DOES JUDE 4 TEACH A DOCTRINE OF DOUBLE PREDESTINATION?

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Divinity in Grace Theological Seminary

May, 1970
PREFACE

The purpose of this critical monograph is to study Jude 4 in order to determine whether or not it teaches the doctrine of double predestination.

The preparation of this paper has caused this writer to appreciate the unfailing devotion and dedication of the entire faculty of these Theological Seminary to train their students to become men of the Word of God who know what it means to stand for the truth and to contend faithfully for the faith that has been entrusted to us care for all.

Grateful acknowledgment is extended to Dr. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., for the kind assistance and helpful suggestions given by him. He was one of the first members of the faculty that this writer talked to upon application for entrance to the Seminary and from that very first day he has been very gracious and kind in extending help and encouragement when this writer needed it.

Moreover, I must express my sincere appreciation for a very kind and understanding congregation of believers at the Wolf Lake Baptist Church who have so graciously allowed this writer to minister as their pastor during those years of Seminary training.

Finally, words cannot adequately express the value of a wife and Godly who have shown the greatest of love, kindness, understanding, and encouragement not only in the preparation of this paper, but throughout the last three years of Seminary training.
The purpose of this critical monograph is to study Jude 1 in order to determine whether or not it teaches the doctrine of double predestination.

The preparation of this paper has caused this writer to appreciate the unfailing devotion and dedication of the entire faculty of Grace Theological Seminary to train their students to become men of the Word of God who know what it means to stand for the truth and to contend faithfully for the faith that has been entrusted to us once for all.

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Furthermore, I must express my sincere appreciation for a very kind and understanding congregation of believers at the Wolf Lake Baptist Church who have so graciously allowed this writer to minister as their pastor during these years of seminary training.

Finally, words cannot adequately express the value of a wife and family who have shown the greatest of love, kindness, understanding, and encouragement not only in the preparation of this paper, but throughout the last five years of seminary training.
It is my prayer and desire that this critical monograph shall prove to be a blessing to its readers and also an encouragement to many of the true children of God to contend earnestly for the faith in these trying days of departure and declension prior to the coming of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
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I. INTRODUCTION

Although the short book of Jude is one of the shortest in the New Testament, it contains one of the most powerful messages of the entire Bible. Jude is a very up-to-date book for the times in which we live today. We must begin to study this epistle so we can learn to discover that many of the same conditions that prevailed in Jude’s day have their counterpart in our modern time. Therefore, it is essential that we face these common dangers in a spiritual manner so that victory will be gained by the name of God, both individually and corporately.

I have never heard a series of messages preached on the book of Jude from entire lifetime. At the very least, as a pastor and student of the Word of God, the exhortation to “preach the whole counsel of God,” I have to admit to my own sense that I have never preached a series of sermons on this very practical epistle.

Perhaps one of the reasons for my choice of the text of Jude was for this practical monoepist was because of the fact that I recently had the opportunity to study through the epistles of 1 and 2 Peter and Jude in a Sunday school class in the church that I have pastored while attending a theological seminary. My appetite to go beyond the mere “titles” of the Word suggested a careful and thorough study of this little epistle. Certainly, this is a day when the believer has a responsibility to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints of God.
INTRODUCTION

Although the little epistle of Jude is one of the shortest in the New Testament, it contains one of the most powerful messages of the entire Bible. It is a very up-to-date book for the times in which we live today. When one begins to study this epistle to see what Jude was really writing about, we are amazed to discover that many of the same conditions that prevailed in Jude's day have their counterpart in our modern space age. Therefore, it is essential that we face these common dangers in a Scriptural manner so that victory will be gained by the saints of God, both individually and corporately.

I have never heard a book sermon or a series of messages preached on the book of Jude in my entire lifetime. At the same time, as a pastor and student of the Word of God with the exhortation to "preach the whole counsel" of God, I have to admit to my own shame that I have never preached a series of sermons on this very practical epistle.

Probably one of the reasons for my choice of the text of Jude four for this critical monograph was because of the fact that I recently had the opportunity to study through the epistles of I and II Peter and Jude in a Sunday school class in the church that I have pastored while attending Grace Theological Seminary. My appetite to go beyond the mere "milk" of the Word suggested a careful and thorough study of this little epistle. Certainly, this is a day when the believer has a responsibility to contend for the faith which has been delivered to the saints of God.
and to encourage many believers to assume their responsibility in their own local churches.

Thomas Manton has stated the need for such a study of Jude today in the following observations:

The people of God have ever been exercised with two sorts of enemies—persecutors and sectaries: it is hard to say which is worst.

What hath been our late experience, we all know, and have cause to bewail: as soon as we were freed from our hard taskmaster, and a door of hope began to be opened to us, a swarm of Libertines have arisen among us, and do every day increase in number, power, and malice, and under various forms impugn the unquestionable interests of Jesus Christ, to the great scandal of reformation, and the saddening of the hearts of the godly.¹

The epistle of Jude is extremely appropriate and practical in our day of apostasy and turning from the faith once for all delivered to the saints of God. However, I have known only one preacher that has preached a series of expository messages on the book of Jude. This is not really a strange or new phenomenon for it was largely neglected during the early days of the Christian church.²

Therefore, I trust that this paper shall cause many believers to consider the message of the epistle of Jude for our modern space age of declension and departure.

The purpose of this critical monograph is to deal with just one of the problems of a proper exposition of the text of Jude. The problem is that of the doctrine of "double predestination" or "divine reprobation" which has probably generated more heat than light at times in the dis-


cussion of it by Calvinists and Arminians.

The manner of our treatment of the problem shall be to first consider the essential background of the epistle, then study the sources of Jude four, and finally, to consider the major problem of the predestination of the ungodly to perdition.
II. GREEK TEXT

The Greek Text Quoted

United Bible Societies' Text, 1975 Edition

πορείς διὰ τινός

καθημερινός, ο θάλας

προκεχρηματίζεται εἰς τὸ ἄνα
to ἄνα

ποιμένα. Τὸν τὸν

ἐκτὸς τὴν σκέψιν, τὴν τὸν

νέον ἁμαρτολογεῖν

μετανοεῖται εἰς σκέψιν

καὶ τὸν μόνον σεοπτάν

καὶ κάριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ

Χριστοῦ ἁπατώμουν.
II. GREEK TEXT

The Greek Text Quoted

United Bible Societies' Text, 1966 Edition

ΠΑΡΕΙΟΣΟΥΝ ΧΑΡ ΔΙΝΕΣ
Αносαποι, οί Πάλαι
ΠΡΟΥΞΥΡΑΜΜΕΝΟΙ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΤΟ
ΤΟ ΚΡΙΜΑ ΔΩΣΕΙΣ, ΤΗΝ ΤΟΥ
ΘΕΟΥ ΗΜΩΝ ΧΑΡΙΤΑ
ΜΕΤΑΤΙΘΕΝΤΕΣ ΕΙΣ ΑΣΕΛΥΕΙΑΝ
ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΜΟΝΟΥ ΔΕΟΠΟΤΗΝ
ΚΑΙ ΥΨΙΟΝ ΗΜΩΝ ἸΗΣΟΥΧ
ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΔΡΟΝΟΥΜΕΝΟΙ.
III. ENGLISH VERSIONS

The King James Version

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old
ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our
God into licentiousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord
Jesus Christ.

