

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 433

The Epistle of Jude, Part 2

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Episode Summary

This episode focuses on Jude 4-5. In Jude 4, the false teachers who are Jude's opponents are said to have long ago "been designated for condemnation." What does this phrase mean? In Jude 5, the author shocks his readers by informing them that it was Jesus who saved the Israelites from Egypt. Not surprisingly, that verse is controversial. Join us as we unravel Jude's comment and show how it relates to the Old Testament's theology of a Godhead, the ancient "two powers in heaven" doctrine.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 433: The Epistle of Jude, Part 2. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

MH: Well, pretty good, pretty good.

TS: Yeah.

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MH: Anticipating the new season, such as it is—two episodes of *Stranger Things*.

TS: Yeah, yeah, it came out last weekend. So by the time this show airs we will probably both have watched it. So I'm just going to go ahead and assume that it's good. So, I liked it.

MH: Yeah, I don't know. It might take us a while to get to it, but it just depends on what the kids want to do.

TS: Yeah, it's strange having Halloween during 4th of July. That's a crazy mixed emotion there.

MH: Yeah. Yeah, it is kind of weird.

TS: That's funny. Not a whole lot of fireworks going on here for the 4th of July. We hope everybody that's in America had a good 4th of July. We had big wildfires, Mike, and everything burned around us, so I don't think we're really going to do fireworks this year.

MH: Oh, wow.

TS: Yeah, Texas has been on fire for a little bit. Fortunately, we got the fires out, but I had ash raining down in my backyard.

MH: Wow.

TS: So it was too close for comfort for sure, but yeah.

MH: Wow! That's crazy.

TS: Yeah, it is. Well, Mike, I got an email from one of our listeners. Mark and his wife, Kim, he emailed me and said they finally caught up to all of the episodes and it only took them four years.

MH: Oh my!

TS: I want to welcome them to the present. Yeah, I enjoy those emails.

MH: They deserve some kind of medal for that.

TS: I know, and they're probably sad because I can only imagine if you're binging all of this good stuff and then you catch up and you have to wait every week for an episode to come out, that's pretty rough. I know how it is when we binge, you know, *Stranger Things* or anything. You want to watch them all *now*. So it's not as much fun.

MH: Yeah, that's true.

TS: But I bet you could go back and listen to them again, I guess. There's several of them that are worthy of listening again.

MH: Yeah, you could pick them out, yeah.

TS: Alright, Mike, well, here we are in Jude, Part 2. I'm excited about this one, because didn't you mention you're going to have some more *Unseen Realm* content in this particular episode?

MH: Yeah, yeah, we're going to go a little bit beyond *Unseen Realm* in this episode. So we're going to focus on Jude 4 and 5, those two verses. We got into

verse 4 a little bit on the previous episode in the characterization of the false teachers, but we'll hit a little bit more (there is one thing I sort of saved just for this week) and then go on into verse 5. But let's just start by reading verse 4 and then when we get to verse 5, then that will be evident. So Jude 4 says... I might as well read verses 3 and 4 just to flavor the context here.

³ Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

The part of verse 4 that I reserved for today for this episode is this line “long ago were designated for this condemnation.” This is ESV, so what ESV translates as the word “designated” is a perfect passive participle of *prographo*, which more literally (if we were going to be real literalistic about this translation) it would read, “Certain people have crept in unnoticed who had (or have) been written about long ago for this condemnation.” So the question is, is this some kind of note about predestination, or is it a prophetic prediction, or is it more or less just Jude saying, “Hey, these people are going to reap what they sow?” I think it is certainly right to say that the predestination idea is NOT self-evident in this. *Prographo* is not the normal verb choice for predestination, like in certain passages in Romans. So it's not self-evident at all. The verb choice seems to indicate he is thinking about a type of people that his audience have been forewarned about, and so that would raise the question of, “Well where were they forewarned?” I'm going to quote again from Gene Green's commentary on Jude (one of the commentaries on Jude that I like). He writes:

Jude's use of “*prographo*,” (to write in advance) appears to point to the way their doom was prophetically predicted.

Then he cross-references Romans 15:4 here for a similar use of the verb.

