***The Great God of the Universe - Jude 25

JD17-01***

We have come to Jude 25. Our subject here is the great God of the universe. Jude closes this letter on apostasy with a doxology of praise to God for what He is as the living God, and what He is able to do for us as we face apostasy. So here is a declaration concerning what our God is able to do and the nature of that God.

**Oneness**

We begin with Jude 25, reading, "To the only wise God our Savior." In the Greek language, the word "wise" is not to be found. It is simply "the only God." It is "monotheo." The word "wise" is not in there. The bible emphatically declares, and this is what Jude is emphatically declaring here, that there is only one God in the universe. He is One in the sense that he is a unique being. There are many Scriptures that declare for us that oneness of God: Deuteronomy 6:4; Deuteronomy 4:35; Isaiah 44:8; Isaiah 45:22; 1 Corinthians 8:4; and, James 2:19. When we speak about the oneness of God, we are referring to the essence of God or to the characteristics of God.

**The Essence of God**

One of the greatest things that you can learn, and to learn well, are the qualities that make up the nature of God--the essence of God. There is to be found tremendous blessing and encouragement by the simple fact that you know what God is like. If you will remember what the only God is like, it will help you through many a crisis; through many a difficulty; and, through many a hard place in your personal walk through this world. So we're going to review here that which constitutes the essence of God. That is several things.

1. **Sovereign**

To begin with, God is supremely sovereign. That means that God has a will which is eternal; it is infinite; and, it is self-determining. We have many passages of Scripture which declare to us the sovereignty of the will of God. These include: Daniel 4:35; Deuteronomy 4:39; 1 Chronicles 20:6; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Job 9:12; Psalm 47:2; Psalm 83:18; Psalm 93:1; Psalm 135:6; and, Acts 17:24. It would be a point of wisdom for you to take the trouble, at your leisure, to look up these verses. This would encourage your heart greatly to discover how clear is the declaration in Scripture that God is in control--that God is in charge. There will be times in your life when that will be the one thing that you hang on to supremely--that nothing is happening to you that is not within the sovereign purpose and control of God. He is supreme, and the absolute ruler of the universe (Hebrews 6:13, Psalm 47:7). God is accountable to no one above Him (Psalm 115:3). So God makes decisions; He makes policy; He sets principles; and, He does this entirely as His own volition pleases. I think it will be clear to as you look up these passages that God is the King, and that is an element of tremendous blessing in itself.

1. **Righteous**

Secondly, there is another characteristic that our God has, and that is that He is righteous. That means that He is absolute perfection (Psalm 145:17). You and I as human beings have relative righteousness; that is, how good we are depends on how bad somebody else is. We tend to compare our goodness to somebody else. We can always find someone who's worse than we are. Consequently, our righteousness--our goodness--is only a relative matter. We find this taught in Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 3:10-12. However, God demands of every human being the same absolute righteousness that He has (Romans 3:23). It is impossible for God to do anything wrong, so He has absolute perfect righteousness (Ezra 9:15, Psalm 48:10, Psalm 119:137, Psalm 145:17, Jeremiah 23:6.) All of these passages clearly establish that God is absolute perfect righteousness. He does not compare Himself to anybody else. He is not comparable to anybody else. He is perfect goodness.

1. **Justice**

Then, God is justice. Justice means that He is absolutely fair and He is absolutely just (2 Chronicles 19:7). It is impossible for God to do anything unfair, and it is necessary that you remember that. There will be many times when your old sin nature will be suggesting up to you that your lot in life is very unfair, and that the deal that you're getting is very unfair for one reason or another, and from one person or another.

There will be times when it would seem to you that the charlatan is being prospered, and you, who are walking in faithfulness to what God has said in His Word, are having a rough time. You will be tempted to think that doesn't seem to be fair. God, in His justice, cannot do anything which is unfair. Consequently, His justice demands that disobedience for His laws be punished (John 3:36, Roman 6:23). He is no respecter of persons in this. Because of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ for our sins, God is free to forgive us (Romans 8:1), or He is free to condemn us (John 3:18). He does either in absolute fairness. Nobody is forgiven in an unfair way. Nobody is condemned in a way that is unfair. A lot of our problems will be eased if we remember this attribute of God. He is absolute justice.

