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### ***Non-Canonical Reference In New Testament Writings: A Case Study Of Jude 9***

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#### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini menyelidiki penggunaan referensi non-kanonik dalam tulisan-tulisan Perjanjian Baru. Meskipun 27 buku dari Matius hingga Wahyu diterima secara luas sebagai otoritatif dan kanonik, surat Yudas menyertakan kutipan dari sumber non-kanonik, khususnya Buku Henokh Apokrif dan Asumsi Musa. Hal ini menimbulkan pertanyaan penting mengenai integrasi teks non-kanonik dalam kitab-kitab kanonik. Dengan pendekatan analisis sastra, studi ini mengkaji latar belakang kutipan dalam Yudas 9 dari Asumsi Musa, mengeksplorasi perdebatan seputar teks apokrif ini, dan menilai implikasi dari memasukkan karya non-kanonik ke dalam teks-teks kanonik. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menentukan apakah status otoritatif Yudas terpengaruh oleh penggunaan sumber-sumber tersebut dan untuk mengevaluasi kembali kriteria penerimaan kanonik sehubungan dengan praktik-praktik ini.

**Kata Kunci:** kanon, Yudas 9, Kitab Pengangkatan Musa

#### **Abstract**

*This paper investigates the use of non-canonical references in New Testament writings. Although the 27 books from Matthew to Revelation are widely accepted as authoritative and canonical, the epistle of Jude includes quotations from non-canonical sources, specifically the Apocryphal Book of Enoch and the Assumption of Moses. This raises important questions about the integration of non-canonical texts within canonical scripture. Through a literary analysis approach, this study examines the background of the quotation in Jude 9 from the Assumption of Moses, explores the debates surrounding this apocryphal text, and assesses the implications of incorporating non-canonical works into canonical texts. The paper aims to determine whether Jude's authoritative status is affected by its use of such sources and to reevaluate the criteria for canonical acceptance in light of these practices.*

**Keywords:** canon, Jude 9, Assumption of Moses

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## Introduction

The New Testament Bible, which contains 27 books, was unanimously accepted by the church as the fully authorized revelation of God. The books from Matthew to Revelation gained recognition and validation through the canonization process, commonly understood to have been finalized in the fourth century with the publication of St. Athanasius' renowned Paschal Encyclical of 367. The 27 books "are the fountains of salvation" as St. Athanasius emphasized, stating, "let no man add to them, neither let him take ought from them." He regarded other writings, particularly apocryphal texts, as the "invention of heretics."<sup>1</sup>

The canon of the New Testament remained unsettled until the significant contribution of St. Athanasius, who first established the precise list of books that are now recognized.<sup>2</sup> The rise of heresies was the main reason for this authorization. In Reformed tradition, all the books of the New Testament are taken for granted as inspired by God through the medium of human handwriting to convey the word of God.

The problem is that it is well known that one of the New Testament books, the epistle of Jude, quotes several sources from the Apocryphal tradition, a non-canonical collection of books. Jude 14, for example, is certainly a quotation from the book of Enoch due to its agreement, word for word, with the Apocryphal books.<sup>3</sup> Not only that, Jude 9, the passage that will be highlighted in this paper, can be traced back to the Assumption of Moses (As. Mos.) Both Apocryphal books referred to by Jude are collections of books that seek to enhance the teaching of their sect or assembly by utilizing Old Testament figures.

The question is, how to explain the use of non-canonical sources by canonical books? Is the authoritative status of the book of Jude and its citations considered equal? Or is the status of Jude as a canonical book questionable, as was once raised during the canonization process? Using a literary analysis approach, this paper will investigate the background of the quotation in Jude 9 in relation to the Apocryphal Book of Moses. It will examine the debates surrounding this Apocryphal text, its use in Jude 9, and conclude with a discussion on the implications of using non-canonical books within canonical texts.

