CrossMark

Showing Mercy to the Ungodly and the Inversion of Invective in Jude

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The present paper offers a new interpretation of the three-clause reading of Jude 22–23 and demonstrates how Jude carries on the Jesus tradition by inverting the norms of invective. It is demonstrated that this interpretation is especially surprising given that the epistle follows many conventions of Greco-Roman invective. Given the character of invective, one would expect the writer to instruct the beloved to expel the ungodly from the community. Instead, Jude commands the beloved to 'show mercy' to the very ones with whom they contend (Jude 22), a profound reflection of Jude's understanding of mercy and faith.

Keywords: Jude, οὕς plus μέν and δέ, διακρινομένους, invective, oral tradition

1. Introduction

Jude 22–23 is recognised as one of the more textually difficult passages of the New Testament.[1] Scholars have attempted to make sense of the many variant readings, offering an assortment of interpretations.[2] The present paper offers a new theory for understanding a three-clause reading of Jude 22–23, whereby Jude instructs the beloved to show mercy to those who contend against them.[3]

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1 J. S. Allen, 'A New Possibility for the Three-Clause Format of Jude 22–3', *NTS* 44 (1998) 133–43, at 133.

2 See section 2.

3 The three-clause reading, as it appears in NA²⁸, is as follows: καὶ οὕς μὲν ἐλεᾶτε διακρινομένους, οὕς δὲ σῴζετε ἐκ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες, οὕς δὲ ἐλεᾶτε ἐν φόβῳ

We conclude from a grammatical analysis that Jude's use of the οὓς μέν ... οὓς δέ ... οὓς δέ construction is not standard, suggesting that it is best understood as part of an oral tradition. Further, οὓς μὲν ἐλεᾶτε διακρινομένους, it is argued, should be translated as 'show mercy to them though they contend' (v. 22). The paper not only offers a new translation of these contentious verses, but also, and importantly, reasons that the translation best fits into the genre, purpose and theme of the letter and is therefore not an isolated grammatical theory. Regarding genre, the epistle bears a striking resemblance to the conventions of Greco-Roman invective, seen as Jude attempts to isolate ungodly intruders who have 'slipped in' (v. 4). As the invective draws to a close, one would expect (following convention) the writer to instruct the beloved to expel the ungodly from their community. Instead, Jude commands the beloved to 'show mercy' to the very ones who contend with them (Jude 22). In relation to the purpose of the letter (Jude 3) and the thematic framework of mercy (Jude 2, 21, 24) we conclude that the translation offered here makes the most sense given Jude's aim in writing and his implicit understanding of Jesus' own teaching.

2. History of Interpretation

Disagreement over the text and interpretation of Jude 22–23 is, to say the least, widespread. The first issue with this passage is that the manuscripts themselves do not agree. Some have a three-clause reading (as it appears in the NA[28]), others have a two-clause reading, others still consist of a hybrid of the two, and then there are a range of textual variants within those options. There are scholars on every side of the debate: those in favour of the two-clause position,[4] as attested

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μισοῦντες καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς σαρκὸς ἐσπιλωμένον χιτῶνα. This varies from a shorter and smoother two-clause reading found in 𝔓[72].

4 J. N. Birdsall, 'The Text of Jude in P72', *JTS* 14 (1963) 394–9; C. D. Osburn, 'The Text of Jude 22–23', *ZNW* 63 (1972) 139–44; R. J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (WBC 50; Waco: Word, 1983) 109–10; J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AC 37C; New York: Doubleday, 1993) 85–6; S. C. Winter, 'Jude 22–23: A Note on the Text and Translation', *HTR* 82 (1994) 215–22; C. Landon, *A Text-Critical Study of the Epistle of Jude* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996) 131–4. Osburn has now changed his position on this issue and is in favour of the three-clause reading. See C. D. Osburn, 'Discourse Analysis and Jewish Apocalyptic in the Epistle of Jude', *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis* (ed. D. A. Black; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992) 292. This position is particularly favourable as 𝔓[72] has the earliest dating. However, 𝔓[72] has a considerable number of flaws and thus is not overly reliable. See P. W. Comfort, *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992) 95–6.

by $\mathfrak{P}^{72}$ and C, and those in favour of the three-clause position,[5] as supported by Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ) Codex Alexandrinus (A) and Codex Vaticanus (B).[6] The latter would argue that the testimony of A, ℵ and B outweighs $\mathfrak{P}^{72}$, as seen by its acceptance in NA[28], and that the two-clause manuscripts are a scribal attempt to create a smoother reading. This is the position taken in this paper.

However, if the three-clause reading is preferred, it does not come without its own difficulties – for instance, how is the μέν, δέ, δέ construction functioning, what does οὕς refer to, and how should we translate διακρινομένους? In regard to the οὕς μέν ... οὕς δέ ... οὕς δέ construction, some conclude that the pronoun (οὕς) introduces three distinct groups of people at whom the imperatives are directed.[7] The main objection raised against the three-group theory is that there are only two groups of persons mentioned throughout Jude's epistle:[8] a divide is formed between the community of believers (ἀγαπητοί 'the beloved', vv. 3, 17, 20) and the ungodly (οὗτοι 'these ones', vv. 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 19) who are corrupting the community.[9] Others suggest that there are three clauses, but one group to which each pronoun (οὕς) refers.[10] By this interpretation, there is a subdivision of *actions* as opposed to a subdivision of groups of

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5 There are several compelling studies in favour of this view. See S. Kubo, 'Jude 22–23: Two-Division Form or Three?', *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis* (ed. E. G. Epp and G. D. Fee; Oxford: Clarendon, 1981) 239–53; Winter, 'Jude 22–23', 215–22; Allen, 'A New Possibility', 133–43; T. R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (NAC 37; Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2003) 484–9; T. Wasserman, *The Epistle of Jude: Its Text and Transmission* (CBNTS 43; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 2006) 320–31; J. Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015) 119–31.

6 There is one variant between ℵ and A; ℵ contains ἐλέγχετε in the initial clause, while A contains ἐλεᾶτε. As Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 486) points out, ἐλεᾶτε is supported by the wider textual tradition, while ἐλέγχετε is more likely a scribal addition, used to create a progression of severity. There is another variant found in over 400 manuscripts which should be acknowledged. From 1000 CE to 1500 CE the reading και ους μεν ελεειτε διακρινομενοι is widely attested (Wasserman, *The Epistle of Jude*, 197). However, given that no early manuscripts reflect this variant, it has been widely disregarded.

