That does not mean he affirms that the *Testament (or Assumption) of Moses* is inspired or that everything in it is true, any more than Paul's citing of the Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 means he affirms that writing was inspired or all true. This element of that apparently widely known tradition was true.

5. On the one hand, the false teachers revile fallen angels, which are among the things they do not really understand, matters that are beyond their depth. On the other hand, the physical appetites, which they, like unreasoning animals, know instinctively, destroy them because they refuse to restrain them. Rather, they live in immorality. As in the OT examples he gave, they too will suffer God's judgment.

C. Woe to the false teachers (11-13)

¹¹Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, have given themselves over to Balaam's error for profit, and have perished in Korah's rebellion.

¹²These are the men who are hidden reefs at your love feasts, feasting with [you] without fear, shepherding themselves. [They are] waterless clouds

being carried along by winds, late-autumn trees without fruit, having twice died and been uprooted; ¹³wild waves of the sea, tossing up their shameful deeds like foam; wandering stars for whom the blackness of the darkness has been reserved forever.

1. Like OT prophets (e.g., Isa. 3:11), Jude uses a "woe formula" to announce the pain and distress of God's judgment that is in store for the false teachers. They will experience that judgment because they have "gone the way of Cain, have given themselves over to Balaam's error for profit, and have perished in Korah's rebellion."

a. Cain, of course, murdered his brother, Abel, out of envy and jealousy (Gen. 4:1-14; Heb. 11:4; 1 Jn. 3:12). He gave vent to his ungodly passions, serving them rather than God, which is analogous to the false teachers rationalizing the feeding of their sexual appetites by claiming it was acceptable to God.

b. Jude's words about the false teachers following Balaam are paralleled in 2 Pet. 2:15. Balaam gave advice on how to lure the Israelites into sexual immorality at Baal Peor (Num. 25:1-3, 31:7-8, 15-16), which effort was linked in Jewish tradition to his greed.²⁶ Jesus describes Balaam to John in Rev. 2:14 as one "who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality." The false teachers were likewise seeking to lure the church into sexual immorality, presumably also motivated by financial gain.²⁷ There is always a market for teaching that baptizes sin, that assures sinners they can continue in their sinful ways and be at peace with God. This allowed the false teachers to make money in spreading their error, which was at least part of their motivation.

c. Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16 involved a rejection of divine authority as represented by Moses and Aaron. On that occasion, the rebels, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were swallowed by the earth and the 250 community leaders who supported them were incinerated by God. It says in Num. 26:9-10 that this judgment served as a warning sign to those who might be tempted to rebel against the Lord. Gene Green comments, "Jude likely understands this temporal judgment as a type of the eternal ruin (Matt. 10:28; 21:41; Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; Rom. 14:15; James 4:12) that the heretics will face because of their sin."²⁸ He puts it in the past tense to indicate they had already sealed their fate; we might say "they are as good as gone."

²⁶ Gene L. Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 285.

²⁷ The tradition of Balaam's greed may be rooted in Numbers 22, which contains hints that he was motivated by the hope of financial gain. According to Walter Kaiser in *Hard Sayings of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 88-91, God's permission to Balaam in v. 20 was conditioned on the *emissaries* coming to Balaam (rather than Balaam going to them) after Balaam told them in v. 19 to stay for the night. In other words, God told Balaam that *if* the emissaries sought him out again (instead of leaving in disgust) after being put off when Balaam told them he needed to consult the Lord, *then* he could go with them. (For this view, v. 20 is translated as in the KJV: "If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them.") But instead of waiting for that condition (the emissaries coming once more to him), Balaam took the initiative in v. 21 and rose to go with the emissaries. Perhaps Balaam feared the emissaries would not return and was not willing to give up all hope of financial gain in the situation. There are indications that Balaam was torn: he failed to mention in Num. 22:13 God's reason for refusing to let him go and curse Israel (that Israel was blessed - Num. 22:12) and he continued to press God for permission when it had been clearly denied. We know that he later succumbed to the temptation to harm Israel (Num. 31:7-8, 15-16; 2 Pet. 2:15; Rev. 2:14).

²⁸ G. Green, 93.

2. It seems that first-century Christians often, if not always, celebrated the Lord's Supper in conjunction with a larger fellowship meal. This is suggested in 1 Cor. 11:17-34 and some later noncanonical writings. The Supper proper, meaning the bread and juice, probably was eaten at the end of the meal. (The fellowship meal was an optional act of benevolence and fellowship that early on was separated from the Lord's Supper, which is a remembrance and proclamation of the death and resurrection of Jesus. It eventually was dropped, at least as a regular practice.) This is presumably the "love feast" to which Jude refers. This is paralleled in 2 Pet. 2:13.