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<sup>1</sup> St. Athanasius, *The Festal Epistles of S. Athanasius*, trans. Members of the English Church, A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church (London: John Henry Parker, 1854), 138–39.

<sup>2</sup> For an examination of the complexities surrounding canonization from the perspective of the Eastern Church, see Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou, "Banned from the Lectionary: Excluding the Apocalypse of John from the Orthodox," in *The Canon of the Bible and the Apocrypha in the Churches of the East*, ed. Vahan S. Hovhannessian, vol. 2, Bible in the Christian Orthodox Tradition (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 51.

<sup>3</sup> In the English translation, Enoch 1:9 reads, "Enoch prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with myriads of his holy ones.'" Cf. Jude 14, 15, "Enoch prophesied, saying, 'Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones.'"

## Jude 9 and the Assumption of Moses

The quotation contained in Jude 9 cannot actually be found in the manuscripts that have survived to the present day. Nonetheless, scholars agree that Jude 9 does not quote from a narrative in the Old Testament canon, but rather probably from the so-called book of As. Mos., known in the early church as *Αναληψις Μωυσεως*, a first century Jewish apocryphal work.<sup>4</sup> The passage tells the story of the archangel, Michael, arguing with the devil over the body of Moses.

Jude 9 NTG ο δε Μιχαήλ ο απχαγγελος, οτε τω διαβολω διακρινομενος  
διελεγετο περι του Μωυσεως σωματος, ουκ ετολμησεν κρισιν  
επενεγκειν βλασφημιας αλλ ειπεν επιτιμησαι σοι κυριος.

Although the consensus is that Jude 9 probably refers to the book of As. Mos., unfortunately, it is one of the poorly preserved parts of the book of As. Mos..<sup>5</sup> An early external source of evidence can be traced to Origen's *On First Principles* (III.2.1), in which he notes that the Epistle of Jude 9 draws upon a text titled *Moysis Ascensio*.<sup>6</sup> However, the only manuscripts of the Latin text of As. Mos. exist in an incomplete or lost state, especially at the end.<sup>7</sup>

To clarify the origin of the quotation, some scholars have attempted to conjecture its source. For example, Calmet investigated the Midrash *Petirat Mosheh* to determine if it was the source of the verse quoted in Jude 9. The investigation concluded that this was not the case.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, scholars such as Charles, James, Loewenstam and Bauckham have attempted to reconstruct the missing ending of As. Mos..<sup>9</sup> Due to their speculative nature, these scholars do not consider their 'additions' to be final. This leaves one question open: is it true that Jude 9 quotes from As. Mos.? Additionally, Richard Bauckham presents two

<sup>4</sup> There is some confusion in scholarly circles as to whether this book of As. Mos. is the same as the book of the Testament of Moses (Διαθήκη Μωυσεως). Were these “two distinct works, a single work consisting of two sections, or two separate works which were subsequently joined together”? Lih. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, 180. Scribd Edition.

<sup>5</sup> Ryan E. Stokes, “Not Over Moses’ Dead Body: Jude 9, 22-24 and As. Mos. in Their Early Jewish Context,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 40 no 2 (2017): 193.

<sup>6</sup> Origen writes, “...in the Ascension of Moses, a book which the apostle Jude mentions in his epistle, Michael the archangel when disputing with the devil about the body of Moses...” See Origen, *On First Principles*, trans. G. W. Butterworth (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2013), 275.

<sup>7</sup> Johannes Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses: A Critical Edition with Commentary* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), 270.

<sup>8</sup> Augustin Calmet, "Dissertation Sur La Mort, et La Sépulture de Moyse," in *Dissertation Sur La Mort, et La Sépulture de Moyse: Commentaire Littéral Sur Tous Le Livres de l'Ancien et Du Nouveau Testament*, vol. VIII (Paris: chez Pierre Emery, 1726), 755.