7 T. Manton, *An Exposition on the Epistle of Jude* (GSC; London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958); S. J. Kistemaker, *Peter and Jude* (NTC; (Grand Rapids: Evangelical Press, 1987) 406–9; J. D. Charles and E. Waltner, *1–2 Peter, Jude* (BCBC; Scottdale & Waterloo: Herald, 1999) 274–340; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 484–9; R. A. Reese, *2 Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids & Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007); B. Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007) 626; D. A. Keating, *First and Second Peter, Jude* (CCSS; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); J. H. Greenlee, *An Exegetical Summary of Jude* (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2012²) 72–4.

8 A problem also noticed by Greenlee, *Jude*, 73; Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, 90–2.

9 Landon, *Jude*, 133.

10 D. D. Lockett, 'Objects of Mercy in Jude: The Prophetic Background of Jude 22–23', *CBQ* 77 (2015) 322–36, at 328. Similar examples can be found in 2 Macc 3.26; 11.18; 12.24; 15.12; 3 Macc 6.29; 4 Macc 4.12; 7.1.

people.[11] Is Jude then using the οὓς μέν … οὓς δέ … οὓς δέ construction as a tool to distinguish various actions directed towards the one group[12] and thereby adding emphasis to his final injunction?[13] This reading is contingent on how one interprets διακρινομένους, an issue in and of itself and one that begs the question: upon whom are the beloved being commanded to have mercy?

Neville Birdsall (in favour of the two-clause reading) argues that διακρινομένους (construed as passive) refers to those 'under judgment',[14] whereas Peter Davids and Ruth Ann Reese (in favour of the three-clause reading) maintain that Jude is probably referring to the beloved who are 'wavering' or 'doubting' (διακρινομένους construed as middle), given that it appears in Jude's letter that the opponents are not redeemable.[15] Richard J. Bauckham, Duane F. Watson, Peter Spitaler and Gene L. Green, alternatively, view διακρινομένους through the lens of Jude 9 and take it to mean 'those who dispute'. Green and Watson maintain that Jude here refers to those being persuaded by the heretics, whereas Bauckham (using the two-clause reading) classifies them as either 'the false teachers themselves or disciples of theirs'.[16]

These various interpretations form the backdrop from which we enter our assessment of Jude 22–23. In the following two sections, we will consider the grammar and semantics of the text, noting the grammatical complications of these two verses and offering plausible solutions. Then we will examine Jude 22–23 within the context of the letter. This second phase will have three parts. We will consider: (i) the genre of invective and the atmosphere of contest, (ii) Jude 22–23 and its relationship to the occasion of the letter (v. 3), and (iii) the relationship between mercy and contesting in view of Jesus' own teaching. As will become clear, the three parts of this second phase are closely related. This holistic approach will give credence to our new interpretation, placing it within the overall context of Jude.

11 See Allen, 'A New Possibility', 134; D. J. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003) 221; L. R. Donelson, *1 & 2 Peter and Jude: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010) 199–200; P. H. Davids, *2 Peter and Jude: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (BHGNT; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011) 35.

12 See also Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, 223; Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (ed. D. A. Carson; PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 35; Donelson, *1 & 2 Peter and Jude*, 199.

13 Allen, 'A New Possibility', 136.

14 Birdsall, 'The Text of Jude in P72', 394–9.

15 P. H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (ed. D. A. Carson; PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 100; R. A. Reese, *2 Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007) 70.

16 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 115; D. F. Watson, *Invention, Arrangement and Style: Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter* (SBL Dissertation Series 104; Atlanta: SBL, 1988) 75; P. Spitaler, 'Doubt or Dispute (Jude 9 and 22–23): Rereading a Special New Testament Meaning through the Lens of Internal Evidence', *Biblical Studies on the Web* 87 (2006) 201–22; G. L. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008) 126.

3. Grammatical and Semantic Considerations

In light of the history of interpretation, we now move to this article's approach to the language of Jude 22–23 as it appears in NA[28]. The Greek reads: καὶ οὓς μὲν ἐλεᾶτε διακρινομένους, οὓς δὲ σῴζετε ἐκ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες, οὓς δὲ ἐλεᾶτε ἐν φόβῳ μισοῦντες καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς σαρκὸς ἐσπιλωμένον χιτῶνα (NA[28]). We translate the text: 'and show mercy to them though they contend, and save them snatching them out of the fire, and show mercy on them, though in fear[17] you also hate the tunic stained from the flesh'. This translation has a few relatively unique features. Firstly, the use of 'them' leaves open the question as to whether distinct groups are in mind. Others routinely translate each οὓς δέ with 'others' or 'some'. Secondly, the objects are 'contending', not 'wavering' or 'doubting'. Thirdly, we translate the first and third participles with 'though' to emphasise the negative tone of the described actions. We understand the two participles to have concessive shades, i.e. the action is both simultaneous with and in spite of the action of the main verb;[18] in other translations the first participle is adjectival and the third (like the second) participle is instrumental.

3.1 *The Grammatical Problem*

The grammatical problem in Jude 22–23 is that the verses appear to consist of a series of relative clauses but there is no main clause or clauses expressed. BDF §482 suggests that the verses may be a series of aposiopeses, i.e. relative clauses with the second main clause missing. If so, we would have instances of ellipsis, where the implicit clause is to be supplied by its most immediate antecedent. In other words, what we have to read here would be something like: καὶ οὓς μὲν ἐλεᾶτε, (ἐλεᾶτε) διακρινομένους, οὓς δὲ σῴζετε, (σῴζετε) ἐκ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες, οὓς δὲ ἐλεᾶτε, (ἐλεᾶτε) ἐν φόβῳ μισοῦντες καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς σαρκὸς ἐσπιλωμένον χιτῶνα. Of course, ellipsis might have been avoided by use of the article instead: καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐλεᾶτε διακρινομένους, τοὺς δὲ σῴζετε ἐκ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες, τοὺς δὲ ἐλεᾶτε ἐν φόβῳ μισοῦντες καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς σαρκὸς ἐσπιλωμένον χιτῶνα.

Linguistic evidence suggests that the three-part construction with the article (i.e. τοὺς μέν ... τοὺς δέ ... τοὺς δέ) extends the function of the two-part

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17 We construe the prepositional phrase as modifying the following participle just as in the previous clause, i.e. 'snatching out of the fire'. For the pre-positioning of prepositional modifiers, see vv. 5, 12, 16, 18 and 20. Cf. also v. 12 (ἀφόβως ἑαυτοὺς ποιμαίνοντες) for the prepositioning of an adverbial modifier with the participle. In the case of vv. 22–3 and ἐν φόβῳ (perhaps better construed as 'in awe/*mysterium tremendum*') in particular, the prepositional phrase modifies the strongly negative emotion of hate placing it within the realm of pious response to defilement.

