

THE BOOK OF JUDE

(Lesson Eight)

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” Jude 1:24-25

INTRODUCTION: In the previous message on verses 20-23, Jude instructed us in the duty of Christian perseverance in the faith. In verses 20, 21, he gave four exhortations for Christian living which would serve to balance the Christian life, and prevent a falling away into apostasy. He exhorted us:

- (1) to develop the intellectual Christian life by *“building up yourselves on the holy faith,”*
- (2) to develop the emotional Christian life by *“praying in the Holy Spirit,”*
- (3) to develop the practical Christian life by keeping *“yourselves in the love of God,”* and
- (4) to develop the hopeful Christian life by *“looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”*

He then gave three directives for ministering to those influenced by apostasy. In verses 22, 23 we are to show:

compassion on the doubters,
concern for the deceived, and
caution with the defiled.

Today we close out our study of Jude’s letter with his doxology or benediction. We will examine first, “The Prayer For Man’s Preservation” in verse 24 and second, “The Praise of God’s Perfections” in verse 25.

III. JUDE’S ADMONITION (Believers Exhorted) verses 20-25.

3. The Prayer For Man’s Preservation - verse 24.

After giving warnings and descriptions of apostate teachers, and exhortations to Christian duties, Jude now takes his readers’ eyes off of the battleground on the earth below, to a heavenly scene wherein the believer’s captain is seated in the heavens above. From there He is directing the entire scope and course of the believer’s battle here on earth. Jude recognizes the fact that the victory in this fight *“for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints,”* can be won only through our great Savior and Lord.

Jude’s words form a doxology and a benediction. A doxology is a statement of praise directed to the Almighty God. This doxology is universally recognized as one of the fullest and beautiful in all of the Scriptures. It stresses the security of the true believer in the midst of apostasy and brings the letter to a marvelous conclusion. Jude’s epistle thus begins and

ends with words of assurance for God's people who are living on earth in dark times of apostasy.

The first part of the doxology consists of a confident prayer that God will preserve the believers from the spiritual harm which is coming from the false teachers, and bring them to the certain future which God has designed for them. Having stressed the believer's responsibilities in the previous verses (17-23), Jude now assures them of God's protection and support without which all their efforts would be of no avail.

Since God is omnipotent, He has the ability to do whatever His wisdom has designed to do. Because of this: He is able to:

a. He is Able to Preserve us as His Possession - *"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling."*

God alone is able to keep a believer from falling. Man cannot keep himself. The angels that fell could not keep themselves. Adam could not keep himself. If these being sinless fell, how can a sinful being expect to keep himself from falling? Jude uses two different verbs which are translated "keep". They each have a slightly different meaning. In verse 23, in reference to the believers responsibility, Jude uses *"keep yourselves."* There it means "to have watchful care." The believer is to maintain a steady gaze upon God's love. The word was used of somebody taking care of a sick person or caring for sheep. But here in verse 24, in referring to God's ability, Jude says that God is *"able to keep you from falling."* In this instance the word means "to stand guard over, to watch in case of attack." It stresses safe custody under attack.

As Christians, we may be attacked by the world about us, our flesh within us, and the Devil over us, but God's power is watching over us to keep us from falling into the sin of apostasy which would send us to hell. We did not save ourselves and we cannot keep ourselves, but if God has saved us, He will keep us. The word "falling" means to "trip as to stumble." Not one of Christ's sheep will be permitted to stumble into a state of final apostasy. They are under His care and He will use the entire power of the Godhead to bring them into the eternal presence of God. In the covenant of redemption, Christ is accountable to God and holds Himself accountable for their safety. Jesus said in John 6:37, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* And in verse 39, *"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* In John 10:28, 29, He says of His sheep, *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* When the roll of the Lamb's Book of Life is called up yonder, all of Christ's sheep will be there and accounted for.

b. He is Able to Present us in His Presence - *“to present you faultless before the presence of his glory.”*

Because God has the ability to keep us from falling, He is able also to carry the process on to completion. Philippians 1:6 says, *“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”* The word translated “faultless” is a technical term describing the absence of a spot or blemish in a sacrifice which would otherwise make it unworthy to be offered. It is used of our Lord Jesus in I Peter 1:19 where we read of our redemption, *“but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”* As the lamb was shut up and examined for any imperfections prior to its being offered up to God, so our Lord was shut up for some thirty-three years and declared by God to be without sin. He was then offered up without blemish to God for the sins of His people.

