

# “The Minority Report: A Different Assessment for Interpreting Jude”<sup>1</sup>

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In 1956, Philip K. Dick wrote a short story published in the science fiction magazine, *Fantastic Universe*. His short story later served as the basis for Steven Spielberg’s film entitled *The Minority Report* (2002) starring Tom Cruise. In short, the movie questions the accuracy of a predetermined policing system that prevents crime.

The predetermined policing system is based upon the interpretation of material offered by three precog mutants who foresee a crime before it occurs. The precog mutants are kept in a pool of water in a somewhat ridged position so that all of their energy may be directed at predicting the future. Yet, they themselves have questions about their interpretations. Nevertheless, precog data are feed into a computer, the computer analyzes the material, and a report is generated for each precog. Unfortunately, the precogs do not always agree. So if the three reports differ, the computer identifies the two reports with the greatest similarity or overlaps and then produces a “majority report” about a foreseen crime upon which the police proceed to take action. Police officers prevent an alleged crime with the arrest of the person who has been predetermined a “criminal” before the criminal act can even occur thereby eliminating the freewill of a person to chose another course of action.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is a summation and an argument for Herbert W. Bateman IV’s perspective in his commentary on Jude. *Jude* in *The Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, edited by Hall Harris (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, digital 2015; printed 2017).

I'd like to suggest that there are three precog reports for Jude. Jude's common name, the nameless recipients, the obscure references about the "godless," (vv. 4, 15) and "these *people*" (vv. 8, 12, 16, 19), among other things creates an historical vacuum that all three reports strive to fill. Two reports agree. They conclude that Jude is alarmed (vv. 3–4) about "false teachers" who are challenging the early church. And though there are numerous disagreements within the two false teacher reports, they serve as the basis for a majority report that has become the predetermined conclusion upon which pastors and students read, interpret, and preach Jude. There is, however, one report that differs. It is a minority report. The minority report suggests that Jude is distressed (vv. 3–4) about the "zealot led rebellion" that is challenging the early church in Judea and thereby offers a different historical factor upon which to read, interpret, and preach Jude.

So, it seems we need to describe the majority and minority reports. First, how similar are the two reports that make-up the majority report, and how do they differ? Are there any problems within the majority report that might suggest the need to entertain the minority report? Then we need to examine the minority report. What does the minority report have to offer? Is there any credible value within the report? Ultimately, this question needs attention: should the false teacher majority report be the predetermining factor for reading, interpreting, and preaching the letter of Jude?

### **The Majority Report: Jude Addresses False Teachers**

The majority report concludes that Jude is alarmed (vv. 3–4) about "false teachers" who are challenging the early church. Yet, the majority report consists of two different reports about false teachers. One false teacher report concludes they are *Gnostic* false teachers, the other report claims they are *Christian* false teachers. Despite the variety of

disagreement within each report, their greatest similarity has led to a predetermined approach that presumes Jude is speaking against false teachers upon which nearly everyone reads, interprets, and preaches Jude. Since these two reports undergird the majority view, they warrant some overview.

### *Report of the Gnostic False Teacher View*

A very large group of *mostly* non-Evangelicals contribute evidence to the *Gnostic* false teacher report. While there are at least sixteen commentators who agree that (1) Jude is pseudonymous, (2) written during the post-apostolic period, and (3) oriented against Gnosticism,<sup>2</sup> there are many competing *Gnostic* false teacher assessments within the report. Nevertheless, whenever the “godless,” (vv. 4, 15) and “these *people*” (vv. 8, 12, 16, 19) appear in Jude, this report assumes that an unknown author speaks out against *Gnostic* false teachers sometime during the post-apostolic period (A.D. 85+).<sup>3</sup> But what are some of the competing assessments presented within this *Gnostic* false teacher report?

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<sup>2</sup> A. Jülicher, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, translated by Janet P. Ward (New York, NY: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1904), 229-31; O. Pflleiderer, *Primitive Christianity: Its Writings and Teachings in their Historical Connections*, trans. by W. Montgomery, 4 vols. (New York: Putnam, 1911), 4:251-54; R. Knopf, *Die Breve Petri und Judä*, KEK 12 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912), 206-07, 209; A. Loisy, *Remarques sur la littérature épistolaire du Nouveau Testament* (Paris: É. Nourry, 1935): 137-38; E. J. Goodspeed, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1937) 348-49; R. Leconte, *Let épîtres catholiques de Saint Jacques, Saint Jude et Saint Pierre*, La Sainte Bible (Paris: Cerf, 1961), 58-60; A. R. C. Leaney, *The Letters of Peter and Jude*, Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 82; E.M. Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 78-79; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*, Thornapple Commentaries (Private Publishing, 1969; Grand Rapids: Baker, reprint 1981), 232-34; W. Schrage, “Der Judasbrief,” in H. Balz and W. Schrage, *Die ‘Kaholischen’ Briefe: Die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas*, NTD 10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1973), 218, 220; W. G. Kümmel *Introduction to the New Testament*, revised ed. translated by Howard Clark Lee (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1975), 426-288; E. Fuchs and P. Raymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre: L’être de saint Jude*, CNT (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1980), 143, 147-48; F. Hahn, “Randbemerkungen zum Judasbrief.” *TZ* 37 (1981): 209-18, esp. 216-17; J. J. Gunther, “The Alexandrian Epistle of Jude,” *NTS* 30 (1984): 549-62, esp. 550; H. Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*. KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 44-45, 49; A. Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, der 2 Petrusbrief* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Determining the beginning of the apostolic period must begin with Jesus. Based upon Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection (*circa* A.D. 33), the growth of the early Judean church (A.D. 33-35; Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 6:1), and the scattering of the Diaspora Jewish Christians (A.D. 35; Acts 8:1, 5-6, 12-13; 9:2, 10, 19, etc.),

First, there is a minor disagreement about the pseudonymity of Jude. At least one *Gnostic* false teacher view suggests that a Jerusalem bishop who bore the name Jude wrote the letter during the time of Trajan (A.D. 98-117).<sup>4</sup> Another view argues that an unknown Judas of the second century (A.D. 100-130) wrote the letter.<sup>5</sup> Both agree that someone named Jude wrote the letter, and that ἀδελφός was added later to the opening salutation. Yet the majority of information found within the *Gnostic* false teacher report refutes both views. Consequently, the prevailing view is that an unknown person wrote the letter and merely ascribed Jude's name to it.<sup>6</sup> We might also add that there are no text critical glosses of “brother of James” (ἀδελφὸς δὲ Ἰακώβου) in any of the manuscript evidence.<sup>7</sup> Second, there is another minor disagreement within the *Gnostic* report that

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the earliest *terminus a quo* for Jude would be the mid A.D. 30s. When determining a *terminus ad quem* for dating Jude, many commentators speculate on Jude's age. Thus a likely time span of 90 years of age limits Jude's writing to the 80s. Nevertheless, many commentators believe the apostolic period begins in the mid 30s and ends in the mid to late 80s and thereby calculate the dating of Jude accordingly.

<sup>4</sup> Streeter argues that the original opening of Jude's letter was merely “Judas of James, a servant of Christ,” and that the statement “the brother of (James)” was a later addition. B. H. Streeter, *The Primitive Church: Studied with Special Reference to the Origins of the Christian Ministry* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1929), 178–80.

<sup>5</sup> Harnack and others were content to believe some unknown person named Jude wrote the letter and that “the brother of” (ἀδελφός) was added later (A.D. 150-180). A. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius II: Die Chronologie der Litteratur von Irenaeus bis Eusebius*. Volume 2. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1897; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1958), 2:467-68.

<sup>6</sup> This view is by far the most prominent view. In addition to those listed in note 3 above, we might also add: S. Davidson, *An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (London: Longman, Green, and Co 1868), 440-41; G. Hollmann, “Der Brief Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus,” in *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2, ed. by J. Weiss (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907), 2:61-63; W. Grundmann, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, THNT 15 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1974), 15; R. Kugelman, *James and Jude*, NTM 19 (Dublin: Veritas 1980), 80-82; F. Hahn, “Randbemerkungen zum Judasbrief.” *TZ* 37 (1981): 209-18, esp. 216-17; R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997), 749; E. J. Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 237; S.J. Kraftchick, *Jude, 2 Peter*, ANTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2002), 21; D. Senior and D. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, SP 17 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 182-83; L. R. Donelson, *I, II Peter and Jude*, NWL (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 162. There are many others.

<sup>7</sup> T. Wasserman, *The Epistle of Jude: Its Text and Transmission* in *Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series* 43. (Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2006), 134. Landon, though not as exhaustive as Wasserman, identifies no gloss of “brother of James.” C. Landon, *A Text-Critical Study of*

counters the post-apostolic dating of the letter. Some evidence exists in the report that suggests Jude was written around the time Jerusalem fell under Roman control (A.D. 70).<sup>8</sup> Yet, the overwhelming evidence presented within the report underscores a pseudonymous author of a letter to be dated sometime during the post-apostolic period (A.D. 85–160).

Finally, there is disagreement within the report about the Gnostics themselves. Some older evidence underscores Jude confronting a second-century Gnostic sect known as the Carpocratians who took up residence in Alexandria, Egypt.<sup>9</sup> Pfleiderer considered Jude 4 and 18 to be an assault on the Carpocratians based upon their promotion of unrestrained sexual indulgences.<sup>10</sup> While it may be true that Clement of Alexandria (*circa* A.D. 150-220) believed that Jude spoke *prophetically* against the Carpocratians and that Irenaeus's (*circa* A.D. 175-195) comment concerning the Carpocratians's scoffing of angels fits one of Jude's criticisms of the godless (v. 8),<sup>11</sup> other *Gnostic* false teacher contributors offer counter evidence against these second-century *Gnostic* influences.