3. Despite being enemies of the faith, the false teachers join in the church meals without fear of God; they have no qualms about being there as wolves in sheep's clothing. They pose an unrecognized danger, like hidden reefs that rip the bottom out of a boat, presumably by using the access of the meals to damage unwitting people's faith by spreading their heresy. They shepherd themselves in the sense they look out only for themselves. They care only about how they can improve their own lot and standing in the world and have no regard for the souls they destroy.

4. They are "waterless clouds" in that they suggest the provision of refreshing and life-giving water, deeper and truer insight into the will of the Lord, but they prove false and bitterly disappointing. They carry no blessing but only harm under the guise of blessing. Proverbs 25:14 states: "Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of a gift he does not give." The reference to them as "late-autumn trees without fruit" has the same connotation in that a tree at that time of year would be expected to have fruit and would disappoint if it did not.

5. In describing the false teachers as "having twice died," Jude probably is referring to the fact they once died spiritually as a result of their transgressions and sins (Eph. 2:1), and after having been made alive in Christ, in some sense died again because their apostasy had cut them off from the source of life. He may be referring to their present return to a state of spiritual death, alienation from God, or he may be referring to their eventual consignment to eternal punishment at the final judgment which is called the second death (Rev. 2:11, 20:6, 14; 21:8). "Uprooted," as a dead tree would be, picks up on the comparison of the false teachers to late-autumn trees without fruit.

6. The unrestrained sinfulness of the false teachers is pictured in their description as wild waves of the sea tossing up their shameful deeds like foam. They are out of control, giving free expression to their sinful passions and impulses.

7. The false teachers are called "wandering stars," what we know as planets, because planets were understood historically to lack regularity in their movements compared to the "non-wandering stars." They seemed to "do their own thing," and though it was known in the first century that planets had a regularity of their own, they continued to be associated with nonconformity. The false teachers reflected that nonconformity to the laws of celestial motion in their nonconformity to moral laws, and for this reason they have reserved for them a place in

hell, which is here depicted as the blackest darkness. As Moo remarks, "'Darkness,' along with 'fire,' is a popular biblical image for the judgment of God."²⁹

D. Enoch's prophecy (14-16)

¹⁴And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, also prophesied about these men, saying, "Behold, the Lord is coming with tens of thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵to execute judgment against all and to convict every person concerning all of their works of godlessness which they godlessly performed and concerning all of the harsh things which godless sinners have spoken against him."¹⁶These men are grumblers [and] malcontents who live according to their own desires, and their mouth speaks inflated [words], flattering people for the sake of advantage.

1. Jude reveals that Enoch had long ago prophesied about the doom of the false teachers in that he prophesied about the coming judgment on all the godless.

a. This prophecy is not in the OT but had apparently been kept alive in Jewish oral tradition and came to be included in the noncanonical Jewish writing known as *1 Enoch*. Jude by inspiration affirms that this part of *1 Enoch* was indeed a prophecy of the historical Enoch. Though many reject such a scenario, Moo recognizes that "God could well have seen to it that the unknown author of *1 Enoch* included at this point in his book a genuine prophecy of Enoch."³⁰

b. This does not mean Jude affirms that *1 Enoch* is inspired or that everything in it is true. As Moo states, "It is crucial to note that Jude does not refer to *1 Enoch* as Scripture; that is, the crucial word *graphe* ("Scripture") is not used here. The cognate verb of this word, *grapho*, is used throughout the New Testament to introduce Old Testament quotations: 'as it is written,' and this formula is not found here either." As I noted, Paul's citing of the Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 does not mean he affirms that writing was inspired or all true. So Jude's affirming that part of *1 Enoch* was a genuine prophecy of Enoch does not mean he is affirming it all is.

2. The point is to reinforce the fate of these false teachers at the Lord's return. One is reminded of texts like Mat. 25:31-34, 41, 46; 1 Thess. 4:16; and 2 Thess. 1:5-10. Those who lived in rebellion to him will be condemned. As the writer of Hebrews states in Heb. 10:26-27, "For if we deliberately keep on sinning after we received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins ²⁷ but a certain, fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the adversaries."

3. He describes the false teachers as "grumblers [and] malcontents who live according to their own desires." They "were like Israel in the wilderness in that they were 'grumblers' (*gongystai*) who complained against the Lord (cf. Exod 16:7-9, 12; 17:3; Num 11:1;

²⁹ Moo, 261.

³⁰ Moo, 274.

14:23; 16:41; 17:5, 11; Ps 105:25; *Sir* 46:7).³¹ This probably refers to their complaints against any who spoke the truth about moral standards. Though faithfully presenting God's word on the matter, they would be dismissed or maligned as unenlightened opponents of freedom in Christ.

