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The Authorship, Canonicity, and Authenticity of the Epistle of St Jude

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**THE AUTHORSHIP, CANONICITY, AND AUTHENTICITY
OF THE EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE**

A Thesis Presented to

The Faculty of Concordia Seminary

Department of New Testament

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Divinity

by

Leroy Biesenthal

May 1948

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INTRODUCTION

The study of Introduction has always been an intriguing one. Many of the problems provoked by a study of Introduction cannot be solved. A study, however, of these problems serves to awaken the appreciation of the student. He can see just what processes the books of the Bible went through in being declared authentic and canonic. His interest in Scripture as the Word of God will be greatly deepened with the answer he obtains to the problems before him.

One of the most interesting books of the New Testament, from the isagogical standpoint, is that of the Epistle of St. Jude. It will be the purpose of this thesis to discuss certain of these problems. Under examination especially will be the question of authorship of the Epistle, the question of genuineness, and finally the problem of canonicity.

The materials used will endeavor to cover a portion of the vast amount of material that has been written on the subject - not only from the conservative, but also from the critical viewpoint; not only the writings of the ancient writers, but of the modern scholars. Much of the material will be of secondary sources, because of the inability to

to manage the language of the original manuscripts. We have endeavored to limit ourselves, however, to accredited scholars who have made use of the primary sources.

THE AUTHORSHIP, DATE AND AUTHORITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

1. The Introduction

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

As to the question of the authorship of the book of Job we have the internal evidence offered by the book itself. The writer names himself upon the first page, the servant of Job, the son of Eliphaz, and brother of Temai, the servant of Zerah. This claim is corroborated by a certain line of evidence which brings out questions which may be answered. In these few external evidences to the fact that a man wrote this book? If Job is the author, what of the style and content in the Bible in the author's own words? The style is simple and direct, and the content is full of wisdom and insight. The life of the author, the style of the book, and the evidence of the text.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

There is little external evidence for ascribing the

THE AUTHORSHIP, CANONICITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF

THE EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE.

I. The Authorship

Internal Evidence

As to the question of the authorship of the book of Jude we have the internal evidence offered in the book itself. The author names himself when he says, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called."

This claim to authorship by a certain Jude or Judas immediately brings out questions which must be answered. Is there any external evidence to the fact that a Jude wrote this book? If Jude is the author, which of the Judes mentioned in the Bible is the author? After we determine answers to these and other questions, and then only are we ready to discuss the life of the author, elements of style and other peculiarities of the letter.

External Evidence

There is little external evidence for ascribing the

authorship of this book to Jude. It has more or less simply been taken for granted that a man named Jude wrote the Book.

Much of course has been written on the subject, but actually the only authorities at our command are the ancient fathers.¹ Men like Tertullian, Augustine and Origen not only regard the author as Jude, but list him as an apostle.²

Which Jude is Author of the Epistle?

Granted that a man named Jude wrote the book, we are immediately interested in determining whether one of the Judes mentioned in the Bible is the author of the Epistle before us. Thiessen distinguished seven different Judes in the Biblical records viz., Judas the ancestor of Jesus (Lu.iii.30); Judas the Galilean (Acts v.37); Judas Iscariot (Mark iii.19); Judas with whom Paul lodged in Damascus (Acts ix.11); Judas Barsabbas (Acts xv.22); Judas the son (or brother) of James (Lu. vi.16, Acts i.13, John xiv.22) an apostle and commonly identified with Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus; and Judas the brother of James.³ From this we see that the name Judas was a very common one during the early Christian era. It is not at all surprising then that the author adds a note of identification "a servant of Jesus Christ, a brother of James." Plummer notes that only

1. For a full discussion of the external attestations of the ancient fathers see Chapter III, pp. 57-80.

2. Alfred Plummer, St. James and St. Jude, p. 372.

3. Henry Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament, p. 293.

two of the Judes mentioned deserve any consideration:

1. Judas not Iscariot, who seems also to have been called Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus, for in the lists of the Apostles, Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus (the readings are confused) stands in Matt.x and Mark iii as the equivalent of 'Judas (the son) of James' in Luke vi and Acts 1.

2. Judas, one of the four brethren of the Lord; the names of the other three being James, Joseph or Joses and Simeon (Matt. xiii.55; Mark vi.3) ⁴

Barnes claims that there is no difficulty in determining which of these two Judes is meant. There are two apostles called Jude. One was Iscariot, the other the author of the Book of Jude. I do not think that he is justified in his reasoning, which continues:

In the catalogue of the Apostles given by Matthew (x.3) the tenth place is given to an apostle who is there called 'Lebbaeus,' whose surname was 'Thaddaeus;' and as this name does not occur in the list given by Luke (vi. 15) and as the tenth place in the catalogue is occupied by 'Simeon called Zelotes,' and as he afterwards mentions 'Judas the brother of James,' it is supposed that Lebbaeus and Judas were the same persons. It was not uncommon for persons to have two or more names. ⁵

The error on Barnes' part is that he assumes that the writer of this Epistle is an Apostle. If that assumption were correct, his reasoning would be quite logical, for we have in the two lists (Lk. and Mark) the names of the twelve apostles. If eleven names are identical, it follows that the twelfth person is one and the same. Barnes notes that

4. Plummer, op. cit., p. 571.

5. Albert Barnes, Notes on the New Testament, vol.10, p.331.

it is not impossible for a person to have more than one name. We claim, however, that Barnes' first assumption is wrong as we shall show below as we prove from external evidence that this Jude was not an apostle.⁶

The general conclusion of Barnes is given some support by an interesting note in Plummer's St. James and St. Jude. He notes that the Authorized Version would identify Judas Lebbaeus with Judas the brother of the Lord by giving to the "Judas of James" (Luke vi, Acts i) the meaning of "brother of James".⁷ After Jude calls himself "brother of James" in our Epistle, the translators of the Authorized Version assume that the Judas mentioned in the list of the Apostles (Acts i, Luke vi) is also "brother of James." That implies a twofold inference on the part of the translators, 1. that Jude the author of the Epistle was an apostle, and 2. that the Judas mentioned in the list of the apostles is the author of the Epistle.⁸ What this amounts to is an adding of words to support a pre-conceived notion or judgment.

We hold that this view is untenable, because it is inconsonant with Greek usage. The Greek of Luke vi is Καὶ Τουδου Τελλου "Jude of James." Regular Greek usage de-

6. See Chapter III, p. 42-53.

7. Plummer, op. cit., p. 372.

8. This rendering was introduced by the Geneva version. Previous versions either leave the meaning doubtful, Judas of James, as Wiclif, or translate "James' sonne" as Tyndale and Cranmer. Luther is also in favor of 'son' rather than brother. cf. Plummer, op. cit., p. 372.

notes parentage by affixing to the child's name, the name of the father in the genitive case.⁹ Accordingly, Ἰουδα Ἰακώβου indicates that this apostle is the son of James. It is unfair exegesis, translation and interpretation to give the meaning "brother of James" to words which clearly indicate that "son of James" is meant. Furthermore, it is impossible to assume that Jude was an apostle, and, therefore, the hypothesis on which these men based their assumption was a wrong one.¹⁰

We conclude, therefore, that the Jude mentioned is not Judas Lebbaeus, but that Jude who clearly identifies himself as a brother of James, one of the brethren of the Lord. If we can establish the identity of this James, we hold that we have also definitely identified the author of our Epistle.

His relation to James

If Jude is one of the brethren of the Lord, and if James is of the brethren of the Lord, then Jude and James must be brothers. We know that James did have a brother Jude, but

9. Goodspeed holds that this is the accepted way of denoting friendship in the papyri also. cf. E. J. Goodspeed, An Introduction to the New Testament, p. 348. Blass-Debrunner states that this is the classical way "zur Bezeichnung einer Person nach dem Vater," cf. Friedrich Blass' Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, p. 99. Robertson calls it a genitive of membership or of relationship. He cites many examples of this, yet, says, "In Luke vi. 16 and Acts i. 13 we have Ἰουδα Ἰακώβου which probably means the (ἀδελφός) brother of Jude in view of Jude i (ἀδελφός Ἰακώβου) rather than son." It is odd that Robertson could make this one exception. cf. A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, p. 501.

10. For a discussion on the Apostleship of Jude, see Chapter III, p. 49-53.

can we identify this James more closely? Mombert claims that it could not be James the Apostle and brother of John, for he was early martyred (Acts xii.2); nor could it have been James the son of Alphaeus, called the Little, concerning whom we have no definite information (Mark xv.40). The only man of distinction bearing that name is James the revered head of the church of Jerusalem.¹¹ We conclude that it is of this James that Jude is brother.¹²

Radical views on authorship

Having concluded that the author of the Epistle of Jude is Jude, one of the brethren of the Lord and of James the revered head of the church of Jerusalem, we could proceed to his life, style and so forth were it not for the radical views concerning the authorship of this Epistle and concerning the claims made by the author. It has been held by some that

11. J. I. Mombert, "The Epistle General of Jude", Lange-Schaff Commentary, v.25, p. 5.

12. The brethren of the Lord did not believe in him as the Messiah (John vii.5). No doubt James was among them. It was only after the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7) and after the ascension that we find them in the circle of believers (Acts i.14). Concerning James himself, Mombert says, "Among the brothers of the Lord, after they had become believers, James soon occupied a prominent position. He is introduced as the representative of the Jewish Christian tendency in the Mother Church (Acts xii. 17). His near bodily relation to the Lord, his pious life and austere habits soon raised him to apostolic dignity. At the Apostolic Council on the obligatoriness of the law, his judgment proved decisive (Acts xv.13). The council of elders gathered round him (Acts xxi.13). Among the pillars of the church he is mentioned first (Gal. ii. 9) while otherwise Peter is the Prince of the Apostles." cf. Mombert, op. cit., p. 6.

he mentions a relationship to James, simply to assure the acceptance of his book.¹³ Of the relationship of Jude and James, Goodspeed simply believes that the term "brother of James" was added to his name by some later copier of his letter who took the writer to be the Jude mentioned in Mark vi. 3 as a brother of James and Jesus.¹⁴ Moffatt quotes Harnack on this question; Harnack conjectures that "some unknown Judas of the second century (A.D. 100-130) wrote this homily against a contemporary phase of Syro-Palestinian gnosticism, and that the words *ἀδελφὸς ἐκ Ἰακώβου* were added later (A.D. 150 - 180) when it became desirable, in the light of the rampant gnosticism of the age, to guarantee the writing's authority."¹⁵

Grotius is of the opinion that Jude was written by that Jude who, according to Eusebius was fifteenth and last of the Jewish line of bishops of Jerusalem.¹⁶ If this view is held, one must either look upon the words *ἀδελφὸς ἐκ Ἰακώβου* as an interpolation or as a title born by all the successors of James in his episcopal chair. No evidence can be given in support of either alternative.