This verb, however, is not commonly employed in the context of predictive prophecy, but in the literature of the era it repeatedly arises in legal contexts. The verb is attached to the concept of making official decrees, either in marriage contracts, deeds of sale, or public notes. The substantives *programma* and *prographe* are the office decrees or notices themselves.

Then he cites LSJ (which is Liddell and Scott's lexicon) and BDAG (which is the Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich lexicon), and Moulton and Milligan—that lexicon for the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament. So there are lots of examples of this in legal contexts. Back to Green. He says:

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Jude's emphasis is not simply that the doom of the heretics was predicted, but also that it was decreed and publicly announced. While the predictive sense is not absent entirely, his principal point concerns the official and public condemnation of the heretics.

That's the end of the quotation. I'm going to throw in another quote here from Herb Bateman's commentary because he adds some important details to this. Herb writes:

This descriptive clause has at least two baffling interpretive challenges. To begin with, Jude alludes to written material (οἱ προγεγραμμένοι, *hoi progegrammenoi*; "those who were written about") about these intruders. Furthermore, this material was written at some point in the past (πάλαι, *palai*; usually "long ago"). Was Jude speaking of direct prophecies written specifically about these certain people, or was he speaking of godless patterns of rebellious behavior traceable in written texts? Some commentators suggest Jude refers to books in heaven (*1 En.* 81:1–4; 89:61–71; 104:7; 106:19; 108:7; cf. *Jub.* 5:13; *Rev* 20:12; *Apoc. Bar.* 24:1)..

I'll just stop there. If you remember back in the Naked Bible Podcast history, we did a whole episode on the heavenly books or the Book of Life, the heavenly tablets. And some of those were just as Herb is describing here about things done or condemnation for certain works. So then he continues to write:

Others propose Jude references godless people in other New Testament texts. Paul, for instance, predicts that "fierce wolves will come in among you, even from among your own group" (1 Tim 4:1–3; 2 Tim 3:13; cf. Acts 20:25, 29–30; Mark 15:44; Matt 7:15; 1 John 4:1–2; 2 John 10; 2 Pet 2:1–3:4; *Did.* 11–12; Ignatius, *To the Ephesians* 9:1).

You also get this in Early Patristics or Early Church Fathers like Ignatius and the Didache—this notion, again, of Jude referencing godless people that would arise from within. So Herb writes here:

Still others put forward the idea that Jude alludes to prophetic material in the Old Testament (Isa 37:26; 48:5).

Isaiah 37:26 says:

**²⁶ "Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,**

**that you should make fortified cities
crash into heaps of ruins,**

So that's an allusion to—a prediction—in the Old Testament about what happens with bad behavior, and the same thing is there for Isaiah 48:5. It is a similar idea. So Herb writes:

Jude is not necessarily specifying a specific written text, but rather people who long ago were written about and thereby appear frequently in Jewish literature. For instance, Jude is about to call his readers to remember three different patterns of past rebellions and God's diverse judgments of them: the exodus generation, angelic beings, and Gentile urban centers (Jude 5–7).

This is where Herb is saying Jude is going to get into some of these things from the Old Testament that were typological. They showed patterns of behavior and what happens. Herb continues and says:

Second, Jude is also about to apply three other assorted patterns of rebellion by three men from the past to these dubious intruders and tell of God's forthcoming condemnation of their rebellion: Cain, Balaam, and Korah (Jude 11:13). Thus Jude may merely employ a form of ancient typology as a means to point out the ungodly characteristics of these "certain people." Yet it seems very likely Jude has a particular text in mind (e.g., 1 Enoch 1:9) because he alludes to it in Jude 14-15. Thus it would appear that Jude has both a written source and specific godless people (speaking typologically) in purview.

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That's the end of Herb's quote. So the point here is that it is clear Jude references specific texts and that he references Old Testament typological groups or individuals elsewhere in his epistle. I mean, Herb just gave us the verse numbers; Jude 5-7, Jude 11-13, Jude 14 and 15. So that helps inform us here in verse 4 about how to read what he says. Jude is looking at some texts, either in the Old Testament or the Pseudepigrapha (and probably both), that predict the downfall of such people and uses Old Testament analogies or types to make that point. Again, for those for whom typology might not be a working part of their vocabulary or their Biblical knowledge, a type is like a predictive thing. It's not verbal prophecy. It's nonverbal prophecy. It's a particular person or institution or event that foreshadows something yet to come. And in this case, Jude is picking on some specific characters in the Old Testament: Cain, Baal, for instance, and Korah. And he's also referencing verses about what happens with this kind of wanton self-destructive behavior. That's the end to which it is going to lead. So this is what Jude is doing. He is not saying that all of this was predetermined or pre-ordained, but he is using Old Testament passages and maybe a pseudepigraphal passage and certainly Old Testament types to

foreshadow that, “Hey, you all should know that false teachers like this... You should already know what their destiny is because of this material.”