4. The false teachers engaged in what we would call "big talk," pumping themselves up in the eyes of others, and were involved in flattering people for their own advantage. That is, they ingratiated themselves to people by flattery to benefit from the status and financial support that came with their increasing popularity.

IV. Exhortations to Believers (17-25)

A. Remember the predictions of the apostles (17-19)

¹⁷But you, beloved, remember the words foretold by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁸that they were saying to you, "In [the] last time there will be scoffers who live according to their own desires for godless things." ¹⁹These are the ones who are creating divisions, worldly people, not having the Spirit.

1. Jude calls his readers to remember that apostles previously had told them that in the last time there would be scoffers who lived immoral lives. The false teachers were examples of such people ("These are the ones"), scoffing at the will of God in pursuit of their fleshly appetites. And as false teachers often do, they created division in the body of Christ. Moo comments: "We know that one of the almost inevitable byproducts of false teaching is division within the church. There are always some who are ready to listen to anything new and different, who are ready to be swept away by whatever new wind of teaching might be blowing. Others, however, better anchored in the faith, resist. As a result, divisiveness follows."³²

2. Since we do not know precisely to whom Jude is writing, we do not know which apostles previously told them about the godless scoffers of the last time. If 2 Peter was written before Jude, it is possible he has in mind 2 Pet. 3:3, which states, "Know this first [of all] that in the last days scoffers will come with scoffing, proceeding according to their own lusts." Though the scoffing in 2 Pet. 3:3 relates to Christ's return in glory (2 Pet. 3:4) whereas in Jude it relates to God's moral desires, it is still a warning about moral decay in the "last days." This warning was part of apostolic teaching (see, e.g., 2 Tim. 3:1-5).

3. The expression "last time(s)" or "last days" refers to the time after Christ's death and resurrection. Moo states:

[T]he New Testament writers regularly use this expression, or similar ones, to describe the entire period from the time of Jesus' death and resurrection onward (e.g., Acts 2:17-19; Heb. 1:2; 1 John 2:18). Once the Messiah had come, they believed the last and climactic period of salvation history had begun. What the

³¹ Schreiner, 473.

³² Moo, 283.

apostles predicted, then, was that this period of time would be marked by the periodic appearance of "scoffers."³³

4. Jude describes the false teachers as "worldly" or "natural" people, meaning they live on the level of natural instincts, like brute beasts. And contrary to their claim to receive revelatory visions ("dreamers" in v. 8), they are devoid of the Spirit. In other words, they are apostate, fallen away from the faith, or possibly were counterfeit Christians from the beginning. As such, they are the last people who should have any influence over one's spiritual life.

B. Remain in God's love (20-21)

²⁰But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ resulting in eternal life.

1. In v. 1 Jude noted that they were "kept for Jesus Christ," meaning God is at work in the life of Christians protecting them from overpowering hostile forces and circumstances so that they can maintain their faith and thus celebrate Christ's return. Here they are commanded to keep *themselves* in the love of God emphasizing *their role* in maintaining faithfulness. If they succumb to the false teachers and embrace immoral living, they will have rejected the love of God that calls them to submission and the pursuit of holiness. One is reminded of Jn. 15:9-10 (NIV): "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love."

2. The two preceding participial clauses – *building yourselves up* in your most holy faith and *praying* in the Holy Spirit – probably refer to means of maintaining their faithfulness, keeping themselves in the love of God ("by," e.g., NET, NIV).

a. In contrast to the communally destructive division caused by the false teachers, they are to build themselves up in their most holy faith; they are to remind, encourage, and reinforce one another in the truths of the Christian faith. Moo states, "As in the similar phrase in v. 3, 'faith' here means what Christians believe – the doctrinal and ethical core of Christian identity. This is what the false teachers were threatening; therefore, true believers must devote themselves to the faith with renewed dedication."³⁴

b. And they are to pray "in the Holy Spirit" meaning to pray as the Spirit would have them pray. They (and we) are to pray with a proper attitude and motives and in line with and in deference to God's will. They are not, for example, to pray "to be seen by men" (e.g., Mat. 6:5-6) or out of a desire to indulge our selfishness (Jas. 4:3) rather than a desire to glorify God. Such Spirit-directed praying for wisdom, strength, courage, and faithfulness is key to their remaining faithful and thus remaining in God's love.

³³ Moo, 281-282.

³⁴ Moo, 284.