The view expressed by Grotius has been revived and some-

13. J.B. Mayor, "The General Epistle of Jude," The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 5, p. 226.

14. Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 343.

15. J. Moffatt, An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 357.

16. Grotius, quoted in Charles Biggs, "Introduction to the Epistle of St. Jude," The International Critical Commentary, p. 319.

what modified by Juelicher. It seems that at one time Juelicher thought that Judas was probably the real name of the author of the Epistles, and that "brother of James" meant nothing more than "bishop". But in his Einleitung he has abandoned this view and now thinks it most probable that:

The author belonged by birth to that circle in which the memory of James was held in special honor; that he did not venture to foist his well-meant work on James himself, but contented himself with a member of his family. Perhaps Judas lived on after his brother, down to a time at which none of the Apostles of the Lord survived in Palestine, and therefore could be most easily selected out of the men of the first generation as the announcer of the appearance of the prophecied abominations. 17

This evidence, however, is inconclusive. To accept the view of Grotius, one must either disregard a portion of the text or assume something for which there is no evidence. Juelicher in his view is even more radical. It is comforting to note that those who would distort the authorship of our book into a forgery are by far a minority.

Life of the Author

We know very little of the life of this man Jude. He was probably married and apparently traveled a good deal, taking his wife with him on his journeys (1 Cor. ix. 5). Nicephorus Callisti (c. A.D. 1350, Hist. Eccles. i. 33) reports a tradition that Jude's wife was Mary the mother of James and Joses,

17. Juelicher, Einleitung, 1901, i.p. 132, quoted in Biggs op. cit., p. 320.

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and that his mother was Salome.¹⁸ This tradition is reported too late to give it general credence. Hegesippus relates an interesting tale with regard to two of Jude's grandsons. It was near the end of Domitian's reign when these two men, grandsons of Jude and farmers, were brought before the Emperor on the charge that they were descendants of David, and were Christians. When Domitian heard that they were poor, and saw their horny hands he dismissed them as harmless Jews.¹⁹ We do not know what became of Jude himself. Tradition has it that he preached to the Jews in Palestine and in Egypt.²⁰ The Syrians still claim him as their apostle.²¹ In the West it is generally admitted that he was a martyr. According to Greek Menology, however, on May 22 'he fell asleep in peace,' but on June 19 he was hung on a cross and run through with javelins at Arat or Arara.²² In art, St. Jude is usually represented with a club or a cross, and sometimes with a carpenter's square. Often, too, a boat or a ship is near him. By the Greeks he is depicted as a young man with a nascent beard.²³

18. G.T. Purves, "Jude the Lord's Brother," A Dictionary of the Bible, J. Hastings, ed., vol. 2, p. 799.

19. Eusebius, H.E., III. xx. 1-3, cf. Plummer, op. cit., p. 374.

20. A.H. Strong, Popular Lectures on the Books of the New Testament, p. 370.

21. Adiel Sherwood, Notes on the New Testament, vol. 2, p. 694.

22. S. Baring-Gould, The Lives of the Saints, vol. 12, p. 677.

23. ibid., p. 677.

His Style

Regarding the style of the author, some of the critics have very little to say. Bigg says, "Jude's language about the faith is highly dogmatic, highly orthodox, highly zealous. His tone is that of a bishop of the fourth century."²⁴

The writer shows a fondness for triplets. We note some of these triplets: Judas, a servant ... and brother (v.1); to them that are sanctified, preserved ... and kept (v.1); mercy unto you and peace and love (v.2); ungodly men, turning ... and denying (v.4); defile, despise ... speak evil (v.8); Cain, Balaam, Core (v.11); In addition to triplets, he also uses couplets, double triplets and quartettes.²⁵ Chase detects an obvious Christian element in the writing because of the use of words as κλυταί, σωτηρία, πίστις; a knowledge of the LXX because in the Epistle there are several words derived from the LXX which are not independently used by other writers, e.g. ἐκ πορνείων, ἀδελφί, ὑπέρβατος;²⁶ and a use of stately, sonorous, sometimes poetical words e.g. ἀποσιγήσει, ἀδυνατίειν.²⁷ Summing up, Chase says, "The vocabulary then of the Epistle

24. Bigg, op. cit., p. 325.

25. Mayor, op. cit., p. 229.

26. Robertson disagrees with Chase on this point. He says, "He cannot be steeped in the language of the LXX with Chase, but there is a more Hebraistic flavor than is observed in James his brother. He has literary affinities with some of the apocryphal books, and with some of Paul's writings." A. T. Robertson, op. cit. p. 124.

27. F. H. Chase, "Epistle of Jude," A Dictionary of the Bible, J. Hastings, ed., vol. 2, p. 300.

proves that the author, though a Jew, was yet a man of some culture, and, as it would seem, not without acquaintance with Greek writers. Writers, however, of the 'common' dialect, embodying older strata of the language would suffice to supply him with his vocabulary."²⁸

According to Robertson there is nothing peculiar in his grammar, for he uses the Greek idiom in a normal fashion. There are two occurrences of the optative (*ἰδνευοεις* v.2 and *ἰτιγῆιον* v.9); the article is used with the participle, and the use of grammatical cases, pronouns, tenses and the free use of the participle indicate a real mastery of current Greek. He has 20 words (one doubtful) not found elsewhere in the New Testament.²⁹ The grammatical usage of the writer, and his general use of vocabulary prompts Robertson to say that, "The correctness of Greek is quite consonant with the authorship of the brother of Jesus, since Palestine was a bilingual country."³⁰

A Comparison of his Style with that of James

A comparison of the style of the two brothers, James and Jude is interesting. A discussion on the resemblances and difference between the two Epistles is to be found in Mayor's study of the letters. A tone of authority pervades both Epistles, yet there is an evident air of humility on the part

28. ibid., p. 800.

29. For a complete list of these words, see Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 709.

30. Robertson, op. cit., p. 124.

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of the writer. They seem to be highly regarded by their readers, yet simply refer to themselves as servants of Jesus Christ. They both use picturesque language. To obtain vividness both writers refer to past events, James referring to Abraham, Rahab, Job and Elijah, Jude to the Israelites in the wilderness, the fallen angels, Sodom, Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam and Korah. Both exhibit a moral strictness and utter a stiff rebuke against sin. As to their vocabulary, the most striking resemblance is the use of ψυχικός as opposed to πνευματικός.

There are also striking differences in the two letters. Jude apparently belongs to a much later period of Christian development than does James. When James wrote (ca. 45 A.D.), there were as yet no other canonical books in existence. His theological position is that of the early church described in the opening chapters of Acts. Jude seems to be acquainted with Pauline writings, for he addresses his readers in Pauline language, as καταί (v.1) and ἀγιοί (v.3). Jude makes reference to apocryphal literature while James does not, although there are signs that James was not unacquainted with rabbinical traditions. Finally, James is full of instruction for the present period, while Jude is written in the spirit of denunciation.

31. For a full discussion of this matter, see Mayor, op. cit., pp. 227-231.

Purpose of the Epistle

The purpose for which our author wrote his Epistle perhaps accounts for the spirit in which it was written. Then, too, certain peculiarities might be due solely to the individual writing style of the author. There is a certain ambiguity in the opening sentence of the Epistle. The question is whether the words "of our common salvation" go with what proceeds or what follows. From the content of the letter, however, we can only conclude that the sense is not "when I gave all diligence to write unto you, I was constrained to write unto you of our common salvation," but, "when I gave all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith." It can be easily seen that this Epistle is not a letter about "our common salvation." The fact seems to be that Jude was about to write just such a letter when a crisis, created by the creeping in of ungodly men into the church prompted him to write a letter of a very different nature.³² From the words it seems that immediate action was imperative.

A very interesting reasoning for the urgency of the letter is presented by Bigg, who writes:

By far the easiest and most probable explanation of the facts is that the errors denounced in both Epistles (2 Peter, Jude) took their origin from

32. DeWette, following Sherlock, supposes that Jude was actually engaged on a larger and more general epistle, and was compelled to break it off by the necessity mentioned. Taken from Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, p. 530.

Corinth, that the disorder was spreading, that St. Peter took alarm and wrote his second Epistle, sending a copy to St. Jude with a warning of the urgency of the danger, and that St. Jude at once issued a similar letter to the churches in which he was personally interested. In fact, both Epistles may be samples of a circular that was issued to many churches at the same time. In this way we get a perfectly natural explanation of Jude 3, a most significant verse. The writer had evidently received a sudden alarm which had obliged him to write one thing when he was purposing to write quite another. ³³

Moffat has a different way of stating the purpose of the Epistle: "Alarmed at the possibility of his friends being contaminated by these intruders, he writes this brief, forcible warning, full of what Origen called ἐπιμαχία λόγου. It denounces rather than describes the objects of its attacks, and there is a note of exaggerated severity in it, 'a certain hastiness and tendency to take things at the worst.'" ³⁴

Zahn holds that the words ἄλλο γράμμα do not necessarily imply that he was going to write another letter at all. He is of the opinion rather, that he had in mind something more didactic and of greater scope. "It does imply, that the writing in question was intended for the readers, but beyond this it can refer to a work consisting of a number of parts quite as well as to a letter." ³⁵

33. Bigg, op. cit., p. 316.

34. Moffat, op. cit., p. 353.

35. T. Zahn, Introduction to the New Testament, Eng. Trans., v.2, p. 242.

A discussion of the purpose of the writing would not be complete without mentioning the radical view of Renan. Renan accepts the Epistle as a relic of the Apostolic age, placing it as early as 54 A.D. He considers the Epistle to be an attack on St. Paul, believing that Jude had St. Paul in mind when he denounced those who "in their dreamings defile the flesh, and set at nought dominion, and rail at dignities." "If we believe this," says Plummer, "we should be ready enough to believe that he was not really 'Judas, brother of James,' but one who did not dare say openly in the church the accusations which he tried to insinuate."³⁶ No critic has upheld this strange view taken by Renan. His influence would rule out all Pauline influence, as well as Petrine. The contents of the book do not allow this.