1. **Love**

God is love. This is a mental attitude which is free of any ill will in any form toward anyone (1 John 4:7-8, 16). It is this love of God which is the motivation for the grace of God toward us (Ephesians 2:8-9). The problem that has faced us is that the divine perfect righteousness and the absolute fairness of God in His justice have caused the love of God to be restrained against us because of our sin. So God, who is absolute righteousness, cannot have fellowship with sinful man (Isaiah 59:2). Justice demands a penalty to be paid for sin (Roman 6:23). So the love of God--this attribute of God--came through to solve this problem. He sent His Son to the cross to die for us to cover the sins of the whole world (John 3:16). So in this way, the divine righteousness of God on the one hand and His justice on the other hand are satisfied. Now the love of God is free to act in grace towards sinful man (1 John 4:9).

The alternative to the love of God is the wrath of God (John 3:36). The wrath of God is His justice giving the just deserts for our sins, and His righteousness bringing the punishment against our imperfection. So the love of God is the magnificent thing that has been exercised toward us all. When grief comes into your life, remember that God loves you. In what way does He love you? He loves you just as much as He loves his son. There is nothing that could come into your experience that he would not permit His Son to experience. There is no way that He would treat you that He would not treat His own Son. He treats you in that kind of love.

1. **Eternal Life**

God is eternal life. We have many passages that tell us that He has a unique life--a life without beginning or without end. This is somewhat difficult for us to grasp. We can understand a life that cannot end, but it is almost inconceivable for us to grasp the idea of a life that never had a beginning. We have this taught in Exodus 15:18, Deuteronomy 32:40, Deuteronomy 33:27, Job 36:26, Psalm 9:7, Psalm 135:13, Psalm 145:13, Lamentations 5:19, Isaiah 43:13, 1 Timothy 1:17, and Revelation 1:8. The Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins so that we could share God's eternal life (John 10:17-18). God shares His eternal life with believers (John 10:27-28, 1 John 5:11-12a). However, He does not share this eternal life with unbelievers (1 John 5:12b). When you become a believer, this is the life that you receive. We now have, as Christians, this eternal life. So you will live forever with the same kind of life that God has.

1. **Omniscient**

God is omniscient; that is, God is all knowledge (Colossians 2:3). God always knew everything that there was to be known (Job 26:6, Job 31:4, Job 34:21, Psalm 147:5, Proverbs 15:3, Hebrews 4:13, 1 John 3:20). For this reason--the omniscience of God--God is able to read our minds (2 Timothy 2:19). He knows the decisions we make for or against Christ. He knows all the decisions that we make. God's omniscience enables Him to be able to know how to deal with the factors of our lives so that all things work together for good (Romans 8:28). This is because God knows where everything is going. It is because God knows everything about us, and knows how exactly to deal with us to cause us to move in certain directions; to cause us to mature and develop; and, consequently, for all things to be moved in such a way that our lives turn out for good.

Now what God knows is shared with us in His Word, in part (1 Corinthians 2:16, Hebrews 4:12). He does this sharing by means of the ministry of God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-12, 2 Timothy 2:15). Our God is omniscient. He knows everything. Therefore, if there is something that you would like to know, He is the one to ask.

1. **Omnipresent**

God is omnipresent. That means that He is everywhere at the same time (Genesis 28:15, Genesis 31:3, Deuteronomy 4:39, Deuteronomy 31:6, Joshua 1:9, Psalm 139:8, Proverbs 15:3, Isaiah 66:1, Jeremiah 23:24, Acts 17:27, Hebrews 13:5). Because God is omnipresent, it is impossible for anybody to hide himself from God or to hide his sins from God (Psalm 139:7-12). Because God is omnipresent, we have a basis for our faith rest in any situation. This is because we know He is always with us (Matthew 28:20). God's omnipresence--the realization that He is there--will, again, carry you through a difficult place in your life with encouragement.

1. **Omnipotent**

God is omnipotent. That means that He is all powerful. He has no limits on His ability or His authority (Job 20:7, Job 42:2, Psalm 115:3, Psalm 135:6, Habakkuk 3:6, Matthew 19:26, Matthew 20:18, Mark 14:36, Luke 1:37, Revelation 19:6). God, we are told, upholds everything in the universe by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). God has power to save man (Hebrews 7:25). He has power to keep us saved (1 Peter 1:5). And He has power to raise us from the dead back to life (1 Corinthians 15:43). Our God is omnipotent, and He is sharing this power with the believer who is in a position to receive it (Philippians 4:13). He shares this omnipotence. For what we need, and the help that we need, we have the power of God provided to us.