18 The concessive reading arises from the semantic contrast between the verb (positive tenor) and its associated participle (negative tenor), i.e. the expectation is that one will not show mercy to those with whom one contends or hates.

construction to indicate the presence of a third possibility or option.[19] If so, both the three-part construction with the article and thereby presumably also the three-part construction with the relative pronoun indicate that the designated persons are enumerated or listed in terms of the actions shown by or to them (external) and not by any internal group dynamic,[20] contra Bauckham, who sees two groups,[21] and Lockett, who sees just one group.[22] In other words, the term 'group' insofar as it is read to mean an internally coherent collection of individuals is misguided. Unfortunately, the grammatical solution suggested by BDF does not explain why Jude took the first (i.e. pronoun) rather than the second (i.e. article) option. Indeed, as the use of the three-part construction with the article is the more common and given that one might have expected the verbs in relative clauses to be in the subjunctive, it is difficult to understand the choices made by the author of Jude. Of course, one might suggest an alternative solution using ellipsis, namely, that the three relative clauses have one main clause, but what that main clause might be is allusive.

Another solution to the grammatical problem is provided by BDAG s.v. ὅς II. Here a second use of the relative form of the pronoun is listed as demonstrative and several NT instances are given, including Jude 22–23. Most instances consist of just the two-part form, i.e. ὃς μέν ... ὃς δέ, but here it is clear that two possibilities or options are, as it were, enumerated (Matt 22.5; Luke 23.33; Acts 27.44; Rom 9.21; 14.5; 1 Cor 11.21; 2 Cor 2.16; 2 Tim 2.20). However, there are also several three-part forms, all occurring within Matthean parables and presumably indicative of a fondness for threefold enumeration in parables.

   i. Matt 13.8 (and 13.23). In the parable of the sower the produce of grain that fell on good ground is enumerated; some produced one-hundredfold, some sixty-fold and others thirtyfold: καὶ ἐδίδου καρπόν, ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἑξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα.
   ii. Matt 21.35. In the parable of the wicked tenants the fates of the (three) servants sent to collect the rent-in-kind are enumerated; one they beat, one they killed

19 Relevant examples of the function of the three-part construction are: Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.46; Isocrates 3 (*Nic.*) 3.22; *Antid.* 18; Andocides 4 (*Alcib.*) 27; Xenophon, *Hell.* 6.1.6; 7.2.22; *An.* 4.8.15; *Cyr.* 1.1.3; and *Cav.* 8.13. On the principal use of the μέν clause to anticipate a related point or clause (i.e. possibility or option), see S. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010) 53–61. Runge only discusses the anticipation of one related point, i.e. the μέν ... δέ type of construction, but we contend that at least a second related point or clause can be added.

20 The objection that Jude only names two groups, the audience and the intruders/impious, is of no consequence, as the enumeration concerns the intruders and the response enjoined on his audience.

21 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 115.

22 Lockett, 'Objects of Mercy', 325.

and the other they stoned: ὃν μὲν ἔδειραν, ὃν δὲ ἀπέκτειναν, ὃν δὲ ἐλιθοβόλησαν.

iii. Matt 25.15. In the parable of the talents the master in preparation for departure distributes his property; one received five talents, one two talents and the last one talent: καὶ ᾧ μὲν ἔδωκεν πέντε τάλαντα, ᾧ δὲ δύο, ᾧ δὲ ἕν.

Unfortunately, the suggested demonstrative function of the pronoun appears problematic in those instances where instead of continuing with ὃς δέ ... ὃς δέ, the writer changes to a rather non-specific ἄλλος δέ or καὶ ἄλλος/ἕτερος (cf. Matt 13.4–8; Mark 4.4–8; Luke 8.5–8; 1 Cor 12.8); a further indicator of the problem is evident when subsequent items are not connected by the conjunctions δέ or καί but are just numbered, as at 1 Cor 12.27–8 – Ὑμεῖς δέ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους. καὶ οὓς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεύτερον προφήτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους ... What is of particular interest with regard to this passage is its paraphrase in Eph 4.11 where the article instead of the relative pronoun is employed: καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους. The evidence thus seems to support Ronald Peters' suggestion that 'with the ascendancy of the demonstratives οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος, the article and the relative pronoun followed new trajectories and were both pressed into new services, with the article representing a reduced or diminished form and function of the relative pronoun'.[23] As a result neither has the demonstrative (deictic) function of directing the hearer 'to the information necessary for identification' but rather they 'indicate that this information is being provided by the speaker'.[24] In terms of vv. 22–23 that information is provided by the author in the commands that follow, i.e. the relative pronoun makes the 'referent concrete, as belonging to experience of an actual person'.[25] That said, in whatever way one chooses to understand the construction, the examples suggest that in Jude 22–23 it also plays a listing or enumerating role.

If we compare these examples with Jude 22–23 we see that the latter lacks an immediate antecedent for the relative pronoun, and it is this that contributes to its ambiguity.[26] The observation is further confirmed when one looks at examples from literature more generally, where the antecedent (either pre- or post-

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23 R. D. Peters, *The Greek Article: A Functional Grammar of ὁ-Items in the Greek New Testament with Special Emphasis on the Greek Article* (Leiden: Brill, 2014) 67. On the μέν ... δέ construction see pp. 151–78.

24 Peters, *The Greek Article*, 70.

25 Peters, *The Greek Article*, 150.

26 Peters, *The Greek Article*, 154–5 is mistaken in his analysis of Matt 13.23 when he states that in the expression ὃ μὲν ἑκατὸν ὃ δὲ ἑξήκοντα ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα the relative pronoun has no antecedent. As the verse is part of the parable's interpretation, it is best understood as a verbatim citation of v. 8.

positioned) is invariably stated, or able to be inferred from context. Below we cite only the four examples where a three-clause usage is attested, though the sample included sixteen other usages as well.[27]

(x) Dionysius of Halicarnassus 11.39.3 (antecedent = 'the other assembly' in the forum):

> And the very thing which was likely (to happen) was about to, namely, that some summoned to this assembly by the reputation of the men (οὓς μὲν τὸ ἀξίωμα τῶν ἀνδρῶν), some by their pity for the girl (οὓς δ' ὁ τῆς κόρης ἔλεος) who suffered terrible, nay more than terrible, things because of her ill-fated beauty, and some by their very desire for the ancient constitution (οὓς δ' αὐτὸς ὁ τῆς ἀρχαίας καταστάσεως πόθος) would be gathered together in greater number than the others, with the result that ...

(xii) Josephus, *Jewish War* 1.293 (antecedent = 'people of the country'):

> Of the people of the country (καὶ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων) some led by hereditary friendship (οὓς μὲν πατρῴα φιλία προσῆγεν), some by his renown (οὓς δὲ τὸ αὐτοῦ κλέος), some by the compensation of benefaction from both [i.e. Herod and his father, Antipas] (οὓς δὲ τῆς ἐξ ἀμφοῖν εὐεργεσίας ἀμοιβή), but the majority surely by the expectation as from an assured king.