Addressees

From the content of the Epistle itself, it is impossible to determine the exact locality for which it was intended. Palestine, Asia Minor, and Alexandria have all been suggested. Jude simply says, "To them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ". (v.1). The persons addressed were Christians, but they apparently embrace all Christians, whether Jew or Gentile, whether inside or outside of Palestine.³⁷ The contents are such as would chiefly interest

³⁶ Plummer, *op. cit.*, 371.

³⁷ Camerlynck takes the view that it was not addressed to Christians in general, but to a particular church. He bases his position on vv. 3,4,17,22, A. Camerlynck, "Epistle of St. Jude", The Catholic Encyclopedia, v.8, p. 544.

Jewish Christians. The Epistle, therefore, may have been intended for the Jews in Palestine and the surrounding territories, but the address does not limit the message to them.³⁸ The writer has in mind all Christians. The evils opposed are much the same as those opposed in 2 Peter. It is doubtful that these two men would address their letter to the same people. Perhaps it was meant for the same people as those for whom the author's brother James wrote his Epistle.³⁹

The words of Jude can be applied to all Christians, but whether this was his sole purpose, namely the warning of Christians of the time in general, or some particular congregations, we cannot decide for lack of evidence.

Deissmann concludes that the very address itself precludes the idea of the letter having been written for a particular locality. He divides the books of the Bible into literary and non-literary works, placing Jude among the

38. Arnaud says with reference to this that Jude, "expounds his proofs in a manner peculiar to the Jews. From the beginning to the end he uses their mode of speech and their manner of expressing an idea; he employs images and comparisons, makes allusions, and uses myths, traditions and examples, which were familiar to them." Quoted in J. E. Huther, "The Epistle of St. Jude," Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament, v. 10, p. 660-661.

39. Mayor upholds this latter view. He says, "In my edition of James I have argued that his epistle was addressed to the Jews of the eastern Diaspora and it seems not improbable that Jude, writing many years after his brother's death, may have wished to supply his place by addressing to the same circle of readers the warning which he felt bound to utter under the perilous circumstances of the new age." Mayor, op. cit., p. 227.

literary. Of them he says,

...we recognize in other New Testament texts literary epistles, most clearly in the Epistles of James, Peter and Jude, which have from ancient times been known as 'catholic' or 'general'. A glance at the 'addressees' shows that these are not real letters. Impossible demands are made of the 'bearer' if we are to imagine one. A 'letter' for instance, superscribed to 'the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad' would be simply undeliverable. James, in whose praescript we find this 'address' writes as does the author of the Epistle of Baruch 'to the nine-and-a-half tribes that are in captivity.' In these cases we have to do not with the definite addressees but with a great 'catholic circle of readers.' The authors did not dispatch a single copy of their 'letter' as did St. Paul did of Philippians, for example: they published a number of copies" ⁴⁰

Again we have a lack of positive evidence to refute Deissmann fully. Even if the letters were delivered in pamphlet form, we do not in any way see how this would effect their purpose or validity. Both in Jude and James, however, there seems to be an evident awareness of certain definite existing conditions. We feel that this would hardly be shown in the letters, were they sent out in pamphlet form for a wide distribution. Neither would it be impossible for a carrier to carry the message from tribe to tribe for a reading before the tribal assembly.

With regard to the bearer problem, Deissmann is guilty of some faulty exegesis, for the "twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," (Jas. 1) is a figure of speech, referring

40. Adolf Deissmann Light from the Ancient East, revised edition, p. 242.

to the fact that all Christians are but sojourners on earth. The phrase does not refer to a physical locality whatsoever.

Content

An allusion has already been made to the content. Jude was about to write his addressees concerning their common salvation when a serious crisis prompts him to do otherwise. The letter becomes a strong exhortation to guard against the ungodly men who have crept into the church, and to contend earnestly for their faith. ⁴¹

Summary

It has been the burden of this chapter to show that the author of the Epistle of Jude is Jude, brother of the Lord, and brother of James the renowned head of the church at Jerusalem. We have presented what little we know of his life, have discussed his style along with a comparison of his style with that of his brother James. It was the purpose of his letter to warn against ungodly men and to exhort his readers to remain steadfast. There is no evidence to determine those for whom the book was intended, but the strong Jewish flavor tends to prove that it was written for the Jewish people, perhaps in and around Palestine.

41. Mayor thinks very little of the content of the letter. He says, "To a modern reader it is curious rather than edifying, with the exception of the beginning and the end." Mayor op. cit., p. 232. We cannot agree with Mayor on this point. The epistle is a strong exhortation to the Christian of today. Let each Christian contend for the faith that is his.

II. The Authenticity of Jude

In determining whether such a book as our Epistle could have been written by Jude, we must determine whether such a book could have been written at this time at all. We must also examine some of the arguments of those who claim that the book is a pseudepigraphic work. Because of the very nature of the book, most of our arguments must be gained by inference. There is very little in the letter itself that lends itself to a study of the authenticity of the book. There is, for example, nothing in the text of the book which limits the dating to a particular period. As an instance of this, the false teachers described could well find their counterpart in false teachers of today. It is by association with other events that we must find a dating for our book.

Possible external evidence

We have already referred to the story preserved for us by Hegesippus, concerning the grandsons of Jude.¹ The Emperor before whom they were brought was Domitian. Domitian came to the throne in 81 A.D. He died in 95 A.D., and so his meeting with the grandsons of Jude must have taken place between these two dates. When they met with the Emperor, they were already grown men, for the narrative speaks of

1. cf. Chapter I, p. 8.

their "horny hands," which is sufficient proof that they were already hardened laborers. We believe, because of these facts, it is also safe to assume that Jude was dead before Domitian came to the throne. That means that our Epistle was probably written before 81 A.D.

More controversial is the question whether the Epistle was written before or after the fall of Jerusalem which occurred in 70 A.D. Those holding the former view state that Jude could not have failed to mention that great evidence of God's destructive wrath upon men. In his Epistle, Jude lists several of the great judgments passed on man, e.g. Cain, Balaam, Korah. How could he possibly overlook the great judgment which was so close at hand?

The other point of view is that Jude, writing very shortly after the destruction of the holy city, purposely omitted it from his catalogue of judgments. It is held that Jude did not care to open a fresh wound, that he did not wish to recall an event so fearful and so recent. This argument loses its force when a study of the Epistle itself is carefully made. Then too, it seems that his readers would stand in much greater need of his strong warning and exhortation before the fall, rather than immediately after so great a visitation to God's people.²

2. With reference to the claim that Jude would have mentioned the fall of Jerusalem, Bigg says, "this meaning can hardly be extracted from the passage." Bigg, op. cit., p. 315.

The Relationship to Christ

Another mode of dating the Epistle is to synchronize the life of Jude with that of Christ. The attempt is made to establish the date by fixing the precise relationship of Jude to the Lord. We have been mentioning the fact that Jude was "brother of the Lord." This opens the question whether Christ did have any brothers and sisters according to our use of the term. There is nothing in Scripture that would militate against such a possibility. In fact, the terms used seem to indicate that Christ could quite possibly have had brothers, and perhaps sisters. The term used to denote this relationship is ἀδελφός. The first meaning given for ἀδελφός is "a brother," whether born of the same two parents, or only of the same father or the same mother.³ Thayer holds that ἀδελφός is parallel to the Hebrew אָבִיבִי. Accordingly, "brethren of the Lord" are neither sons of Joseph by a former wife, nor cousins, but actual brothers born after Jesus. Had this not been the case, in Lk. 11.7, we would have found ὕψις παραγενῆ instead of ἀδὲν π. πρωτόγενης.⁴ Thayer does not ascribe the meaning "cousin" to ἀδελφός.⁵ Von Soden takes this view also. Writing on the subject, he says,

3. Thayer, op. cit., p. 10.

4. ibid., p. 10.

5. It is interesting to note that the Greek word for "cousin" in Lk. 1.33 and 1.53 is συγγενής. These are the only two occurrences of the term in New Testament Greek. The New Testament uses the regular term for "cousin" ἀνεψιός (Col. iv. 10).

" ἀδελφός und ἀδελφὸς bezeichnen in NT entweder im eigentlichen Sinn die leibliche Geschwisterschaft oder im uebertragenen Sinn die geistliche Bruderschaft der Israeliten bzw Christen untereinander." ⁶ The idea that "brother of Christ" must mean "cousin of Christ" is fostered by the Catholics because of their doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Kittel says, "Die altkatholische Kirche wollte wegen der dauernden Jungfrauschaft Marias vollbluetige leibliche Geschwister Jesu nicht anerkennen; sie galten ihr als Kinder Josephs aus einer fruhern Ehe oder als Vettern und Basen Jesu." ⁷

Some, who are agreed that Jesus did have brothers, are not agreed on the question whether these were brothers by a former marriage of Joseph, or brothers born after Jesus. Salmon holds that there is the possibility for either children of Joseph by a former wife, or close kinsmen, but he speaks strongly in favor of the former view. "The manner in which the four brothers are mentioned in Matt. xiii.55, would scarcely be natural if they were not members of the same household as our Lord. The Protevangelium and the Gospel according to St. Peter (as we know from Origen's Commentary on Matt. xiii.55) represent these brothers as sons of Joseph

6. Von Soden quoted in Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Erster Band, p. 144.

7. ibid., p. 144.

by a former wife. Hegesippus, describing Simeon, the second Bishop of Jerusalem, as our Lord's cousin, never calls him "brother" of our Lord as he does James and Jude." ⁸

Biggs has a few interesting notes on this question. He says,

Some help toward fixing the date would be gained if we could settle the precise relationship of Jude to our Lord. Clement of Alexandria, following the very ancient tradition embodied in the Protevangelium of James, regarded him as the son of Joseph by a former marriage (adumb. in Ep. Judae ad initium). If we accept this view, Jude was older than Christ, though possibly not by many years, as he is named last, or last but one of the brethren. And this view is commended not only by the peculiar form of Jude's address, - he seems to shrink from calling himself the Lord's brother, - but by the fact that the brethren on more than one occasion appear to have claimed a certain right to interfere with the Lord's freedom of action (Matt. xii.46; John vii.3); indeed all the passages where the Lord's brethren are mentioned in the Gospels are most readily understood in the same way. But if this is so, and if Jude was born some six or seven years before the Christian era, we could safely date the Epistle after 65 A.D. or thereabouts. Those who, while accepting the Epistle as authentic, would place it about 80 or 90 A.D., must face this as well as other difficulties. ⁹

Looking over the meanings of *ἀδελφοί* we can only conclude that it was highly possible that Jesus did have brothers according to the flesh. If then, Jude was a younger brother of Jesus, he would not have been too old a man to write the Epistle about 65 A.D., the date accepted by many scholars. Actually, it makes little difference whether Jude was a

8. Salmon, op. cit., p. 475.

9. Biggs, op. cit., p. 315.

brother older or younger than Christ. In either case it is highly possible that his letter could have been written within the first century.