<sup>9</sup> Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses*, 270.

recreated closing fragments: one for *The Testament of Moses*, the other for *The Assumption of Moses*, and another for both texts being combined.<sup>10</sup>

What is certain is that Jude had extensive knowledge of Palestinian Jewish tradition. The evidence, as mentioned earlier, is that Jude quoted from the book of Enoch. Jude was very familiar with this literature, which originated in Palestine and was the authoritative writing for the Judean sect at Qumran. DeSilva asserts that the apocalyptic perspectives presented in 1 Enoch and the Epistle of Jude are in alignment with each other. Additionally, Jude demonstrates an acquaintance with extra-biblical traditions concerning figures such as Cain, Balaam, and Moses, which are predominantly recorded in Palestinian sources, such as the Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible known as the Targumim.<sup>11</sup>

Tromp gives some points of the above scholars' attempted reconstruction of the end of the book of As. Mos.. The extant text of the Ascension of Moses exhibits traits of a testamentary form, suggesting that the dialogue between Joshua and Moses (chapters 11-12) originally included an account of Moses' death. Passages in As. Mos. 1:15 and 10:14 imply Moses anticipated his death and that it was witnessed by many, reinforcing the certainty of the event. As. Mos. 11:7, where Joshua questions who would dare to bury Moses, hints at the tradition of Moses being buried by God or angels, with fragments indicating a dispute over Moses' body involving the archangel, Michael. Although the surviving fragments do not explicitly confirm Michael's role as a psychopomp to transport Moses' soul to heaven, this role is consistent with well-documented Jewish traditions of the time regarding Moses' posthumous heavenly existence.<sup>12</sup>

Fortunately, some traditions related to the book have been preserved that can contribute to a better understanding of the text of Jude. These traditions come from Greek writers who quote or refer to the book of As. Mos.. One such reliable source is Gelasius Cyzicenus (circa 476), who writes "ἐπιτιμῆσαι σοι κύριος" in his work, a phrase that corresponds with Jude 9. The overall validity of Cyzicenus' testimony can be seen from his accuracy in quoting biblical passages from the Septuagint. Thus, since almost all the parts of Jude 9, i.e., ἐπιτιμῆσαι σοι κύριος, correspond exactly to Cyzicenus' writings, it can be

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<sup>10</sup> Richard Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church* (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1990), 235–80; cf. Richard Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary 50 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 65–76.

<sup>11</sup> David 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.

<sup>12</sup> Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses*, 170–71.

safely said that he was correct in quoting As. Mos..<sup>13</sup> Therefore, Jude 9 can almost certainly draw its material from the lost final section of the As. Mos.

### **The Problem of Interpretation**

As for the content, early Christian interpreters themselves had difficulty in determining some of the main points of the debate between the archangel Michael and the devil. There are at least three reasons for this. Firstly, they did not specify how the debate between Michael and the devil related to the resurrection of Moses. Secondly, they do not specify whether Moses' journey was more of a physical or spiritual matter. And thirdly, whether Moses' Assumption into the presence of God took place during his last days on earth or referred to an earlier period of his life.

There have been several attempts on the part of scholars to answer these questions. One, for example, claims that the debate between the archangel Michael and the devil was about the corpse of Moses. Others, on the other hand, argue, based on the Christian tradition's commentary on Deuteronomy 34:6 and Jude 9, that the subject of the argument was the soul of Moses despite the use of the term *σώμα* in Jude 9.<sup>14</sup>

In this verse, Michael, one of the Leaders of the angels had a big fight with the devil over the dead body of Moses. Satan, as the King of Death, feels entitled to the bodies of the dead including Moses. K. Berger points out that the quarrel between good and evil angels is a traditional motif that can be found for example in the text of 4QAmram<sup>b</sup> I 10-11 which reads: [I saw] in a vision, a vision in a dream, that two of them were speaking about me, and they had a great fight on me.<sup>15</sup>

However, Deuteronomy 34:6 states that no one knows where Moses was buried. Some argue that this may have been the point of contention between Michael and the devil. It is possible that Michael buried Moses' body in an unknown place, lest the Israelites idolize Moses and worship him. So, the devil wanted to seize Moses' corpse.