3. This is how we are to live while waiting or anticipating or looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to be received at his return. Gene Green states, "'Mercy' is here viewed as an eschatological blessing that will be given to the believer at the final consummation (Luke 1:78; 2 Tim. 1:16-18; Rom. 9:23; 1 Pet. 1:3; 2 Macc. 2:7; Ps. Sol. 17.45; 1 En. 1.8; 27.4); it is the opposite of judgment, which will befall those who disobey the gospel (James 2:13; cf. Ps. Sol. 14.9-10; 1 En. 27.4)."³⁵ Moo comments:

Jude's last exhortation, fittingly, directs attention to the future. God's mercy is always present, but the Scriptures often associate his mercy with deliverance on the last day (see, e.g., Matt. 5:7; 2 Tim. 1:18). Here, therefore, "the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ" is something that we are urged to "wait for." The verb translated "wait for" often occurs in such eschatological contexts. It connotes eager yet patient expectation and the kind of lifestyle that should accompany such hope for deliverance (see the use of the word in 2 Peter 3:12-14).³⁶

4. The final prepositional clause, literally "into (*eis*) eternal life," speaks of the result or effect of the mercy Christ will bestow when he returns.³⁷ Thus it is variously rendered "that leads to" (NRSV, NAB, ESV), "that brings" (NET), "to bring you to" (NIV), "will give" (NEB, REB), and "to give you" (NJB) eternal life. Bauckham explains, "Eternal life, i.e. the resurrection life of the age to come, is the gift which Christ in his mercy will bestow on the faithful Christians at the Parousia."³⁸ There is a sense in which we already have eternal life (Jn. 5:24, 6:47; 1 Jn. 5:11, 5:13), but there is a sense in which eternal life is still to come (Mat. 19:29, 25:46; Mk. 10:30; Lk. 18:30; Rom. 6:22; Gal. 6:8; Tit. 3:7). It is only at Christ's return, when he consummates the kingdom he inaugurated at this first coming, that eternal life will be realized fully in resurrection life.

C. How to treat those influenced by the false teachers (22-23)

²²And have mercy on those who are wavering; ²³save others by snatching them from the fire; have mercy on others with fear, hating even the clothing having been defiled by the flesh.

1. The text of Jude 22-23 appears in a variety of forms falling into two basic categories. Some manuscripts indicate three classes of people, as indicated in the translation, which follows a large majority of English translations. But "[s]ome manuscripts have only two categories of people: (1) those whose faith is wavering and therefore need to be snatched from the flames of judgment, and (2) those who need to be shown mercy."³⁹

2. In the three-category text, Jude first urges them to have mercy on those who are wavering. These are brothers or sisters who "were affected to the extent that they were beginning to doubt whether the opponents were correct or whether the faith they received at the inception

³⁵ G. Green, 123.

³⁶ Moo, 285.

³⁷ E.g., Schreiner, 484.

³⁸ Bauckham, 114.

³⁹ NLT marginal note.

of their Christian life was normative (v. 3).⁴⁰ Schreiner comments: "It is tempting to dismiss those who are struggling with doubts, to lose patience with them and move on to something else. Jude encouraged those who were strong to show mercy and kindness to those wavering with doubts, to reclaim them with gentleness (cf. 2 Tim 2:25)."⁴¹

3. Regarding those who were not simply entertaining doubts but who were *being persuaded* by the false teachers, who were close to embracing their teaching and consequent immorality, he commands that they save them, snatching them from the fire, from the threshold of hell. There is a sense of urgency, the need for a spiritual intervention, in the hope they might be rescued before succumbing completely to the error and be brought back to correct understanding.

4. The last group is those who have "taken the plunge," gone to the dark side, but who have not yet hardened themselves beyond the point where it is no longer possible for them to return (Heb. 6:4-6). There is still hope that their repenting apparatus has not been completely disabled. They are to be dealt with in a spirit of mercy, a spirit that seeks to bless them through bringing them back to the faith, probably through the process of church discipline, but that mercy toward them is to be tempered with fear of the allure the false freedom they now promote. One must maintain a thorough hatred of fleshly deeds as a protection against enticement.

V. Doxology (24-25)

²⁴Now to him who is able to guard you from stumbling and to cause [you] to stand in the presence of his glory without blemish in great joy, ²⁵to [the] only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, [belong] glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time and now and forever, amen.

A. Jude offers an expression of praise to the only God our Savior, whom he describes as being able to guard them from stumbling and to bring them into his glorious presence on judgment day in great joy because they will stand before him without blemish because of Christ. Bauckham states, "The general sense is that God will protect Jude's readers from the dangers of falling into the sinful ways of the false teachers and thereby failing to attain to final salvation."⁴² As they (and we) keep themselves in God's love (v. 21), he will not allow them to be pulled from the path. "Jude now assures them of the divine support and protection without which all their efforts will be fruitless."⁴³

B. The praise offered to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is acknowledgement of the fact that to him belong glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time and now and forever more. It expresses maximum greatness. "When the letter was read aloud, the hearers would join in the concluding 'Amen.'"⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Schreiner, 488.

⁴¹ Schreiner, 488.

⁴² Bauckham, 122.

⁴³ Bauckham, 124.

⁴⁴ Bauckham, 124.