

Hebrew Word Study | Al Lundy

March 18, 2013

Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath **rejected** them.
Jeremiah 6:30, KJV

Reprobate. Regarding the word reprobate, most of us have run across it in the book of Romans 1:28 where it states,

*“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a **reprobate** mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”*

New Testament Use of Reprobate

- *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be **reprobates**? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not **reprobates**.... Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as **reprobates**. **2 Corinthians 13:5, 6, 7***
- *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, **reprobate** concerning the faith. **2 Timothy 3:8***
- They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work **reprobate**. **Titus 1:16**

Defined in the New Testament

According to the Blue Letter Bibles Lexicon, this word comes from Strong's #G3860, adokimos (a-do-ke-mos) and means, **not standing the test, not approved** (properly used of metals and coins) and that which does not prove itself such as it ought (unfit for, unproved, spurious, reprobate). Further review shows that it also refers to something that beareth thorns and briars and is therefore **rejected** (See Hebrews 6:8).

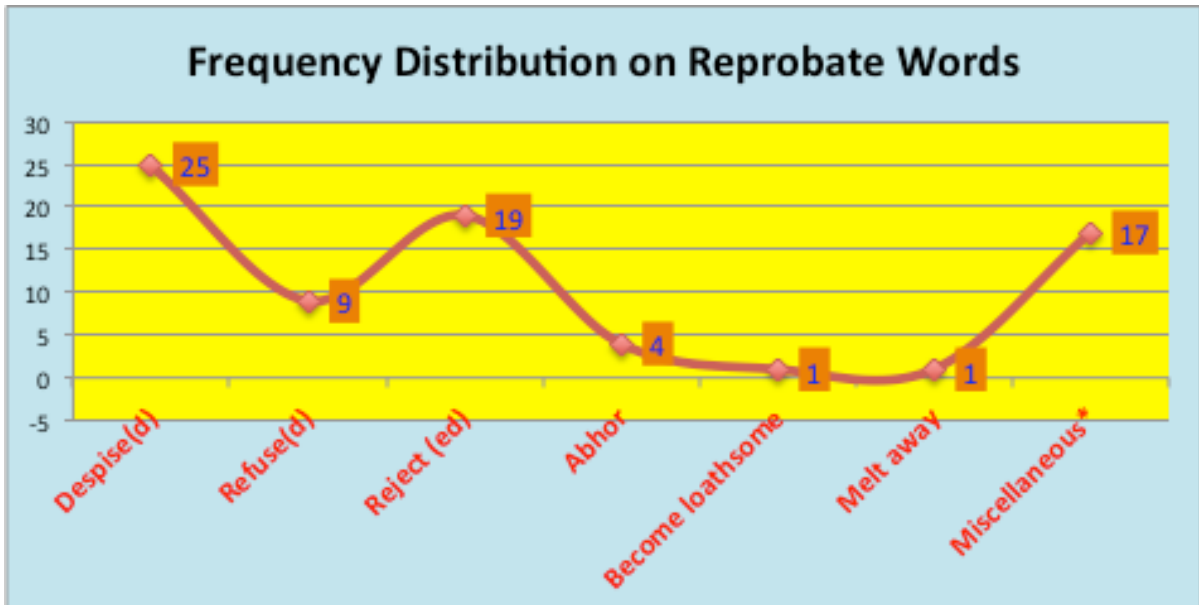
In 1 Corinthians 9:27, the apostle Paul noted that he needed to keep his body under subjection, *“lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”*

Important Point to Remember. *Being a castaway, a rejected man or woman or being seen as a failure in the eyesight of God is certainly not a good thing. He “gave them over (to give into the hands of another, to give over into (one’s) power or use, to deliver up treacherously).*

Reprobate as defined in the Old Testament

To get an even deeper understanding of this word, let us turn to where the word reprobate is first mentioned, as this follows one of the rules of Hermeneutics (The Science of Interpreting the Scriptures). According to Dr. David Cooper, “The Law of First Mention may be said to be the principle that requires one to go to that portion of the Scriptures where a doctrine is mentioned for the first time and to study the first occurrence of the same in order to get the fundamental inherent meaning of that doctrine.” Moreover, “when this law is applied the simple precedes the complex.”¹ Who were our first people in the Bible whom we can label as castaways? Adam and Eve failed. Cain failed to bring the proper sacrifice and even worse, he murdered his own brother. Castaway? He was sent from the presence of the Lord. Not good.

In the Old Testament, the word for reprobate is **ma'ac, Strong's #H3988**; it is the root word meaning, to reject, despise, refuse, to be rejected, to flow, run. It is used as noted in the below table, where it is used as despise(d) 25 times, 19 times for reject(ed) and nine times for refused. Amazingly, in 1 Samuel 16, God rejected two men, Saul who already King and Eliab, Jesse's son. In chapter 17, God reveals a problem associated with Eliab: anger. I wonder how people handle their anger when they have been rejected? Rejected by the world --- but rejected by God!



¹ [Http://www.messianicassociation.org/ezone21-dc.hermeneutics-messianic.htm](http://www.messianicassociation.org/ezone21-dc.hermeneutics-messianic.htm). He further states: A history of the development of anything will show that it sprang from something in the very simplest form (for example the steamship; airplane; automobile). In the Scriptures the growth and development of ideas and doctrine might be illustrated by some simple word. Throughout the history of a term it may have increased its meaning and undergone certain changes, yet the basic, original, fundamental thought is seldom lost.

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*Miscellaneous: Cast them away, cast away, cast them off, disdained, vile person, utterly, etc.

- *And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? **fill thine horn with oil, and go**, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. **1 Samuel 16:1***
- *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for [the LORD seeth] not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. **1 Samuel 16:8***
- *And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. **1 Samuel 17:2***

The Hebrew word ma'ac is composed of the following letters:

Hebrew Letter	Letter #__ of 22	Word Picture
Mem	13	Water
Aleph	1	Ox -- Strength
Samech	15	Support

A View From the Gesenius Lexicon

One can either choose to do the right thing or be rejected. Gesenius states that “to reject” is most often used a) of God rejecting a people or an individual. This is certainly the case with Saul and Eliab as noted earlier and b) Jeremiah 6:30, coupled with text such as **Jeremiah 7:29 and Amos 2:4**.

*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. **Isaiah 7:14-16***

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- *Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath **rejected** and forsaken the generation of his wrath. **Jeremiah 7:29***

The Lord hath rejected!!

- *Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have **despised** the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked: **Amos 2:4***

The Lord's word says what it means and it means what it says. Proverbs 15:32 provides an excellent example. It states, "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding."

1. *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would **despise** my life. **Job 9:21***

Note: Job's condition was serious.

2. *Yea, young children **despised** me; I arose, and they spake against me. **Job 19:18***

In my opinion, the hardest blow and implication of this word reprobate is found in Job 7:5 and Psalm 58:7-8.

1. *My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become **loathsome**. **Job 7:5***
2. *Let them **melt away** as waters [which] run continually: [when] he bendeth [his bow to shoot] his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. **Psalm 58:7-8***