Various theories have been proposed regarding the nature of the dispute over Moses' corpse. One theory suggests that, since the devil is depicted as an accuser who indicts believers day and night (Rev. 12:10), he may be obstructing Moses' assumption into eternal life due to the sins committed by Moses, specifically the sin at Meribah (Deut. 32:51), or the

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<sup>13</sup> Tromp, 272.

<sup>14</sup> Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses*, 275.

<sup>15</sup> Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses*, 276.

murder of the Egyptian, whose body Moses buried in the sand before fleeing to Midian (Exod. 2:12).<sup>16</sup> Thus, according to this theory, the devil was trying to indict Moses.

Another theory connects Jude 9 with the book of Zechariah.<sup>17</sup> Some suspect that Jude is referring to the same event as stated in Zechariah 3:1-2. In those verses, we see the Angel of the LORD saying to Satan: "May the LORD rebuke you!" This debate between the angel and the devil led scholars to connect Jude 9 with Zechariah 3. As such, the quarrel between the angel and the devil was considered a believable thing in the early Jewish tradition.

However, there are several counterarguments that the two passages are talking about different things. Firstly, the only thing these two passages have in common is the words, "May the Lord rebuke you". If so, the connection between the two is not strong. Secondly, the name Michael is not mentioned at all in Zechariah. It is only mentioned as the Angel of the LORD. Therefore, comparing Zechariah with Jude 9 cannot be done without crossing the bridge of interpretation. Lastly, Zechariah does not mention the dead body of Moses either by implication or in writing. As such, the two do not have a strong parallel relationship.

Another problem in interpreting Jude 9 with the book of As. Mos. is that there are also those who connect Deuteronomy 31 to 34 with the book of As. Mos.. Charlesworth argues that the Testament of Moses closely mirrors the structure of Deuteronomy 31-34, to the extent that it can be viewed as a reworking of those chapters. This resemblance extends to specific references and theological viewpoints. While the Testament of Moses is clearly modeled after Deuteronomy, it reinterprets the material through the lens of the author's own historical context and apocalyptic perspective.<sup>18</sup> If Charlesworth is correct, then the book of As. Mos. uses canonical sources. Thus, if Deuteronomy 34:5-6 states that Moses died and was buried, then at least the title of the Apocryphal book needs to be revised to avoid misunderstanding.

A more conservative way of understanding the role of the book of As. Mos. is to see it as an Apocalyptic book. Santo explains that the value of the text lies in the belief that the

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<sup>16</sup> John Muddiman, "The Assumption of Moses and the Epistle of Jude," in *Moses in Biblical and Extra-Biblical Traditions*, ed. Axel Graupner and Michael Wolter, Beihefte Zur Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 372 (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 171.

<sup>17</sup> ἐπιτιμήσαι σοι Κύριος. These words occur in the vision of Zechariah (2 Peter 3:1-10) where the angel of the Lord replies to the charges of Satan against the high priest Joshua with the words ἐπιτιμήσαι Κύριος ἐν σοί, διάβολε, καὶ ἐπιτιμήσαι Κύριος ἐν σοί, ὁ ἐκλεξάμενος τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ. They were no doubt inserted as appropriate by the author of the As. Mos. in his account of the controversy at the grave of Moses. We may compare Matthew 17:18, ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

<sup>18</sup> James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 923.

hope for the kingdom of God has begun to be fulfilled with the first coming of Jesus Christ, who came for our salvation (John 1:1-14). Additionally, Jesus has already defeated evil forces through His Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension (Mark 3:27; John 12:20-23, 31-32; Colossians 2:13-15; Hebrews 2:14-15). Ultimately, at the Second Advent, Jesus will fully overcome Satan and all evil (Revelation 20:1-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:24ff).<sup>19</sup>