(xvi) Appian, *Punic Wars* 66 (antecedent = 'leaders'):

> And of their leaders some they praise, some they mock, some they censure (καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων οὓς μὲν ἐπαινοῦσιν, οὓς δὲ σκώπτουσιν, οὓς δὲ ψέγουσιν). For the *triumphus* is brash and empowered to say whatever it should wish.

(xix) Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 271f (antecedent = 'freed slaves'):

> The Lacedaemonians, he says, often freed slaves, and some they called Aphetae, some Adespoti, some Erycteres (οὓς μὲν ἀφέτας ἐκάλεσαν, οὓς

27 The twenty texts are as follows, with antecedent indicated in brackets: (i) Thuc. 3.66.2 (us); (ii) Polybius, *Hist.* 1.7.3 (citizens); (iii) *Hist.* 2.8.2 (Italian traders); (iv) Diodorus Siculus, *Bib. hist.* 11.44.3 (other barbarians); (v) *Bib. hist.* 11.61.3 (other Persians); (vi) *Bib. hist.* 13.48.7 (partisans to the Lacedaemonians' affairs); (vii) *Bib. hist.* 17.3.6 (Argives, Eleians *et al.*); (viii) *Bib. hist.* 19.95.3 (captives); (ix) *Bib. hist.* 33.28b.4 (those in dispute); (x) Dionysius of Halicarnassus 11.39.3 (other assembly in the forum); (xi) Philo, *Decal.* 18 (the laws); (xii) Josephus, *J.W.* 1.293 (people of the country); (xiii) *J.W.* 2.325 (rebels); (xiv) *J.W.* 4.78 (Jewish defenders of Gamala); (xv) Plutarch, *Cat. Min.* 43.4 (citizens); (xvi) Appian, *Punic Wars* 66 (leaders); (xvii) Cassius Dio from *Ioannis Antiocheni fragmenta quae supersunt omnia* 115 (those able to disclose); (xviii) Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 1.147 (everyone); (xix) Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 271f (W. Dindorf, *Athenaeus* (Leipzig 1827) p. 589) (freed slaves); (xx) Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae phil.* 9.80–81 (humankind).

δὲ ἀδεσπότους, οὓς δὲ ἐρυκτῆρας), yet others Desposionautae (δεσποσιοναύτας δ' ἄλλους), whom they assigned to their fleets, and others Neodamodes (ἄλλους δὲ νεοδαμώδεις), (all) being different from the Helots.

A review of all twenty examples allows some observations to be drawn:

1. As already observed, it appears rather standard that the antecedent be either stated or implicit in terms of context. It occurs in all twenty examples looked at. This implies that the usage at Jude 22–23 is not standard and is thus problematic. It will be contended here that the context was provided by the received tradition of what may well have been a piece of oral teaching.

2. Significant for the interpretation of Jude 22–23 is the fact that the sequence of relative pronouns does not enumerate or list internally distinct groups. What is enumerated are the actions referenced in the verbs (and dependent participles) that govern the relative pronouns.

3. There appears to be a limit of between two to three uses of the relative pronoun in sequence and any more possibilities or options require the use of some other extending device or expression. See (iii), (iv), (v (?)), (vi), (vii), (viii), (ix), (xix).

4. The antecedent can be expressed as a preceding (or occasionally following) genitive. See (iv), (v), (ix), (xi), (xii), (xiii), (xvi) (preceding), and (ii), (xv) (following). The use of an accusative, especially after the relative pronoun (as in Jude 22), is less common.

3.2 Διακρινομένους

Here is not the place to enter into a detailed history of the semantic extension or polysemy of the term, but in the case of διακρίνω one can reasonably suggest that there is contiguity between the term's various glosses as 'separate', 'distinguish' and 'decide' and that this contiguity lies along a trajectory that increasingly highlights the cognitive aspect of the verb. However, it is not immediately obvious how the meaning 'contend' developed. Metonymic chaining, as argued by Günter Radden and Zoltán Kövecses, provides the clue.[28] Accordingly, one can surmise that an ACTION FOR RESULT metonym (*separate standing for differ*) was chained with a CAUSE FOR EFFECT metonym (*differ standing for contend*) to create the resultant sense. The meaning 'waver, hesitate, doubt' possibly derived from a different chaining that had as its intermediate step the sense 'question'. Here one surmises that an EFFECT FOR CAUSE metonym (*distinguish standing for question*) was chained with an ACTION FOR RESULT metonym (*question*

28 G. Radden and Z. Kövecses, 'Towards a Theory of Metonymy', *Metonymy in Language and Thought* (ed. K.-U. Panther and G. Radden; Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1999) 17–59. See also J. Littlemore, *Metonymy: Hidden Shortcuts in Language, Thought and Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2015).

standing for doubt). Be that as it may, we suggest that it is the first schema that explains the meaning 'contend' in Jude 22 and that this meaning had already been signalled by its use in Jude 9, for it is here that the archangel Michael is portrayed as contending with Satan (τῷ διαβόλῳ διακρινόμενος).[29]

Clearly the usage in v. 9 predisposes one to assume a similar meaning for the same participle in v. 22. However, other glosses are suggested in the translations, e.g. 'some who are wavering' (NRSV), 'those who doubt' (NIV), 'those who have doubts' (ISV), 'who are in doubt' (ASV), 'some who are doubting' (NASB), and in so doing follow LSJ, which gives the meaning 'doubt/waver/hesitate' based on NT usage, i.e. Matt 21.21; Acts 10.20; 11.12; and Rom 4.20. BDAG s.v. διακρίνω adds examples noting that the meaning is first attested in NT writers. And this extended meaning makes good sense of such examples as Matt 21.21 ('if you have faith and do not doubt'), where the verb and 'have faith' are opposed to each other, and Rom 4.20 ('no distrust made him waver'), where distrust (ἀπιστία) is the instrument of the verb. Indeed, where polysemy is present the audience must rely on the larger context, be it linguistic or pragmatic, to provide clues as to meaning. In the cases of Matt 21.21 and Rom 4.20 it is the coordinated concept of belief/trust or lack thereof that provides the signal. In Jude 22, however, there is no such clue and the clues that do exist point to the meaning 'contend':

1. The purpose of the epistle is stated in its opening sentence (vv. 1–2 being the prescript or salutation). Jude writes calling on his readers to contend (ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι) τῇ ... πίστει. Jude 22–23 forms the concluding formula of the epistle proper (vv. 24–25 constituting its benediction) and again reiterates that purpose, though now in a qualified form. Indeed, (ἐπ)αγωνίζομαι and διακρίνομαι appear to be synonymous, as Plutarch, *De genio Socratis* 579a shows: 'Chonuphis advised that ... the god was guiding and advising the Greeks by the inscription to live at leisure and peace, always competing by philosophy (διὰ φιλοσοφίας ἀγωνιζομένους ἀεί), contending for justice by (the) Muses and word (Μούσαις καὶ λόγῳ διακρινομένους περὶ τῶν δικαίων), putting aside weapons.'
2. The opponents are pictured as speaking harsh things; they are grumblers and malcontents; they are bombastic and flatterers (vv. 15–16); they are scoffers (v. 18). This state of expressed tension signals that 'contend' provides the better sense. Of course, the audience by their own experience of such persons will be more readily able to infer the appropriate meaning of διακρίνομαι, but we must rely on a more detailed consideration of terms that key into and give expression to the audience's experience, albeit as assumed by the writer.