The American Standard Version

For there are certain men crept in unawares, even they who were of old
ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our
God into licentiousness, and denying our only Lord and
Lord, Jesus Christ.

The New American Standard Version

For certain persons have crept in unawares who were long before
ordained to this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the
grace of our God into licentiousness, and denying our only Lord and
Lord, Jesus Christ.

The Revised Standard Version

For men have crept in unawares who were long ago assig-
ned to this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of
our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and
Lord, Jesus Christ.

The New English Bible

It is no wonder that certain persons who have turned their way in the
very way that Scripture long ago marked down for this doom they have in
surrender. They are persons of religion; they pervert the free favour of
our God into licentiousness, denying Jesus Christ, our only Master and
Lord.

The English Bible

For certain men have crept in unawares—posing externals exactly by a
III. ENGLISH VERSIONS

The King James Version

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The American Standard Version

For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

The New American Standard Version

For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Revised Standard Version

For admission has been secretly gained by some who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

The New English Bible

It is in danger from certain persons who have wormed their way in, the very men whom Scripture long ago marked down for this doom they have incurred. They are enemies of religion; they pervert the free favour of our God into licentiousness, disowning Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord.

The Amplified Bible

For certain men have crept in stealthily—gaining entrance secretly by a
wide door. Their doom was predicted long ago, (impious, profane) ungodly persons who pervert the grace (the spiritual blessing and favor) of our God into lawlessness and wantonness and immorality, and disown and deny our sole Master and Lord, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One.

Phillips' Translation
For there are men who have surreptitiously entered the Church but who have for a long time been heading straight for the condemnation I shall plainly give them. They have no real reverence for God, and they abuse his grace as an opportunity for immorality. They will not recognize the only master, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today's English Version
For some godless men, who have slipped in unnoticed among us, distort the message about the grace of God to excuse their immoral ways, and reject Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord. Long ago the Scriptures predicted this condemnation that they have received.

Living Letters: The Paraphrased Epistles
I say this because some godless teachers have wormed their way in among you saying after we become Christians we can do just as we like without fear of God's punishment. The fate of such people was written long ago, for they have turned against our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.
IV. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE

The Author of the Epistle

In the consideration of the authorship of the Epistle of Jude, one main question is not so much whether Jude wrote it, but which one? There were seven men in the New Testament named Jude. One of these is recognized to be the author of this epistle. His name is transliterated Judah, but in reality it is the name Jesus found in the New Testament.

Which of the seven Judases is the author of this epistle? Let us list these men by the names of Jude; (1) an ancestor of Christ (Luke 3: 30); (2) a revolutionary (Acts 5:17); (3) a brother of James, or possibly the relationship is uncertain (Galatians 1:19); (4) a man of Samaria who went with the Paul (Acts 19:11); (5) the betrayer of Christ called Judas Iscariot (Matthew 10: 4); (6) the one called Thaddeus (Luke 6:16) and (7) the Judas listed as one of the brothers of Christ (Matthew 13: 55).

Although there is some discussion of this matter, it seems almost certain that the last one mentioned, Judas, a brother of Christ, is to be considered the author of this little epistle. The identification which seems to make this clear is the reference to his brother James in verse one. This shows, as all probability is, well-known passage in the

Jude 1:1, "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are of God called to be saints with respect to God our Father, and preserved for Jesus Christ, who preserved for Jesus Christ, and preserved for Jesus Christ".
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Which of the seven Judases is the author of this epistle? Let us list these men by the name of Judas: (1) an ancestor of Christ (Luke 3:30); (2) a revolutionary (Acts 5:37); (3) a brother of James, or possibly the relationship was a son of James since the word indicating the relationship is lacking in the original text (Luke 6:16); (4) a man of Damascus who was host to Paul (Acts 9:11); (5) the betrayer of Christ called Judas Iscariot (Matthew 10:4); (6) the one called Barsabas (Acts 15:22); and (7) the Judas listed as one of the brothers of Christ (Matthew 13:55).

Although there is some discussion of this matter, it seems almost certain that the last one mentioned, Judas, a brother of Christ, is to be considered the author of this little epistle. The identification which seems to make this clear is the reference to his brother James in verse one. This James, in all probability is the well-known personage in the

early church, who was the leader of the church in Jerusalem and the brother of Christ, also. Why does Jude refer to himself as a servant of Christ? Because it would have been out of place to emphasize his earthly relationship to the Lord since that had no bearing on his own spiritual condition or his service for the Lord.

J. B. Mayor states the following in regard to both the epistle of Jude and his brother James:

They do not arrogate to themselves that relationship which constituted the ground of the reverence with which they were regarded by their fellow-believers. They are simply servants of Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, to whose coming, as the righteous Judge, they look forward.... They are sharers of a common salvation (Jude 3), they need forgiveness of sin like other men (James 3:2).

Lenski states a view that Jude was the son of Joseph by another marriage:

Acts 1:14, "These (the eleven apostles) continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers." The two prepositions, and (associative) marks two groups. The second group is not connected with Mary; 'and with her other sons,' but only with Jesus, 'and with his brothers.' Why? If here or anywhere the wording were 'her sons,' we should not hesitate for one moment to consider James (and thus also Jude, Jude 1) the uterine brother of Jesus. But this is the very thing the Scriptures do not say and in the notable passages avoid saying.

However, this supposition is without any other Scriptural support for nowhere else in the New Testament does it ever state or imply that Joseph had any other wife prior to his marriage to Mary.

There are several other views of another Judas as the author of


the epistle. Guthrie suggests these:

The letter is supposed by some to be too late to make it possible that Jude, the Lord's brother was the author. Some have disputed the reading of verse 1, claiming that is an interpolation and regarding the author as an unknown Jude who was the son of an unknown James. Another idea which has been circulated is that Jude was Jude the apostle, called Judas of James in Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13. Yet another hypothesis is that Grotius who identified this Jude with a second century bishop of Jerusalem, who bore that name.

Therefore, we conclude that the Jude who was a brother of the Lord Jesus Christ and of James was the author of this epistle.

The Authenticity of the Epistle

From the very earliest days there has been some question in regard to its authenticity. Actually, most of the evidence is external rather than internal, although there is some within the epistle itself.

The external evidence for Jude's authorship is given by Thiessen as follows:

Hermas has much to say about "defiling the flesh" in Similitudes (V.vii); cf. Jude 8. Polycarp speaks of "building you up in that faith which has been given you" in the Epistle to the Philippians (ch. iii), which seems to allude to Jude 3,20. There is a possible allusion to Jude 6 in Athenagoras' Plea for the Christians (ch. xxiv).