### **The Use of the Assumption of Moses in the Epistle of Jude**

The Epistle of Jude is classified under the general epistles. However, deSilva argues that the term is inappropriate. This is because, although writing to the church in the diaspora and giving advice that can be used for local churches in general, he is addressing a specific challenge caused by specific teachers who infiltrated a particular congregation. Possibly, Jude is classified as a general epistle because of the nature of the epistle which addresses "our common salvation" (vv. 3-4).<sup>20</sup>

These intruder teachers came in disguise and claimed to be Christians who believed in Jesus (v. 4). Not only that, they also acted as teachers and authoritative figures (cf. v. 12). The content of their teaching was experiential practices that emphasized supernatural visions (v. 8). These were the things faced by the church to which Jude sent his letter.

Despite this, Jude did not seem to be fighting the false teachers doctrinally. In fact, there is no sign that Jude was correcting the congregation's understanding of Christological issues as can be seen in the epistle of 1 John. Thus, there is no indication that it was the Gnostic sect that Jude was fighting against.<sup>21</sup> Rather, what Jude was concerned with was the ethical practice of accusing the false teachers of being ungodly men, abusing the grace of our God to fulfill their lusts (v. 4). They claimed to have the power of the Spirit leading to supernatural visions but rebelled against God's moral authority. These are the ones who grumble and complain about their lot, living according to their lusts, but their mouths speak idle words and they curry favor with men for gain (v. 16). They do anything for reward, are perverse, and disobedient. They are not ashamed to devour and are selfish (vv. 11-12).

In the name of the Spirit who gave them supernatural revelation, these false teachers encouraged the believers to live as they pleased. They advised believers to enjoy freedom

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<sup>19</sup> Charles De Santo, "The Assumption of Moses and the Christian Gospel," *Interpretation*, 16 no 3 (1962): 310.

<sup>20</sup> deSilva, *The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude: What Earliest Christianity Learned from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 55.

<sup>21</sup> deSilva, *The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude*, 56.

from all the shackles of moral rules on the grounds of being in the Spirit. Although their teachings were not systematically organized as one would find in Gnostic teachings, they preached a piecemeal message that boasted of experiences of supernatural powers and acted as if they had (vv. 8-10) and exploited Christian hospitality and closeness (vv. 10, 12-13, 16).

Jude therefore states that the purpose of his writing is to urge his readers to fight for the faith that was once delivered to the saints (v. 3). This exhortation was written because of a critical situation in which there was an infiltration of people into the church who misused the grace of God to fulfill their lusts and deny the only Lord and Master, Jesus Christ (v. 4).<sup>22</sup> The purpose of this epistle is more of a pastoral matter, exhorting the readers to beware of the danger these intruders would cause in the midst of the church.<sup>23</sup>

Bible commentators often point out that Jude 9 shows how even Michael did not dare to use his power to rebuke the devil, the ruler of all evil powers. Yet Michael is the highest ranking angel among all the angels in heaven.<sup>24</sup> Instead, Michael left the matter to God. Thus, Jude used this story from the Apocrypha to reveal the character and fate of the deceivers who infiltrated the church of God.

Although Jude did not mention the reason for the argument between the archangel Michael and the devil, he indicated that they were having a legal debate. This can be seen through the syntax used by Jude. He uses the verb διακρινόμενος by referring to the name of the arguing party in the dative form τῷ διαβολῷ thus meaning "to have one's case with so-and-so decided." In other words, the argument between Michael and the devil was not a debate, especially with the use of the word διαλεγέτο in the imperfect form meaning "to argue" (cf. Mark 9:34).<sup>25</sup>

According to Bauckham's reconstruction of the end of the book of As. Mos. quoted by Jude, the passage reads

"God sent the archangel Michael to remove the body of Moses to another place and bury it there, but Samm'el, the devil, opposed him, disputing Moses' right to honorable burial. Michael and the devil

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<sup>22</sup> Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 374–75.