29 MM s. v. διακρίνω suggests that διακρίνω plus the dative means 'have a case with someone decided'.

3. The archangel Michael provides an example when he contends with Satan (τῷ διαβόλῳ διακρινόμενος, v. 9). It will be noted that in v. 9 it is the angel who does the contending, though in v. 22 it is the opponents/others who are contending with the beloved. But this is of little consequence as there are always at least two parties to a dispute and the choice of which party will function as the subject/theme depends on the focus of the author at that point. Clearly Jude has foregrounded the opponents as active in the creation of disharmony and thus it suits his purposes to portray them here as the subject of the verb.

4. In the two clauses that follow, there are allusions to Zech 3.2 ('a brand plucked from the fire') and 3.3 ('garment stained by the flesh'). By these allusions the reader is referred to the context of Zech 3.1–5 as well as back to Jude 9, which also alludes to a similar situation. In Zechariah the prophet sees in a vision Joshua, the high priest, and the angel of the Lord with Satan at his right hand ready to accuse him (לשטנו – τοῦ ἀντικεῖσθαι). The (angel of the) Lord rebukes Satan in wording that clearly calls to mind Jude 9, ἐπιτιμήσαι κύριος ἐν σοί, διάβολε, καὶ ἐπιτιμήσαι κύριος ἐν σοὶ ὁ ἐκλεξάμενος τὴν Ἰερουσαλήμ ('(The) Lord rebuke you, Satan, and (the) Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you'). In other words, it would appear that Jude 22–23 is framed with the accusatorial context of Zech 3.1–5 in mind but at the same time seeks to qualify it by his injunction to show mercy.

5. Textual transmission confirms this meaning when it renders the term in the nominative plural, i.e. καὶ οὓς μὲν ἐλεᾶτε διακρινομένοι. Jude can hardly advise his audience to show mercy to some while wavering/doubting themselves! But he can tell them to show mercy to some though they contend with them. The point of interest with the meaning 'contend' is that it entails an agent and an object. The accusative is better attested and, in some ways, better suits the purpose of the author. As already noted, by the use of the accusative the ungodly have been made the agents of dispute and difference.

In *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson describe how higher-level metaphors structure the way we think about the world. One of their key examples is the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, and they enumerate how this metaphor underlies a number of expressions we use in relation to arguments (e.g. your claims are *indefensible*; he *attacked every weak point in* my argument; if you use that *strategy*, he'll *wipe you out*) and entertain what the expressions might be if the underlying metaphor was ARGUMENT IS DANCE.[30] The above discussion points to the operation of a different metaphor underlying social antagonism, namely, ARGUMENT IS CONTEST. In other words, the metaphor of the physical

30 G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) 4–5.

contest between competing athletes is used to structure how the ancient audience thought about social difference as manifest in its verbal expression. It is with this understanding in mind that we now turn to consider ancient invective and the genre of our epistle.

4. Jude 22–23 in Context

Though we believe that our interpretation is grammatically plausible, context will determine the validity of the argument. The grammatical analysis unveiled an atmosphere of contest in the letter. We will unpack this further: (i) by examining the genre of invective and Jude's appropriation of it; (ii) by looking at the relationship between vv. 22–23 and the author's original purpose for writing as stated in v. 3; (iii) by considering the theme of 'mercy' as an unexpected inversion of invective in light of Jesus' own teaching. Once again these three points are closely related.

4.1 *Jude as Invective*

The use of διακρινομένους and the larger context of contesting raises the question of genre. It may be argued that in constructing a verbal contest Jude invokes the conventions of invective. Invective is 'the public shaming of a known individual through the open recounting of faults'.[31] In the ancient world it was a popular rhetorical device used in written or spoken communication to shame an opponent *and* persuade an individual (or group) to remain on what could be classed as the moral path. There was not necessarily a 'legal' verdict at the end of the discourse, but the goal was to persuade the majority to disassociate from or, better yet, remove the guilty party from a city or position of power. The epistle of Jude has some striking similarities with this textual form, although, as we shall see, at vv. 22–23 Jude departs significantly from the normal course of invective.[32]

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31 A. Corbeill, 'Ciceronian Invective', *Brill's Companion to Cicero* (ed. J. M. May; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 197–218, at 200. Invective is often used to attack prominent or influential figures. See also R. Barilli, *Rhetoric* (trans. G. Menozzi; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) 3. For a further discussion on invective and the categories of blame, censure and rebuke, see Demetrius, *Eloc.* 211.18–22; 288.4–19; 292.21–24; Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epist.* 3–9; cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 75.6–7; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1.9.76.1–81.2. See also S. K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986); A. J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* (SBL Sources for Biblical Study 19; Atlanta: Scholars, 1988) 33–9.

32 For other studies which make a case for Jude as invective, see J. W. Knust, *Abandoned to Lust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) 19, 122–6; A. J. Batten, 'The Letter of Jude and Graeco-Roman Invective', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70.1 (2014) 1–7. It might be more accurate, however, to identify Jude not simply as invective but more specifically as a 'Jewish invective' due to the overwhelmingly Jewish themes and references. See A. Robinson, *Jude on the Attack: A Comparative Analysis of the Epistle of Jude, Jewish*

The aim of Greco-Roman invective can be broken into three groups: (i) to persuade the public to take seriously the matter at hand (Cicero, *Cat.* 1.22; 2.12.27; *Verr.* 1.1.56); (ii) to shame an opponent and have them removed from the community (Demosthenes, *Meid.* 143–150; Cicero, *Verr.* 1.1.56); and (iii) to protect a community or city from further wrongdoing and deception (Isocrates, *Soph.* 3; *Euth.* 3; Martial 10). Jude's aim is twofold. His primary aim is to compel the believers to contend τῇ … πίστει, much as in (i); cf. vv. 3, 20–21. His second aim is to make clear to the ungodly, hidden among the believers, that judgement is coming as in aims (ii) and (iii), with some important differences noted below; cf. vv. 4–15. This secondary aim also has the effect of galvanising the beloved: if they do not reject the false teaching of the ungodly, the same fate awaits them.