So let’s move to Jude 5 and Jude 5 says this:

⁵ Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

Now if you think about that, that’s a shocking statement because it puts Jesus in the Old Testament. Jesus is the one who gets credit here in Jude 5 for saving the people in the Old Testament. Some texts will say it’s Yahweh. Some texts will say it’s Elohim. Some texts will say it’s *ha panim*—the presence. Other texts will say it’s *ha malakh*—the Angel of the Lord. So I would often ask, “Well, which one is correct?” And the answer is “all of them.” But Jude here is saying that Jesus is in that mix. Now we could say that the Angel of the Lord (and again, if you’ve read *Unseen Realm* you know this is where I’m at for good reason) was the pre-incarnate appearance of one of the Persons of the Godhead—specifically the Second Person of the Godhead before we had the incarnation, before we had Jesus of Nazareth. So there’s an immediate connection right there, but the connection is explicit here in Jude 5.

⁵ Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

The issue here, other than just the impact of the statement (because it would be a strong statement of the pre-existence of Christ) is that there is a text-critical issue here. Not all manuscripts say “Jesus.” Some say “Lord.” Some have something else, but a number of them do have Jesus here. So there’s a text-critical issue that if you look this up, some of these resources will be familiar. And if you don’t know Greek, then the go-to source for this kind of thing is the NET Bible notes. The NET Bible goes with “Jesus.” That’s the reading it adopts, and there’s a note here I’m going to read in a moment that will explain why. The SBLGNT (the SBL Greek New Testament) reads “Jesus,” for those who can read Greek and use that material. Interestingly enough, Jesus is not in the Nestle-Aland 27. (That’s another version of the Greek New Testament that is often used in seminaries and schools.) However, the following edition, Nestle-Aland 28, adopts it. It says “Jesus.” And the same thing happened with the United Bible Society Greek New Testament that is used a lot in schools. The fourth edition did not have Jesus; it had *kurios*. It had Lord, like the old NA 27, but both the NA 28 and United Bible Society 5th version have *Iesuos*—Jesus. So this has strong textual support. It has, I would say, strong contextual support if you’re aware of the Two Powers stuff—the Two Yahwehs idea from the Old Testament. Again, if

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you've not read *Unseen Realm*, you need to. I can't rehearse all this data in a podcast episode, but it would be chapter 16-18 in *Unseen Realm*.

The NET Bible quotation... Let's read that. Here's what they say about it.

The reading Ἰησοῦς (*lēsous*, "Jesus") is deemed too hard by several scholars, since it involves the notion of Jesus acting in the early history of the nation Israel. However, not only does this reading enjoy the strongest support from a variety of early witnesses (e.g., A B 33 81 1241 1739 1881 2344 pc vg co Or)...

And they give a few examples. It's the manuscript numbers and so on and so forth, but two of the main ones that we have referenced before in incidents like this are the text known as *Alexandrinus* and another one known as *Vaticanus*. These are two very old codices of the Greek New Testament. So *lēsous* is in both of those. But the NET Bible goes on to say:

...but the plethora of variants demonstrate that scribes were uncomfortable with it, for they seemed to exchange κύριος (*kurios*, "Lord") or θεός (*theos*, "God") for Ἰησοῦς (though P72 has the intriguing reading θεὸς Χριστός [*theos Christos*, "God Christ"] for Ἰησοῦς).

That's an indication to textual critics that scribes would run into this and not know what to do with it because it was so shocking. So that argues for its originality. The NET Bible says:

The scribes were uncomfortable with it, for they seemed to exchange (*kurios*, "Lord,") or (*theos*, "God,") for *lēsous* in other manuscripts.