Theophilus of Antioch speaks of the planets as a type of fallen man, which figure occurs only in Jude. The Epistle is not in the Old Syriac, but the Muratorian Fragment recognizes it.

Further evidence is found for its attestation and authenticity in its use as a reference by Tertullian, Eusebius, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Didymus, etc. These all seem to attest to the early use of this

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3Ibid.
epistle and the reason it has become a disputed book is because of its use of apocryphal books.\footnote{1}

The internal evidence agrees with the external evidence for the authenticity of Jude. The main evidence is the introduction of the writer in verse 1, "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." There are some problems involved within this evidence; namely, the citations from the apocryphal books, the relation of Jude to the books of Romans and Second Peter, and the different style of Jude.

The evidence, both internally and externally, seems to be very strong and in favor of the authenticity of this epistle to be from the pen of Jude. When it is all considered, the evidence against it's genuineness is very small indeed in comparison to that which is in favor of it.

The Date and Place of Writing

The date of the epistle has generally been disputed as to its exactness from A.D. 60 to A.D. 114. The evidence for the early dates prior to A.D. 70 is largely based upon the assumption of the authorship of Jude, the brother of Christ and James.\footnote{2} At the same time, if we accept Jude as following II Peter, then we have to put it after 66 or 67 A.D.\footnote{3} If we accept the fact that Jude was younger than Christ, possibly as much as ten years younger, then we could put it as late as 75-80 A.D. and Jude would still be comparatively a young man.

The evidence for a later date is based upon the following premises:

\footnote{1}{Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p. 227.}
\footnote{2}{Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p. 230.}
\footnote{3}{Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament, p. 296.}
First, it is claimed that verse 3 necessitates a period late enough for Christianity to have established an orthodox doctrine and therefore Jude could not have belonged to the first century Christian body. Guthrie says in refuting this fallacious view, "Our knowledge of the development of early Christian doctrine is after all far too limited to conclude with any confidence the precise date when Christians had a formal basis of faith."

Another evidence for a later date is presented in regard to the reference to the apostle in verse 17. The natural interpretation would take this verse to mean that the apostolic age had passed, but this is not necessarily so, for these Christians could have either have heard the apostles or they may have had access to copies of the epistles of the apostles by this time. Guthrie cites Zahn, "who maintained that 2 Peter preceded Jude," and thus in verse 17 Jude is referring to Peter's epistle to his readers.

Another evidence for a later date is the nature of the false teachers, which some make out to be Gnostics and thus seek to place the epistle within the second century.

Bigg assigns the date of the epistle to be about 65 A.D. on the basis that Jude was older than Christ, by Joseph's former marriage.

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2 Ibid., p. 231.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p. 232.
Probably it is safest and wisest to conclude that the epistle was written by Jude between the years 65-80 A.D., which is still well within the first century.

The place of writing is even more vague and is very meagerly discussed in the majority of commentaries. Bigg does not favor Jerusalem as a tentative place of writing on the basis that Jude would have had to leave the city after the death of his brother, James, in about 62 A.D. However, Salmond favors Jerusalem suggesting, "So far as a decision thus far attempted, it has been in favor of Palestine."

**The Recipients of the Epistle**

This epistle is directed to believers as is made plain by the opening verse. This is clearly evident by the threefold description of the readers. First, they are ones who have been sanctified by the Father. Secondly, they are also "preserved in Jesus Christ" or more accurately "preserved for Christ." Third, they are the "called" ones who had accepted God's invitation through the preaching of the gospel. Aside from these statements the readers are little known.

Thiessen suggests the area of Palestine, Asia Minor, and Alexandria as possibilities though he presents very little evidence to defend any of them. He does not view 2 Peter and Jude as having the same destination, but rather Jude and the letter of his brother James as destined for the same group of believers.

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4. Ibid.
Wolff in his commentary on Jude suggests "Syria or Asia Minor" and then builds a case for the same addressees as the epistle of Peter.¹

It seems that there were both Jews and Gentiles within this body of believers although the emphasis upon the Old Testament may point in the direction of a Jewish audience within the land of Palestine.

Mayor summarizes three arguments used by Spitler, Bigg, and Zahn in favour of the priority of II Peter over Jude:

Assuming the genuineness of the two epistles, it is easier, in a case of evident borrowing, to suppose that the borrower should be the comparatively obscure Jude, rather than Peter, the foremost of the Apostles.

Jude seems to acknowledge his obligations to Peter in v. 17,18... and in v. 17,18...

The priority of P. is confirmed by the prevailing use of the future tense in regard to the innovators, whereas J. uses the past or the present, cf. P. 2:1,2,3, with J. v. 17,18,10, and the aorist in v. 11.²

Mayor takes the view that Jude expressed the thoughts first and Peter reflected upon them and altered them.³

The Aim of the Epistle

Jude is the only letter in the New Testament that was begun with one purpose in mind and then another aim became the one that prevailed. Jude began his epistle to write about their "common salvation" but that purpose was changed by the Holy Spirit, who bore Jude along as he wrote the inspired letter (II Peter 1:20,21).

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²Mayor, Jude and Second Peter, pp. xxii-xxiii.
³Ibid., p. xxv.
Jude ultimately writes to exhort his readers to earnestly contend for the faith which was delivered to them once for all. Jude's message becomes eventually a negative exhortation rather than a positive affirmation. This epistle certainly points up the Scriptural ministry of the Church and pastors in maintaining a proper balance of both negative and positive teaching and preaching.

This epistle has a very practical nature and thus because of Jude's new aim, it contains very little theological content. This is in contrast to Paul's refutation of the false teaching in the Colossian heresy, but Jude feels these errorists are past refuting and only need unconditional denunciation. Yet before Jude closes his epistle he does return to a positive note in verse 17 and gives a series of exhortations to his readers.

The Outline of the Epistle

One of the best outlines that I have found on this little epistle is that of S. Maxwell Coder in his concise commentary on Jude.

The security of the believer (vv. 1-2).
The believer and the faith (v. 3).
Apostates described (v. 4).
Apostasy in Old Testament history (vv. 5-8).
Apostasy in the supernatural realm (vv. 9-10).
An ancient trio of apostates (v. 11).
Apostasy in the natural realm (vv. 12-13).
Apostasy in Old Testament prophecy (vv. 14-16).
Apostates described (vv. 17-19).
The believer and the faith (vv. 20-23).
The security of the believer (vv. 24-25).

After this brief introduction to the essential background of the epistle of Jude we are now ready to begin the study of the major problem of the text of Jude h.
V. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS
V. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

The Major Problem: Does Jude teach a doctrine of double predestination?