The themes of Greco-Roman invective have been noted variously due to their remarkable consistency across various texts.[33] The list includes comments on such factors as: external circumstances, physical attributes, sexual misconduct, speech, detrimental behaviour towards the city and its citizens, excessive habits, and bringing shame to one's family. No single example of invective used all these themes, but rather rhetoricians selected whichever were useful in building the particular case. Jude's themes are consistent with this list. As he builds his case against the ungodly (vv. 4–19), he draws on the standard themes of irreverent speech (vv. 8, 10, 15, 16, 19), falsehood (vv. 12, 16), lust (v. 7), greed (vv. 11, 12, 16) and the abuse of power (vv. 11, 12, 19).

A vital structural technique in polemical works was the majority-minority division. The orator would fashion the discourse to appear a 'champion of normative values'.[34] This would enable him to separate members of the ruling class from the crowd and its negligent behaviour. The same feature can be seen in the epistle of Jude. Jude begins with inclusive language as the beloved are affirmed (vv. 1–3a), before the ungodly are publicly accused of perverting God's grace and denying Jesus as Lord (v. 4). Consequently, a division is formed between the community (ἀγαπητοί 'the beloved', vv. 3, 17, 20) and the ungodly (οὗτοι 'these ones', vv. 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 19) who are corrupting the community. This enables Jude to establish a common bond with the audience and allows him to contrast this common bond with the behaviour of the ungodly.[35] Interestingly, Jude uses a

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Judgment Oracles, and Greco-Roman Invective (LNTS 581; London/Oxford: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018).

33 *Rhet. Her.* 3.6.10. See also W. Süss, *Ethos: Studien zur älteren Griechischen Rhetorik* (Berlin: Teubner, 1910); C. P. Craig, 'Audience, Expectations, Invective, and Proof', *Cicero the Advocate* (ed. J. G. F. Powell and J. Paterson; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 187–213.

34 W. J. Tatum, 'Invective Identities in *Pro Caelio*', *Praise and Blame in Roman Republican Rhetoric*, (ed. C. Smith and R. Covino; Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2011) 165–80, at 167.

35 Du Toit notices a similar pattern in Galatians, commenting that when a writer composes a text with the aim of influencing the audience, 'introductory sections function on the pragmatic

vague descriptor for the ungodly who have slipped in, τινες ἄνθρωποι ('certain persons', v. 4), which may link to the ambiguity of the pronouns in vv. 22–23.

Greco-Roman orators also constructed their speeches around an emotional climax where the target was severely denounced with the intent of moral if not legal judgement. In *Against Vatinius*, Cicero moves from a discussion of Vatinius' unworthiness of character (*Vat.* 1) to his violence and intent to commit murder (*Vat.* 17, 24), concluding with the most potent statement: 'You could not possibly do anything more agreeable to the people than you would if you were to kill yourself' (*Vat.* 39). With a slightly different form, in Martial's epigram against the slanderous poet (10.5), his subject's offence is mentioned only briefly ('[he] injured them with his impious verse'). He then builds the intensity by evoking a series of punishments for his foe, each with growing severity.[36] Greg Woolf observes that in Martial's fantasy, his anonymous foe moves from being an 'outcast', to a beggar eating 'spoiled bread reserved for dogs', to being cold and dreary wishing for his death as he 'drives off the birds of prey', and even after death, his pain and suffering continue as he 'exhaust[s] all the fabled torments of the poets'.[37]

Jude's argument notably increases in intensity, but does not finish in a manner consistent with invective. As Jude's argument builds, we observe a noticeable heightening of intensity.[38] Jude's passion rises and his imagery becomes more pointed (v. 10). The sentence structure is sharper (vv. 11–13) and more direct (vv. 14–15) as the inescapable judgement of the Lord is made clear. Interestingly, however, there is no call at this point for the expulsion of the ungodly as might be expected in traditional invective. Rather, Jude implores the beloved to keep themselves in God's love and be merciful to the ungodly, i.e. those who contend with them (vv. 20–23). It must be asked, then, how this unexpected call for mercy fits with the conceptual framework of the letter as a whole.

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level to create a positive climate between sender and recipient'. See A. B. du Toit, 'Alienation and Re-identification as Pragmatic Strategies in Galatians', *Neot* 26.2 (1992) 279–96, at 282. Other examples of this include Apollonius' letter to Artemas (P.Oxy. XXXVI.2783), Pathermuthis' letter to Theon (P.Oxy. x.1348), Helene's letter to her brother Petechon (P. Oxy. VII.1067), Crates' letter to Hipparchia (Crates, *Ep.* 32), a mother's letter to her son (*SB* III.6264), described elsewhere as a 'spontaneous outpouring of indignant phrases'. See R. S. Bagnall and R. Cribiore, *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt, 300 BC–AD 800* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2006) 282. There is also Seneca's letter to Lucilius (*Ep.* 99), in which he 'turns traditional consolatory topics into rebukes'. See Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, 135.

36 G. Woolf, 'Writing Poverty in Rome', *Poverty in the Roman World* (ed. M. Atkins and R. Osborne; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 83–99.

37 See Woolf, 'Writing Poverty in Rome', 94–7. For similar imagery, see Martial 1.92.

38 For a detailed discussion on the structure of Jude, see A. M. Robinson, 'The Enoch Inclusio in Jude: A New Structural Possibility', *JGRChJ* 9 (2013) 196–212.

4.2 *Jude 22–23 in Relation to Jude 3 and the Occasion of the Letter*

Our view of Jude's purpose and occasion is idiosyncratic. The author of Jude does not divert from the 'original purpose which was to write about a shared salvation' when, as argued elsewhere, 'he addresses an admonition to engage in a fight on behalf of the apostolic faith', nor is the 'occasion for writing ... the infiltration of false teachers'.[39] Firstly, we would translate the participle ποιούμενος as 'in preparing', not 'though preparing'. The author finds it 'necessary to write and appeal' as he begins to write about 'our shared deliverance' (v. 3). The participle is circumstantial, not concessive. Secondly, ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ... πίστει means 'to contend by means of the faith', not 'to contend on behalf of the faith' (v. 3).

On the first point, there is a continuity of words and ideas between 'our shared deliverance' (v. 3), 'the faith decisively passed down to the holy ones' (v. 3), and 'I want to remind you, though you have been decisively informed of all things, that the Lord, who delivered a people ...' (v. 5).[40] The σωτηρία/σώζω ('deliverance/deliver') family and the adverb ἅπαξ ('decisively/once') are present in the first traditional example (v. 5) and therefore join together the two parts of the purpose statement (v. 3). Thus, the author does not indicate that he had prepared to write about something different before writing the letter we now have.