And it notes that the early *Papyrus P72* has the intriguing reading *theos Christos*, "God Christ," for *lēsous*. So text-critically, again, we're not going to lapse into a lecture on textual criticism and how textual critics think, but generally speaking, if it's a hard difficult reading it's to be preferred. The argument is that it is an argument for originality because scribes would tend to make things easier or less complicated than more complicated. A scribe wouldn't deliberately complicate his text. He would add something to smooth something out or to explain something. And since you see a lot of that here in Jude 5, it's a good argument for *lēsous* being original. So this is a very strong argument for Christ's pre-existence here in Jude 5.

So for those of you who are having conversations with people or maybe doing a little bit of apologetics, don't be deterred by the fact that some manuscripts don't have *kurios*. A couple of very old ones and very good ones do and, again, text-critically, all your major additions of the Greek New Testament that are available today adopt *lēsous* as the original reading here.

If you're really into this kind of subject, you can handle some Greek, and you have access to maybe some scholarly material like the journals, there was a fairly recent article in 2008 by Philip Bartholomä. I'm not sure I'm pronouncing the last name correctly. It's B-a-r-t-h-o-l-o-m-ä (with an Umlaut over it). So my apologies to Philip if I get his last name wrong, but Philip Bartholomä, and the article is entitled "Did Jesus Save the People out of Egypt?: A Re-examination of a Textual Problem in Jude 5." It's from the scholarly journal *Novum Testamentum 50 (2008): 143-158*. And his conclusion is that, yeah, this is original; this is the best reading. And he marshals lots of data and lots of reasoning behind it in this recent article. But again, all of your major Greek New Testament editions—NA 28, the most recent, UBS 5, SBLGNT... They all read *Jesus*; they all read "Jesus" here.

Now a few observations that are kind of interesting before we get into the bonus material beyond *Unseen Realm*, because I mentioned this verse in *Unseen Realm* but I don't really say anything about it. There are those who would argue... Let's go back and read the verse just so it's fresh in your mind.

⁵ Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus [*Iesous*], who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

Some people would point out, "Hey, the Old Testament character Joshua in the Septuagint, his name is *Iesous*. So maybe this is referring to just Joshua—just plain old Joshua. And Jude is saying, 'Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Joshua, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.'" But the question is obvious: did Joshua do that? What does it mean, "He destroyed a people who afterward did not believe?" But more importantly, think about the verse. He says here that "Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe." If you keep reading, in verse 6 you read this:

⁶ And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he [MH: that is, the Jesus or *Iesous* of verse 5] has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—

Again, I've got news for you: Joshua didn't do that. Joshua did not ensure that the angels who sinned back in Genesis 6 were kept in chains of gloomy darkness. Jesus did. I take this comment in verse 6 that *he* kept the angels in prison and referring back grammatically to *Iesous* in verse 5... I take this as another indication—another reference—to the 1 Peter 3 scenario. And again, I didn't say that in *Unseen Realm*. I did deal with 1 Peter 3 a lot. If you remember, this is 1 Peter 3:14-22. And I'm just going to read little sections of it because, again, we don't have time to repeat all the content in *Unseen Realm* and so on

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and so forth, and in previous episodes. But this is the passage where in verse 18 we read this.

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.

I think Jude 6 is actually referring to this same scenario that Christ, when he suffers and dies, he goes into the underworld. And this is where all the traditions (all the New Testament passages like 2 Peter 2 and here in Jude 6), they have the angels that sin back in Genesis 6 imprisoned and Christ goes and preaches to them. And you say, "Well what does he preach?" Again, the short version (because I'm not going to just quote *Unseen Realm* at length here), is he preaches to them their doom—that they're not going to get out of the netherworld. They're doomed forever until the day of the end when they're annihilated finally.

If you recall 1 Peter 3, a lot of people... This was the passage where I actually visited a church where the pastor stood up right in the middle of a series in 1 Peter and said, "This is what we're supposed to be preaching today, 1 Peter 3:14-22, and it's so weird I'm just going to skip it." And he did. He didn't even try. And what unlocks this passage is to realize that 1 Peter 3 uses Enoch—the person of Enoch—as a type, as typology (again a foreshadowing of things to come about Jesus) in the same way that Paul uses Adam as a type in Romans 5, who becomes a prefiguring figure. And that's really important because you have to know the story of Genesis 6 and the sins of the sons of God (called the Watchers in the book of Enoch, but they're the sons of God of Genesis 6). You have to know the Enochian story to appreciate what Peter is saying in 1 Peter and in 2 Peter 2 and here in Jude 5 and 6.