Jude's Reference to the Apostles

Those who uphold a late dating for the Epistle point to v. 17 where Jude says, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." The implication is that Jude was reaching into the distant past to ask his readers to remember something written long before; ergo, this Epistle was not written until sometime in the second century. The words, themselves, however, do not prove this contention. Jude could just as well have exhorted his readers to remember something said quite recently as something in the far past. This argument as presented by those who hold the late dating is simply stretched to support their point. Juelicher, according to Bigg, is of the opinion that Jude is a man of late date because of his reference to the apostles as being quite a thing of the past (v. 17), but also because of his stiff orthodoxy (vv. 3, 20) and by reason of his quotation of a Christian saying as written long ago, as well as because of his use of the apocrypha, which is not in the Apostolic manner. Says Bigg, "The actual conclusion at which he arrives is that Jude must have been written before 130 (on the ground of external attestation), that one cannot fix the date between 100

and 130, but that it must have been rather early than late between these two limits, because the author evidently regards this outbreak of Gnostic godlessness as a new thing."¹⁰

This brings us to the two real points at issue in dating the Epistle. If we could determine who the false teachers were that Jude had in mind, we could establish fairly well the date of the Epistle. The other point at issue is the discussion of the relationship of this Epistle to the second Epistle of St. Peter. If we can establish the priority of either Epistle, we again have something definite by which to date our Epistle.

The Question of the Ungodly Men

What does Jude say about these ungodly men? In the Epistle he informs us that they crept into the church un-awares, that they turn the grace of God into license, and deny the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, they had given themselves over to fornication, they defiled the flesh, they ignored the authorities placed over them, speaking evil of dignitaries. They sit at the love feasts of the Christians, unashamed of their conduct, mocking and blaspheming. Now we are interested in trying to determine just who these ungodly men were. Were they a definite class of men such as the Gnostics? Were they teachers with a doctrine already well formulated, or were they simply by conduct and example trying to pollute the Christians?

10. ibid. p. 313-14.

Undoubtedly these men were libertines who translated the grace of God into license. Two charges are brought against them. They are described as godless persons who pervert the grace of God into immorality, and as persons denying the Christian's only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.¹¹ They were under the impression that as Christians they were free, free to live lives of sensuality and covetousness. They were teachers, not by a formulated doctrine, but by their lives, denying the Lord Jesus Christ in lives of sin. They had become fruitless trees, clouds without water, raging waves of the sea. The love feasts they used as occasion for sin, feeding themselves with no thought of their fellow, eager to satisfy their own desires, glorying in themselves instead of in God. Jude does not hint that these feasts were in themselves unchaste, for they were the feasts of the readers. Neither does he accuse the readers of intimacy with these men, nor of a participation in their sins. The point is that they allow these men to take part in their love feasts. They need to know that those who sit with them are unclean, that

11. Regarding these two accusations against these men, Zahn says, "the first of these charges presupposes a teaching in which the fact that the Christians are under grace is used to justify an immoral life. Since these persons claimed to be Christians, the latter charge must mean that they separated themselves from Christ as Lord by their disobedience, denying Him, not in name, but in fact, by living a life inconsistent with the confession of Him." Zahn, op. cit., p. 243.

they are filled with unhaste feelings and desires. It is the very nature of these ungodly men that prompts Jude to write so strongly to his readers. It would be easy for his readers to detect a bold sect openly proclaiming a stand against God's grace, and denying the redemption of Christ. But these men have crept into the church itself; they have crept in "unawares," unknown to the unsuspecting Christians. Then, when rebuked by the elders and authorities of the church, they not only refuse to submit, but have reviled those who were set over them.

We conclude that a special class of men cannot be meant here by the author. Summarizing what we know of them, we can conclude from the internal evidence, only the following: they apparently were members of the church. Perhaps they considered themselves good members, men of the Spirit, making a great distinction between themselves and ordinary Christians. There is no conclusive evidence to prove that they were an organized sect, or to prove that they had a set formula of doctrine. It is interesting to note, however, some of the conclusions reached by scholars in the field.

Views of Critics

Speaking of the false teachers, Davidson says, "The description of the men who had crept in among the readers suits antinomian Gnosticism only. Now Gnosticism proper did

not exist in the first century."¹² With these few words, Davidson expresses his conviction that the ungodly men were Gnostics. The Epistle is then given a late dating to suit the conclusion he has reached concerning the ungodly men.

Hilgenfeld agrees with Davidson when he says, "The heretical teachers here attacked are manifestly Gnostics of the second century with their contemptuous repudiation of God and the angels of the Old Testament (vers. 8-10) of Jesus as the merely human organ of the higher Christ (ver. 4), and of the inferior psychical people (ver. 19), and with their Gnostic libertine tendencies (vers. 8, 10, 16) Its composition by Jude, whether one of the Lord's brethren or one of the twelve is out of the question."¹³

Dorner says, "The persons whom Jude opposes are not merely such as have practically swerved from the way; they are also teachers of error."¹⁴

Clement of Alexandria thinks that Jude is speaking prophetically of the abominable doctrines of the Gnostic teacher Carpocrates.¹⁵ Others take this view with the omission of the word "prophetically," and so obtain an argument against the genuineness of the book. Bigg has a rather lengthy

12. Marcus Dods, An Introduction to the New Testament, p. 227.

13. Hilgenfeld, Einleitung, p. 744, quoted in Bigg, op. cit., p. 227.

14. Dorner, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 390.

15. Clement of Alexandria, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 390, (Strom III.ii sub. fin.)

discussion on the background and teaching of the Carpoetrations, and of the possibility of their being the ungodly men to whom Jude makes reference. We feel that his discussion bears repeating in full.

As to the date of Carpoetrationalism we only know that the sect was in existence before the time of Hegesippus (Bas. H.E. 4,22.5) and of Irenaeus (1.25, 2.51-54). Carpoetrates is said to have insisted on the unity of God, but to have taught that the world was made by the evil angels. According to this statement of Irenaeus, he was therefore a dualist, like all Gnostics. It is possible, however, that Irenaeus did not rightly apprehend the precise form of his teaching on this point. At any rate, the doctrine of his son, Epiphanes, was quite different. Epiphanes based his moral system on the state of nature, which is divine, yet neither chaste nor honest. "God," he said, "made the vines in common for all men; they reject neither the sparrow nor the thief." The same rule applies to the differences of sex. In all things the divine justice is λογικὴ ἀδελφότης. Human law violates this natural equality of right, makes the thief and makes the adulterer. Nature is divine, but law is devilish. In the fragments from the work of Epiphanes on Justice, preserved by Clement of Alexandria (Strom 111.2), we are not told expressly who was supposed to be the author of law, but it was probably the adversary, the Devil. Our Lord taught us that we are to free ourselves from the adversary, (Ln. xii, 53). This is to be done by breaking all his rules, and completing the cycle of experience which he forbids. Those who have not attained in this way to perfect emancipation must return again to life in other bodies till they have found freedom. (Irenaeus 1.25,4) 16

This will give us some insight into the teaching of the Carpoetrations. Could they possibly be the ungodly men referred to by Jude? Biggs says,

16. Biggs, op. cit., p. 312.

Some of the Gnostics did not desire to separate wholly from the church, but this can hardly have been the case with the Carpocratians.

Whatever view we take of this extravagant sect it is impossible to suppose that Jude actually had seen or heard of them. Carpocratianism was built on Stoicism (*Jude's* *Stoicism*) and on the Republic of Plato, but Jude says not one word about philosophy. The sect practised magic to show that they were masters over the evil spirits, believed in the transmigration of souls, possessed pictures or statues of Christ and the philosophers, which they crowned, or in other words, worshipped, with equal honor. Some of them marked themselves with a brand on the right ear. They have nothing whatever in common with the men denounced by Jude except antinomianism, and to find this error at work we have no need to go beyond the Apostolic times. 17

Less Radical Views

Goodspeed is a little less radical in his view. He treads middle ground by refusing to name the ungodly men outright. He says,

Many ancient thinkers thought of God as by nature far removed from the material world and too pure to have anything directly to do with it. This idea naturally created a chasm between the physical and the spiritual aspects of human experience and led to the dangerous doctrine that the spirit might seek and find fellowship with God while the body followed its own material impulses and passions.

With regard to Jesus, such thinkers separated his human nature from his divine and followed a Gnostic type of thought, believing that the divine in him had escaped from him on the cross and only his material body had suffered there. They accordingly saw little meaning in his death, but they considered themselves so spiritual that they did not need an atonement. Indeed, they felt so secure in their spirituality that they thought

17. ibid., p. 315.

it did not much matter what they did physically, and so they permitted themselves all sorts of indulgence without scruple.

Such people could not fail to be a scandal in the churches, and a Christian teacher named Jude burst out against them with vehement denunciation.¹⁸

Moffatt, too, refrains from naming these men as any one particular group of people. He says, "The writer is not interested in the doctrines, as the apologists of the second century are in the principles of the errorists whom they convert. He attempts no refutation of their theories, nor does he go into any detail in exposing their aberrations. He is a plain honest leader of the church who knows when sound indignation is more telling than argument."¹⁹

A Comparison with the Ungodly Men in Galatians

An interesting comparison between the ungodly men of Galatians and Jude has been made by Plummer. He notes that both these factions have come into the church secretly, but for different purposes. The ungodly men in Galatians crept into the church "to spy out our liberty which we have in Jesus Christ, that they might bring us into bondage." (Gal. 3.4). The ungodly men at the time of Jude crept into the church to "turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness." (ver. 4). Plummer says, "The troublers of the Galatian church were endeavoring to contract Christian liberty, whereas these

¹⁸. Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 345.