<sup>23</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 660.

<sup>24</sup> Michael, in the doctrine of the angels, as it was developed during and after the captivity by the Jews, belonged to the seven highest angels, and was regarded as the guardian of the nation of Israel: Daniel 12:1, הַשָּׂר הַגָּדוֹל הָעֹמֵד עַל־בְּנֵי עַמּוּךְ; cf. Daniel 10:13; Daniel 10:21; in the N. T. he is only mentioned in Revelation 12:7. In the Book of Enoch, chap. 20:5, he is described as "one of the holy angels set over the best part of the human race, over the people."

<sup>25</sup> Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, 185. Scribd Edition.

engaged in a dispute over the body. The devil slandered Moses, charging him with Murder, because he slew the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand (cf. Exod. 2:11).”<sup>26</sup>

Thus, what Jude is trying to convey through the use of the story of the disputation between Michael and the devil is that just like the devil, the deceivers of the church had insulted the "authority" of a being superior to them (v. 8) and blasphemed against everything they did not know (v. 10). The teachers of error had exceeded the limits of their authority (v. 8), just like Israel (v. 5), the fallen angels (v. 6) and Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7). However, in contrast to this, Michael, the archangel who was entitled to judge them by virtue of his office refrained and thus made room for the Lord as the true Judge.<sup>27</sup> In short, Jude said that the judgment that would judge them would be the terrible judgment of the Lord Himself.

### **The Use of Non-Canonical Sources?**

For the layman, quoting from non-canonical books can be a difficult question to answer. For, if Jude was writing from revelation, would quoting a non-canonical book be said to have equal authority with the canonical writings? And if non-canonical books do not have equal authority, why should Jude quote them?

Several answers can be given to this dilemma. Firstly, in canonical books, as Paul did, the author can use writings outside his own tradition. Tenney suggests that there may be similarities between the nature of this quotation by Jude and the quotation by Paul in his Athenian speech. The apostle Paul in his speech quoted the Greek poet Aratus (Acts 17:28). He deliberately quoted from a non-canonical work, and of course the quotation is clearly written in the canonical Acts of the Apostles, to strengthen a point in his speech because he knew that by using it he would attract the attention of his audience. And Paul did not quote these non-canonical works because he thought that the Greek poets had received revelation or had the same authority as the canonical writings.<sup>28</sup> Thus, we can conclude that As. Mos. was quoted by Jude to illustrate a certain principle for those who held the Apocryphal writings in high esteem.

This argument can be analyzed from a socio-rhetorical perspective. For instance, Dorota Myszytowska argues that the motif of Michael and the devil functions as an *exemplum*. The primary purpose of the story is to facilitate the readers' acceptance of the

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<sup>26</sup> R. J. Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 239.

<sup>27</sup> Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, 188. Scribd Edition.

<sup>28</sup> Tenney, *New Testament Survey*, 374.

proposed indictments.<sup>29</sup> She supported her argument by noting that Jude does not provide extensive commentary on the story; thus, the example serves as a straightforward allusion to the reader, presenting something with which they are already familiar.<sup>30</sup>

Secondly, in the early church the Apocryphal writings were highly valued and considered to be very useful reading. This use of the Apocrypha implies that Jude knew that his readers were familiar with the source of his quotation. With this quotation, Jude could be doing two things at once. Firstly, he could be teaching his congregation through stories that they already knew and learned from. And secondly, he could have been using teachings that were known even to deceiving teachers who were trying to distort Christianity using stories or teachings held by their own sects as authoritative.