The Minor Problem: What prophecies was Jude referring to when he said they prophesied about "they who were of old"?
VI. THE SOURCES OF JUDE 1

The Early Pseudepigrapha

After an introduction to the book and to the intended purpose of Jude for writing this letter, he then relates the reason for his change of purpose. This chapter introduces the problem around which the whole epistle centers, namely, the danger from certain men who were creeping into the midst of the Christians with their dangerous doctrines. Jude begins to fully reveal his purpose of writing in order to warn these of such sin and to encourage them in standing upon the word of God's Word against the insinu- ations of Satan within the church.

VI. THE SOURCES OF JUDE 1

One of the primary sources of Jude 1 is the use of the dead sea. There are basically two views in regard to what was meant. Jude was referring to in his statement, "who were before of the day.

The "Context or Distinct Past" View

This view contends that the word "day" is used in the Scriptures as relating to the distant past. Those who hold this view are agreed as to the word only being used in Scriptures of something in the distant past, but specifically through what past is being considered. Bengel states it a way for the prophecies of which he means the words and their main word. This would make it a
VI. THE SOURCES OF JUDE

The Danger Prophesied Beforehand

After an introduction to the book and to the intended purpose of Jude for writing this letter, he then relates the reason for his change of purpose. This then introduces the problem around which the whole epistle centers, namely, the danger from certain ones who were creeping into the midst of the Christians with their dangerous doctrines. Jude begins to fully reveal his purpose of writing in order to warn them of such men and to encourage them in standing upon the truth of God's Word against the inroads of Satan within the Church.

One of the first problems in arriving at the source of Jude 1 is the use of the word Περιέχομαι • There are basically two views in regard to what prophecies Jude was referring to in his statement, "who were before of old."

The "Ancient or Distant Past" View

This view contends that the word Περιέχομαι is used in the Scriptures to refer to the distant past. Those who hold this view are agreed as to the word only being used in Scriptures of something in the distant past, but there is disagreement as to what past is being considered. Bengel states a case for the prophecy of Enoch who spoke the words and then it was placed in Scripture through the writer Jude. 1 This would make it a

reference to the prophecy of Enoch as quoted in Jude verses 14 and 15.

Richard Wolff quotes B. Weiss as saying that the words "of old" cannot possibly refer to a recently composed Apostolic writing (such as II Peter), but only to the Old Testament Scripture. He also quotes a statement by Frommuller that the word τοῦ ο λύμ"renders all references to the Epistles of Paul and Peter inadmissible" but hastens to say that this view is certainly incorrect. The other side of the "ancient or distant past" view is that these things were written down before and are decisions rendered in eternity past. This view makes τοῦ ολύ then refer to God's predetermined and predestined council in regard to these men mentioned in verse 4.

John Calvin states in regard to this view:

But the metaphor is taken from this circumstance, because the eternal counsel of God, by which the faithful are ordained unto salvation is called a book; and when the faithful heard that these were given up to eternal death, it behooved them to take heed lest they should involve themselves in the same destruction.

This is the same view that is held by Thomas Manton who expresses his position in this manner:

The meaning of the metaphor is to show that these decrees are as certain and determinate as if he had a book wherein to write them. Now, these are said to be, 'written before of old,' to show, that though they crept in unawares as to the church, yet not as to God; they fell under the notice of his decrees before they ever acted in this evil way.

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4 Manton, Jude, p. 125.
The fact is that Jude is stating once again that which has been written down before would be the destiny of such false teachers and errorists. He wants to emphasize that this pronouncement still stands yet to this day. There are very few who would still defend today the view that \( \text{\textit{theaxia}} \) is a reference to errorists and heretics being predestined or predetermined in the eternal counsels of God.\(^1\)

The "Short While Ago" View

The other major view of the source of Jude 4 is that which is called the "short while ago" view which contends that the word \( \text{\textit{theaxia}} \) in this case can mean a period of a few hours, weeks or months just as well as years or centuries. Some of the Scriptures given for this argument are: Matthew 11:21 (long ago), Luke 10:13 (a great while ago), Mark 1:1 (time past), II Peter 1:9 (old), and Jude v. 4. The main argument for this view is that this word is not always used of God's eternal decrees or purposes, but rather in many instances refers to a point in time. Lenski says, "The word \( \text{\textit{theaxia}} \) does not always mean 'anciently,' in the distant past, and, therefore the document or the documents here referred to are not necessarily Old Testament writings."\(^2\)

The main prooftext for this view is Mark 15:44 where Pilate is speaking of Christ's death and asks the centurion, "and calling the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead." In this


\(^2\)Ibid.
reference the verb "reaches back no farther than an hour" and even at the
most no more than a few hours in light of the context of Jesus' death. ¹
There is also the problem involved here of the variant reading of \( \gamma \gamma \) as
used by Westcott and Hort² while the Nestle text uses \( \gamma \gamma \) and gives
only three manuscripts for the support of \( \gamma \gamma \).³ The American Bible
Society edition uses \( \gamma \gamma \) but lists in the critical apparatus the
variants and gives it a "C" rating showing considerable doubt as to the
correct text.⁴ The usage of the word actually warrants a reference to
some time past whether distant or nearer. Certainly in Mark 15:44 as
well as II Corinthians 12:19 it refers to a shorter time period.

According to Arndt and Gingrich the word \( \gamma \gamma \) means "covering
a period of time, looking back from the present to a point of time in the
past" and is used in Jude ⁴ to mean either "designating a point of time
in the past long ago, formerly" or possibly "for a long time."⁵ When
this evidence is taken into account along with the above parallelism
between Jude and II Peter it is possible therefore to take this as a
reference to Enoch's prophecy (cf. vv. 11:15) as well as the more
immediate prophecy of the Apostle Peter concerning the entrance of

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¹ Lenski, Peter, John, and Jude, p. 613.

² Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort (revisers),
The New Testament in the Original Greek (New York: The Macmillan
Company, 1936), p. 112.

³ D. Eberhard Nestle and D. Erwin, Greek New Testament (London:

⁴ Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Bruce M. Metzger, and Allen Wikgren,
The Greek Text of the United Bible Societies (New York: American Bible

⁵ William F. Arndt and Wilbur F. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon
of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The
such errorists and deniers of the truth. This idea is enhanced by the writer of Jude in exhorting the believers to remember the words of the Apostles of Christ (vv. 17,18) when the following passages are compared with Jude: II Peter 2:1-22; 3:7,16; II Thess. 1:7-10; 2:11,12.

George Lawlor in his excellent exposition of the book of Jude says:

This announcement by writing was made by men of God who were moved by the Holy Spirit to write concerning the crime and punishment of ungodly, Christ-denying men. The passive voice of the participle indicates the action of the writing as due to outside force. Holy men of God wrote as they were compelled to do so by the Holy Spirit and borne along by Him.¹

The Danger Prophesied by Peter

The Use of the Participle

A second problem involved in the source of Jude 1 is found in the use of the perfect passive participle \( \pi\nu\rho\upsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\nu\mu\epsilon\nu\upsilon\alpha\nu \). The problem involves the compounding of \( \pi\nu\rho\upsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\nu\mu\epsilon\nu\upsilon\alpha\nu \) and the sense that it gives to the word with which it is compounded. The immediate implication suggested by this perfect participle is that Jude is simply writing of the actual fulfillment of the prophecy of the Apostle Peter.