So it presupposes that the people know the story because it's in that story that the angels that sin back in Genesis 6 are enchained in Tartarus. 2 Peter actually uses that term explicitly. They're put into Tartarus. A lot of English translations have "sent to Hades" or something like that. The Greek verb is *tartaroo* and they are sent to Tartarus (which is where the Titans of Greek religion get sent) and they are giant figures. They're completely supernatural. Some of the titans are also giants, but this is where they get punished, where they get imprisoned in the Greek stories in their own religion.

So it's very clear that this is what happens to the sons of God of Genesis 6 who are called the Watchers in 1 Enoch. And this has an ancient Mesopotamian

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antecedent, as well, that goes beyond the Greek material. It goes beyond Enoch. It goes beyond this other material we have cited. But the original back story for Genesis 6 is the Apkallu tradition. This is where the Apkallu are sent after they violate, they transgress, just like in the matter of Genesis 6—cohabiting with human women to preserve the knowledge of Babylon in the Apkallu story, preserve the knowledge and civilization of Babylon. They're punished by the higher gods by being sent to the *abzu* (the pit, the watery abyss) forever, to never return.

So the antecedent is the context; the cognate material is all consistent here. And I realize a lot of people listening, they don't want to have anything to do with Genesis 6 and they're going to opt for something like the Sethite view, which is among the dumbest Bible interpretation I've ever heard for any passage, but that's where people go because this is just too strange. It's too weird. Like the guy who said "We're just going to skip this this morning" (the Sunday morning, the pastor), and by golly he did it. He just skipped it. He moved on. But you don't need to do that. If you understand the Enoch story from the book of Enoch... And Jude is going to quote Enoch. He is going to allude to parts of Enoch elsewhere in this very tiny epistle. But here, it's a very clear allusion to the Enoch story. And he is actually using Enoch as a type of Jesus, because in the Enoch story when the Watchers sin and get sent to their prison, then they're sorry. They're sorry for what they did—transgressing heaven and earth, so to speak, like they did. And they solicit Enoch because Enoch was taken to heaven and he is favored with God and so on and so forth. They solicit Enoch to intercede for them with God on their behalf to let them out, and Enoch does. Enoch goes to God and says, "Hey, you know, the Watchers down here down in the abyss, they want some clemency. They're repentant, they say, and they want to be forgiven and they want to be left out." And God said, "Go back and tell them no. They're there until the end of days." And so Enoch descends to the underworld to announce their doom, and that's what Peter is using in 1 Peter 3 to typify Christ. Christ goes down there and tells the powers of darkness that they've lost, they're defeated [audio breaks up]... I'm out of here soon. Jesus leaves the grave and you have the resurrection, which 1 Peter 3 (if we'd have kept reading) mentions the resurrection. Because of the resurrection, he is no longer held captive to death and they're still there. That's the whole point of 1 Peter 3. And then Peter loops baptism into it. In *Unseen Realm*, I talk about how baptism is like a loyalty oath. It's spiritual warfare because it's a reminder not only to the people watching of whose side you're on, but it's a reminder to the powers of darkness that they're defeated.

So all of this is going on in the backdrop. So we don't have the Old Testament Joshua here. What we have here is, again, Jesus. We have this reference specifically to him, and he's the one who kept the angels that sinned in chains. He announces to them their doom. So I actually think we have a nice support here for the 1 Peter 3 interpretation that I laid out in *Unseen Realm*. And it's not

my interpretation. Again, nothing in *Unseen Realm* is original to me. This is a long, time-tested view of what's going on in 1 Peter 3. The longest scholarly exposition of it is Dalton's book. Again, if you read *Unseen Realm*, you can look it up in the bibliography. I'm not going to rabbit-trail any further on it. But again, I didn't include that in *Unseen Realm* and I think it's an important, kind of a neat thing to include here as we're talking about the book of Jude.

The second observation is, what about the line "afterward destroyed those who did not believe?" So let's read the verse one more time.