On the second point, the BDAG and LSJ entries on the verb ἐπαγωνίζομαι make this example in Jude a unique usage, translating 'contend for'.[41] But perhaps this is a conspicuous play on the established usage with the dative that indicates the thing depended upon for support in rivalry. LSJ indicates that ἐπαγωνίζομαι takes the dative for both the person against whom one contends and the means by which one contends. Lucius Aufidius Bassus, like his father, contends with goodwill for the city (τῆι πρὸς τὴν πόλιν εὐνοίᾳ, *IG* XII/5.860.19–20); conciseness requires one not to contend with speech (τῇ λέξει), describing every facet of the matter, but to go to the essential point (Aelius Aristides, *Ars rhetorica* 1.11.2); those who would see a connection between Numa and Pythagoras contend with other proofs (ἐπαγωνίζονται τεκμηρίοις) in support of their argument (Plutarch, *Numa* 8.9); and in medical enquiry one not only seeks to discover how something happens but by the use of reason (ἐπαγωνισώμεθα τῷ λόγῳ) to learn its cause (Galen, *De theriaca ad Pisonem*

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39 A. Chester and R. P. Martin, *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1994) 67. Similarly, '[t]he writer's reaction to the menace is such that he felt moved to turn away from his originally intended project and address a warning with the rival, intruding teachers clearly in view' (ibid., 75). Theirs seems to reflect the mainstream view. But see Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 29–31, who, though opting for the mainstream interpretation, cites some older literature that holds the view we argue here.

40 NA²⁸ selects Ἰησοῦς from the manuscript tradition's several options. κύριος seems to be preferable. See Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 43.

41 See BDAG s.v. ἐπαγωνίζομαι and LSJ s.v. ἐπαγωνίζομαι.

xiv.246 Kühn).[42] So, might Jude mean that this is the way by which the beloved can challenge the ungodly, namely, their faith? Jude shifts the verb's frame of reference from rivalry and exclusion to harmony and inclusion, assuming that the essence of the faith is indicated in the closing appeal (vv. 22–23). The sense of the expression is to struggle/contend against the ungodly with the faith. The use of ἐπαγωνίζομαι, then, is the first sign that the letter will subvert the conventions of invective.

The compound verb ἐπαγωνίζομαι occurs once in Jude and nowhere else in the NT and LXX. ἀγωνίζομαι, the same verb but without the prefix ἐπι-, occurs six times in the LXX and eight times in the NT to mean 'struggle' or 'fight'.[43] An inscription from the third century BCE uses the verb ἀγωνίζομαι to reference warfare. Strikingly, the language of shared deliverance is also present. The text reads: ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ τῆς κοινῆς σωτηρίας, 'fighting for the sake of the common deliverance' (*Syll.* 213.33).[44] However, the important point to note here is that such glosses reflect the figurative nature of the term, i.e. the glosses arise from the fact that the same source domain (athletic contest) was used to structure how the audience thought about the target domains of both war and argument. So, given the context of the letter of Jude, it is better to stay within the terminology of the source domain itself. Accordingly, the sense of what Jude is saying is that it is by means of the faith decisively passed down that the audience is to contend for the deliverance they share.

Jude closes with two complementary appeals to ministry, one towards the beloved (vv. 20–21) and one towards the ungodly (vv. 22–23). Both have three parts, demarcated by present plural participles. The first has three nominative participles (ἐποικοδομοῦντες, προσευχόμενοι, προσδεχόμενοι, vv. 20–21), while the second begins with the accusative participle διακρινομένους before returning to the nominative case for the remaining two participles (ἁρπάζοντες, μισοῦντες, vv. 22–23). This accusative participle is outstanding and helps to mark the shift in focus to the ungodly (see above on the active role of the ungodly in the creation of disharmony). The letter implores the beloved not only to take care of themselves but more importantly to have

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42 Another example of this usage is where Diodorus contends with a particular argument in Libanius, *Argumenta orationum Demosthenicarum* 22.2–3: ἐπὶ τούτῳ παρανόμων κρίνεται κατηγορούντων αὐτοῦ δύο ἐχθρῶν Εὐκτήμονος καὶ Διοδώρου καὶ προείρηκε μὲν ὁ Εὐκτήμων δεύτερος δὲ ὁ Διόδωρος ἐπαγωνίζεται τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ. φασὶ δὲ οἱ κατήγοροι ... ('with reference to this (issue) of unconstitutionality he was indicted, with two of his enemies bringing the charge, namely, Euktemus and Diodorus. Euktemus spoke first, and second Diodorus contended with this argument. The accusers said ...').

43 1 Macc 7.21; 2 Macc 8.16; 13.14; 15.27; 4 Macc 17.13; Sir 4.28; Luke 13.24; John 18.36; 1 Cor. 9.25; Col 1.29; 4.12; 1 Tim 4.10; 6.12; 2 Tim 4.7.

44 See MM s. v. ἀγωνίζομαι.

mercy on the ungodly out of the abundance of mercy for which they hope (vv. 2, 21, 22, 23). To struggle by means of the faith is to minister among both the beloved and the ungodly, for God, not the beloved, is responsible for salvation as well as judgement (v. 5).

The LXX of Zechariah uses the verb ἐκσπάω ('draw out') rather than ἁρπάζω in the question οὐκ ἰδοὺ τοῦτο ὡς δαλὸς ἐξεσπασμένος ἐκ πυρός, 'behold, is this not like a burning stick drawn out of the fire' (Zech 3.2).[45] The referent is probably Ιερουσαλημ, rather than the act of its deliverance, or even the great priest, Joshua (Ιησοῦς).[46] Zechariah portrays Joshua as removed from fire, in filthy clothes and opposed by the slanderer.[47] Jude transposes this image to implore the audience to show mercy to the contenders as they would to Jerusalem or Joshua, even while still burning, even while in impure garments.

4.3 *Jude's Appeal to 'Mercy': Invoking Jesus and Inverting Invective*

We have already suggested that the syntactical awkwardness of vv. 22–23 might indicate the presence of traditional material. Consider also both how the theme of mercy (ἔλεος, vv. 2, 21, ἐλεάω, vv. 22, 23) frames the letter as it leads to the appeal to ministry towards the ungodly and how the three parts of the text make for a memorable form. We propose that the appeal derives from the sentiment of the saying οὐκ ἔδει καὶ σὲ ἐλεῆσαι τὸν σύνδουλόν σου ὡς κἀγὼ σὲ ἠλέησα; 'Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave as I had mercy on you?' (Matt 18.33). The saying's concept is the base of Jude's conceptual framework, and it carries Jesus' authority even in this setting. Jude asks, are you the beloved, and do you share in Jesus' deliverance if you do not have mercy on the ungodly as Jesus had mercy on you while you were yet sinners?