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*the Epistle of Jude*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 135 Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> J. Chaine, *Les épîtres catholiques: La seconde épître de Saint Pierre, les épîtres de Saint Jean, l'épître de Saint Jude*, Études bibliques 27 (Paris: Gabalda, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1939), 269-71; A. Wikenhauser, *New Testament Introduction*, trans. Joseph Cunningham (New York, NY: Herder & Herder, 1958, 1960), 490-91; J. Cantinat, "The Catholic Epistles," *Introduction to the New Testament*, ed. A. Robert and A. Feuillet (New York, NY: Desclee, 1965), 595; idem, *Les Épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (1973), 287.

<sup>9</sup> Carpocratian Gnostics were followers of Carpocrates of Alexandria (*circa* A.D. 135). He was educated and influenced by Platonic philosophy, and promoted a syncretistic form of Christianity. He believed, among other things, that God was an unrevealed First Principle, the world was created by subordinate beings, Jesus was a mere man, etc. His followers survived into the fourth century and became known for both their licentious living and their revealed images of Jesus and philosophers. Robert M. Grant, *Gnosticism: A Source Book of Heretical Writings from the Early Christian Period* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1961), 36-39; idem *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1966), 95.

<sup>10</sup> Pflleiderer, *Primitive Christianity* (1911), 4:251-53. Harnack also holds the view, but he believes they first emerged in Syria and later migrated to Egypt. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius II* (1897; repr 1958), 2:466. Gunther argues, "The particular combination of errors attacked in Jude is distinctively Carpocratian and /or Cainite" ("The Alexandrian Epistle of Jude" [1984], 554).

<sup>11</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 3.2.6-10-11; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.25.1.

Moffatt says the traits of rebellion and discontentment against the church like Korah's (vv. 8b, 11c, 16a), the selfish false prophecies like Balaam's (v. 11), the loud pretensions (vv. 13a, 16), the sodomy and sexual abuses (vv. 7, 10b), and the divisions of mankind into psychics and spirituals (v. 19) "belong to the incipient phases of some local, possibly syncretistic, development of libertinism upon *Gnostic* lines, rather than to any definite school."<sup>12</sup> A contributor to the *Christian* false teacher report, Bauckham, observes that, "the attempt to identify a particular second-century Gnostic sect has been largely abandoned."<sup>13</sup> Most of the current information within the *Gnostic* report tends to classify the Gnostics in one of three categories: incipient, libertine, or antinomian Gnosticism.

Commentator	Date or Date Range	Gnostic Sect
Leconte	70–100	Libertine Gnostic
Knopf	80–100	Libertine Gnostic
Kelly, Fuchs/Raymond	80–100	Incipient / Libertine Gnostic
Paulsen	80–120	Incipient Gnostic
Vögile	<i>circa</i> 90	Libertine Gnostic
Hahn	90–120	Incipient Gnostic
Schrage, Kümmel	<i>circa</i> 100	Libertine Gnostic
Sidebottom	100–120	Incipient Gnostic
Jülicher	100–180	Antinomian Gnostic
Gunther	120–130	Carpocratian Gnostic (2 <sup>nd</sup> cent.)
Goodspeed	<i>circa</i> 125	Docetic Gnostic (2 <sup>nd</sup> cent.)
Loisy	140–150	Antinomian Gnostic
Pfleiderer	150	Carpocratian Gnostic (2 <sup>nd</sup> cent.)

<sup>12</sup> J. Moffatt, *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner, 1911), 354-55; cf. Leconte, *Let épîtres catholiques* (1961), 68.

<sup>13</sup> R. Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 163.

Regardless of the Gnostic classification, the majority of the evidence presented within the *Gnostic* false teacher report suggests a Gentile audience<sup>14</sup> with a wide range of geographical destinations.<sup>15</sup> So while the overriding presupposition of the report is that the unknown author's comments are directed at *Gnostic* false teachers, there exists a healthy range of diverse evidence provided about destination and *Gnostic* classification that underscores a rather significant amount of ambiguity within the report.

### *Report of the Christian False Teacher View*

Another large group of commentators, many of whom are Evangelicals, contribute to the *Christian* false teacher report. Evidence within the *Christian* false teacher report tends to dismantle the idea that Jude is pseudonymous. Naturally, they

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<sup>14</sup> F. H. Chase, "Epistle of Jude," *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2 vol., ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1899, reprint 1901), 2:805; Jülicher, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (1904), 231; Barns, "The Epistle of Jude" (1905), 396; Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity* (1911), 255; Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (1912), 209; Chaine, *Les épîtres catholiques* (1939), 287-88; Leconte, *Les épîtres catholiques de Saint Jacques, Saint Jude et Saint Pierre* (1961), 69-70; Kelly, *Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1969, repr 1981), 234; Cantinat, *Les épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (1973), 287; H. Koester, *History and Literature of the New Testament*, 2 vol. trans. Walter de Gruyter & Co. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1982), 2:246-47; Gunther, "The Alexandrian Epistle of Jude" (1984), 549-62; Neyrey, *2 Peter and Jude* (1993), 30; Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief / Der 2 Petrusbrief* (1994), 5.

<sup>15</sup> **Unknown Destination:** G. Hollmann, "Der Brief Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus," *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2:61-84, ed. J. Weiss (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907), 61; Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (1911), 358; J. C. Beker, "Letter of Jude," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 2:1009-1011, ed. G. A. Buttrick (New York, NY: Abington, 1962) 2:1010; Cantinat, *Les épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (1973), 288; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968, reprint 1983), 48; Fuch/Raymond. *La deuxième épître de saint Piette* (1980), 144; R. Kugelman, "James and Jude," *New Testament Message: A Biblical Theological Message* 19 (Dublin: Veritas, 1980). 84; Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter* (2000), 237-38. **Asia Minor Destination:** Barns, "The Epistle of Jude" (1905), 396; Chaine, *Lex Épîtres Caholiques* (1939), 273 and 288; Becker hold to the unknown view but like the Asia Minor view: Beker, "Jude, Letter of" (1962), 2:1010. **Syrian Antioch Destination:** Davidson, *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament* (London: Longmans, Green, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1882), 1:272; Harnack, *Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius* (1897; repr 1958), 2:466-67; Chase, "Jude, Epistle of" (1901), 2:805; Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (1912), 209; Wikenhauser, *New Testament Introduction* (1960), 490. **Alexandria, Egypt Destination:** Jülicher, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (1904), 231; Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity* (1911), 255; Chaine, *Les épîtres catholiques* (1939), 288; H. Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 45; Neyrey, *2 Peter and Jude* (1993), 30; For the most compelling argument for an Alexandrian audience see Gunther, "The Alexandrian Epistle of Jude" (1984): 549-62.

place the letter's composition during a possible life-span for Jude (A.D. 50–85), they underscore the importance of Jewish tradition (= literature: e.g. *I Enoch*, *Assumption of Moses*, etc.), and they strive to profile the false teachers based upon Jude's portrayal of the godless within the text. And though the *Christian* false teacher report seldom appeals to *Gnostic* texts and concerns, there are times when *Gnostic* conclusions *appear* to be a mere re-contextualization within the *Christian* false teacher report.

While there are at least thirty-three commentators who agree that (1) James's brother, Jude, wrote the letter (2) during the pre-apostolic period and thereby (3) oriented against *Christian* false teachers<sup>16</sup> there are numerous competing *Christian* false teacher assessments within the report. Nevertheless, whenever the “godless,” (vv. 4, 15) and “these *people*” (vv. 8, 12, 16, 19) appear in Jude, it is assumed that Jude, the brother of

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<sup>16</sup> E. Renan, *Saint Paul* (Paris: M. Lévy, 1869), 84; Gloag, *Introduction to the Catholic Epistles* (1887), 360-61; B. Weiss, *A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament* (1889), 125; E. Kühl, *Die Brief Petri und Judae*, KEK 12 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897), 291-92; **Commentators of the 1900s**: F. Chase, “Jude, Epistle of,” in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. J. Hastings, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 2:804; J. Bartlet, *The Apostolic Age: Its Life, Doctrine, Worship and Polity* (New York, NY: Scribner's Sons, 1905), 350; C. Bigg, *Epistles of St. Jude and St. Peter*, in ICC (New York, NY: Scribner's Sons, 1909), 317-18; J. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907, repr. Grand Rapids, Baker, 1979), cxlvi-clii; S. Salmond, *Jude*, Pulpit Commentary, eds. H. D. M. Spence and J.S. Exell (New York: NY: Funk & Wagnalls, 1907), iv; M. R. James, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), xxxvi; G. Wohlenberg, *Der erste und zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*, KNT 15 (Leipzig / Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1923), xxxix; Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (1934), 189-90; Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1968), 45-46; Payne, “The Letter of Jude” (1969), 626; W. J. Dalton, “Jude” in *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (1969), 1263; D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, Revised Edition (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1970), 902-03; R. Gromacki, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), 385-86; I. H. Eybers, “Aspects of the Background of the Letter of Jude,” *Neot* (1975): 113–23; Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (1976). 170; R. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC (Waco, TX: Word, 1983), 14-16; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1983), 48-52; S. Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 355-56, 365-66; N. Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, in NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992), 16; D. Fiensy, *New Testament Introduction*, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1994) 338; G. Holloway, *James & Jude*, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1996), 137; Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, NIV Application Commentary (1996), 27. **Commentators of the 2000s**: Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (2003), 404–406; Brosend II, *James & Jude* (2004), 3; Carson/Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2005), 690-92; Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2008), 1-9; K. H. Jobes, *Letters to the Church: A Survey of Hebrews and the General Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 236; J. Painter and D. deSilva, *James and Jude*, PCNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 179-83.