1. **Immutable**

God is immutable. That means that God cannot change (Numbers 23:19, Psalm 33:11, Psalm 102:27, Matthew 3:6a, Hebrews 1:12, Hebrews 13:8, James 1:17). Because God is immutable, all of these things that we've been saying about Him will always be true. He cannot change any of His attributes. Since He is unchanging, He will always keep His promises. This is one of the reasons you can't trust the devil. Because Satan is not immutable, he cannot keep his promises. You cannot trust the devil to go along with what he says he will do. He will change. Immutability, along with the omnipotence of God, means the faithfulness of God. When we read in the Bible that God has changed His mind, it means that God has changed relative to the fact that people have changed in some respect. So He moves according to that situation. However, God Himself, in His being, does not change.

1. **Veracity**

Finally, God is veracity which means truth. He is absolute truthfulness. He was never in error, and He never speaks falsely (Deuteronomy 32:4, 2 Samuel 7:28, Psalm 33:4, Psalm 146:6, Isaiah 65:16). The Bible tells us that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2, Hebrews 6:18). His truthfulness is eternal (Psalm 117:2). It is this truthfulness of God that makes Him so dependable and that will sustain us in our walk (Psalm 91:4). Because He is truth, He gives us Bible doctrine which is the expression of His truth.

Now this is the essence of God. Then Jude says here, "To the only god," and this is the person he is talking about. He's talking to us and he's committing us to a God who has these characteristics. He has absolute sovereignty in His decisions and in the exercise of His will. He has absolute righteousness, and there is no sinfulness in Him--no wrongdoing. He's absolutely just. He is perfectly fair. He acts in love without any bitterness or ill will toward anybody. He has eternal life which is the basis upon which He functions toward us. He knows everything because He is omniscient. He is everywhere because He is omnipresent. He has all power and so He is omnipotent. He is never changing because he is immutable. He is absolute truthfulness. Now that's the kind of person that is caring for us in an age of apostasy. Jude very wisely indeed closes this book by committing us to the God who has these characteristics.

**The Trinity**

This is God's essence. When we say God is one, this is what we mean--everything that we've been looking at. This is how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One. They are One in these characteristics. However, the Word of God also tells us that God is a Trinity. God is revealed to be One in His essence, but it says that He is three in personality. God is three persons who act in one unity of essence. All three persons have the same complete essence. They are all 100% deity. This union of three in one is called the Godhead in Colossians 2:9. Thus the divine essence expresses itself in three separate distinct personalities.

So in order to express this, theology comes up with a word. You will not find this word in the Bible. This is a term which has been coined in order to convey an idea. So we use the word "Trinity." Trinity is made up of two parts. It's obviously made up of "tri" which means three, and the second part of the word "nity" stands for unity. "Three in unity" is the idea--"tri-unity," or "trinity." God is one, but He is made up of three persons: Father; Son; and, Holy Spirit. We have many illustrations that we could think of. The United States is one country, but it's made up of many states. Man is a single being, yet he is made up of three parts: his spirit; his soul; and, his body. So God is one in essence, yet He expresses that singleness of essence in the form of three distinct personalities.

In the Bible, we have the Trinity taught. We have evidences of this in the Old Testament. The Old Testament was not ready to be giving the revelation concerning the Trinity of God. So in the Old Testament, we just have reflections of the Trinity. You do not have the thing clearly taught. The New Testament stresses the individual persons of the Godhead, and stresses the fact of the Trinity. So in Genesis 1:1 we read. "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." The word in the Hebrew here is "elohim." The word "elohim" in the Hebrew is a plural word. It is a word in the singular that is referring to the true God, but it in itself is a plural term. In Genesis 1:26 we read, "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image.'" You will notice that it says, "And God said, 'Let *us* make man in *our* image.'" We have these plural pronouns which signal to us that God is more than one person--that God is a triple personality.

Consequently, "elohim," meaning "more than one" is used. The plural nouns are used. This is reflecting, here in the Old Testament Scriptures, that God is a Trinity without a clear open declaration of that truth. Genesis 1:27 says, "So God created man in His own image." There we have again this same word "elohim," but here we have this unity of God stressed. So here, between Genesis 1:26 and Genesis 1:27, we have both sides of the truth taught. In verse 26, we have stressed the three persons--the multiplicity of persons--in the word "elohim." In verse 27, we have stressed the singleness--the unity of God in the name "elohim."