¹⁹. Moffatt, op. cit., p. 353.

ungodly men were straining it to the uttermost. Both ended in destroying it. The one turned the 'freedom with which Christ set us free,' into an intolerable yoke of Jewish bondage; the other turned it into the polluting anarchy of heathen, or worse than heathen, license." 20

Gnosticism does not Necessarily Point to a Late Date

Jude is not the first writer to speak against, and warn against libertines. This libertinistic antinomianism was already a tendency within the church at Corinth. We should like to quote Findlay on this. He writes:

The moral transformation effected in this corrupt material was accompanied by a notable mental quickening. The Hellenic intellect awoke at the touch of spiritual faith. This first Christian society planted upon Greek soil exhibited the characteristic qualities of the race - qualities, however, of Greece in her decadence rather than her prime. Amongst so many freshly awakened and eager but undisciplined minds, the Greek intellectualism took on a crude and shallow form; it betrayed a childish conceit and fondness for rhetoric and philosophical jargon (i.17, ii.1-5 etc.) and allied itself with the factiousness that was the inveterate curse of Greece ... Even the gifts of the Holy Spirit were abused for purposes of display, edification being often the last thing thought of in their exercise (xii, xiv).... Still graver mischief arose from the influence of heathen society. For men breathing the moral atmosphere of Corinth, and whose earlier habits and notions had been formed in this environment, to conceive and maintain a Christian moral ideal was difficult in the extreme. Deplorable relapses occurred when the fervor of conversion had abated, and the Church proved shamefully tolerant toward sins of impurity (1 Cor. v; 2 Cor. xii. 20 f.).

20. Plummer, op. cit., p. 339.

The acuteness of the Greek mind showed itself in antinomian sophistry; the 'liberty' from Jewish ceremonial restrictions claimed by Paul for Gentile Christians was by some construed into a general license, and carried to a length which shocked not merely the scruples of fellow-believers but the common moral instincts (vi. 12 ff., viii. 9-13, x. 23 ff., xi. 13 b). 21

This problem then had already been faced by Paul before Jude wrote his Epistle. It cannot be held, therefore, that Jude's Epistle must receive a late dating because of his treatment of the "ungodly men."

The Relation of the Epistle to 2 Peter

The other big factor in determining the date of this Epistle is the relation that it bears to the second Epistle of Peter. A quick glance at the two Epistles will immediately disclose a marked resemblance. The question comes before us at once, Did the one author borrow from the other? Did they use a common third source from which they drew their material? If one author drew from the other, whose was the original work? These and other questions we must determine as we study the striking similarities of these two works. For the sake of convenience and comparison we list the passages that are similar.

"But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them" (2 Pet. 11. 1).

"For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old set forth unto this condemnation, ungodly men, denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

21. Findlay, "Corinthians," in "The Expositor's Greek Testament," Vol. 11, p. 731.

"For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness to be preserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. 11.4)

"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, having made them an example unto those that should live ungodly" (2 Pet. 11. 6).

"But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise dominion. Daring, self-willed, they tremble not to rail at dignities" (2 Pet. 11. 10)

"Whereas angels, though greater in might and power, bring not a railing judgment against them before the Lord" (2 Pet.11.11)

"But these as creatures without reason, born mere animals, railing in matters whereof they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be destroyed" (2 Pet. 11. 12).

"Spots and blemishes, reveling in their love-feasts while they feast with you" (2 Pet. 11. 13).

"Forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam the son of Boer, who loved the hire of wrong-doing. (2 Pet. 11. 15).

"And angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

"Yet in like manner these also in their dreamings defile the flesh, and set at nought dominion, and rail at dignities" (Jude 8).

"But Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgment." (Jude 9).

"But these rail at whatsoever things they know not: and what they understand naturally, like the creatures without reason, in these things are they destroyed. (Jude 10).

"These are they who are spots in your love feasts when they feast with you" (Jude 12).

"They went in the way of Cain, and ran riotously in the error of Balaam for hire, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah" (Jude 11).

"These are springs without water, and cists driven by a storm; for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved" (2 Pet. ii. 17).

"Clouds without water, carried by the winds wandering stars for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved forever" (Jude 12,13).

"Uttering great swelling words of vanity" (2 Pet. ii. 18).

"Their mouth speaking great swelling words" (Jude 16).

"That ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles" (2 Pet. iii.2).

"But ye, beloved, remember the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 17).

"Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts" (2 Pet. iii. 3).

"How that they said unto you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 18). 22

Another comparison that can be made between the two books is that concerning the judgments brought out in the two books.

2 Peter	Jude
1. -----	Israel in the Wilderness
2. The fallen angels	The fallen angels
3. The flood (Noah)	-----
4. The cities of the Plain (Lot)	The cities of the Plain (Lot) is not mentioned).
5. -----	Cain
6. Balaam	Balaam
7. -----	Korah 23

In addition to these evident similarities, Bigg notes that the circumstances calling forth the two letters are also much alike.

Neither mentions any distinct persons, or doctrines or facts. They do not give so many details about the errors which they denounce as Colossians,

22. I have taken this parallel from Dods, op. cit., p.230-22.
23. This parallel has been drawn by Bigg, op. cit., p.221.

of the Pastoral Epistles or the Apocalypse. It is quite certain that they would have done so if it had been in their power. If they are vague, it is for the obvious reason that they are obliged to be vague. They deal with this new heresy just as 1 Peter deals with persecution. There is as yet nothing definite to lay hold of; the peril is incohate, and their warning is like an alarm in the night; it is only known that there is an enemy. ²⁴

From these parallels, it is easy to discern the similarity between the two books. Did the two authors borrow from a common source? We believe we can answer this with an emphatic negative. Had they used an "original", it would surely have appeared somewhere, been mentioned by someone, or at least been alluded to. Such an important manuscript could not have been overlooked by the fathers as they carefully digested the material at hand when they formulated the canon. We believe the assertion that there was a third book, a common source book, can be ruled out completely. No critic that we examined suggests the probability or even possibility of a third document.

On the other question, namely which of the two is the original, there is great difference of opinion. After ten years of intensive study on this very issue, Plummer says,

The similarity, both in substance and wording, is so great that only two alternatives are possible - either one has borrowed from the other, or both have borrowed from a common source. The second alternative is rarely, if ever, advocated; it does not explain the facts very satisfactorily, and critics are agreed in rejecting it. But here the agreement ends. On the further question, as to which writer is the prior, there is a very great diversity of opinion. One thing, therefore is certain, that whichever writer has borrowed, he is no

24. *Ibid.* p. 315.

ordinary borrower. He knows how to assimilate foreign material so as to make it thoroughly his own. He remains original, even while he appropriates the words and thoughts of another. He controls them, not they him. Were this not so, there would be little doubt about the matter. On any ordinary case of appropriation, if both the original and the copy are forthcoming, critics do not doubt long as to which is the original. It is when the copy itself is a masterpiece, as in the case of Holbein's Madonna, that criticism is baffled. Such would seem to be the case here; and the present writer is free to confess his own uncertainty. ²⁵

From Plummer's words we can readily see what a controversial matter we have before us. At the outset we must say again that all the evidence presented is internal and therefore subjective. We should like to present some of the opinions and arguments of the critics, and then summarize them and draw our own conclusions.

For the Priority of Jude.

Many critics favor the priority of Jude. Mayor says, "The impression which they leave on my mind is that in Jude we have the first thought, in Peter the second thought; that we can generally see a reason why Peter should have altered Jude, but very rarely a reason why what we read in Peter should have been altered to what we read in Jude. Peter is more reflective, Jude more spontaneous." ²⁶

Archdeacon Farrar is also in favor of the priority of

25. Plummer, op. cit., p. 391.

26. Mayor, quoted in Moffatt, op. cit., p. 351.

Jude.

After careful consideration and comparison of the two documents it seems to my own mind impossible to doubt that Jude was the earlier of the two writers.... I must confess my inability to see how anyone who approaches the inquiry with no ready-made theories can fail to come to the conclusion that the priority in this instance belongs to St. Jude. It would have been impossible for such a withering and burning blast of defiance and invective as his brief letter to have been written on modification and addition. ²⁷

Hug presents three arguments for his position in which he claims priority in Jude. He notes that Jude is too short a book to have been the copy of another book. In the second place he notes that Jude's language is simple, while Peter's is more elegant, flourishing with participles and rhetoric. His argument is then, that Peter enlarged on Jude's vocabulary. In the third place, Hug holds that the reference to the fallen angels in 2 Pet. ii. 11 could not be understood without Jude 4. The argument is then, that Peter assumed that Jude's Epistle was in the hands of his readers, and therefore could make his point merely by alluding to the angels. He says, "The language of Peter is so general and indefinite that we could not know what he meant unless we had Jude in our possession."²⁸

A. H. Strong also concurs in this opinion. He writes,

It appears that Jude was the original; for there is a certain terseness, vigor, and coherence about

27. Archdeacon Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 333-34.

28. Barnes, op. cit.; p. 335-36.

the Epistle of Jude which marks it as an original. No one can read the Epistle of Jude without feeling that it is a unit, that it is the work of one man.

On the other hand, when you read the Second Epistle of Peter, you find that the second chapter is not in Peter's ordinary style; that there are expressions which are diverse from Peter's manner; and when you compare those divergent expressions with the Epistle of Jude, you find that, in the Epistle of Jude some of them are there, almost word for word....

There is another reason why we should be led to think that Peter was the transcriber and not Jude, viz.: That the Epistle of Peter is the longer, and the Epistle of Jude is the briefer. It is the big fish that eat up the little fish, and not vice versa. It was easier for Peter to take Jude and to incorporate what Jude had written than it was for Jude to take a piece out of Peter, and make his whole Epistle out of that.²⁹

Holtzmann is quoted by Bigg as saying, "It is not necessary again to refute this hypothesis (of the priority of 2 Peter), which at the present day is practically abandoned."³⁰

We see from these notations that there is strong inclination toward the priority of Jude. We shall not comment on the arguments presented until we have given the opinions of some of the critics who hold the other view, namely that Peter was the original work.