⁵ Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

The term translated "afterward" is *deuteron* which means second or secondly, taking it adverbially. So what does this incident refer to? Who are those who did not believe? If it's the Egyptians, then the Angel of the Lord (again, the Old Testament Second Yahweh figure—Second Power or Second Person of the Trinity figure—who is equatable with Jesus in the New Testament context) then it would mean he is both a deliverer of Israel and he's also the death angel. If you're talking about the Egyptians, it would be the Egyptians either who die at Passover or who are judged in the Red Sea. So either way... And you say, "Well, is the death angel associated with the Red Sea and judgment?" He is. And again, you could read my *Angels* book for this in my discussion of the Destroyer (*mashkit*) who, again, indications are in the Palms that this is the Angel of Yahweh. It's Yahweh himself in the form of this angel. So again, there's a good argument to be made there and Jude could be picking up on it. And it would be very consistent with having this Angel of the Lord figure be both the deliverer and the destroyer. You could also ask, "Well what if those who did not believe are the Israelites later on?" Certain judgement episodes like when... It's not really a judgment episode, but I'm thinking of Exodus 16 with the manna. Nobody dies there. They're not judged, but all along the way to the Promised Land they have these episodes of grumbling and complaining, and on certain occasions God judges the people. The most obvious candidate for this is the rebellion of Korah in Numbers 16.

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Well, that's also a good indicator of this Second Yahweh figure being a destroyer because of the Targums. And I have to stop here and launch into my third point here. The third observation has to do with the Targums—the Two Powers precedent in the Targums. But you might say, "What in the world's a Targum? What are the Targums?"

Targum is a Hebrew word (also used in Aramaic) meaning "translation" and it is used especially for Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Scriptures that were read in the synagogues on the Sabbath and on feast or fast days. Scholars usually

assume that this practice of translating the Hebrew Bible for people was necessitated by the loss of Hebrew fluency by Jews growing up in exile.

Now that's actually a quotation from John Ronning's book, *Jewish Targums and John's Logos Theology*. Remember, John refers to Jesus as "The Word of the Lord." Now that also has Old Testament precedent (and we'll get to it in a minute, just reviewing that), but it was the practice in Jesus' day and before, where after the return from Exile (which is where the synagogues were started when the Israelites were in exile in Babylon)... They didn't have a temple anymore so they started the synagogues, where they would meet together in groups and they would learn Torah. They would learn the law. Well, gradually there came a need to translate the material for the hearer. The typical practice was that both would get read in the synagogue, both the Hebrew and the Aramaic, and the Aramaic (the Targum material—again, Targum just means translation) was sort of used... It developed as a commentary, like an explanation of certain parts of the Torah—certain things that were read. So it's like a mini-commentary. And what's significant about this is that... I'm going to read another quote from Ronning's book, *Jewish Targums and John's Logos Theology*. Jesus as the Word theology. He writes:

In hundreds of cases in the Targums where the Masoretic text [MH: the traditional Hebrew text] refers to God, the corresponding Targum passage refers to the Word [MEMRA].

In Aramaic, it's the MEMRA. Did you catch that? There are hundreds of places in the Targums where God does something or says something—where in the Targums, it's "the Word." It's the Word of the Lord doing that thing or saying that thing. Ronning writes:

Considered against this background, calling Jesus "the Word" is a way of identifying him with the God of Israel.

Now there's Old Testament precedent for this. It goes well beyond the Targums back in the time. The Word of the Lord is an expression used to describe God himself in human form in the Old Testament. You've got Genesis 12, you've got 1 Samuel 3, you've got Jeremiah 1, where the Word of the Lord comes to the prophet, and then a few verses later the Word of the Lord reaches out his hand and touches the prophet's mouth. It's God in human form—in anthropomorphic form—God as man in the Old Testament. The Word of the Lord is one of the ways this is indicated. Now that does not mean every time you have Word of the Lord in the Hebrew Bible that it's an anthropomorphic figure like Jesus in the Old Testament or something like that. It doesn't mean that. It means that in certain contexts, though, there will be indications in the context that you actually have an anthropomorphic form—a human figure—who is the Word of the Lord, who is Yahweh but he's not the invisible transcendent Yahweh. There are passages

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where you have the Word of the Lord or the Angel of the Lord (or the name of the Lord as another way of expressing this) in the same passage as God himself. So you actually have both figures in the same passage. They are two Yahwehs. They're two Yahweh figures. This is the antecedent—the carnal form of Godhead thinking in the Old Testament that is going to get amplified in the New Testament, especially with the incarnation when we have Jesus come, born of a virgin, God as man in the New Testament. The New Testament is where we develop this idea of a Godhead and, specifically, a Trinity. But this all starts in the Old Testament, and the Word of the Lord is one of the ways this is expressed.