These persons are further identified for us in the Old Testament. In verse 26, it says, "Let us make man." In the Hebrew, this refers to "the planner," and we know that God the Father is the planner. So verse 26 is referring to God the Father. In Genesis 1:2, we read about the Holy Spirit hovering over the chaotic earth before its re-creation. That's referring to the Holy Spirit. And in Genesis 1:1, we read that God created the heavens and the earth, and we know from the New Testament (in John 1:1, John 1:3, and Colossians 1:16) that the member of the Trinity which did the creating is God the Son. It is the Son who created. So here, within the opening of the Bible, in verse 1, we have reference to God the Son. He is the creator. In verse 2, we have reference to God the Holy Spirit. And in verse 26, we have reference to God the Father--the planner. So the persons are identified as well as the fact that we have these implications that God is one in essence, but three in persons.

In Isaiah 48:16, we have another implication in the Old Testament of the Trinity. In Isaiah 48:16 we read, "Come near unto me. Hear this. I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From the time that it was, there am I." And now the Lord God in His Spirit has sent me." The first question is, who is speaking here? Well, it is not the prophet. The prophet's voice has been overridden by quoting God himself. You may see this if you will let your eyes run back over Isaiah 48:12-15. You will see that God is the one who is speaking. He says, "I am the first. I am the last." He speaks about laying the foundations of the earth and spreading out the heavens, and so on. He indicates clearly in the context that God is speaking.

So when you come to verse 16, this is not the prophet Isaiah, but it is God himself who is saying, "Come near unto me. Hear this. I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From the time that it was, there am I." "There am I" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, for John 1:1 tells us that He is the one who was from the beginning. He is the one who in Scripture is particularly stressed and identified as the manifest person of the Godhead who was from the beginning. He says, "There am I." Jesus Christ in the New Testament called himself "the Great I Am." The speaker here is Christ. Then it says, "And now the Lord God (referring to the Father) and His Spirit (referring to the Holy Spirit)." So here in verse 16 again you have the three persons of the Godhead referred to.

The full name of our God is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah 6, we have another Trinity implied. In Isaiah 6:1-3, Isaiah sees the Lord, "Sitting upon the throne, high and lifted up." And in verse 3, it says "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory." The reason he says, "Holy, Holy, Holy" three times is because he is describing this praise to each member of the Trinity. There is something else to note here however. It says, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the *Lord* of hosts." Hosts refers to armies.

You notice that he did not put it in the plural. He did not say, "Holy, Holy, Holy are the lords of host." He says, "Is the Lord of hosts." So here in verse three, we again have the implication of three persons, and the implication that they are one. Throughout the Old Testament, this is what you find. God is one, and the implication of three persons. However, it is never clearly declared because, in the Old Testament, the emphasis was upon the unity of God. Isaiah saw only one person here when he said he saw the Lord upon the throne, and that was, of course, the Son who is the manifest (the evident and the visible) member of the Trinity (John 1:18, John 6:46).

There is another vision that we have in the New Testament that we can look at in the book of Matthew at the baptism of the Lord Jesus. In Matthew 3:16-17, we have the Trinity again appearing: "And Jesus when He was baptized went up straight away out of the water (there is the Son), and, lo, the heavens were open unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him (there is the Holy Spirit), and, lo, a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Jesus was 30 years old. He came to John the Baptist for water baptism. This baptism represented His identification with God's will and plan for Him, which was to go to the cross. The Messiah was to be identified to Israel through this act of baptism, John 1:31 tells us. When Jesus walked out of the water, this identification was confirmed by God the Father speaking from heaven. The Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove sitting upon the Son, and the Son standing there by the Jordan River. So the New Testament emphasis here is on the individual members of the Trinity specifically referred to.

Now you must avoid two falsehoods. Church history has fought this battle in the past. Early in the Christian era, as people read the Scriptures, there were leaders who implied a false concept of the Godhead. One is that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one person but they appear at different times in these different roles. This one person, we are falsely taught, sometimes appears as a Father; sometimes He appears as a Son; and, sometimes He appears as the Holy Spirit. This is called Sabellianism. This is what the Unitarians teach today. This is contrary to the Word of God.

Another thing that you must avoid is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three gods independent of one another. That's tritheism. In church history, you read about a man named Arius who tried to promote this idea that, in effect, said there were three gods. Abraham Isaac and Jacob were three individuals, yet they all partake of the common characteristics of humanity. So God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are three persons, but They have a total unity in that They act in complete compatibility according to the attributes which They equally share as deity.