The word \( \nu\partial\phi\omega \) means "to write," but when it is compounded with the preposition \( \pi\nu\rho\upsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\nu\mu\epsilon\nu\upsilon\alpha\nu \) it may mean to "write before (hand)" as in the same document in which the word is found or it may refer to something written before in an older document or the participle may refer to "depicting" or publicly "portraying" as a proclamation or a placard in a public place.²

²Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, pp. 710-711.
George Cone cites evidence from Plummer, Liddell and Scott, and Moulton and Milligan, as well as papyri evidence to support the idea that "Jude not only refers to the writings of Peter and Paul, which were read in public at the gatherings of the church, but that he may also be referring to the events of history which vividly portray their condemnation." He therefore concurs with the view that the immediate source of Jude is the Apostle Peter while at the same time recalling examples from the Old Testament as illustrations of God's judgment upon such errorists. Cone also says that the perfect tense of the participle "would portray the action as past with effective results continuing up to the time of the writing of the epistle so far as Jude was concerned, and so he used it for exhortation."  

The Evidence for a Petrine Source  

There is strong evidence for the view that Jude was writing of that which he knew that the Apostle Peter had prophesied would come into the church. Lenski comments on the comparison of II Peter 2:1 with Jude stating:  

What Peter wrote in Second Peter to the very people to whom Jude now writes has come to pass. What Peter prophesied is now being fulfilled. Place II Peter 2:1, etc., 3:3 beside Jude 4 and see how they match. Peter prophesies: "there shall be among you pseudo-teachers" — "there shall come mockers;" Jude: "there did creep in covertly;" Peter: "they shall bring in covertly;" Jude: "they did creep in covertly," Peter's future tense is a compound with "they shall steal in heresies;" Jude: "they stole in themselves."  

More than this, decidedly more! Peter says: "denying the absolute Master;" Jude says: "denying our absolute Master;" Both speak of

1Cone, "Jude", p. 71.  
2Ibid., p. 72.
Both speak of *TO KÔIMAX*, Peter in v. 3, Jude in verse 4. All the rest agrees although it is couched in different words. Jude uses even some of the examples of judgment that Peter employs.  

Although Jude does not call them false teachers, he describes them in the same way that Peter describes the false teachers in II Peter 2. It seems certain that these two writers are both talking about the same group of men. In the case of II Peter 2 they are viewed in prospect, that is, they are going to creep into the midst of the church. In Jude they are viewed in retrospect; that is, they are already in the church. If we accept the fact of a common identity of the readership of the Petrine epistles and Jude’s epistle then his readers already had Peter’s epistles announcing the coming of such errorists and Jude is simply pointing them back to that prophecy and stating that it has now become a reality in their midst. This helps to explain the strong exhortation of Jude to these believers to stand against the enemies of God who seek to thwart the purposes of God especially within the body of believers.

Lenski succinctly observes:

The substantivized perfect passive participle is an apposition; whoever they are and whatever their number, they are "the ones who a while back have been written down in advance for this verdict." Peter made this advance record in his prophecy which is still in the hands of the readers. The perfect tense says that Peter in advance writing still stands; Jude implies that all that the readers need to do is to read anew what Peter foretold.  

Wolff states his view as embracing both the age-old prophecy of Enoch and the New Testament prophecy of Peter as he says:

There is no technical objection why Jude should not refer to the

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1Lenski, Peter, John, and Jude, p. 612.

2Ibid.
prophecy of Peter as contained in II Peter, especially in view of v. 18 as compared with II Peter 3:3.¹

The bulk of evidence then seems to suggest a strong case for Jude's reference to the prophecy of Peter in II Peter 2, with the possibility that Jude may also have had in mind the announcement of such errorists by the age-old prophecy of Enoch later on in the epistle.

¹Wolff, Jude, p. 57.
VII. THE INTERPRETATION OF JUDE 4

The "Church" Theory

The second view is that the judgment which Jude is referring to is upon the churches into which there are two sects in unison. Wolff quotes law upon this view by saying that Jude:

"...because of the appearance of these persons in the Churches to which he is writing as a judgment, and more than that, a judgment that since produced in some writings, naturally it is not a judgment but a judgment upon the Churches in which they have appeared."

"The Episcopacy" Theory

This view sees the judgment not as actually punishment but in respect to the very act of creeping in wickedly. Is the condemnation and
VII. THE INTERPRETATION OF JUDE 4

The Meaning of Judgment

The "Punishment" Theory

We now come to the consideration of the major problem in the interpretation of the text of Jude 4. The problem arises out of the exact nature, meaning, and usage of the word log. First, let us consider the "punishment" view which as the term suggests hold that the word can only refer to punishment. Bigg says, "St. Jude in his hurry picked out St. Peter's word ('with II Peter first in his mind') without observing that it required an explanation."

The "Church" Theory

The second view is that the judgment which Jude is referring to is upon the churches into which these men have crept in unawares. Wolff quotes Zahn upon this view as saying that Jude,

...conceives the appearance of these persons in the Churches to which he is writing as a judgment, and more than that, a judgment long since prophesied in some writing. Naturally it is not a judgment fulfilled upon them or by them, but a judgment upon the Churches in which they have appeared.2

The "Apostasy" Theory

This view sees the judgment not as actually punishment but in regard to the very act of creeping in wickedly is the condemnation and

1Bigg, "Jude," The International Critical Commentary, p. 326.
2Wolff, Jude, p. 57.
and puts the judgment upon the intruders in the present. A variation of this would be the idea that the condemnation is a judgment that God sends upon these intruders in that they become devoid of spiritual judgment and have become incorrigible and are given over to their own delusion. This is also the view of Thomas Manton.

The Scriptural View

From the various views suggested above it can readily be seen that it is necessary to come to some definite understanding of the meaning and usage of ἱππαξ.

Liddell and Scott suggest the meaning of ἱππαξ as follows:

Legal decisions...it is (not) the duty of the Toparchs to give decisions regarding the taxes...(the dioiketes) shall require the legal decision to be carried out...From denoting "judgment", "sentence," the word came to denote the offence for which one is sentenced.

Arndt and Gingrich give the following meanings of ἱππαξ:

1. Dispute, lawsuit.
2. Decision, decree, also of fixed purposes of divine grace.
3. Judgment, judging, the action or function of a judge.
4. Judicial verdict, mostly in an unfavorable sense, of the sentence of condemnation, also of the condemnation and the subsequent punishment itself, 2 Pt. 2:3; Jude 4.
5. Used of the judgment of man upon man.