In Ephesians 1:4 it is said of the elect of God that God *“has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame (blemish) before him.”* Those whom God foreknew in election, He predestined them *“to be conformed to the image of his Son.”* At the second coming of Christ all of the saints of God who have ever lived will be presented by Christ unto the Father without spot or blemish in either body or soul. Colossians 3:4 says, *“When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory.”* This glory surrounds the throne of God’s attributes. Revelation 14:5 describes the redeemed in heaven, *“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”* They are faultless in their justification for they are clothed with Christ’s righteousness. They are faultless in their sanctification for their moral character has been cleansed, and they are faultless in their glorification for they have been given a new body like that of their Lord Jesus Christ.

c. He is Able to Perfect us in His Perpetual Joy - *“With exceeding joy.”*

What a joy it will be to arrive in heaven with nothing hindering our enjoyment of God. All of our sins are forgiven, nothing to be ashamed of, no more prayers to deliver us from temptation, for nothing shall exist to tempt us. No more seeking to know His will for we will know as He knows. No more clouds of doubts and fears for eternity shall consist of a cloudless day.

O they tell me of a home far beyond the skies,
O they tell me of a home far away.
Yes, they tell me of a home where no storms-clouds rise,
O they tell me of an unclouded day.
O they tell me that he smiles on His children there,
And His smile drives their sorrows all away,
And they tell me that no tears ever come again,
In that lovely land of unclouded day

O the land of cloudless day,
O the land of an unclouded day,
O they tell me of a home where no storm-clouds rise,
O they tell me of an unclouded day.

Revelation 21:4 says, ***“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”*** Matthew Henry says,

Where there is no sin there will be no sorrow; where there is the perfection of holiness, there will be the perfection of joy. (Henry, *Commentary on Jude*, Vol. 6: p. 1117: Revell)

The perfected joy which the believer will partake of in glory will flow from his God-given attitude of servanthood. A servant has no greater joy than that of serving his master. In the parable of the servants in Matthew 25:21 Jesus said, ***“His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”*** The joy of perfected servanthood is the reward of the saints. What shall we receive for faithful service in this life? The ability to serve Christ perfectly in the next life! Because of our redemption, Christians will not enter into the presence of God with fear, but with exceeding joy.

Jesus will also share in this joy. He will have the special joy of presenting His bride, the church, before the Father’s throne! It was the anticipation of this joy that helped Him endure the sufferings of the cross. Hebrews 12:2 says, ***“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*** The purpose of salvation is not simply to rescue sinners from hell, as wonderful as that is, but the grand purpose is that God may be glorified throughout all eternity and Jesus Christ receive the preeminence in all things.

This is a strong motive for serving Christ in that we want to bring joy to His heart as we anticipate the joy He will have when He welcomes His bride to heaven. Thus I John 3:2, 3 says, ***“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure.”***

4. The Praise of God’s Perfections - verse 25.

Jude now moves from prayer to praise. Such a God as he has just described is deserving of all praise.

- a. The person to be praised - *“To the only wise God our Savior.”***
 - (1) God only is wise.**

Some of the Greek texts omit the word wise but Paul uses it in his closing doxology in Romans 11:27, ***“To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.”*** Also in I Timothy 1:17 he says, ***“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”***

God is said to be only wise in that all wisdom found in the creatures is derived from Him and is nothing in comparison to His own wisdom. No creature can outwit Him for He says in I Corinthians 1:19, ***“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”*** God is omniscient, and with one immutable, eternal act of understanding, He perfectly sees and perceives, observes and knows all things. His knowledge is intuitive, not acquired. He goes not out of Himself to the objects to acquire knowledge. He knew them before they were. He said to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:5, ***“Before I formed you in the belly I knew thee; and before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”*** Thus He does not arrive at knowledge as men do through sense, opinions, reasoning, discoursing, or drawing conclusions from propositions. He knows everything from beginning to end and forgets nothing. His knowledge can neither be diminished nor increased. He has never learned anything nor forgotten anything.

He knows all things possible, though they never shall actually be. His knowledge is as large as His power, and His power is such that He can do far more than He ever will do. He knows the most minute things such as the number of hairs on our head, and He knows the most secret things such as the very thoughts of our hearts. He knows what we are thinking and what we will think before we ever think them.

He knows Himself and all His works. In Acts 15:18 we read, ***“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”*** When Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him, Peter replied, ***“Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”*** (John 21:7).

He formed the world in wisdom. He governs His creation in wisdom and He redeems His people in wisdom. This God alone is to be praised.