The Trinity to which Jude commends us here, in the closing verse of this book, he calls our Savior. The only God who has these characteristics, these attributes that we have looked at, who is a Trinity in persons is our Savior. Our Savior, in the Greek language, is followed by the phrase, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." You don't have that in most of the English translations. It should read, "To the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord." The triune God is called our Savior. He is the one who preserves us from sin and eternal death in hell, but the agent of that preservation is Jesus Christ the Son. Just to believe in God is not equivalent to being saved. James 2:19 tells us about demons who know about God and believe in Him and tremble. The triune God is the Savior God, but no one can come to this God for salvation except through the Son Jesus Christ. That's what 1 Timothy 2:5 tells us--that Christ is the only mediator.

This triune God, in eternity past, on one occasion had a conference. They came together and They made a plan. In eternity past, each member of the Godhead assumed a certain role relative to man. We call this plan the decree of God (or in its various parts, the decrees--plural). The decrees of God included that man was to be created. However, because God is both sovereign and omniscient, He knew that man would be negative and break fellowship, and sin would enter the human race. Therefore, God, in eternity past, made a plan as the triune God to deal with this problem. That's why He is called our Savior here. God loved man and wanted to be free to express that love. He wanted to share his eternal life with man--a man who was going to take upon himself eternal death through his sins. God, who was perfect righteousness and justice, demanded satisfaction. God was going to find a wall between Himself and the man He was going to create. This triune God formed a plan, and became, through that plan, our Savior.

**The Plan of God**

Here is the plan of God in three stages:

1. **Salvation**

The first stage was salvation. This was to be executed by the Son. The Godhead decided that there would be a salvation provided. It would be provided by satisfying the righteousness of God and the justice of God by sending Christ to pay for man's sins; thus, justice would be served. God would also give man the righteousness of God; thus, God's perfect righteousness would be met. The Savior was to come into the world as a man. He could not do this as God. Jesus Christ could not pay for the sins of the world as deity. Therefore, He had to come into the world.

However, if He came into the world the way that you and I came into the world, He would come in spiritually dead. Consequently, He would be unable to pay for man's sins. So he had to come in spiritually alive. For that reason, He did not have a human father in order that He would not receive an old sin nature. The result was that the second Person of the Trinity came into the world. We call this the incarnation--the taking on of human flesh. He became a member of the human race--100% humanity. So He became the unique Person of the universe. We call him the God Man. Jesus Christ, as a man now, would be able to die for the sins of humanity and offer His perfect righteousness in payment for our sins. And that's exactly what He did.

For you and me to be in this plan of God, you have to enter it at stage 1, and that stage begins with the cross and your acceptance of what God has provided. This plan was provided entirely by the Triune God apart from any human help. You enter this plan by grace. You do not earn it. You do not deserve it. Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us that. The technique of entrance is by faith. It is a matter of believing what God offers and that what God offers is genuine. John 3:36 and John 3:16 tell us that. That's why we have stressed to you that the gimmickry which is imposed upon people is a monstrous fraud that invites people to do something physical, public, and open in order to accept Christ as Savior. That is so monstrous. It's unbelievable that sincere men of God would ever impose that upon a human being--that they should ask him in any way to make some public move.

We would be sympathetic with the fact that there are certain conditions of mass evangelism that if people are to be encouraged or they need further explanation, we need to get with them. However, at the point of salvation--at the point of accepting Christ--they must never be given the idea that if they walk forward, that's part of the deal. It must always be clear that salvation is a matter of faith. It is a matter of believing God. The word "belief" is badmouthed today. People who are very prominent in evangelism poke fun at what they call believe-ism, but the Word of God constantly stresses this word. The only way you can be saved is by believing. Believing, in its scriptural sense, means to trust what God has said. What has He said? He has said here that the only God is our Savior. He is our Savior because the Trinity made a plan, and that plan functions on grace. And God has explained that plan to us in His Word, and all we must do is say, "Okay."

It's like I heard someone say the other day, "What I would like to do in life," and then he added what I thought was a very significant and precious phrase that we ought to add. He said, "What I would like to do in life, if it's okay with the Lord, is this, ..." I said, "That's well put." That's exactly what God is saying to you. In eternity past, the plan was made. The first stage has been executed. This Son, who could die, has died. The provision has been made. Now God says, "It's okay with me if you want to come to heaven." That's the point." It's okay with God if you want to come to heaven. He can perfectly welcome you now. His love can be perfectly free to bring you in. Nothing is hindering Him. His justice is no longer a problem toward you. His righteousness is no longer a problem. It's okay with God if you want to go to heaven.