With regard to the second answer, the third answer that also needs to be addressed is that at the time Jude's letter was written there was no concept of a closed canon as it is known today, especially as held by the Reformation tradition. Therefore, the question of why Jude quotes from non-canonical sources is itself an anachronistic question. Marshall correctly notes that Jude was likely referencing widely accepted beliefs of the time, as the distinction between Scripture and other ancient writings considered inspired was not well-defined.<sup>31</sup>

In fact, during the time of Hillel, Jesus, Johanan ben Zakkai, Josephus, and Akiba, there was no concept of canonical scripture.<sup>32</sup> That being said, before AD 70, including the period when Jude was written, approximately 67-68 AD,<sup>33</sup> there was considerable freedom in quoting sources. Additionally, Emanuel Tov discovered that there were more than ten different text types of Jeremiah and the books of Samuel of the OT, in which many compositions were regarded as scriptural and, in some cases, even considered more scriptural than works later recognized as canonical.<sup>34</sup> Thus, quoting a wide range of writings was not considered "heretical" or "uncanonical" during that period. The issue lies in the fact that modern readers often perceive the scripture as having been fixed canonically at the time it was written.

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<sup>29</sup> Dorota Muszytowska, "The Meaning of the Motif of Michael the Archangel's Dispute with the Devil (Jude 9). A Socio-Rhetorical Perspective," *The Biblical Annals*, 10, no. 4 (2020): 679–80, <https://doi.org/10.31743/biban.9602>.

<sup>30</sup> Muszytowska, 679–80.

<sup>31</sup> Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*, 667.

<sup>32</sup> James H. Charlesworth, "Writings Ostensibly Outside the Canon," in *Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Emanuel Tov (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 64.

<sup>33</sup> Tenney, *New Testament Survey*, 372.

<sup>34</sup> Emanuel Tov, "The Interpretative Significance of a Fixed Text and Canon of the Hebrew and the Greek Bible," in *The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, ed. M. Sæbø, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 49–66.

Fourthly, in the Canonical books, the Author may quote from non-canonical sources that are in a close tradition. For example, Paul refers to the rabbinic writing, the Midrash, in 1 Corinthians 10:4. The names of Pharaoh's oracles against Moses, Jannes and Jambres, are also quoted from non-canonical sources (2 Timothy 3:8); there is no such record in the canonical sources. The citation does not necessarily mean that the Author believed in the divine inspiration of the non-canonical writings. It also does not mean that the Author believed in the historicity of the material. Rather, the New Testament Author could have used any source to explain his ideas as John Milton did, for example, who used Greek myths without believing in the historicity of the content.<sup>35</sup>

With regard to the fourth answer, the fifth answer opens up the new possibility that Jude's interpretive procedure may be related to that of the commentaries or *pesharim* found at Qumran where scriptural texts considered authoritative at the time are made the basis for a commentary that is applied specifically to the contemporary situation of the time.<sup>36</sup> In this instance, the author of Jude employs As. Mos. to clarify his argument to the reader, including additional commentary.

## Conclusion

There are several points that need to be emphasized in conclusion. Firstly, that Jude 9 is understood as quoting the book of As. Mos. because of other sources that refer to the text of the book of As. Mos.. This is due to the missing final section of the book of As. Mos.. Secondly, that there are some difficulties that give rise to debates in interpreting the verse in question. Such debates include whether what the two supernatural beings are arguing about is the body or the soul/spirit of Moses; whether there is a connection between Jude 9 and Zechariah 3. Thirdly, the general interpretation of Jude 9 using As. Mos. text is that it is used as a story that teaches believers to, like the archangel Michael, not act rashly by rebuking humans and even supernatural beings because all judgment is from God. Just like Michael, we need to leave the judgment to God as the ultimate Judge of the universe. Fourth, that the citation of sources from non-canonical traditions need not be a problem in understanding the authority of the Bible, but rather is useful for teaching even though it is not necessary to accept the validity of its authority and historicity.

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<sup>35</sup> Robert H. Gundry, *A Survey of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 954. Scribd Edition.

<sup>36</sup> Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*, 667.

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