Again, if you want details on this in a better systematic layout, you have to read *Unseen Realm* chapters 16-18. If you've already done that, you know exactly what I'm talking about here. But we're upping the ante here because now we're bring the Targums into the picture, which I did not do in *Unseen Realm*—where you have this second anthropomorphic figure called the Word, called the "Memra." It's the Aramaic word for "word" in a particular scene in the Old Testament. So it happens all over the place. I am going to read again from Ronning. He says:

In the Targums, the divine Word is usually indicated by a form of the Aramaic word Memra, which, when so used, is not a translation of anything in the Hebrew text; rather, the phrase "Word of the Lord," is often a circumlocution, or substitute, for the Tetragrammaton (the four letters, YHWH, Yahweh), the pre-eminent Old Testament name for God.

It's another way of referring to God. That's the end of the Ronning quote. So in the Targums, when the Hebrew Bible reads "Yahweh" in many passages, the Targums will instead read "Memra" or add "the Memra of the Lord" into the scene, thus identifying Yahweh as the Memra, the Word, or again, creating this intermediate figure who is Yahweh but is also different from Yahweh—is but isn't. Same but separate, just like this Godhead thinking in the New Testament, where Jesus is God but he is also Jesus of Nazareth, the man. He's both.

So again, these are Jewish antecedents to this idea. Now I'm going to give you an example. In Genesis 3:8 (in your Old Testament)... I'm reading ESV. This is what you would read:

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

And then in verse 10, Adam says:

¹⁰ ...“I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”

So Genesis 3:8 and 3:10 have the “sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.” That’s anthropomorphic because God doesn’t have legs to walk and God is a spirit, but he is described here in human form walking around in the garden. Well, if you go to the Targums, same passage, Genesis 3:8. You read this:

Then they heard the voice of the Memra of the Lord God walking in the garden towards the decline of the day. So Adam and his wife hid themselves before the Lord God within a tree of the garden.

It’s not the Lord anymore; it’s the Memra.

Another Targum. This is Targum Neofiti. The first one was Targum Ongelos: “and they heard at the sound of the Memra of the Lord walking within the garden with the breeze of the day.” Again, it’s the second figure.

In Genesis 15:6 in the Hebrew Bible, you have the statement about Abraham and he (Abraham) believed the Lord and he counted it to him as righteousness. You know, there’s this scene where God comes to Abraham and makes him promises. He is going to make a covenant with him in Genesis 15, and then you read in verse 6:

⁶ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Well, guess what the Targums say? Targum Ongelos:

...that he (Abraham) trusted the Memra of the Lord.

He trusted the Memra. He put his faith in the Word of the Lord.

Targum Neofiti:

And Abraham believed in the name of the Memra of the Lord and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

Again, it’s this God in human form. I mean, God as the Word of the Lord. It’s all over the place in the Targums.

I should make one comment here about the Targums, but before I get to that I should mention it, too, that the same thing (the same phenomenon about the

Word of the Lord being inserted in places) happens occasionally in Second Temple texts, like Jubilees 2:1. I'm going to read that here.

The angel of the presence spoke to Moses by the Word of the Lord, saying, "Write the whole account of the creation, and then in six days the Lord completed all his work."

45:00 So in Jubilees, you have the Word of the Lord (specifically, the Angel of the Lord) instructing and actually helping Moses write the creation story. Just one illustration.

So this idea, again, is very old. It's as old as the Hebrew Bible. It's as old as Second Temple period literature and it gets picked up in the Targums. Now the Targums as far as they are dating... The Targums relates to their manuscripts but not their content. Their content is very ancient. Again, it goes back to the Hebrew Bible, this Word of the Lord idea in Second Temple material like in Jubilees. The Targums, they actually get codified and preserved (of the ones we know about anyway—the ones scholars have recovered). They're usually third or fourth century or something like that in the Christian era. So they're later in the New Testament, but their content aligns with BC-era sources like Pseudepigrapha and some material in the Mishna. Again, it's just that the Targums later get codified, but this was the practice in the early synagogues in Jesus' day and before. After the exile, you would have the Torah read in the synagogue and you would have in Aramaic a rendering of that material. And that rendering would often include commentary, and that commentary would often include this figure, the Memra of the Lord.