The question is, is it okay with you? If it is, all you have to do is believe it. You just accept it. You trust Him. You trust the triune God who made that plan in eternity past. You just trust Them, that They knew what They were doing, and that They have come up with a plan that handles your sin relative to divine righteousness and justice. If you do that, you are in. Belief, in itself, is nothing. Grammatically, the word "believe" is what's called a transitive verb. That simply means that it has to have on one side a subject, and it has to have on the other side an object. Belief in the Bible, in itself, is absolutely worthless. It doesn't mean a thing.

You hear a lot of ignorant talk among people that if you only believe, somehow everything is going to turn out right with you and God. That is not true. "Believe" has to have a subject. Who will be the subject? Obviously, you. It is you who must put yourself in there with the word, "I," and say, "I believe."

But what do you believe? The object has to be Jesus Christ. Then we have the condition of what the Bible calls salvation. I believe Jesus Christ. This is another word for "faith," and a good explanation of faith is the word "trust." We must have that understanding of "believe." It's a good word. It's a scriptural word. It's exactly the word that we should tell people. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer used to love to stress in class that there are two things that you had to do for a person before he could be saved. One, you have to explain the gospel to him to tell him what God has done to make provision for his sins. And secondly, he said, with equal importance, you must stress to him that he must believe this. That's all there is to it. That's grace. Belief, in itself, is not worth anything. However, if you believe, and you are the subject, and grace is the object, then you have eternal life.

1. **The Christian Life**

The second stage of the plan of God is the believer's life on earth. This is executed by the third member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. God provided a grace system for learning spiritual things. He reveals salvation to the lost and He convicts them. He fills the believer with the Holy Spirit when sins are confessed so that he has fellowship with the Son; he has partnership with the Holy Spirit; and he has fellowship with the Father. The Christian gains knowledge of doctrine in this way. With the filling of the Holy Spirit, he is able to use that doctrine to function with his spiritual gift and to produce divine good for which God will someday reward him. The things that we do in the way of divine good production are not ignored by the Lord. Our life in this second stage is a supernatural life. It can be produced only by the Holy Spirit. He takes the knowledge of the Word of God, and He rewards what that knowledge produces.

1. **Eternity**

The third stage is in eternity. That's executed by the Father. All is returned to a perfect order under God the Father. He provides our entrance into eternity. He gives you very much grace for you to live now. With every problem that you've been hit with this week, He has given you grace to take it. Nothing has happened to you this week that is too much for you to bear. This includes right up to the time when you check out of this life. At the point that you check out of this life, God has a grace provision for you to be able to do it with ease and with capacity, and take it right in stride. You walk right out of this life, through death, and into the presence of the Lord. Then you have entered the third stage.

Most of you here have passed stage one. You have entered into that stage of your experience and the plan of God. You're now functioning in stage two. With more or less of a timespan that none of us knows, you will be entering stage three. Stage three will be entered with the same grace that you have in stage two for your living. The Triune God, in complete fellowship with you, will be in eternity forever. The reason that this is true is because the barrier has been removed--the wall that existed between you and God. So right now, the only thing that separates you from the Triune God, who is your Savior, is your attitude toward the cross. In John 3:36, we read, "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. And he that does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him."

So with this understanding: that God is One; that He is a Trinity; that this Triune God is our Savior; that that Savior has made a plan which is set up with three stages; and, that each member of the Trinity is executing His stage in perfect order, it is with this realization that the wall between us and God is removed. This is where Jude comes to the end of his book with this magnificent praise; that to such a God who is such a Savior should be these expressions of praise. "Glory" is the Greek word "doxa," and it means the shining radiance of the divine essence--the radiance of these attributes of God. "To Him (this Triune God) be majesty" ("megalosune"). God's awesome sovereignty is what is in mind here--His majesty--the supreme sovereignty of God and His absolute control. "To Him be dominion." This is the Greek word "kratos." This means the absolute power of God to execute His plan. And finally, "power" which is "exousia." This refers to His complete authority in His rule.

Again, your English translation of Jude 25 may have left out a couple of important words that are in the Greek. Here is how verse 25 should read: "To the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, before all time, both now and forever. Amen." "Amen" is that Hebrew word of affirmation meaning "so be it." You and I indeed can say "amen" to the same thing. This is the God whose glory and essence will stand by us. This is the God whose majesty, whose awesome sovereignty, will work in our behalf. This is the God whose dominion, whose absolute power, will execute all that He has promised. This is the God whose power is that of complete authority, and none can frustrate Him. In an age of apostasy, it is a great joy to be committed to such a God.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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