Lenski takes the view that ἱππαξ means the verdict or sentence, and not the action of judging (ἱππαῖς) and translates II Peter 2:3 to

1 Wolff, Jude, p. 58.
2 Ibid.
3 Manton, Jude, p. 125.
5 Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 451-452.
The primary meaning of the word then seems to be that of a verdict or sentence as the word "judgment" is frequently used to speak of an adverse or condemnatory sentence or judgment in God's righteousness as revealed in the punishment of his enemies. The implication then is that Jude does not go into any description of the punishment, but only is announcing the sentence or verdict upon these men. Lenski says, "The supposition that a verdict names only the penalty is unwarranted. In modern courts the judge names the penalty, but the jury brings in the verdict of guilt. When there is only a judge he does both. Here the verdict states the guilt."

If we accept a Petrine source for Jude 4 then it is much more credible to see how that Peter had already stated in II Peter 2:1,3,17 the penalty of the false teachers he prophesied would arise within the church. Now Jude writes, sometime later, and he simply states the guilt of these errorists in three summarized statements, "ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."

Wolff says that the best answer then is that the "condemnation" is the one indicated in the following verses, quoting Plummer as saying, "The doom of these impious profligates has long since been written down in the doom of those who sinned in similar manner."

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1 Lenski, Peter, John, and Jude, p. 613.
2 Ibid.
3 Wolff, Jude, p. 58.
Therefore, the conclusion we arrive at is that Jude states the legal decision or verdict without a detailed explanation of the nature of the punishment and yet he is still within the bounds of proper semantics in regard to the use of the word ἱσταμένων.

The Description of These "Ungodly Men"

Their Character Is Announced

In order to fully understand the meaning of this verse we need to know the kind of men who are revealed as having crept into the midst of the church. Jude describes them as "ungodly" by using the word ἀσεβείας. As Thomas Manton suggests, "This word may be almost said to give the keynote to the Epistle (cf. vv. 15-18) as it does to the Book of Enoch." The primary meaning of ἀσεβείας is "godlessness, impiety, progress further into ungodliness." It is characteristic of a total lack of reverence and awe for a holy God. Manton says it means "without worship" and comments upon the word:

> Worship is the chiefest and most solemn respect of the creature to God, and therefore it is put for the whole subjection and obedience that we owe to Him, and when any part of that service, respect, or honour is denied or withheld, we are guilty of ungodliness.

This is the same word used by Paul in Romans 1:5; 5:6; and I Timothy 1:9 as well as by Peter in I Peter 4:18; II Peter 2:5; 3:7 to characterize ungodly men who are definitely opposed to God. The use of this term to describe these men as those who had been exposed to the truth of God and

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2 Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 114.
3 Manton, Jude, p. 134.
should have realized that all created beings ought to have an attitude of reverential respect and awe as they stand before God. They are characterized by a noticeable lack of what the Old Testament calls "the fear of the Lord" and a reverential awe of God and trust in Him that results in spiritual wisdom and obedience to God's will.

George Lawlor has succinctly described them as he comments:

Believers should recognize that Jude is describing the apostates as to character, informing us as to what they are underneath the external aspects of piety and religious form. These men are ungodly. They are enemies of the Gospel. They are in the Church, prominent in the Church, human-appointed leaders and spokesmen of the Church, but they do not belong in the Church, they are not of the Church. They are ungodly men who have slipped in stealthily, slyly. They have come in with the appearance of being worthy and as though in accord with the doctrines of the Church, but they have no call from God; they are deceivers, seducers, who speak and act out lies. Gifted as they may be, educated and polished, seemingly religious and pious and near to God, we must recognize these men for what they really are: ungodly, living examples of apostasy, destitute of saving faith.

Richard Wolff quotes the following remarks by W. Jenkyn, An Exposition of the Epistle of Jude, on the term "ungodly" saying that ungodliness consists of:

1. The denial to God of the honor which is due Him, by
   --Denying God His honor by not knowing Him...
   --Not honoring God by not believing Him
   --Not honoring God by not loving Him
   --Not honoring God by not fearing to sin against Him
   --Not honoring God by not obeying His Word
   --Not honoring God by not bearing His stroke....
   --Not honoring God by not regarding His worship....

2. Ungodliness consists in giving the honor which is due to God to something else beside God. And this ungodly men do in two ways
   --Inwardly, in the soul, will, and affections, and the whole inner man, trusting in wealth, flesh (Jer. 17:5)
   --Outwardly, ungodly men give the honor to the creature which is due to God (Rom. 1:25).

3. Ungodliness consists in giving honor to God after a false and undue manner
   --When it is given unwarrantably, and not according to His revealed will
   --When it is not given Him, obediently; when, though what is

1Lawlor, "Jude", p. 8.
done is commanded, yet it is not done because it is commanded, or in obedience to a precept
—When it is not given Him inwardly, heartily...ungodly men rather act out one work and reject another.
—When honor is not given cheerfully
—When God is not honored fervently...ungodly men honor not God as God, or the best, the greatest, but without cost, slightly and coldly
—When honor is not given to God with single aim and sincere intentions...they seek themselves and not God, and therefore they lose God and themselves. ¹

Therefore, Jude sets the theme and keynote of the rest of his entire epistle which he not only describes in a twofold manner in verse 4 but throughout the rest of the epistle by illustrations and descriptions. As Lenski aptly puts it, "Godless! is the first verdict. It is comprehensive, concise. Second Peter furnishes the full details; Jude, too, will presently add many." ²

Their Crimes Are Explained

These "ungodly" men are further described in regard to their specific crimes: (1) They pervert the grace of God, and (2) They deny the Lord and Master.

First, let us consider the nature of the perversion of the grace of God by these "ungodly" men. When the grace of God is used for the purpose of commending license, it has been perverted. This is what we refer today to by the term "antinomian" tendencies. An antinomian is "One who maintains that Christians are freed from the moral law by the dispensation of grace set forth in the gospel." ³ Jude

1 Wolff, Jude, pp. 114-115.
2 Lenski, Peter, John, and Jude, p. 614.
could call those errorists "antinomians" if he were writing today for
that is exactly what they were in regard to their crimes. The verb
\[ \text{METAXTAKENES} \] is a present active participle which suggests that these
men wrest and turn the grace of God from the freedom of Christian for-
giveness into an excessive or wanton license.

Manton comments on this perversion:

You may take notice... The manner how so excellent a thing as the
grace of God was made pliable to so vile a purpose, for a man would
wonder that things at so great and infinite a distance as the grace
of God and filthy lusts should ever be brought to cast an aspect
upon one another... They offered violence to the doctrine of grace
that it might be conscious to such a monstrous birth and production
as filthy lusts and carnal pleasures.\(^1\)

These men have taken the grace of God and used it in the midst
of the assembly of God's children to argue for their own licentiousness
and excessive pleasures.