For the Priority of Second Peter

Luther holds to the priority of Peter. He writes, "No

29. A. H. Strong, Popular Lectures on the Books of The New Testament, p. 265.

30. Holtzmann, quoted in Bigg, op. cit., p. 216.

one can deny that the Epistle of St. Jude is an extract or a copy of St. Peter's second Epistle, inasmuch as almost all the words of the two are the same."³¹

Dean Mansel has gone strongly in favor of the priority of Peter. He argues,

Some eminent modern critics have attempted, on the very precarious evidence of style, to assign the priority in time of writing to Jude; but there are two circumstances which appear to me to prove most conclusively that St. Jude's Epistle was written after that of St. Peter, and with express reference to it. The first is, that the evils which St. Peter speak of as partly future, St. Jude describes as now present. The one says, 'There shall be false teachers among you' (2 Pet. ii.1); the other says, 'There are certain men crept in unawares.' The other circumstance is still more to the point. St. Peter, in his Second Epistle has the remarkable words, 'Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers (*ἐμπαίκτηι*) shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts' (2 Pet. iii.3). St. Jude has the same passage repeated almost word for word, but expressly introduced as a citation of Apostolic language: 'But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they said to you, In the last time there shall be mockers (*ἐμπαίκτηι*) walking after their own ungodly lusts' (Jude vv.17,18). The use of the plural number (*τῶν ἀποστόλων*) may be explained by supposing that the writer may also have intended to allude to passages similar in import, though differently expressed, in the writings of St. Paul (such as 1 Tim. iv. 1,2; 2 Tim. iii.1), but the verbal coincidence can hardly be satisfactorily explained, unless we suppose that St. Jude had principally in his thoughts, and was actually citing the language of St. Peter.³²

Hengstenberg uses the same arguments, considering the

³¹ Martin Luther, (Erl. Augsburg. 63, S.159), quoted by Zahn, op. cit., p. 235.

³² Dean Mansel, The Gnostic Heresies of the First and Second Centuries, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 392.

second to be conclusive as to the priority of 2 Peter. ³³

We must yet examine what Zahn writes. He says,

Since we now have a writing, purporting to be Peter's, which contains exactly what Jude quotes from the Apostolic document cited by him and since besides these two express references of Jude there are so many parallels between Jude and 2 Peter as regards facts, thought and language as to necessitate the assumption of a literary relation between them, by the ordinary canons of criticism we should conclude that Jude knew and prized 2 Peter as an apostolic writing and made it the basis of part of his letter. ³⁴

From the quotations we have made, it is easy to see the great divergence of opinion as to the question of the priority of the two Epistles. Let us summarize the arguments that are presented by the men who hold definite opinions regarding the priority of either of the Epistles. ³⁵

Arguments for the Priority of Peter

1. The author of the Second Epistle of Peter speaks in a prophetic tone. St. Jude speaks in the present tense. The ungodly men are in the church now. Peter says they

33. Plummer, op. cit., 592.

34. Zahn, op. cit., p. 265.

35. For the priority of 2 Peter: Bauer, Beausobre, Benson, Bloomfield, Dahl, Dietlein, Dodwell, Estius, Fronmüller, Haeclein, Hengstenberg, Heydenreich, Hofmann, Lange, Lenfant, Lumby, Luthart, Luther, Mansel, Michaelis, Mill, OEcumenius, Pott, Schaff, Schmid, Schöff, Schulze, Semler, Steinfass, Stier, Stolz, Storr, Thiersch, Wetstein, Wolf, Wordsworth, Zachariae and others.

For the priority of St. Jude: Alford, Angus, Arnaud, Bleek, Brawekner, Caffin, Credner, Davidson, De Wette, Eichhorn, Ewald, F.W. Farrar, Guericke, Hatch, Herder, Hilgenfeld, Hug, Huther, Kuehl, Kurz, Mayerhoff, Neander, Plumptre, Reuss, Salmon, Schenkel, Sieffert, Thorold, Weiss, Wiesinger and others. This list was compiled by Plummer, op. cit., p. 599.

"shall" come into the church.

2. If 2 Peter is a genuine book it is more probable that St. Jude should borrow from Peter than that Peter, chief of the Apostles, should borrow from an unknown Jude. On the other hand, if 2 Peter is not genuine, it is not likely that the author of 2 Peter would have quoted from Jude's Epistle, a book that was regarded with suspicion because it quoted apocryphal literature.

3. From the content we know that Jude wrote under pressure. He was "constrained" to write. It seems more likely that he would have used materials at hand, rather than Peter who was under no such necessity.

Arguments for the Priority of Jude

1. It seems more probable that the greater part of a small letter be used with a great deal of additional material rather than a short section of a much larger letter be used with very little additional matter.

2. It seems that the writer of 2 Peter would omit difficult expressions as "waterless clouds," "wells without water," than that Jude should add to the difficulty by adding such terms.

3. The Second Epistle of Peter is not written in the usual style of St. Peter.

Arguments Used on Both Sides

1. There are certain portions which the writer of Peter's

Epistle could have used from Jude's Epistle, had he seen them, e.g., "the ironical play upon the word 'kept' in 'the angels which kept not their own principality...He hath kept in everlasting bonds;' the telling antithesis in v.10, that what these sinners do not know, and cannot know, they abuse by gross irreverance; and what they know, and cannot help knowing, they abuse by gross licentiousness; and the metaphor of 'wandering stars' (v.13), which would fit the false teachers, who led others astray, in 2 Peter, much better than the ungodly men who are not teachers at all, in Jude. As the writer of 2 Peter makes no use of these points, the inference is that he had never seen them."³⁶

On the other hand, there are elements in Peter, of which Jude could have made excellent use, and did not, e.g. the destruction of the "world of the ungodly" by the flood; the "eyes full of an adulteress." These would have fit excellently into Jude's thought. As Jude makes no use of these points, the inference is that he did not see them.

2. Jude's style, his love for taking everything in threes is used as another argument. On the one hand it is argued that it would be the writer who is using the material of someone else who would add such fanciful arrangement. On the other hand it is argued that it would be just these

³⁶. Mayor, op. cit., p. 396.

fanciful flourishes that would be omitted by a borrower.³⁷

Evaluation of Arguments

What is to be said concerning all the arguments that have been discussed? Let us at once discount the last two arguments that were presented, arguments that can easily be turned to suit either party.

What is the strongest and most conclusive evidence that has been presented? There is only one argument that cannot be waved aside as conjecture. It is the argument favoring the priority of 2 Peter. The writer of this epistle speaks of the future. He does not say that ungodly men are in the church, but that they shall appear. Jude speaks of the presence of the ungodly men within the church at the time he is writing. These ungodly men, whose appearance was prophesied by the writer of 2 Peter, have now appeared. In view of the use of the future and present tenses in the original, we can hardly overlook the importance of this point. Critics who uphold the priority of Jude must face this problem.

All the other arguments are based on subjective internal criticism. It seems that there is no concrete evidence other than that which we have cited. We hold that it is sufficient, even conclusive, in establishing the priority of 2 Peter.

³⁷. For a fuller discussion of these arguments see Mayor, op. cit., pp. 394-96.

The dating of the Second Epistle of Peter is not so easily established, but it is held generally by conservative scholars that it was written around 60 A.D. If Peter is the author of the book, it certainly must have been written before 64 A.D., for that is the year he suffered martyrdom. Placing the dating of this 2 Peter in the year 60 A.D. allows for sufficient time to have elapsed for the infiltration into the church of the ungodly men described by Jude, and still to place the writing of Jude about 65 A.D.

Pseudepigraphy

There are those who deny completely the authenticity of Jude's Epistle. They regard it simply as a pseudepigraphy. Endeavoring to completely discount the work, they claim that it was written very late and was simply ascribed to Jude. The chief problem these people have to face is that of the choice a supposed forger made in ascribing his book to Jude. Why would a forger choose such an obscure person as Jude to whom he ascribes the work? Would not a forger have made every effort to assure the authority of his writing? It seems that he would definitely have pinned down his relationship to the apostles to assure the acceptance of his work. Zahn is very emphatic on this point.

According to historical tradition, Jude, the brother of James, is a very obscure personality;

according to later tradition also, he was not an apostle, and in the circle of early Christian authors down to the year 200, his name does not once appear. (See *Eus. H.E. vi.7*). What could have induced anyone desiring to defend the common Christian faith and Christian morality to represent himself as Jude? Why was it necessary for him to assume any character at all? Nothing that he says requires any particular authority. He refers to certain unpleasant conditions in the present life of the readers, and condemns them severely, but only in such a way as every Christian was under necessity of doing. He declares that in the events of the present, an apostolic prediction written years before is finding its fulfillment; but this, again, could be recognized and expressed by any ordinary Christian under the same conditions. Nor does he claim any special authority. He does not call himself an apostle, and intimates only in a very modest way that he is the Jude known to the readers as one of the brothers of Jesus.

A further proof of genuineness is the manner in which he refers to one or a number of apostolic writings. What forger, who could have had no other purpose in such a reference than to strengthen the authority of his own writing, would have been content with such hints as found in *Jude 4, 17f*? Would he not have mentioned the apostle, or apostles by name? 53

Another question that must be answered by those claiming that the work is a pseudepigraphy is "What motive would there be in anyone forging this Epistle?" There certainly is no motive evident from the text of the Epistle. The motive could not have been personal aggrandizement, or the author would have used his own name. If he were seeking authority for his work, he certainly would have used a greater authority

53. Zahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 268-69.

to whom to ascribe the writing.

Again, those claiming that the work is a pseudepigraphic writing say that he would have made a definite point of mentioning his relationship to the Lord. We note, however, that James does not mention his kinship to the Lord either.

Plummer has a very good summary of the arguments that refute this claim.

If it be argued that, had St. Jude been the brother of the Lord, he would have mentioned the fact, we may securely answer that he would not have done so. As the author of the Adumbrationes remarked, religious feeling would deter him, as it did his brother James, in his Epistle, from mentioning this. The Ascension had altered all Christ's human relationships, and his brethren would shrink from claiming kinship after the flesh with His glorified body. This conjecture is supported by fact. Nowhere in primitive Christian literature is any authority claimed on the basis of nearness of kin to the Redeemer. He Himself had taught Christians that the lowliest among them might rise above the closest of such earthly ties (Lu. xi.27,28); to be spiritually the 'servant of Christ' was much more than being His actual brother.³⁹

If the book were a forgery, it is doubtful whether it would have gained the wide acceptance that it did among the early fathers and the churches of the early centuries.⁴⁰ If the book suddenly appeared late in the second century, under forged authorship, the book surely would have received much less recognition than it did.