Jude's appeal to show mercy is a case of traditional referentiality.[48] For John Miles Foley, Jude is neither absolute nor autonomous.[49] The letter enjoys a metonymic relationship with the tradition, the 'dynamic, multivalent body of meaning that preserves much that a group has invented and transmitted but that also includes as necessary defining features both an inherent indeterminacy and a

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45 The verb ἁρπάζω ('snatch' or 'seize') has a negative tenor in the prophets (Hosea 2x, Amos 2x, Micah 2x, Isaiah 1x and Ezekiel 8x). In BDAG, too, both denotations of ἁρπάζω are dark, 'make off with someone's property by attacking or seizing' and 'grab or seize suddenly so as to remove or gain control'.

46 Also, we might note the mention of Ιουδας ('Judah'), the name of Jude's author, a few lines earlier (2.16, English 2.12).

47 We agree with much in Lockett, 'Objects of Mercy' concerning the influence of Zechariah on Jude.

48 See J. M. Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995) and *Homer's Traditional Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999).

49 J. M. Foley, 'Word-Power, Performance, and Tradition', *The Journal of American Folklore* 105.417 (1992) 275–301, at 275.

predisposition to various kinds of changes or modifications'.[50] That is, by evoking the name of Jude the author also evokes the tradition associated with that name, i.e. the Jesus tradition, modifying and integrating it according to his own literary setting and agenda.[51] The 'mercy' word family 'reaches beyond the confines' of Jude into the infinitely rich web of significance in the early Jesus movement.[52] Yet, if the reader of Jude is to 'learn the lexicon that' Jude 'and his tradition used', where is she to look?[53]

One place is Matthew, for example 18.33.[54] It is the same for James, which alludes to traditional Jesus material, 'often in a form that does not suggest literary dependence on one or more of the Gospels, but, rather, on an earlier stage in the development of the Jesus tradition' that usually 'exhibits greater similarities with "Q" and the special Matthean material'.[55] David A. DeSilva continues, suggesting that James integrates the traditional material seamlessly, reflecting not only the early period of the movement but also the usual approach to wisdom teaching.[56] So, if we do hear something of the 'voices' of Jesus' brothers in James and Jude, and if James bears evidence of familiarity with and authority in the burgeoning Jesus tradition, might the same be conjectured regarding Jude? Also, consider how Jude's standard is to reframe rather than quote tradition. Jude's own authority is steeped in the presumed authority of the traditional references, of which the appeal to show mercy may well be one.

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50 Foley, 'Word-Power, Performance, and Tradition', 277.

51 To be clear, we are considering the significance of the attribution to Jude not the veracity of that attribution, and in so doing we circumvent the authorship debate.

52 Foley, 'Word-Power, Performance, and Tradition', 281.

53 J. M. Foley, 'Signs, Texts, and Oral Tradition', *Journal of Folklore Research* 33.1 (1996) 21–9, at 24.

54 Our choice to highlight Matt 18.33 is inevitably arbitrary. Of course, there is much more in the Jesus tradition on the topic of mercy. Cf. in Matthew alone 5.7; 9.13; 12.7. Consider also the emphasis on remembering the words of Jesus in *1 Clem.* 13.1 and the ensuing call to 'show mercy, so that you may receive mercy; forgive, so that you may be forgiven ... As you judge, so shall you be judged' in 13.2. 13.3 then concludes that by heeding these words the author and audience can strengthen themselves. See M. W. Holmes, ed., *The Apostolic Fathers in English* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006) 48. Note not only the presence of the theme of mercy, but more significantly its relation to the themes of remembering tradition (cf. Jude 17), judgement (cf. Jude 22 with James 2.4) and building up in the faith (cf. Jude 20). 1 Clement 13 uses Luke 6.37–8. See D. C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010) 325. We might even hazard that 1 Clement and Jude are interpreting similar Jesus tradition along the same trajectory. Thanks to Francis Watson for pointing out to us the text in 1 Clement.

55 D. A. deSilva, *The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude: What Earliest Christianity Learned from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 53.

56 See also A. J. Batten, 'The Jesus Tradition and the Letter of James', *Review and Expositor* 108 (2011) 381–90; A. J. Batten and J. S. Kloppenborg, eds., *James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Early Jesus Traditions* (ed. M. Goodacre; LNTS 478; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014).

The traditional saying encapsulates Jude's notion of contending by means of the faith.[57] The faith (v. 3) and the teaching (vv. 22–23) are related by metonymy as what was handed down. The faith by means of which they are to contend has been handed over (παραδίδωμι, v. 3), language associated with passing down teaching (e.g. 1 Cor 15.3) and reinforced with the emphasis on remembering received tradition (v. 17). If the teaching in vv. 22–23 truly does undergird the conceptual framework of the letter, and if the attribution of authorship invokes the authority of Jesus' own family, perhaps Jude sprang from or in relation with a part of the burgeoning Jesus tradition (e.g. Matt 18.33). We suggest that Jude appropriates the Jesus tradition to command the beloved to show mercy to the ungodly by means of the faith. While the invective of the body of the letter anticipates the casting out of the intruders in the conclusion, as per standard invective, the appeal in vv. 22–23 turns this norm on its head. The letter asks, who are the beloved, the holy ones, those who anticipate Jesus' mercy that leads to eternal life, if not those who contend by means of the faith to show mercy? The ominous reminder that the Lord destroyed those who were saved but nevertheless unfaithful (v. 5) applies to the beloved, the one enjoying the shared deliverance.

This discussion of genre (invective), occasion (contend by means of the faith, v. 3) and the theme of mercy, taken in combination, serve to underscore our proposed translation of vv. 22–23. We suggest that the translation should read: 'and show mercy to them though they contend, and save them snatching them out of the fire, and show mercy on them though in fear you also hate the tunic stained from the flesh'. This accords with Jude's refusal to pronounce a final judgement in his use of invective, his initial aim of contending by means of the faith, and the theme of mercy woven throughout the letter.

5. Conclusion

If we read Jude 22–23 in light of Zech 3.1–5 and Jude 9, which together inform our understanding of διακρινομένους and in particular the atmosphere of contest, it can be argued that Jude 22–23 is an inversion of invective, and an appropriation of the Jesus tradition and its call to show mercy. Despite Jude's dismay at the ungodly (v. 4) and his command to remain firm in the midst of this contest (v. 3), it is neither his nor his audience's place to judge the ungodly (v. 9). Instead, they are to show mercy to those with whom they contend (v. 22), while still remaining alert to the trappings of sin (v. 23). The struggle, then, is for those within the community to both preserve the integrity of their faith, and yet reserve judgement for the Lord.

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57 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 4 sees the theme of the letter as being 'stated' in v. 3 and 'spelled out in detail' in vv. 20–23.