James, is speaking against *Christian* false teachers. But what are some of the competing assessments within the *Christian* false teacher report? What *Christian* false teacher conclusions seem to be echoes from the *Gnostic* false teacher report?

First, competing information within the *Christian* false teacher report concerns from where Jude wrote and to whom he wrote. While from where Jude wrote is often ignored,<sup>17</sup> evidence often appears within the report that suggests Jude wrote to Hellenistic Jewish Christians living in a predominately Gentile area (the diaspora).<sup>18</sup> Occasionally, the report provides evidence for a mixed Jew and Gentile audience.<sup>19</sup> Proof, however, for a Judean place of origin,<sup>20</sup> written to a Jewish audience living in Judea is also compelling.<sup>21</sup> Some support for a Judean place of origin even appears within the *Gnostic*

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<sup>17</sup> Bigg, *Epistles of St. Jude and St. Peter* (1901), 320; James, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude* (1912), xxxviii; Willmering, “The Epistle of St. Jude” (1953), 1191; Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (1976), 170; Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 360; Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude* (1993), 30; Holloway, *James & Jude* (1996), 138; Carson/Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2005), 693. **Compare these *Gnostic* false teacher presentations:** Wikenhausen, *New Testament Introduction* (1960), 491; Koester, *History and Literature of the New Testament* (1982), 2:246-47.

<sup>18</sup> Willmering, “The Epistle of St. Jude” (1953), 1191; Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (1976), 198; Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (1983), 16; Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 359; Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (1990), 914; Moo, *2 Peter, Jude* (1996), 28; Webb, “Jude” (1997), 618; Painter/deSilva, *James and Jude* (2012), 181. **Compare these *Gnostic* false teacher presentations:** Davidson, *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament* (1882), 1:447; Wikenhausen, *New Testament Introduction* (1960), 490.

<sup>19</sup> Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (1983), 16; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (2003), 409. Compare these *Gnostic* false teacher presentations: Schneider, *Die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Judas und Johannes* (1961); 122; Fuchs/Raymond. *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre* (1980), 144; Kugelman, *James and Jude* (1980), 84; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1983), 48.

<sup>20</sup> Gloag, *Introduction to the Catholic Epistles* (1887), 373; Davidson, *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament* (1894), 1:447; S. Salmond, *Jude* (1907), iv; Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* (1909; repr 1977), 2:238-39; Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (1934), 193; Cranfield, *I & II Peter and Jude* (1960), 148; Payne, “The Letter of Jude” (1969), 626; Elwell/Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament* (1998), 371; Watson, “The Letter of Jude” (1998), 12:475; Brosend, *James & Jude* (2004), 7; Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (2006), 14. Jobes, *Letters to the Church* (2011), 238, 240-41.

<sup>21</sup> Keil, *Commentar über die Briefe des Petrus and Judas*. (1883), 296; Gloag, *Introduction to the Catholic Epistles* (1887), 365; S. Salmond, *Jude* (1907), iv, vii; Holloway, *James & Jude* (1996), 137; Watson, “The Letter of Jude” (1998), 12:475; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (2003), 409; Brosend, *James & Jude* (2004), 7; Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2008), 16; Jobes, *Letters to the Church* (2011), 242; Painter/ deSilva, *James and Jude* (2012), 186.

false teacher report: “The tract must have originated in Palestine,” says Kelly, “for it was there that Jude probably worked and that his and James’ names were highly regarded.”<sup>22</sup> Yet, the debate and competing evidence offered within the *Christian* false teacher report seems unending and inconclusive. So while ambiguity abounds about the recipients, the report does provide evidence to suggest that Jude wrote his letter while in Judea to Jewish Christians living in Judea.

Second, the *Christian* false teacher report appears at times to recontextualize evidence from the *Gnostic* false teacher report. This is particularly true about the proof provided for the practice of unrestrained sexual indulgences among the false teachers, a prominent rebuke about the *Gnostics*. For instance, the term for “immoral behavior” (ἀσελείαν) in verse 4 is at times limited to sexual behavior.<sup>23</sup> Yet, Kraftchick, a *Christian* false teacher contributor objects and counters this idea. He concludes, “we cannot say that the opponents were actually engaged in sexual misconduct . . . in all likelihood they were not.”<sup>24</sup> Translations like “a license for evil” (NET), “wicked deeds” or “immoral *behavior*” appear to be the best three renderings for ἀσελείαν because Jude’s explicitly stated concern is rebellion (vv. 4, 5–7, 8), verbal abuse (vv. 8, 16, 19),

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<sup>22</sup> Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1969, repr 1981), 234.

<sup>23</sup> Harrington contends “it is best taken in its root sexual sense,” and Schreiner limits the term to sexual immorality due to the referencing of angels and Sodom and Gomorrah (vv. 6-7). Senior/Harrington, *Jude and 2 Peter* (2003), 190 and Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (2003) 439. **Christian False Teacher Presentations:** Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (1983), 38-39; Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 374; Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2010), 59-60; Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (2006), 44. **Gnostic False Teacher Presentations:** Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief* (1992), 55–56; Richard, *1 Peter, Jude, 2 Peter* (2000), 261. See also O. Bauernfeind, “ἀσελεία,” *TDNT*, 1:490.

<sup>24</sup> Kraftchick, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 33-34. Evidence that broadens “Immoral behavior” see Reese who considers the term to include immorality and violence and Moo who expands the meaning to include “sexual misconduct, drunkenness, gluttony, and so on.” Reese, *2 Peter & Jude* (2007), 40; Moo, *2 Peter, Jude* (1996), 230.

and greed (11, 12). Furthermore, “immoral behavior” (ἀσελγείαν) has a wide range of meanings.<sup>25</sup> It is not a term limited to sexual misconduct.

More frequently presented within the *Christian* false teacher report, however, are the unrestrained sexual indulgences imposed upon the angels (v. 6). The sexual passions of which celestial beings are charged is derived from *I Enoch* and promoted within both the *Gnostic* and *Christian* false teacher reports.<sup>26</sup> Equally evident, however, is the counter evidence presented against the view. “We note,” says Kistemaker, “that he (= Jude) does not endorse this idea in his epistle” and that the example of rebellion in verse 6 differs from the rebellion that appears in verse 7.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps Jude chooses not to make a sexual connection because Jesus taught celestial beings are sexless (Matt 22:30).<sup>28</sup> Regardless, what Jude seems to explicitly underscore in verse 6 is that celestial beings left their

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<sup>25</sup> Josephus employs ἀσελγείαν broadly to include “inappropriate” language (*Ant* 4.6.12 § 151), of following a way of “wickedness” as a reproof to governing officials (*Ant* 8.10.2§252), of a women who fall into “impurity” (*Ant* 8.13.1 § 318), of Herod’s feelings of “lust” (sexual?) for Cleopatra (*Ant* 15.4.2 § 98), the *inconsistency* of Mariamne, which was not sexual (*Ant* 16.7.1§185), of “wasteful behavior” (*Ant* 17.5.5 § 110), of an “impudent obscenity” of a soldier (*Ant* 20.5§112), of Cleopatra’s sexual lust for Anthony (*War*, 1.22.3 § 439), of “lascivious behavior” of women (*War*, 2.8.2 § 121), and of “unlawful pleasures” (*War*, 4.9.10 § 562). So for Josephus, “immoral *behavior*” takes into consideration many wicked activities.

<sup>26</sup> **Gnostic False Teacher Presentations:** Sidebottom, *James, Jude and 2 Peter* (1967), 85; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1968, repr 1983), 166; Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1969, repr 1981), 257; Cantinat, *Les épître de St. Jacques de St. Jude* (1973), 304; Fuchs/Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre* (1980), 164; Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief* (1992), 63; Grundmann, *Judas-2 Petrusbrief* (1986), 33-34; Hillyer, 1 and 2 Peter (1992), 242. **Christian False Teacher Presentations:** Bigg, *Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (1909), 329; Horrell, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1998), 120; Watson, “2 Peter, Jude” (1998), 12:488; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter and Jude* (2003), 448-49; Harvey/Towner, *2 Peter & Jude* (2008), 192-93.

<sup>27</sup> Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 380;. Others also provide evidence that counters sexual allusions. See Sellin, “Die Häretiker des Judasbriefes” (1968): 217; Albertus K. J. Klijn, “Jude 5 to 7” in *The New Testament Age: Essays*, vol. 1, ed. by William C. Weinrich (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 237-44, esp. 241-42; J. Daryl Charles, “‘Those’ and ‘These’: The Use of the Old Testament in the Epistle of Jude,” *JSNT* 38 (1990): 109-124, esp. 114; L. R. Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2010), 179

<sup>28</sup> Angels are invisible (2 Kings 6:17) spiritual beings (Heb 1:14) who can take on human appearances (Gen 18:1-8; 19:1-8; Zech 5:9; Mark 16:5; Luke 24:4; Acts 1:10), but they seem unable to reproduce among themselves and perhaps are even sexless (Matt. 22:29-30; cf. Mark 12:25. Fallen angels are capable of invading human beings (Mark 1:21-26; 5:1-13; 9:14-26), and perhaps have the ability to mate with humans by way of possession (Gen. 6:1-4; *I Enoch* 6:1-8:4).

residency in the heavens and thereby challenge where God had situated them in the heavens. As a result, God punished them.<sup>29</sup> Within the *Christian* false teacher report, Gene Green makes this historical application for verse 6.