39. Plummer, op. cit., p. 374.

40. See Chapter III, p. 56-60.

Summary

In this chapter we have presented a few facts that serve as evidence for a positive dating of the Epistle. We concluded that it was written about 65 A.D. On the question of the ungodly men, the conclusion reached was that these men were not a Gnostic sect, but simply a libertinistic group that had worked itself into the church. The conclusion was also reached that the Epistle of 2 Peter precedes Jude's Epistle. Briefly, we alluded to the weak and unfounded claims of those who hold that we are studying a pseudepigraphic work.

III. The Canonicity of Jude

We are interested in determining just how this book of Jude got into the canon of Holy Scriptures. We have noted that there has been quite some doubt as to the exact authorship of the book. Many refuse to believe that the book is genuine. On both these scores, the canonicity of the Epistle of Jude has been questioned. In spite of all these doubts, however, the fathers did place the book into the canon. They must have had good reason for doing so. Before we examine what the fathers had to say of the book, we should like to examine some of the doubts that are registered against the book.

Authority of the Writer

There are two chief arguments used by those who would deny the right of canonicity to the Book of Jude. The first of these is the doubtful authority of the writer himself. We have already alluded to the author and his life in Chapter I, but certain critics hold that the arguments for canonicity lose their force in the obscurity of the writer, and, therefore the book has no place in the canon of Scripture.

The Question of Apostleship

The argument centers chiefly around the question of the apostleship of Jude. If Jude was not an apostle, it is said,

arguments for canonicity are greatly weakened. Was he an apostle? We note that Jude does not call himself an apostle in his Epistle. This is in direct contrast to Paul, and Peter for example, who says, "be mindful of the commandments of us, the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (2 Pet. iii.2). Jude's only reference to the apostles is in the 17th verse of his Epistle where he says, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." These words almost seem to preclude the apostleship of Jude. But, before we ask the reader to accept such subjective conclusions, let us examine the evidence for and against the apostleship of the author.

Evidence for Apostleship

Evidence for the apostleship of Jude goes back to Tertullian and Augustine. Writing about the Book of Enoch, Tertullian says, "To these considerations is added to the fact that Enoch possesses a testimony in the Apostle Jude."¹ Origen, too has referred to him as an apostle, "but only in two passages of which the Greek original is wanting (De Principiis, III, 11.1; Comm. on Romans v. 13, vol. iv, 549). In no passage of the Greek works, and in no other passage of the Latin translations, does he call Jude an apostle; so that the addition of the Apostle in these two places may be an insertion of his not

1. Tertullian, On The Apparel of Women I, 111., quoted in Thiesen, op. cit., p. 292.

very accurate translator Rufinus." 2

The translators of the Authorized Version were also convinced of the Apostleship of the author. 3

Of the more modern scholars, Barnes thinks that Jude was an apostle. Concerning the question, Why did Jude not refer to himself as an apostle, he writes,

... it may be replied that to have called himself 'Judas, the Apostle,' would not have designated him so certainly, as to call himself 'the brother of James;' and besides, the naked title, 'Judas the Apostle,' was one which he might not chose to have applied to himself. After the act of the traitor, and the reproach which he had brought upon that name, it is probable that he would prefer to designate himself by some other appellation than one which had such associations connected with it. It may be added, also, that in several of his epistles, Paul himself does not make use of the name of the apostle, Phil 1:1. 2 Thess.1:1, Philemon 1. 4

Evidence against Apostleship

Other than that which we have just presented, there is very little evidence to show that Jude was an apostle. Most scholars today are agreed that Jude was not an apostle. Plummer advances definite reasons against the apostleship of James. These can be applied as well to his brother Jude.

1. In none of the apostolic lists is there any hint that any of the apostles is a brother of the Lord. In

2. Plummer, op. cit., p. 372.
3. Chapter I, p. 4.
4. Barnes, op. cit., p. 332.

Acts 1. 13,14 and in 1 Cor. ix. 5, the 'brethren of the Lord' are expressly distinguished from the apostles.

2. The 'brethren of the Lord' appear almost always with the mother of the Lord (Matt. xii.46, Mark iii.32, Luke viii.19, John ii. 12).

3. St. John says (vii. 7) that "even His brethren did not believe on Him." Now, this statement could hardly have been made of His brethren had they not already been apostles.⁵

Regarding the apostleship of Jude himself, Plummer writes,

He would have mentioned it had he been an apostle, instead of simply mentioning his relationship to his more distinguished brother James.

It does not do well to claim that Paul does not always call himself an Apostle in his Epistles. He was a well known person, especially after his four great Epistles had been published, in all of which he styles himself as an Apostle. In the two to the Thessalonians, he does not, probably because he there associates Silvanus and Timothy with himself (but see 1 Thess. ii.6). St. Jude was comparatively unknown, having written nothing else, and having probably travelled little.

The charge, "Remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 17), although it does not necessarily imply that the writer is not one of the Apostles, yet would be more suitable to one who did not possess the Apostolic rank.⁶

On the basis of this evidence, which we hold to be good and correct, we conclude that Jude was not an Apostle. The evidence of Tertullian loses force when we realize that

5. For a full discussion of these arguments see Plummer, *op. cit.*, p. 28-29.

6. *ibid.*, p. 273.

in the statement we quoted above, he was trying to prove the canonicity of the Book of Enoch, a book which received very little recognition. The statement of Augustine has been disregarded by critics, apparently, and the quotation concerning the attestation of Origen should suffice to weaken that evidence. The idea of Barnes that he would have shied away from the title of 'Apostle' because of the stigma on the name Judas is pure speculation. His charge that Paul does not always refer to himself as an apostle is answered by Plummer in the quotation directly above. We are again ready to state our claim that Jude, brother of James and the Lord was not an Apostle.

But, does not our conclusion that Jude was not an apostle strengthen the claim of those who say that the non-apostleship of Jude is strong argument against the canonicity of the book? Their argument is that Jude was not an apostle. Therefore, the Epistle has no place in Scripture. We ask, however, if canonicity is absolutely dependent upon the apostolicity of the writer? It is generally held that James was not an apostle, and yet, his book was canonized also. The writer to the Hebrews is unknown, yet his memorable work has been canonized. It seems, therefore, that canonicity depends upon more than the mere apostolicity of its writer. It does not seem that apostleship is absolutely necessary. God had a very particular task to perform. His church was in

grave danger from the inroads being made into it by certain libertines. His people needed to be warned. They needed exhortation, They needed a plea for steadfastness and contention for the faith. God's tool to perform his wish was an honest, God-fearing churchman whom He now chose to write an Epistle to these people. The book of Jude was preserved, and on the basis of the content and what was then known of the author, the book was placed in the canon of Scripture. I think that this view can be held without any weakening of confidence in the book as such, its message, purpose, inspiration, or canonicity.

The Use of Apocryphal Writings

The other big factor which led to doubts concerning Jude's Epistle, is the fact that Jude quotes, or at least alludes to the apocryphal literature. But there is even argument on this point. Philippi vigorously denies the resemblance of v. 9 to the Assumption of Moses, and of v. 14 to the Book of Enoch as direct quotations. He holds that Jude writes this purely from oral tradition, and this is possible.⁷ However, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Jerome and the church fathers generally held that Jude does quote from apocryphal literature.⁸ The point at issue then becomes a matter of deciding whether Jude's use of apocryphal literature in any way destroys the authority of his book. Does a

7. Thiessen, op. cit., p. 294.

8. ibid., p. 294.

mere quotation from these works mean that Jude necessarily subscribes to all that is written therein? We believe that this is the real point. Arguments that have been advanced, as this, that God would not permit one of His Holy Writers to make use of books of questionable character, do not seem to fit into the picture. Moorehead has hit this point squarely. He says, especially with regard to the book of Enoch.

Granting such quotation, that fact does not warrant us to affirm that he indorses the book. Paul cites from three Greek poets; from Aratus, (Acts xvii. 28), from Menander (1 Cor. xv. 33), and from Epimenides (Tit. 1:2). Does anyone imagine that Paul endorses all that these poets wrote? To the quotation from Epimenides the apostle adds, 'This testimony is true' (Tit. 1.13), but no one imagines he means to say the whole poem is true. So Jude cites a passage from a non-canonical book, not because he accepts the whole book as true, but this particular prediction he receives from God.

We conclude, therefore, that the use of the apocryphal books cannot be used as an argument against the canonicity of Jude's Epistle.¹⁰ That was true also of the other chief

9. Moorehead, "The Epistle of Jude" in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, quoted in Thiessen, op. cit., p. 294-95.

10. The passage alluded to in the Book of Enoch is, "Behold, He cometh with myriads of His holy ones, to pass judgment on them, and will destroy the ungodly, and reckon with all flesh for everything which the sinners and the ungodly have done and committed against Him."

For a long time it was thought that the Book of Enoch was lost, but in 1773, Bruce, the traveller, brought three copies of it from Abyssinia in Ethiopia. In 1821, Laurence published an English translation, and in 1853, Dillman re-edited the book and translated it into German. See Dods, op. cit., p. 229.

argument brought forth, namely the doubtful authority of the writer himself. Per se these two doubts cannot be used as evidence against the book. In fact, these doubts lose almost all of their force when we look at the external attestations that the book has.¹¹

External Attestations

The external attestations to Jude's book are quite extensive, in spite of all the doubts that surrounded the book from the very earliest of time. It, nevertheless, received more attestation than other books in the Bible, for example, 2 Peter, and even better attestation than James.¹² It does

The argument concerning the Assumption of Moses is that v. 9 of Jude's Epistle has reference to this work. The Assumption of Moses apparently gained some circulation in the Christian Church. Clement of Alexandria cites it (Strom. vi. 15, p. 806); as does Origen (Lit. Jesu Nav. Hom. 11.1) among others. Among the Old Testament apocrypha it is listed in the synopsis of the pseudo-Athanasius; it is included in the stichometry of Nicephorus, who assigns it the same length as the Apocalypse of St. John. A large portion of it, however, had disappeared when, in 1361 a considerable portion of it was recovered (Latin version) and was published by Ariani, from a palimpsest in the Ambrosian Library of Milan.

The recovered portion, however, is no more than one-third of the entire book. Much of it is in very poor condition, with words and letters obliterated. Then too, the fragment breaks off before the death of Moses, so that we do not have the means of verifying that the work related a dispute between the Devil and the Archangel Michael over the body of Moses. See Salmon, op. cit., p. 473.

11. The most serious evidence against the book is, its absence from the Peshitta and the Ancient Syrian Version. This should not trouble us, however, because other portions of Scripture recognized and accepted by the church at large were not received into the Syrian Canon until late.