Lawlor makes a very appropriate application of this doctrine in
the Church today and is worth quoting:

Then it may be said that the apostates of our day presume upon the
grace of God today when they receive multitudes of unregenerates
into church membership with no profession of faith; and they insti-
gate license when they preach to their people a social gospel des-
titute of saving, sanctifying truth, which allows these communicants
to go their own sinful way in a corrupt and perverse age under cover
of religious garb.\(^2\)

The subject of this action and crime of ungodliness is to be
understood as the "certain men" who wormed their way into the congregation.
They have deliberately and stealthily made their way in among the be-
lievers even as they do today, and seek to pervert the grace of God into

\(^1\) Manton, Jude, pp. 134-145.
\(^2\) Lawlor, "Jude," p. 86.
a doctrine of giving license to their own iniquities and lustful desires.

The nature of their excess is described by the word 
which is rendered "lasciviousness" in the King James Version and in the Amplified Bible "lawlessness and wantonness and immorality." The word actually means "licentiousness, debauchery, sensuality." It is used especially in reference to excessive sexual desires and pleasures. Manton says "it is derived from alpha, an augmentative particle, and Selga, the name of a town in Psidia, saith Suidas, whose inhabitants were infamous for sodomy..."

Mayor notes the following:

A man may be and hide his sin: he does not become until he shocks public decency. In classical Greek the word generally signifies insolence or violence towards another...In the later language the prominent idea is sensuality.

It is no wonder then that men have sometime referred to this word as the ugliest word in the list of sins mentioned in the New Testament (Cf. Mk. 7:22; Rom. 13:13; II Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; I Pet. 4:3; II Pet. 2:2,7,18; and Jude 4). It certainly depicts the heinousness of the crime of these "ungodly men" in their perversion of the wonderful grace of our God.

Wolff says:

This term well describes the practical apostasy of Jude's opponents. Had they taught pernicious doctrines, it would not have been so difficult to detect those that had sneaked in. Of course, there is an indissoluble connection between our belief and our behaviour, but their words were perhaps understood in one sense by their followers,

1 Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 114.
2 Manton, Jude, p. 114.
while the ingenuous hearers hoped that they meant another.\(^1\)

In the second place, these "certain men" have flagrantly rebelled against God. This is revealed in the present participle which Judes uses, \(\lambda\rho\alpha\nu\gamma\mu\epsilon\mu\alpha\nu\) which means "deny, repudiate, disown."\(^2\) It is used here with the accusative case for the object, "the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ", which is an application of the Granville Sharp rule. Admittedly there is a problem involved in this phrase and we shall observe the varying interpretations.

Wolff comments:

The word "God" is not found in the best MSS and is omitted by L T Tr A N etc. "Strict grammar favours the rendering according to which there is only one person in all these places, Jesus Christ, who is called 'our only Master and Lord' and 'our great God and Saviour.' There are cases, however, in which strict grammar is misleading, and these may be among them" (J. Denney in Jesus and the Gospel). There is no particular reason to deviate from "strict grammar" here, and we should render: And denying our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. Not two persons, but one person is mentioned. It must be mentioned in passing that the same holds true in Titus 2:13, where the R.S.V. renders correctly: The appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. See also II Peter 1:1, "the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ." In both passages the deity of Christ is thus prominently brought forward. The word "God" has probably been inserted by a copyist because of the word "only" as well as the word "Lord," which is more correctly "master" (despoten).\(^3\)

Lenski says that it is a reference to one person, but he also refers to Robertson's question as to this conclusion. He says:

On page 786 Robertson says that, because \(\kappa\u0395\rho\iota\iota\sigma\) is often anarthrous like a proper noun, this "slightly weakens" the conclusion that Jude has in mind only one person. How else could Jude have referred to one Person save by the standard Greek way of using one article? In order to get two persons, one text, and one view and \(\kappa\iota\u0395\iota\sigma\) to \(\delta\eta\nu\iota\gamma\nu\alpha\nu\) as though this would insure two persons. In view of II Peter 1:1,2 we should still be entitled to translate:

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1 Wolff, Jude, pp. 59-60.
2 Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 107.
3 Wolff, Jude, p. 60.
"our only absolute Master-God and Lord, Jesus Christ" — one person.

Thus it suggests that Jude is emphasizing the nature of the denial of these men who have crept in unawares as that of denying their Master and Lord both by their lives and by their deeds. Lawlor says they were denying all four aspects of Christ's supernatural work: "His absolute sovereignty, His Lordship, His Saviourhood, and His Messiahship." Therefore, Jude seeks to warn these believers against these perverts of the grace of God who would use it to justify their iniquitous deeds and denial of the glorious work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This attitude is found too often among God's children today who sing, "I am not under law, I'm under grace" and fail to understand this wonderful Scriptural teaching and thus use it as an excuse to disregard all regulations concerning personal living. The Apostle Paul combated this concept very well in Romans 6:1,2, "what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Some were saying since we are under the grace of God and not the law, let us go out and live in sin so that God's grace can abound more freely and to a greater degree by the forgiveness of the sin. Paul responds very strongly in verse 2 by saying in effect, "Don't you ever let that thought come into your mind" and in the following verses (vv. 2-10) proves why this cannot be true of the believer.

1Lenski, Peter, John, and Jude, p. 615.
2Lawlor, "Jude," p. 93.
The Problem of "Double Predestination"

The Decree of Reprobation

Some believe there is a double predestination, but we shall seek to prove that this is a faulty interpretation of Scripture. The Bible nowhere teaches that the lost are predestined to their eternal condition. In the second section under this heading we shall examine the proof that predestination is a word used only of believers.

First, let us consider some definitions of the "doctrine of predestination."

Strong in discussing the decrees of God states the following:

While God's total plan with regard to creatures is called predestination, or foreordination, his purpose so to act that certain will believe and be saved is called election, and his purpose so to act that certain will refuse to believe and be lost is called reprobation.¹

Further on in his discussion of the objection that a decree of election implies a decree of reprobation, he gives this answer:

The decree of reprobation is not a positive decree, like that of election, but a permissive decree to leave the sinner to his self-chosen rebellion and its natural consequences of punishment. Election and sovereignty are only sources of good. Election is not a decree to destroy,—it is a decree only to save. When we elect a President, we do not need to hold a second election to determine that the remaining millions shall be non-Presidents. It is needless to apply contrivance or force. Sinners, like water, if simply let alone, will run down hill to ruin. The decree of reprobation is simply a decree to do nothing—a decree to leave the sinner to himself.²

²Ibid., pp. 789-790.
Strong then cites several others on the matter of reprobation:

E.G. Robinson, Christian Theology, 313—"Reprobation in the sense of absolute predestination to sin and eternal damnation, is neither a sequence of the doctrine of election, nor the teaching of the Scripture."

Henry Ward Beecher: "The elect are whosoever will; the non-elect are whosoever won't."

The Westminster Confession reads: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

This latter statement is stated by Strong as that of "supralapsarianism" which dominated the early Westminster Assembly, but the later doctrine of the Presbyterian body in America has stressed the doctrine of reprobation as a "permissive" decree of God and not as an absolute barrier to the salvation of any person.