To keep one's proper station in (Roman) society was a high value during the era when Jude wrote. In a stratified society where status and position were marked by both clothing and positions in banquets and the theater, the accusation that these beings had moved outside their proper sphere or realm would have been understood as a transgression without the need for any further mention of their sin.<sup>30</sup>

Jude's readers would have been aware of Jewish leaders and their followers who challenged Rome's political hierarchy and disrupted the *Pax Romana*, which resulted in imprisonment (e.g., Aristobulus, *Ant* 14.7.4 § 123; Herod Agrippa, *War* 1.9.6 § 181).<sup>31</sup>

One final example within the *Christian* false teacher report that suggests Jude is confronting unrestrained sexual indulgences is the translation of *σπιλάδες* in verse 12. A rather significant number of people submit evidence to support the translation of *σπιλάδες* to be "spot" or "blemish" to indicate immorality. Beyond the appeal within the report to the sexual misconduct in Jude 4, 6, 7, 8 13, 16 as supporting evidence, though often questioned, it is also suggested that 2 Peter 2:13 speaks of false teaches as being

<sup>29</sup> Herbert W. Bateman IV, "Rebellion and God's Judgment in Jude," *BibSac* 170 (October-December 2013): 453-77.

<sup>30</sup> Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2008), 69; cf. Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude* (2010), 179. **Proper Station in Roman Society:** "Legal position and status lay at the root of Roman social organization," muses Craige B. Champion, "which at all levels was formally hierarchical." "Rome exercised a quasi-paternal authority in its foreign policy and expected other states to behave as dutiful clients. In all such cases, Roman authority was paramount and subordinates were hierarchically graded." (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece & Rome* (2010), s.v. "Social Organization, Roman"). See also Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2003), 48-69. At the time, Jude's Judea was not behaving in a manner in keeping with Rome's quasi-paternal authority and thereby (from Rome's point of view) rejecting their station within the Roman Empire.

<sup>31</sup> Hengel explains that Josephus' labeling of Zealots as "bandits" and "chief-bandits" were descriptive political terms among the Romans to speak of people who were rebels for political and religious reasons against the Roman government. Furthermore, Josephus' preference for terms other than "Zealot" was in order present the movement and their leaders as criminals as well as to distance the movement from the Maccabean revolt. M. Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until A.D. 70*, trans. David Smith (Edinburgh, England: T & T Clark, 1989), 15-16, 24-75, 154-56.

“blemishes” due to, among other things, Peter’s description of false teachers who indulge in sexual misconduct.<sup>32</sup> Yet, Peter uses a different noun, σπῖλοι rather than σπιλάδες. The most common understanding of σπιλάδες is a rocky hazard hidden by ocean waves.<sup>33</sup> Just as hidden reefs were harmful for anyone sailing the Mediterranean Sea, many contributors to the *Christian* false teacher report conclude that σπιλάδες is a metaphor describing the godless as hidden and harmful people to the Judean Christian community.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, Jude has already alluded to how the godless *have slipped in* or *sneaked in secretly* (παρεισέδυσαν, v. 4). So in some sense, Jude has returned to the fact that the godless *have sneaked in* and thereby have *hidden* themselves among the followers of Jesus who meet in Jewish *Christian* homes throughout Judea. Thus σπιλάδες

<sup>32</sup> **Christian False Teacher Presentations:** Bigg, *Peter and Jude* (1909), 333–34; Lenski, *The Interpretation of The Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude* (1945), 635; Barnett/Homrighausner, “The Epistle of Jude” (1957), 332; Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude* (1992), 74–75; Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 391–92; Watson, “2 Peter and Jude” (1998), 492; Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter* (2000), 278–79; Senior/Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter* (2003), 199, 212; Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2008), 95. See also Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles* (1551 rep 1948), 441; Lightfoot, *On a Fresh Revision of the English New Testament* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Macmillan, 1891), 151–53; Bennett, *The General Epistles* (n.d.), 337. See also **Gnostic False Teacher Presentations:** Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (1912), 232; Wohlenberg, *Der erste und zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*, KNT 15 (1923), 311–13; Moffatt, *The General Epistles* (1928 rep 1953), 239; Chaîne, *Les épîtres catholiques* (1939), 315; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe* (1951), 44; Sidebottom, James, Jude, 2 Peter (1967), 89; Cantinat, *Les Épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (1973), 314; Grundmann, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus* (1986), 40; Paulsen, *Petrusbrief und Judasbrief* (1992), 71.

<sup>33</sup> Josephus speaks of hazardous rocks that jut from the sea at Joppa: “Now Joppa is not naturally a haven, for it ends in a rough shore, where all the rest of it is straight, but the two ends bend towards each other, where there are deep precipices and great stones (σπιλάδες) that jut out into the sea.” Josephus, *War* 3.9.3 §§ 419–420 (Thackeray). Strabo, *Geography* 17.6.1 describes hidden rocks in the east bay of Alexandria; Spic provides an array of examples from classical Greek sources like Homer, *Odyssea* 3.298; Apollonius Rhodis, *Argonautica* 2.550 (3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.); Polybius, *Historicus* 1.37.2 (2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.); BDAG 938b 1; Spic, *TLNT*, 3:270–72; s.v σπιλάς; cf. Walter, *EDNT*, 3:265; s.v σπιλάς.

<sup>34</sup> **Christian False Teacher Presentations:** Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (1983), 85–86; Hiebert, *Second Peter and Jude* (1989), 259; Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude* (1992), 256; Holloway, *James & Jude* (1996), 160–61; Moo, *2 Peter, Jude* (1996), 259; Horrell, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1998), 124; Kraftchick, *Jude, 2 Peter* (2002), 48–49; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter and Jude* (2003), 465; Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (2006), 68–69; Harvey/Towner, *2 Peter and Jude* (2009), 208; Painter/deSilva, *James and Jude* (2012), 213. **Gnostic False Teacher Presentations:** Mayor, *The Epistle of Saint Jude and the Second Epistle of Saint Peter* (1907 rep 1979), 40–41; Windisch, *Die katholischen Briefe* (1951), 44; Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1967, repr 1977), 270–71; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1968 rep 1983), 174; Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude* (1969), 207; Fuchs/Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre* (1980), 98; Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, der 2 Petrusbrief* (1994), 67.

is often rendered “hidden rocks” (ASV), “hidden reefs” (NASB<sup>95</sup>, ESVS), or “dangerous reefs” (NET, NLT<sup>SE</sup>) as a metaphor without sexual overtones.

So while there is unanimity within the Christian false teacher report about Jude’s speaking out against false teachers, there is a great deal of contradictory evidence presented and disagreement among the contributors. Origin, recipients, destination, and sexual misconduct are just some of the unresolved issues within the report. Nevertheless, the common and overlapping data about false teachers within the *Gnostic* and *Christian* reports serve as the unifying factor for the majority report. Yet, there are several people who raise difficulties with the majority false teacher report.

#### *Difficulties with the Majority Report*

While the majority report has concluded that Jude confronts false teachers, not everyone agrees. “There *does not seem* to me,” says George Salmon, “to be sufficient evidence that those whom Jude condemns were teachers of false doctrine, or even teachers at all.”<sup>35</sup> Salmon’s statement is strengthened with Toit’s observation. Unlike other New Testament authors who address false teachers, Toit points out that Jude fails to use any *pseudo*-prefixed nouns typically employed in designating opposition groups such as “false apostles” (2 Cor. 11:13), “false brothers” (Gal. 2:4), “false teachers” (2 Pet. 2:1), and “false prophets” (1 John 4:1). Nor are they called “liars” (Rev. 2:2).<sup>36</sup> Thurén also reinforces Salmon’s perspective when he says, “Almost no word refers to teaching or

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<sup>35</sup> G. Salmon, *An Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: John Murray, 1886), 507 (emphasis mine).

<sup>36</sup> Andrie du Toit limits Jude’s vilification to moral depravity and prone to poor judgment (“Vilification as a pragmatic Device in Early Christian Epistolography,” *Biblica* 75 [1994]: 403-12, esp. 408, 410).

doctrinal issues” in Jude.<sup>37</sup> He contends that references in Jude to slander (vv. 8, 10), wicked remarks (v. 15), discontented murmurings (v. 16) and scoffing (v. 18), “describe – in a pejorative way – verbal criticisms of other people.”<sup>38</sup> In fact, Eybers considers the letter to be “practical more than doctrinal” (e.g. v. 4).<sup>39</sup> And while Donelson’s conclusion about the opponents is a bit elusive, he observes “there is nothing in Jude that *explicitly* suggests antinomianism” and that “a summarizing adjective, such as Gnostic or antinomian, should be avoided.”<sup>40</sup> Finally, the appeals to Jude’s addressing unrestrained sexual indulgences appear to echo a lingering character flaw of the Carpocratian, incipient, or libertine Gnostics that is usually refuted by contributors for both the *Christian* and *Gnostic* false teacher reports. Jude’s explicitly stated profile of the godless is predominately rebellion (vv. 4, 5–7, 8), verbal abuse (vv. 8, 16, 19), and greed (11, 12).

Triplet Expressions about the Godless				Jude
First set of charges against the intruders	Godless	Rebels	Deniers of Jesus	4
First paradigm of rebellion and punishment (past)	<i>Remember the Wilderness generation</i>	<i>Remember the Fallen angels</i>	<i>Remember Sodom &amp; Gomorrah</i>	5-7
Second set of charges against the intruders	Self-polluting	Rebels	Slanderers	8
Second paradigm of rebellion and punishment (current)	The godless in greed advance their self-interests like Cain	The godless in greed incite foolish acts like Balaam	The godless in greed can expect bereavements like Korah	11

<sup>37</sup> Thurén emphasis, however, is upon the author’s condemnation of rhetorical devices of the opponents being used against Christian leadership within the community. L. Thurén, “Hey Jude! Asking for the Original Situation and Message of a Catholic Epistle.” *New Testament Studies* 43 (1997): 451-65, esp. 463.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. Emphasis mine.