(2) God only can save - *“Our Savior”.*

The reference to God refers to the Father. Some insist that it must refer to the Son since it is Jesus who came to save, but this is not necessitated as the term Savior appears twenty-four times in the New Testament, sixteen which are applied to Christ, and eight to God (Luke 1:47; I Timothy 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 25). Also it is quite common in the Old Testament for God to be called both Savior and Redeemer. It is only through the mediation of Jesus Christ that God saves sinners. I Timothy 2:5 states ***“For there is***

one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

b. The perfections of the person - “*be glory and majesty dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*”

Jude now ascribes perfect praise to four of God’s attributes. They are glory, majesty, dominion, and power.

(1) His glory.

The glory of a thing is that which causes it to excel and be held in high esteem and honor over all else. Glory is the sum total of all that God is and all that God does. The light from the sun, moon and stars radiate their own glory but when God’s glory shines, they are eclipsed and no longer shine. In the new heavens and earth of which we read in Revelation 21:23, *“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”*

Revelation 4:11 says, *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”* From this heavenly chorus words have been formed for an earthly chorus here below.

It goes like this:

Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory, glory and honor, Glory and honor and power.
For Thou hast created, hast all things created;
Thou hast created all things.
And for thy pleasure they are created;
For Thou art worthy, O Lord.

(2) His majesty.

Majesty means “greatness, magnificence.” God alone is great. When we praise God, we praise the most magnificent Person in the universe. He is to be preferred above all. Majesty portrays God as the King of the universe. But He is not simply King, He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! In Psalm 104:1, the Psalmist says, *“O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty.”*

In I Chronicles 29:11 David describes the majesty of God in what is considered the greatest of the Old Testament doxologies, *“Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.”*

From these words a modern chorus is worded like this:

Majesty, worship His majesty,
Unto Jesus be all glory, honor and praise.
Majesty, Kingdom authority,
Flow from His throne, unto His own; His anthem raise.
So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.

Magnify, come glorify, Christ Jesus, the King.
Majesty, worship His majesty.
Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all Kings.

Psalm 95:3 says, *“For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.”* From this verse the song writer says:

Come, Thou Almighty King,
Help us thy name to sing, Help us to praise:
Father, all glorious, O’er all victorious,
Come, and reign over us, Ancient of Days.

(3) His dominion.

The word for dominion means “strength, might, authority” and carries the idea of complete control over all things. Until Jesus took it away from Him, it was said of the Devil that he had the *“power of death”* (Hebrews 2:14). That is, he had dominion over death. Now Jesus says in Revelation 1:18, *“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”* In reference to God, dominion describes God’s sovereign rule over all things.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, Now to His temple draw near,
Join me in glad adoration!

(4) His power.

Power here means “authority or right” to use one’s ability to do as he wills. God’s power is absolute and unlimited. Psalm 115:3 says, *“But our God is in the heavens: he has done whatsoever he has pleased.”* God not only has the ability to do what He wills with His creation, but He has the right to do so as well.

All hail the power of Jesus name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all:
Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all!

(5) His ongoing eternity.

The expression both now and ever is the best words can do to describe the past, the present and the future. God is to be praised at all times. Thomas Manton said,

The saints have such large desires for God’s glory, that they would have him glorified everlastingly, and without ceasing. They desire the present age may not only glorify God, but the future. When they are dead and gone the Lord remaineth; and they would not have him remain without honor. They do not take death so bitterly, if there be any hopes that God will have a people to praise him.

And their great comfort now is the expectation of a ‘great congregation’, gathered from the four winds, united to Christ, presented to God, that they may remain with him, and glorify him for evermore. (Manton, *Jude*, Vol. 5, p. 374: Maranatha Publications).

(6) His Amen.

Jude now closes with a hearty Amen! The expression means “so be it” or “let it be so.” It expresses an agreement or approval of that which has been said or done. Paul directs the Corinthians to speak in a known tongue or language so that the unlearned may give his assent to what is said. In I Corinthians 14:16 we read, *“Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupies the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understands not what you say?”* The word Amen, along with Hosanna and Alleluia, are the only three words which are transliterated straight into all other languages, whenever translations of the Bible are made.

It was verbally expressed at the end of a prayer or a sermon in both Jewish and early church life. Jerome, one of the early church fathers, said that in his day, it was shouted with such fervor that it sounded like a clap of thunder. This would indicate that religious services ought to be expressions of praise unto God in an attitude of warmth and enthusiasm. Thus the words of the hymn say:

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
Let the “a-men” Sound from His people again,
Gladly forever adore Him!

When one is overwhelmed with being in the presence of an all wise, glorious, majestic, mighty, all powerful God, he will not be influenced by false teachers promoting man-centered, self-serving doctrines. We can now close the book of Jude with our own doxology:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him, all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Psalm 96:8 says, *“Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.”* From this the words from the Gloria Patri ring forth:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen, Amen.