Dr. Alva J. McClain taught in his theology class on salvation the following concerning this doctrine:

The Bible never teaches that men are elected to perdition in the same sense that men are elected to salvation. Mt. 25:31 with Mt. 13:41: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (v. 31). "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

In Dr. McClain's booklet on Romans 9:11 he makes the following observations on Romans 9:22-23:

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1Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 790.

2Ibid.

As to those vessels "filled for destruction" He bears no responsibility (The Greek verb may be regarded as in the middle voice, i.e., they fitted themselves). Note: In form the verb may be either passive or middle. In most cases, the deciding factor must be doctrinal. And according to New Testament doctrine, men fit themselves for destruction. God is not responsible.1

He also cites Romans 9:22 with 23 noting the difference that: "God endured both; prepared the saved; and the lost fitted themselves for destruction."2

L. Berkhof states his position in his definition of reprobation:

Reprobation may be defined as that eternal decree of God whereby He has determined to pass some men by with the operations of His special grace, and to punish them for their sins, to the manifestation of His justice.3

Loraine Boettner in his book devoted to the doctrine of predestination states his position in favor of a "decree of reprobation" saying:

We believe that from all eternity God has intended to leave some of Adam's posterity in their sin, and that the decisive factor in the life of each is to be found only in God's will.

We shall find that some Scripture passages do teach the doctrine with unmistakeable clearness. These should be sufficient for any one who accepts the Bible as the Word of God...Prov. 16:4...I Peter 2:8...For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ, Jude 4.4

Although, Boettner uses Jude 4 in a long list of Scriptures, supposedly to support the decree of reprobation, he fails to prove by a careful exegesis of the verse that such a doctrine is stated in this verse.

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Upon the basis of our exegetical exposition of the text of Jude 4, we cannot accept the view that this verse teaches a doctrine of predestination to perdition as an absolute decree of God, but rather a decree that involves the permissive will of God.

The Doctrine of Predestination

In the discussion of the great theological doctrine of predestination in this paper one cannot begin to exhaust all of the facets and implications of such a doctrine. Therefore, this writer shall seek to cite those aspects that are pertinent to the treatment of the text of Jude 4. As it has been previously stated, this writer does not believe in a doctrine of predestination in regard to the unsaved, but that this is a word used of believers.

J. Dwight Pentecost says that predestination "has to do with the end to which those who have been elected are set apart. This word, when used in Scripture, is always qualified by a statement of the end or the aim in view."  

Citing Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 8:29; and I Corinthians 2:7; he makes these statements:

From these Scriptures we would emphasize again the important fact that when predestination is used in the Scriptures it determines the end, or the goal in view, for those whom God has elected unto Himself. I find no place in Scripture where it is said that we were predestinated to faith, that we were predestinated to belief, or that we were predestinated for glory. We were predestinated unto sonship or inheritance.  

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2 Ibid.
William C. Robinson in a book of essays on the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith states:

For Christian faith, predestination is a vision of the King in the glory of His grace and warning against transposing the revelation of the majesty of His mercy into an concatenated scheme of human logic. It proclaims the freeness of God's saving grace in Christ, without making of His will an arbitrary fatalism.

The most important thing in the Apostolic statements on predestination in Romans and Ephesians is that it is God who chooses. The doctrine is not primarily predestination, but God who predestines; the decrees are only after God's decreeing.

Clarence B. Bass defines "election" by saying that "the very nature of election restricts its source to God, without regard to anything external to himself." He goes on to relate the word "foreknowledge" to "election" and says "while it is certain that God had prior knowledge of man's actions, it does not follow that any such actions were to be the basis of God's choice of them. Prior knowledge arose out of prior choice--God's unconditional choice."

Dr. McClain's class notes on "God and the World" gives eight statements concerning the Scriptural support for God's plan and purpose which are here stated with one or two Scriptural references:

1. The Bible teaches that God planned the world. Isa. 46:10,11; Eph. 1:11.
2. All of God's purposes and decrees for the world are parts of one single and comprehensive plan. Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:28.
3. This one plan is an eternal plan, and therefore has never been changed, nor can be changed. Eph. 3:11; Jas. 1:17.
4. This plan was freely made, not of necessity. Eph. 1:11; Psa. 135:6.
5. This plan of God includes His action, not His nature. I Jn. 4:8;

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3 Ibid.
6. This plan of God includes all things. Psa. 119:69-91; Job. 11:5; Jas. 4:13-15; Eph. 2:10; Gen. 50:20; I Pet. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:13; Eph. 1:11; and Rom. 8:28.


8. The plan of God for the world is realized in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. Eph. 1:4,5,9,10; 3:11.1

And again it is stated in the above quoted syllabus that “predestination declares that men will be lost or saved as a direct result of what they do. Predestination is the wise and loving plan of a Father and always works for the ultimate good.”2

Therefore, we would concur with the statement of Pentecost to the effect that “we are admittedly dealing with that which the natural mind is unable to comprehend” and the Scriptural view of predestination is not either the extreme of “freewill” or “fatalism”; but somewhere in between these two views which have so sharply divided scholars and believers down through the centuries.3 We must realize that God’s mind is far greater than our human finite minds and we cannot squeeze God into the confines of our feeble minds. May God help us to stop rationalizing the Scriptures and examine the Word of God with a view to see just what His Word says as to how God did work instead of how our preconceived minds think God ought to work.

Conclusion

Therefore, in light of the exegesis and exposition of Jude 1 and


2Ibid., p. 12.

3Pentecost, Things Which Become Sound Doctrine, p. 135.
the general understanding of the meaning of predestination we do not believe that the Word of God teaches a doctrine of "double predestination." We have not been able to find the Scriptural proof, when it is properly interpreted and exegeted, that will substantiate such a doctrine. Especially, in Jude 4 we cannot find any basis for the suggestion by some that these men who crept in stealthily as false teachers were predestined from the ages of eternity to be condemned. The text states that they were "written down beforehand" and that they would appear and their final destiny would be just as God had predicted. They are clearly unregenerate persons and their destiny is sealed unless such persons would change their ways and accept God's Word and His grace. This seems to be a typical example of what Paul was describing in II Timothy 3:5, of a type of godlessness that denies the power of God behind it, and is merely a formal religion.

Truly, we may conclude this paper on Jude 4 with a statement by G.F.C. Frommuller who very succinctly comments on the need of a practical study of the epistle of Jude, "The closer we draw to the last times of the Church, the more we ought to lay to heart this Epistle."¹

VIII. ENGLISH PARAPHRASE
For there are certain persons who have stealthily crept into
the Church, even those of whom it was written down before, either in
the age-old prophecy of Enoch or the New Testament writings such as
II Peter and II Timothy 3; saying that such ungodly, false teachers
would appear; although, their final destiny, namely an adverse or con-
demnatory sentence or judgment would be just as God had predicted
because they are ungodly persons who have perverted the grace of God
into an excuse for their immoral excesses and pleasures, and have
flagrantly rebelled against God by denying our only Master and Lord,
Jesus Christ.
IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Books


Grammars and Lexicons


Unpublished Materials