<sup>39</sup> I. H. Eybers, “Aspects of the Background of the Letter of Jude,” *Neot* 9 (1975): 113-23, esp. 114.

<sup>40</sup> Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude* (2010), 164 emphasis mine.

Third set of charges against the intruders	Greedy	Brazen	Selfish	12
Fourth set of charges against the intruders	Disgruntled murmurers	Boastful Speech	Patronizing Comments	16
Final set of charges against the intruders	Disrupters	Sensuous	Unspiritual	19

So if there are no references to false teachers in Jude, no references to false teaching in Jude, no *explicit* descriptions of unrestrained sexual practice in Jude, and that Jude ought not to be labeled as Gnostic or antinomian, is there another possible option? Should the majority report be the predetermined and foregone conclusion upon which everyone should read, interpret, and preach Jude? What does the “minority report” have to offer?

### **The Minority Report: Zealot Led Rebellion**

The minority report often agrees with some of the evidence found in the majority report. For instance, evidence presented within the minority report concurs with at least six *Christian* false teacher commentators who have determined that James’s brother, (1) Jude, wrote the letter (2) to Judean believers (3) during the mid-60s.<sup>41</sup> Yet, the minority report suggests that Jude’s distress (v. 3–4) is over a “zealot led rebellion” that is challenging the early church throughout all of Judea.<sup>42</sup> This conclusion is based upon the

<sup>41</sup> P. J. Gloag, *Introduction to the Catholic Epistles* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1887), 360-65; S. Salmond, *Jude*, in *Pulpit Commentary*, eds. H. D. M. Spence and J. S. Exell (New York: NY: Funk & Wagnalls, 1907), iv; G. Holloway, *James & Jude*, *The College Press NIV Commentary* (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1996), 137; T. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, *New American Commentary Series*, vol. 37 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 404–409; W. F. Brosend II, *James & Jude*, *The New Cambridge Bible Commentary*, ed. Ben Witherington III (Edinburgh: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3; J. Painter and D. deSilva, *James and Jude*, *PCNT* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 179-83, 186.

<sup>42</sup> Zealots prompted, promoted, and pursued with great tenacity Judeans to join in the violent rebellion against Rome. Battles with Rome erupted in Galilee (e.g. Sepphoris, Jotapata, Gamala), in Samaria (e.g. Mount Gerizim, Shechem), along the coastal plains (e.g. Joppa, Jamnia, Azotus), Perea (e.g. Bethennabris, Abila, Juias, Besimoth), in Judah (e.g. Jericho, Hebron, Jerusalem) and eventually at Masada. The revolt

answer to this question: *What is happening in Judea during the mid-60s when Jude was alive and writing his letter?*

Although Witherington has a wider range for dating Jude (late 50s and 60s), his resolve is based upon “the wave of rising tension and rebellion leading to the Jewish war in the 60s.”<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, Weiss hypothesizes that “Jude would *not* have taken up the pen before the death of his renowned brother,” and that the year 62 should be “regarded as the *terminus a quo* for the composition of the Epistle.”<sup>44</sup> Weiss’s *terminus a quo* seems reasonable because while James was alive, James was the spokesperson and authority figure for Judean Jewish Christian believers (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:9, 12; 1 Cor 15:7). If difficulties arose within the Judean Jewish/Christian community, James would have dealt with them.

Finally, Josephus recalls how the high priest Ananias (*circa* A.D. 62) had James stoned to death (*Antiquities* 20.9.1 §§ 200-04).<sup>45</sup> Naturally, the death of James would have created a leadership vacuum for the Judean churches. Jude’s letter may have served

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was cross-generational and cross-gender as evidenced in the suicides at Gamala and Masada in which many people died. See Y. Aharoni and M. Avi-Yonah, *The Micmillan Bible Atlas*, (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing, 1968, rev. ed. 1977), 157; Hengel, *The Zealots* (1989), 330-76; L.I. Levine “Jewish War” in *ABD* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3:839-45.

<sup>43</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Hebrews, James and Jude* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 564.

<sup>44</sup> B. Weiss, *A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament* 2 Volumes, translated by A. J. K. Davidson (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls, 1889), 124. Emphasis is mine. Mayor appeals to Jude’s writing after the death of James as well, but for Mayor Jude writes much later (A.D. 70s-80s) to the same eastern Diaspora Jews as James had previously in A.D. 45. J. B. Mayor, *The Epistles of Jude and II Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907), cxlvii-cxlviii. Yet Robinson offers a rather weak contention that if Jude were to have been written after the death of James, then Jude would have added an epithet the name of James, like “blessed” (μακάροϛ) or “good” (ἀγαθός). J. A. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1976), 197.

<sup>45</sup> Admittedly, no one knows exactly when James died or the circumstances surrounding his death. Eusebius tells of James being thrown from a pinnacle of the temple, stoned, then clubbed to death *prior* to the temple’s destruction in A.D. 70 (*Hist* 2.23.4-25). See James C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 476-82; Herbert W. Bateman, “High Priests of the Herodian Period (37 B.C.E. – 70 C.E.)” in *Charts on the Book of Hebrews*, KCB (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), 89-91.

as a means by which to fill the recently developed leadership void for the Judean church (v. 3).<sup>46</sup> Thus on the one hand, the death of James (*circa* A.D. 62) provides the *terminus a quo* for dating Jude. On the other hand, the *terminous ad quem* would be the Judean war with Rome, a war that began in A.D. 66 because Eusebius notes that the Jewish believers fled to Pella due to the Zealot threat and the conflicting messianic beliefs.<sup>47</sup>

Consequently, the evidence in the minority report contends that the occasion for the writing of Jude surrounds the rising tension and rebellion of the Zealots leading up to the Jewish war against Rome in A.D. 66. Furthermore, the minority report presumes that Jude wrote his letter shortly after James's death in A.D. 62 and just prior to the total outbreak of the Judean war with Rome in A.D. 66. So whenever the “godless” (vv. 4, 15) and “these *people*” (vv. 8, 12, 16, 19) appear in Jude, it is presumed that Jude is speaking against those who have joined the “Zealot led rebellion” just prior to the total outbreak of

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<sup>46</sup> The leadership vacuum, the hostility against Rome that was gaining momentum, and the pressure to join the Zealot revolt was mounting. Jude was eager to recall “our common deliverances” or “our shared safety” (τῆς κοινῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας) the Jewish Christian community had experienced during the early beginnings of the church (v. 3a). Jude would have been an eyewitness to and even experienced the divine deliverances recorded in the Book of Acts. When the Sanhedrin arrested the apostles, they were supernaturally released and the community of believers continued to grow (4:1-3, 19-23); when Saul went on his seek and destroy mission to Damascus, he was supernaturally converted and the community of believers in Damascus was spared (9:1-28); when Herod Agrippa I was wreaking havoc on the Christian community in Judea and Peter was arrested, Peter was supernaturally released and Agrippa I was struck dead and the community was once again spared persecution (12:1-17; cp. Josephus *Ant* 19.8.2 § 343–52); when famine hit Judea, relief was divinely provided by Gentile churches located throughout the Roman Empire (21:17-19; cf. 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 9:1-5, 12-15). Who was better qualified than Jude to write a letter, with a disquieted zeal or eagerness, in order to put things into a positive perspective? Thus Jude was eager to write about the “*shared safety*” (τῆς κοινῆς . . . σωτηρίας) that Judean followers of Jesus had experienced over the years. Yet, Jude shifts his purpose to one of defense (v. 3b).

<sup>47</sup> “The people of the church in Jerusalem,” according to Eusebius, “were commanded by an oracle given by revelation before the war to those in the city who were worthy of it to depart and dwell in one of the cities of Perea which they called Pella. To those who believed on Christ migrated from Jerusalem, that when holy men had altogether deserted the royal capital of the Jews and the whole land of Judea, the judgment of God might at last overtake them for all their crimes against the Christ and his Apostles, and all that generation of the wicked be utterly blotted out from among men” (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.5; trans. by Kirsopp Lake). Compare Mark 13:14–18; Luke 21:20–24; Acts 11:28. “It is extremely unlikely that Jewish Christians could have participated in the uprising against Rome,” says Hengel to which he adds the two eschatological movements (Christianity and Zealotism) were “firmly opposed to each other. Hengel, *The Zealots* (1989), 301

war with Rome in A.D. 66. Yet, does the minority report's presupposition offer any evidence to validate this different perspective?

*Jude's Profile of the Godless*

Like the *Christian* false teacher report, the minority report derives its profile about the godless from the text of Jude and Jewish literature of the Second Temple period (e.g. *1 Enoch*, *Assumption of Moses*, etc). Yet, what differs is the amount of interaction with the Jewish historian, Josephus because they both lived through the Jewish uprising against Rome. While Jude writes during the Judean revolt, Josephus writes in retrospect of it. Consequently, they often share similar terminology, echo similar concerns, and draw attention to some of the same Old Testament figures that are descriptive of those promoting and participating in the Zealot movement against Rome.