12. Zahn, op. cit., p. 253.

appear in the Muratorian Canon and in the Old Latin Version. In 397 A.D. it was recognized as canonical by the Third Council of Carthage.¹³ Some scholars are ready to date its universal acceptance even earlier. Zahn claims that as early as 200 A.D. it was accepted, "in the Church of all lands round the Mediterranean Sea."¹⁴ Harnack, to quote a critical scholar, is ready to admit that this is not far in excess of the truth. Referring to his position, Plummer says, "The only abatement which he suggests is that the misgivings to which Origen on a single occasion bears witness, show that the Epistle was not everywhere in the East part of the New Testament Scriptures."¹⁵

Testimony of the Fathers

1. Eusebius says (H.E. 11.23) "Not many old writers have mentioned the Epistle of James, nor yet the Epistle of Jude, which is also one of the seven so-called Catholic Epistles, though we know that these have been publicly used with the rest in most churches."

And also (ib. iii.25), "Among the controverted books, which are nevertheless well known and recognized by most, we class the Epistle circulated under the name of James and that of Jude."¹⁶

13. Mayor, op. cit., p. 232.

14. Zahn, Gesch. d. Neutest. Kanons, I., p. 321, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 370.

15. Plummer, op. cit., p. 370.

16. Eusebius, quoted in Mayor, op. cit., p. 232.

2. Jerome writes, "Jude, the brother of James, has left a short Epistle, which is one of the seven Catholic. And, because in it he draws a testimony from the apocryphal book of Enoch, it is rejected by very many. However, it has now gained authority by antiquity and use, and is counted among the sacred Scriptures."¹⁷

3. Augustine asks, "What of Enoch, the seventh from Adam? Does not the canonical Epistle of the Apostle Jude declare that he prophesied?" (De Civ. Dei xviii.23).¹⁸

4. Origen accepted it himself, although he was fully aware that it was not universally received, for in one place he uses the cautious expression, "If any receive the Epistle of Jude." He, however, cites it frequently, referring in one place to it as "an Epistle of but few lines, yet full of the strong words of heavenly grace." (Comm. on Matt. xiii.55).¹⁹

5. Didymus, head of the Catechetical school at Alexandria, and instructor of Jerome and Rufinus, condemns the opposition which some offered to the Epistle on account of the statement respecting the body of Moses.²⁰

6. Clement of Alexandria quotes it as Scripture (Paed. III. viii., and Strom. III. ii.), and commented upon it in his Hypotyposes (Eus. H.E. VI. xiv.1), of which we still

17. Jerome, quoted in Salmon, op. cit., p. 472.

18. Augustine, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 369.

19. Origen, quoted in Plummer, op. cit., p. 369.

20. Plummer, op. cit., p. 369.

have some translations into Latin, made under the direction of Cassiodorus.²¹

7. It was acknowledged by Cyril of Jerusalem, who also acknowledged 2 Peter, and by Gregory of Nazianzus.²²

8. Athanasius in his list of books of the New Testament "agrees exactly with our own canon."²³

9. Tertullian (De Cult. Fem I.iii.) vehemently contends that the book of Enoch should be included in canonical literature. He tries to clinch his argument by showing that it is quoted by 'Jude the Apostle.' This appeal would seem dangerous rather than conclusive, if in the North African churches there had been any serious misgivings concerning the authority of Jude's Epistle.²⁴

10. Athenagoras speaks of the fallen angels in a manner which suggests acquaintance with Jude v. 6.²⁵

11. Theophilus of Antioch (ad Autol 11.15) seems to allude to Jude v. 13.²⁶

12. Malchion, the presbyter, who was chief composer of the letter of the Synod at Antioch, against Paul of Samatosa, seemed to have the Epistle of Jude in mind when he wrote. The tone of his letter bears this out, but here and there,

21. ibid. p. 363.

22. Mayor, op. cit., p. 232.

23. Athanasius, quoted in Mayor, op. cit., p. 232.

24. Plummer, op. cit., p. 363.

25. Mayor, op. cit., p. 232.

26. ibid., p. 232.

even the wording approaches that used by Jude, e.g. 'denying his God (and Lord)' reminds us of "denying our only master and Lord" (Jude v.4); and "not guarding the faith which he once held" may be suggested by "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." (Jude v.3). ²⁷

13. Ephrem Syrus (A.D. 303-73) has certain quotations from the Epistle of St. Jude, but they are somewhat discredited, for they occur only in the Greek translations of his works, some of which, however, were made in his lifetime. The quotations may be insertions of his translators. ²⁸

This then shows that the Epistle of Jude gained wide acceptance very early in the history of the Christian Church. Now, while it is to be admitted that these testimonies of the fathers do not assure the genuineness or right of canonicity per se, they definitely are strong arguments to be used in favor of the book. While there were doubts concerning the book, these men, nevertheless, considered it worthy of canonization. We ask the question, What prompted these men to place Jude's Book in the canon of Holy Scripture?

A Brief Survey of the Laws of Canonicity

Actually, there is no definite answer to the question of why Jude was placed into the canon. According to the accepted

27. Plummer, op. cit., p. 359-70.

28. Plummer, op. cit., p. 369.

tradition in our circles, it is pretty hard to establish the canonicity of the book after the apostolicity of the writer has been discounted. But what about James, what about Luke and Mark, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews? Must we discount them all because of the lack of evidence supporting claims to the apostolicity of the writers? Certainly not. These holy writers had a special call from God, a specific purpose in view, as they were moved by Him to carry out that purpose. This is by no means a solution to this great problem, but I believe it can certainly be held without detracting anything from the unity of Scripture, its message, purpose or comfort to me. There is one proof yet, which we must not overlook, for it is probably the greatest there is, and that is the historical.

Historical Proof

From the passages listed above, as written by the fathers, it is evident that they accepted the book of Jude. That fact we cannot overlook, for that fact, as historical proof of the canonicity of Jude is probably the strongest proof we have for its canonicity. Perhaps they had more evidence than we have at our disposal; perhaps oral tradition about the book or the author was still strong during the life of the fathers; concerning these things we can only conjecture. The fact remains that at the end of the second century, most churches had already accepted the book as canonical.

A question which concerns us, of course, is whether or not the authority of Scripture now depends on the historical judgment of the church, and whether it is possible for the church to err in such determination. We should like to quote Salmon on this matter.

But I wish to point out that there is an important difference with regard to the assent we give when we adopt a Canon of Scripture merely on the authority of the church, and when we do so as the result of historical inquiry. In the former case all the books of the Canon have equal claims on our acceptance; if the Church have decided in favor of Bel and the Dragon, that must be received ex animo as much as the Book of Genesis; if the verse of the Three Heavenly Witnesses be part of the text adopted by the Church, it has the same authority as the verse, 'In the beginning was the Word.' On the other hand, historical inquiry ordinarily leads to results which we hold with unequal confidence. For some things the evidence is so convincing as to draw from us that undoubting assent to which we commonly give the name of certainty; other results may be pronounced highly probable, others probable in a less degree; in some cases our verdict may not reach beyond a 'non liquet'.²⁹

No doubt the fathers had a great store of material from which they drew, in formulating the canon. Some of the books they discarded are not only in existence, but offer much of value in the study of the history of early Christianity. Some of the writings they considered were the Epistle of Barnabas, The Shepherd of Hermas and the Didache. How were these books weeded out? Snowden has a good note on this. He writes, "The process of sifting out the writings regarded as genuine-

29. Salmon, op. cit., p. 468, 469.

ly inspired, however, began early in the second century and proceeded slowly and through much debate and difficulty and lingering doubt until it was finally settled in the 4th century. Early writers, Clement of Rome, (95 A.D.), Ignatius (115 A.D.) and Polycarp (115 A.D.) began to quote or use words from our New Testament books. Justin Martyr (150 A.D.) was acquainted with the idea of a canon and, "from his time onward no one could doubt that the writings of the apostles were, for the church the primary authority for the determination of apostolic doctrine."³⁰

It was through this sifting process that the book of Jude passed. An example of the failure of a book in this sifting process is the Book of the Shepherd of Hermas. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and the Church at Antioch once quoted it as Scripture. But at the beginning of the 3rd century, there was a loosening of the connection between this book and the canon. Tertullian, owing to the laxity of discipline attributed to this book declared that it should be regarded as apocryphal and even as false. About 200-210, by an ecclesiastical decision, the book was declared outside the canon.³¹ Again Jude's Epistle survived. It seems that the more we ponder this question, the greater the historical judgment of the church becomes - not simply because it was a judg-

³⁰. Snowden, The Making and Meaning of the New Testament, p. 107.

³¹. Zahn, op. cit., p. 394.

ment of the church as such, but because the book withstood all the tests of time during the early centuries, and did remain in the canon.³²

It seems that what is necessary, is a proper approach to the whole question before us. Instead of criticizing the book without compromise, it seems that it would be better to accept the judgment of the fathers. We have said that there is no answer to many of the problems, but it is of no use to increase the difficulties by all manner of subjective, higher-critical views.

We are convinced, of course, that the Almighty God moved his writers to record His Holy Word. Would He not exert the same care in preserving His Work for His children? No doubt His providential care rested upon His Word as men gathered it into one volume.

32. Some have asked, What if another book appeared, that was supported by strong evidence? Would we place it in the canon? Snowden says, "No one, however, purposes to add any other book, and the question of excluding any book now in the canon is not seriously raised and is largely an academic one." Snowden, op. cit. p. 107.

CONCLUSION

The greatest result of this work has been a deepening of appreciation for the inspired Word of God, as found in the Holy Scripture; and especially in the Epistle of St. Jude.

To recapitulate the conclusions which we reached: we concluded that the author of the Epistle was Jude, the brother of James and the Lord. Jude received a special call from God, to warn his readers of the ungodly men who had crept into the church. While the readers are not mentioned, the Jewish flavor tends to show that it was written for Jewish people, perhaps in Palestine itself.

We also concluded that the book is authentic - that such a book could have been written by Jude. The date of the writing is best placed about 65 A.D., following the writing of the second Epistle of Peter. The accusations against the ungodly men do not per se necessitate a late dating. The actual writing probably did take place before the fall of Jerusalem, since Jude would very probably have mentioned the fall of Jerusalem in his catalogue of judgments, if it had already taken place.

Finally, we concluded that the historical judgment of the fathers, together with the process of sifting through which the book passed are sufficient to warrant its canonicity.

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