So now we take all of this and we go back to Jude, this idea of Jesus saving [audio breaks up]. Well, if you look at Exodus 3 in the Hebrew Bible, the burning bush incident... Exodus 3:4, for example:

⁴When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

Now we know from Exodus 3 that there's an angel in the bush. If we went back and we read specifically the context... Let's just go here. So in verse 4, God calls to him out of the bush.

And he said, "Here I am."⁵ Then he said, "Do not come near..."⁶ And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

All that we're familiar with is preceded by verse 2 which says:

² And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.

The angel is in the bush. Well, guess who's in the bush in the Targums? I'll read it to you. This is from one of the Targums. I think it's Neofiti. He says (this is God speaking):

I have been revealed in my Memra to deliver them (the Israelites) from the hands of the Egyptians to bring them up from this land to a land good and broad, a land producing good fruits, pure as milk, and sweet as honey into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, Perezites...

The whole list there. The Targums actually have the Word of the Lord delivering Israel from Egypt. And the Word of the Lord, if we went back in Exodus 3:4 in the Targums, it's the Memra—the Word of the Lord in the bush.

Now that sort of Jewish context ought to be a factor in how we interpret and judge Jude verse 5. The “Jesus” reading has solid manuscript support. It has won the day with important text-critical authorities and it is entirely consistent with the Two Powers—the Two Yahwehs—idea, that sort of thinking in Judaism. I mean, right there it is explicitly in the Targums. You have the Word of the Lord. And remember, John calls Jesus the “Word of the Lord” in John 1. You have the Word of the Lord delivering the Israelites out of Egypt and Jude says, “Yeah, yeah, Jesus did that. Jesus did that.”

Well, that's all I wanted to talk about in this episode in relation to Jude 4 and 5, but again, I'm hoping you see the impact of this. It's very Jewish in context to read something as really shocking in the New Testament as Jesus being put right back in the Old Testament by Jude 5. But it's got the manuscript support, it's got the contextual support, it's consistent with Word of the Lord stuff, Second Power, Second Yahweh stuff back in the Old Testament. And there you go. There it is in the New Testament.

So again, for those of you who have read *Unseen Realm* and been exposed to this before... And when you talk with your friends about this, people look at you like you have two heads. We're all used to that here. But right here it is in Jude 5. And if you want to explore the Jewish context of Jude 5 and, of course, John 1, you get the Memra—the Word of the Lord, this anthropomorphic God-as-man figure substituted for Yahweh or inserted alongside Yahweh in the Jewish Targums that everybody in Jesus' day grew up hearing who went to synagogue. I mean, it's a transparent context for the kinds of things that I wrote about and am arguing for in *Unseen Realm*. So hopefully you found this interesting. Again, I think it's very useful for apologetics and, again, just generally seeing the continuity across the testaments.

50:00

So next week we will move on from Jude 5. I don't know how far we'll get because there's a lot in here on Jude 6. We'll probably spend the whole time on Jude 6 because it's the angels and sin, I don't know. I spent a lot of time on that in *Unseen Realm* so we may go beyond it, but again, this is just another example in this little letter of the really theologically significant stuff that is actually in it.

TS: Alright Mike. This is becoming one of my favorite book studies so far.

MH: Yeah. It's good stuff.

TS: Yeah, it is good stuff. Good stuff times 1000. Alright. Well, we want to remind everybody. Hey, go support our sponsor Logos.com/nakedbible. Now's the time to get on Logos and support us—the show and Logos, of course. It's the best Bible software tool out there. I think Mike would agree with that. True or false?

MH: Yeah, true, and you know what? I'm reading from the Targums here. Guess what? I'm reading them in Logos.

TS: There you go.

MH: The Targums in English translation is one of the book sets you can buy on Logos Bible software and find the material right there.

TS: There you go. Go support our sponsor. We appreciate Logos for sponsoring us. Alright, Mike, looking forward to part 3 next week. And with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast. God Bless.