First they share similar terminology. While the majority report provides evidence to suggest that “our common salvation” (τῆς κοινῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας) reflects a salvific understanding,<sup>48</sup> others who contribute to the *Christian* false teacher report provide counter evidence for a different understanding. Gene Green provides a wide range of evidence that suggests “our common salvation” (τῆς κοινῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας) references a “struggle against national enemies, concerns for the ‘common safety’ or ‘security’ of a

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<sup>48</sup> From within the **Gnostic false teacher report**: “Common salvation,” avers Kelly, means, “(presumably) to prepare a general and positive presentation of the faith for their benefit.” Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 243-44 (emphasis mine). See also Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe* (1951), Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1998, repr. 1983), 158-59; Fuchs/Reymond, *La 2<sup>e</sup> épître de saint Pierre* (1980), 157. From within the **Christian false teacher report**: Moo suggests the same idea when he says, “We are to imagine Jude preparing to write generally and joyfully about the salvation that he and his readers share together when he learns about a new and serious threat to his readers’ faith: the false teachers.” See also Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 370; Hiebert, *Second Peter and Jude* (1989), 216; Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude* (1992), 236; Senior/Harrington, *Jude and 2 Peter* (2003), 189; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (2003), 434-35; Davids, *Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (2009), 42.

people were paramount (similar to the contemporary idea of ‘national security’).”<sup>49</sup> The minority report concurs with Green’s assessment and reinforces it with similar usage found in the writings of Josephus. When Josephus employs the two words “common” (κοινός) and “salvation” (σωτηρία) as Jude does in verse 3, his literary context always conveys some sort of physical welfare or deliverance of the Jewish community.<sup>50</sup> In Jude’s context, like that of Josephus, there is a concern for Judea’s national safety but ultimately for the safety of the Judean church (see n. 43). Thus the noun σωτηρία refers to physical “survival,” “deliverance,” or “preservation” from pressing circumstances similar to Jude’s later use of σωτηρία in verse 5 (cf. Acts 27:34; Phil. 1:19; Heb 11:7; 2 Macc. 3:32)<sup>51</sup> and thereby not a reference to one’s salvation to refute false teaching.

Another example of shared terminology with Josephus evident in the minority report is Jude’s use of “godless” (ἄσεβεις; vv. 4, 15), which is synonymous with “these people” in Jude (vv. 8, 12, 16, 19). “Godless” (ἄσεβεις) appears in Josephus to describe

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<sup>49</sup> Philo, a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher of Alexandria (*circa* 38 CE), used the term to speak of those “who die in defense of the common safety” (κοινῆς σωτηρίας, in *Agriculture* 34 § 156). The Greek military leader and author Xenophon, who courageously led his men back to Greece after having marched into the heart of the Persian Empire (*circa* 401 BCE), at one time declared “the safety (σωτηρίας) of all is the need of all” (*Anabasis* 3.2.32). Finally, Isocrates, in his view of a public leader in the act of war: “Nevertheless I should be ashamed if I showed that I am more concerned about my own reputation than about the public safety” (*De pace* 39). Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2008), 52-54. Although without much comment, deSilva renders σωτηρίας as deliverance. Painter/deSilva, *James and Jude* (2012), 192.

<sup>50</sup> Josephus alludes to prayers offered to God in the temple for the physical welfare of the community when he muses about the importance “to pray for the common welfare of all” (κοινῆς εὐχέσθαι σωτηρίας; *Against Apion* 2.24 § 196). He also speaks of leaders acting on behalf of the common safety of the community when, for example, Moses suffered for the “common safety” (κοινῆς σωτηρίας) of Israel, and again when Hezekiah requested Isaiah to pray for the “common safety” (κοινῆς σωτηρίας) of Israel when the nation was threatened by Sennacherib, King of Assyria. For Moses, see Josephus *Ant* 3.12.6 § 297 (cp. Philo, *Contemplative Life* 86); for Hezekiah see *Ant* 10.1.3 § 12; cp. Isa 37:1-20.

<sup>51</sup> Josephus employs σωτηρία negatively when he remembers the events at Masada. According to Josephus, Eleazar, son of Jarius avers, “we have been deprived, manifestly by God Himself, of all hope of deliverance” (σωτηρία; see *War* 7.8.6 § 331). So then, rather than surrender to Silva and the Roman legion about to breach Masada’s western wall, Eleazar the Zealot leader and nearly all the Jewish people with him who had taken a defensive refuge at Masada – 960 counting men, women, and children – committed suicide (*War* 7.9.1 §§ 389-406). Only two women survived the ordeal.

the leaders of the Zealot rebellion.<sup>52</sup> This conclusion is further supported in verse 4 where Jude describes the godless as people who deny Jesus as “the only Master and Lord” (τὸν μόνον δεσπότην καὶ κύριον). That description corresponds with a Zealot declaration: “God is to be their only Ruler and Lord” (μόνον δεσπότην καὶ κύριον τὸν θεόν; Josephus *Ant* 18.1.5 § 23). “They think little of submitting to death in unusual forms,” writes Josephus, “and permitting vengeance to fall on kinsmen and friends if only they may avoid calling any man master.”<sup>53</sup> Jude’s statement in verse 4 parallels that of a Zealot belief and perhaps even their slogan. It identifies the Zealots to be at odds with those who follow Jesus.<sup>54</sup> So like Josephus, the rebellious Zealots are described as godless, but unlike Josephus, Jude links their godlessness to their denial of Jesus as “the

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<sup>52</sup> Josephus uses the term “godless” or “without God” (ἄσεβεῖς) some sixty times in *Jewish War* and *Antiquities of the Jews* mostly to depict the sort of tyrannical leadership over Israel and Judah. For a few examples from *Antiquities* of ungodly tyrants over Israel are Jeroboam (8.9.1 §§243-45), Baasha (8.12.3 § 299), Ahab (9.1.1 §1), Pekah (9.11.1 § 234), etc. For a few examples of tyrants over Judah are Rehoboam (8.10.2 §§ 251,256), Ahaz (9.12.1 § 243), Manassah (10.3.1 §37). The Judean Zealots are also described as ἄσεβεῖς (*War* 4.3.8 § 157; 5.8.15 §§ 401-42). These depictions are in keeping with the overall purpose of his work, particularly *Jewish War*. The essential thesis of the *Jewish War* (1.4 § 9-12) is that the Judean revolt against Rome “was caused by only a few troublemakers among the Jews – power-hungry tyrants and marauders who drove the people to rebel against their will.” See Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992), 60; Hengel, *The Zealots* (1989), 181-85.

<sup>53</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.1.6 §§ 23-25 (Feldman); cf. *War* 2.8.1 § 117-118. This cry of the Zealots was first introduced circa A.D. 6 when Judas the Galilean first founded the movement. Jesus was probably around twelve years old at the time. Similar sentiments are expressed elsewhere in Josephus: “God is the father and Lord of all things” (*Ant* Preface 4 § 20), Seth esteems God as Master and Lord (*Ant* 1.3.1 § 72), and even after the Romans conquered Judea “they could not get anyone of them to comply so far as to confess or seem to confess, that *Caesar was their master*; but they preserved their own opinion” (*War* 7.10.1 § 418). See Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 1:456; Hengel, *The Zealots*, 229-30.

<sup>54</sup> At the time of Jude’s writing (A.D. 62-66), Judea’s frenzy with Rome manifested itself in pockets of Zealot-led civil disobedience throughout the land led by non-believing Judeans (= godless; vv. 4; cf. 8, 10, 11-13, 16, 19). The nation had already rejected Jesus and the Kingdom message he proclaimed (Matt. 13:53–58; 26:57–68; 27:1–43; cf. Mark 6:4–6; 14:53–65; 15:1–37), they had already explained away the resurrection and denied the current reign of Jesus (Matt. 27:62–66; 28:11–15), and they had already rejected the message and messengers who preached that Jesus had fulfilled God’s covenantal promises (Acts 4:1–4; 5:29–33; 7:1–60; 13:45–46, 50–51; 14:19; 17:5, 13; 18:5–6; etc.). Thus godless Zealots had already rebelled against God and his Messiah. Now they wished to rebel against Rome, reestablish the kingdom of Israel according to their standards, in their own strength, and with Jewish leaders vying for self-imposed leadership rights. Consequently for Jude, belief in the messiahship of Jesus was the Judean believer’s *most* holy faith. They need not feel compelled to get involved in Judea’s rebellion against Rome.

only Master and Lord” (τὸν μόνον δεσπότην καὶ κύριον) and thereby rejected Jesus’s sovereignty.<sup>55</sup>

Second, Jude and Josephus echo similar issues. To begin with, the minority report offers evidence revealing that both are consumed with rebellion. Josephus presents the Zealots as ruthless revolutionaries who lashed out at anyone who submitted to Rome’s rule over Judea.<sup>56</sup> Jude likewise draws explicit attention to God’s view of rebellion by first remembering how God dealt with past rebellions (vv. 5–7) and then by directing attention to current rebels (vv. 4b, 8, 11) as well as their condemnation (vv. 4a, 11, 14–15). Jude’s center of attention is God’s judgment on rebellion observable in the overall literary structure of Jude.

- A Greeting (vv. 1–2)
- B Stated Purpose: Contend for the Faith (vv. 3–4)
- C **Past Rebellions** and Subsequent Divine Judgment (vv. 5–7)
- C<sup>1</sup> **Present Rebellion** and Future Divine Judgment (vv. 8–16)
- B<sup>1</sup> Stated Strategy: Contend for the Faith (vv. 17–23)
- A<sup>1</sup> Doxology (vv. 24–25)

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<sup>55</sup> The designations “Master” and “Lord” follow a typical pattern in Greek, article – noun – καί – noun. Since both nouns are singular, personal, and not proper names, it fits the Granville Sharp rule (e.g. Titus 2:13, 2 Pet. 2:1). We have in Jude τὸν (“the” article) – δεσπότην (“Master” noun) – καί – κύριον (“Lord” noun), thereby indicating that both designations “Master” (δεσπότην) and “Lord” (κύριον) refer to Jesus. In turn, these two terms may form a hendiadys (or two for one) in that they unite two coordinate terms “Master” (δεσπότην) and “Lord” (κύριος) to express a single concept, namely Jesus’ kingship. Thus together they draw attention to the simple fact that Jesus is sovereign. For a more extensive discussion on the Granville Sharp construction, see Daniel B. Wallace, *Granville Sharp’s Canon and Its Kin: Semantics and Significance* in *Studies in Biblical Greek* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

<sup>56</sup> **Descriptions of the Zealot:** Josephus describes the Zealots as “tyrants” (τυράννος) and “foolish” (ἄφροσύνη) people who act “rashly” (τόλμα) and exhibit “madness” (ἄπνοοία) as they promoted and pursued rebellion, pillaged and burned homes, and kidnapped and murdered Roman and countryman alike. He calls them “tyrants” (τυράννος): Josephus *War* 1.1.4 § 10; “foolish” (ἄφροσύνη), Josephus *War* 2.13.6 § 651; manifest “rash” behavior (τόλμα): Josephus *War* 3.10.2 § 479; 4.5.5 § 347; exhibited “madness” (ἄπνοοία): Josephus *War* 2.13.6 § 265; 3.9.8 § 454; 3.10.2 § 479; 4.6.1 § 362; 5.1.5 §§ 34, 121, 424, 436, 436; 6.1.3 § 20; 7.6.5 § 213; 7.8.1 § 267; 7.10.1 § 412.

Furthermore, Jude and Josephus exhibit the same concern about speech (vv. 8, 16, 19). For example, Jude warns his Judean readers about those who have slipped in undetected (vv. 3, 12) and thereby create discord (v. 16). Jude says, “these *people* are grumblers and faultfinders” (οὗτοί εἰσιν γογγυσταί, μεμψίμοιροι). While some contributors to their respective *Gnostic* and *Christian* false teacher reports link the two terms to mean, “whining,”<sup>57</sup> their evidence is countered somewhat equally to suggest that these are as two distinct activities.<sup>58</sup> Jude’s choice use of “faultfinder” (μεμψίμοιροι), that occurs only here in the New Testament, validates the minority reports presumed historical context. Josephus employs “faultfinding” (μέμψεις)<sup>59</sup> to reveal how Jewish people in the past *found fault* with Moses,<sup>60</sup> as well as to recall how *faultfinding*

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<sup>57</sup> **Gnostic False Teacher Presentations:** Moffatt, *The General Epistles James, Peter and Judas* (1928 repr 1953), 241; cf. Chaine, *Les épîtres catholiques* (1939), 324; Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (1969, repr 1976), 278; Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, der 2 Petrusbrief* (1979), 79-80; seemingly Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief* (1992), 77. **Christian False Teacher Presentations:** Huther, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the General Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude* (1883 repr 1979), 831; Lenski, *The Interpretation of The Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude* (1945), 642; Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (1983), 98; Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (1987), 399; Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter* (2000), 286; Reese, *2 Peter & Jude* (2002), 63; Davids, *II Peter and Jude* (2012), 27; Painter/deSilva, *James and Jude* (2012), 221.

<sup>58</sup> **Advocates of Two Distinct Substantives:** Trapp, *A Commentary or Exposition upon all the Books of the New Testament* (1865 repr 1981), 739. **Gnostic False Teacher Presentations:** Fuchs/Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre: L'épître de saint Jude* (1980), 177; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1968, repr 1983), 178; Grundmann, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus* (1986), 43. **Christian False Teacher Presentations:** Bennett, *The General Epistles James, Peter, John, and Jude* (n.d.), 340; Holloway, *James & Jude* (1996), 164; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (2003), 473 n. 125; Reese, *2 Peter & Jude* (2007), 63-64; Gene Green, *Jude & 2 Peter* (2008), 100; perhaps Harvey/Towner, *2 Peter & Jude* (2009), 216-18. See also Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude* (2010), 191.

<sup>59</sup> Lucian captures the conceptual parallel between μεμψίς and μεμψίμοιρος when he observes: “You are satisfied by nothing that befalls you; you complain about everything. You don’t want what you have got; you long for what you haven’t got. In winter, you wish it were summer, and in summer that it was winter. You are like some sick people, hard to please and a *mempsimoiros*.” Lucian, *Cynic*, 117 as translated by Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude* (1992), 259 (italics his); cf. Chaine, *Les épîtres catholiques* (1939), 324; Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude* (1968, repr 1983), 178. Lucian of Samosata (circa A.D. 125–180) from Syria was a rhetorician and satirist who composed in Greek. The work entitled *Cynic* is a dialogue between Lycinus (i.e. Lucian) and a Cynic philosopher.

<sup>60</sup> Josephus employs a cognate term to reveal how Jewish people in the past have *found fault* with God’s chosen leader, Moses. Moses remained firm against the faultfinding Pharaoh and the Hebrews. Josephus avers, “but Moses did not let his courage sink for the king’s threatenings; nor did he abate of his zeal on

generated fear against various leaders prior to the war with Rome. The high priest Jonathan (A.D. 53-58?) feared Jewish faultfinders (μέμψιν) and frequently warned Felix (A.D. 52-60) of his need to be more cautious (*Ant* 20.8.5.162). Furthermore, Josephus testifies about how he himself encouraged Galileans not to get carried away and encouraged *a hundred older men to go to Jerusalem in order to issue a complaint* (μέμψιν) against those who were splitting the country (*Life* 52 § 266). Finally when Agrippa II said “if servitude to Rome is intolerable, raise *complaints* (μέμψις) *against your governors*” (*War* 2.16.4 § 349). Sidebottom, a contributor to the *Gnostic* false teacher report, renders the term “malcontents,”<sup>61</sup> which fits well the public form of Zealot complaining or faultfinding with both Roman and Jewish leaders. Faultfinding became more and more a visible and an escalating discontentment that permeated all of Judea during the early A.D. 60s. Josephus contends that their faultfinding was based upon (κατα) personal desires (τὰς ἐπιθυμίας ἑαυτῶν) for freedom from Rome.<sup>62</sup>

Finally, Jude draws attention to the Old Testament figure, Korah, who is a rather significant figure in Josephus’s writings.<sup>63</sup> For example in *Antiquities*, the power struggle

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account of the Hebrews’ complaints (= faultfinding μέμψεις); but he supported himself and set his soul resolutely against them both, and used his own utmost diligence to procure liberty to his countrymen” (*Ant* 2.13.4 § 290).

<sup>61</sup> Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter* (1967), 91.

<sup>62</sup> Josephus uses this term to speak of an early leader of the Jewish rebellion, Judas son of Hezekiah (= Ezekias). He raised himself “out of an ambitious *desire of the royal honor* (ἐπιθυμία . . . βασιλείου τιμῆς); and he hoped to obtain that as the reward, not of his virtuous skill in war, but of his extravagance in doing injuries” (*Ant* 17.10.5 § 271-72) Later Josephus uses the noun “desire” (ἐπιθυμία) of the Zealots’ “desire for freedom” (ἐλευθερίας ἐπιθυμία; *War* 4.3.10 § 175).

<sup>63</sup> Korah’s rebellion plays a driving thematic literary role in *Antiquities*. According to Mason, “the high priesthood is a core concern in Josephus’s *magnum opus* as the guarantor of the aristocratic constitution established by Moses (*Ant* 1.5, 10, 13,15; 4.45, 184, etc.; 20.229, 251, 261; cf. *Ag. Ap.* 2.287—reflection on *Antiquities*.)” Mason identifies these continual struggles by way of “the meddling of Abiathar, who was removed in favor of Zadok (*Ant.* 8.9–10), with the notorious trio Onias, Jason, and Menelaus (*Ant.* 12.154–236), then with Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II (*Ant.* 14.432). Mason, *Josephus, Judea, and Christian Origins*, 124-25. For the complete retelling of the Korah-Moses event in Numbers 16:1-35, see Josephus,

or the “strife” (στράσις) that existed within Judea’s upper priesthood during the 60s, according to Josephus, began with Korah soon after God established the high priesthood position (*Ant* 4.2.1–4.3.4 §§ 12–59), a power struggle that surfaces as a predominant theme throughout *Antiquities*.<sup>64</sup> Josephus paints Korah and Zealot leaders as tyrants. The mention of Korah in Jude recalls a pattern of conduct that surfaced regularly among the authority figures within the priesthood in Judea during the 60s.<sup>65</sup> The growing discontentment and contentious actions of Judean priests were maneuvering, positioning, and monopolizing power and financial gain for themselves, many of whom either initiate or eventually join in the rebellion against Rome and thereby disrupt the *Pax Romana*. Perhaps the reason why of all the New Testament authors Jude alone mentions Korah is

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*Antiquities* 4.2.1 – 4.3.4 §§ 11-58. For a discussion of the Second Temple priesthood see VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas* (2004); Bateman, *Charts on the Book of Hebrews* (2012), 84-91.

<sup>64</sup> Greek terms like “strife” (στράσις) and “tyrant” (τυράννος) occur frequently in Josephus. Whereas the Greek noun “strife” (στράσις) occurs 151 times, the noun “tyrant” (τυράννος) also has a prominent place in his writings, occurring 61 times. Tyrants, one the one hand, come in the form of Gentile leaders like Cassius (*Ant.* 14.12.1 § 297; 19.2.2 § 182), Jewish kings like Jeroboam (*Ant.* 8.9.1 §§ 243-45), Baasha (*Ant.* 8.12.3 § 299), Ahab (*Ant* 9.1.1 § 1), Pekah (*Ant* 9.11.1 § 234), Rehoboam (*Ant* 8.10.2 §§ 251,256), Ahaz (*Ant* 9.12.1 § 243), Manassah (*Ant* 10.3.1 § 37), and Judean rebels (*Ant.* 20.11.3 §§ 10-11, 27; *War* 1.10-11 § 27). On the other hand, according to Mason (and others), the motif of “strife” (στράσις) “constitutes the principal thesis of *War*, announced in the prologue (1.9-10; cf. 1.25. 27, 31, 67, 88, 142; 2.418, 419, 434, etc): Jerusalem owed its destruction to domestic strife (στράσις οἰκεία) led by those seeking power for themselves (τυράννοι). The theme assumes a prominent place also in *Antiquities-Life* (e.g. *Ant.* 1.117, 164; 4.12-13, 140; 13.291, 299; 18.8; *Life* 17, 134).” Mason, *Josephus, Judea, and Christian Origins*, 123.

<sup>65</sup> For instance in the *Psalms of Solomon*, written sometime after Pompey’s invasion of Jerusalem (63 B.C.), the author (perhaps a Pharisee) expresses his discontentment with the Jewish Hasmonean royal priests when he writes, “Those to whom you did not (make the) promise, they (the Hasmoneans) took away (from us) by force; and they did not glorify your honorable name. With pomp they set up a monarchy because of their arrogance; they despoiled the throne of David with arrogant shouting.” *Psalms of Solomon* 17:5b-8; cp. 8:18-22 (Wright). And though grateful for the demise of the Hasmoneans’s royal priesthood, the author looks to God for the removal of Rome. In fact, the author’s ultimate plea for Yahweh’s intervention is based upon the Davidic covenant of promise. The author implores: “Lord, you chose David to be king over Israel, and you swore to him about his descendants forever, that his kingdom should not fail before you.” God’s sworn oath is a guarantee—a guarantee that Yahweh will fulfill His covenantal promise to David. Thus the future Messiah figure will be a Davidite. *Psalms of Solomon* 17:4 (Wright). Pompey’s defeat of Jerusalem, and Rome’s securing Judea for herself in the *Psalms of Solomon* 2, 8, 17 appear to parallel Josephus *Wars* 1.6.1–1.7.7 § 120-58. Wright labels the *Psalms of Solomon* as “literature of crisis.” See R. B. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 volumes, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 2:643.

because of the obvious greed for power and the unmistakable violence erupting against Rome that marked the Judean priesthood at the time of his writing.<sup>66</sup>

### Conclusion

There are today three reports for Jude: a *Gnostic* false teacher report, a *Christian* false teacher report, and a Zealot led rebellion report. On the one hand, the *Gnostic* and *Christian* false teacher reports have the greatest similarity or overlap and thereby are often merged into a majority report, which says Jude speaks against false teachers who challenged the early church. It is this majority false teacher conclusion that has predetermined an interpretive perspective upon which pastors and students read, interpret, and teach Jude's letter. Yet, the lack of concord within the majority false teacher reports, the lack of false teaching within Jude, the lack of *pseudo*-prefixed teachers and prophets, among other things gives reason to pause and entertain the minority report.

On the other hand, the minority report concludes that Jude is concerned about the Zealot rebellion against Rome, a revolt that was threatening the Judean church. The political-sociological events transpiring in Judea at the time Jude wrote his letter were turbulent, intrusive, and life threatening for anyone living in the country.<sup>67</sup> "The effects of

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<sup>66</sup> Unlike the threefold grouping of the Exodus generation, fallen angels, and Sodom and Gomorrah, the threefold grouping of Cain, Balaam, and Korah does not appear in other extant literature of the Second Temple period. Thus we would be hard pressed to assert *an established* Jewish tradition. A similar listing occurs in a later Rabbinic work in which Cain, Korah, and Balaam are described as follows: "what they wanted was not given to them, and what they had in hand was taken away from them" (*Tosefta Sota* 4:19), Jacob Neusner, *The Tosefta: Translated from the Hebrew with a New Introduction*, 2 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 1:850. See also Geza Vermes, "The Story of Balaam – The Scriptural Origin of Haggadah" in *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 127-77, esp. 134. Consequently, Jude may have been the first to record or perhaps even create this threefold typological listing to condemn an emerging rebellion of the godless in Judea, which appears again in later rabbinic works. Josephus, looking back and writing about the Judean war with Rome, employs these figures as historical types or precursors to the war, a war Jude appears to be writing against and warning Christians to avoid.

<sup>67</sup> Josephus recalls how the *Sicarii* "got together against those [Judeans] that were willing to submit to the Romans, and treated them in all respects as if they had been their enemies, both by plundering them of what

their frenzy,” recalls Josephus, “were thus felt throughout all Judea, and every day saw this war being fanned into fiercer flame.”<sup>68</sup> And though the Zealot rebellion perspective builds upon the *Christian* false teacher view, it moves beyond it. More specifically, the Zealot led rebellion report underscores the increasing seduction of Judeans to rebel against Rome at the time of Jude’s writing after the death of James (A.D. 62) and just prior to the total outbreak of Judea’s war against Rome (A.D. 66). Jude is not concerned about unrestrained sexual indulgences of the Zealots. The Zealots wanted to purify Judea by way of punishing anyone who had sexual intercourse with or who married a Gentile.<sup>69</sup> In order for God’s eschatological kingdom to come, Judea needed to be rid of all impurity, which included but not limited sexual misconduct. Yet, they themselves are described as lawless (“defile the flesh,” v. 8).<sup>70</sup> Nor was Jude concerned about false teaching. His concern was about the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah through whom deliverance and eternal life comes (vv. 1, 20), through whom God had established authority (v. 4), and through whom God is glorified (vv. 19–20).

As it was the case in Spielberg’s movie, *The Minority Report*, we do have the freedom to chose a different path for interpreting Jude. We need not feel locked in to the

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they had, by driving away their cattle, and by setting fire to their houses.” Josephus *War* 7.8.1 § 254; cf. 2.19.6 § 539; 5.2.2 § 60-63; 6.1.1, 5 §§ 3-4, 39. For a Judean to honor Rome’s sovereignty during this period of time while living in Judea might be likened to being a Tory and honoring British rule during the American revolution (March 23, 1775 - Sept. 3, 1783), or to honor Lincoln’s desire to free slaves while living in the south during the early 1860s. It would be a tough road to travel. See Bock’s discussion “Coming of Israel’s King” in Hebert W. Bateman IV, Darrell L. Bock, and Gordon H. Johnston, *Jesus the Messiah: Tracing the Promises, Expectations, and Coming of Israel’s King* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012).

<sup>68</sup> Josephus, *War* 2.8.6 § 264-65 (Thackeray); *Antiquities* 20.8.6 §§ 172-76.

<sup>69</sup> Hengel, *The Zealots* (1989), 189-90.

<sup>70</sup> **Descriptions of the Zealot’s Disregard of the Law:** Josephus refers to Zealots as enemies of the law, people who trampled on the law, and people deserving judgment even more than the Sodomites. He refers to them as enemies of the law (*War* 4.4.3 § 184; 6 § 102), they broke the law of God (*War* 5.9.4 § 393), they trampled on the law (*War* 4.4.3 § 258; cf. *War* 4.3.8 § 157; 4.6.3 §§ 386), and were deserving of punishment more severe than the Sodomites (*War* 5.8.6 § 566). See Hengel, *The Zealots* (1989), 184.

false teacher conclusions as a predetermined fact whereby everyone must read, interpret, and preach Jude. In the 1950s, commentators re-evaluated the predetermined idea that Philo's writings were key for interpreting the Hebrews.<sup>71</sup> Maybe the time has come to re-examine the historical occasion for Jude. Rather than interpret Jude as though he confronts 'false teachers,' whether *Gnostic* or *Christian*, perhaps the occasion for Jude's letter is something other than the rise of some false teaching that challenged the apostolic tradition or confront licentious or antinomian behavior. Perhaps Jude's concern was the growing Zealot insurrection against Rome that was wreaking havoc throughout Judea during the late 50s to mid 60s just prior to the total outbreak of war with Rome in A.D. 66-70. If a person believes Jude is writing his letter to Judean Christians during A.D. 60s, it is the minority report that answers this question the best: *What is happening in Judea during the mid-60s when Jude was alive and writing his letter?*

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<sup>71</sup> **Interpreting Hebrews Re-evaluated:** Although Rissi at one time averred that the recipients were of the "hellenistisch beeinflussten, jüdischen Bereich" with conceptual nearness to Philo of Alexandria, Hurst observed that historically this "Philonic trend reached its apex in 1952 with Spicq's massive commentary." And though Kümmel agreed that Hebrews had a conceptual nearness to Philonic thought, Hurst provides evidence and rightly concludes that Spicq's "plea for direct dependence [on Philonic background] must be judged to have failed," and the Platonic/Philonic background for Hebrews was "not proven." Similarly, Williamson argued on such fundamental subjects as time, history, eschatology, the nature of the physical world, etc., "the thoughts of Philo and the Writer of Hebrews are poles apart." Nevertheless, Attridge insists, "there are undeniable parallels that suggest that Philo and our author are indebted to similar traditions of Greek-speaking-and-thinking Judaism. There are also interesting parallels to the Qumran scrolls . . ." Thus Attridge holds a both/and position concerning Philo and Qumran. Yet Bowman suggests the recipients were second-generation Christians located near Sychar (Samaria) who were influenced by the Qumranians. C. Spicq, "Le philonisme de l'Épître aux Hébreux," *RB* 56 (1949): 542-72; 57 (1950): 212-42; and "Alexandrismes dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," *RB* 58 (1951): 481-502; M. Rissi, *Die Theologie des Hebräerbriefs: Ihre Verankerung in der Situation des Verfassers und seiner Leser* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), 25; L. D. Hurst, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought* (New York: Cambridge, 1990), 7-11. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 395. R. Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 576. H. W. Attridge, *Hebrews*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 29. n. 219; J. W. Bowman, *Hebrews, James, I & II Peter*, Layman's Bible Commentary (London: SCM, 1962), 9-16. See also F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), xxviii-xxix.