

- **Jude 1, 4**—“Jude, **bondman of Jesus Christ**, and brother of James, to the called ones beloved in God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ . . . For certain men have got in unnoticed, they who of old were marked out beforehand to this sentence, ungodly persons, turning the grace of our God into dissoluteness, and denying **our only Master and Lord** Jesus Christ.”

That is:

Jude, **bondman of Jesus Christ** [*it is Jude's boast to be His bondservant, which means that Jesus Christ is thus his supreme Lord/Master in sovereign love, to whom belongs his obedience and allegiance as absolute and primary, with singleness of purpose and devotedness of heart*], and brother of James, to the called ones beloved in God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ . . . For certain men have got in unnoticed, they who of old were marked out beforehand to this sentence, ungodly persons, turning the grace of our God into dissoluteness, and denying **our only Master and Lord** Jesus Christ [*as our **ONLY Sovereign Master, Despot** (Gr. *Despotes*, as in 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 6.10; Acts 4:24; and Luke 2:29) **and Lord**, in the primary, highest and ultimate sense, He, therefore, must be God*].

“In Jude, it is not only denying the Sovereign Master of the world, of everything [as in 2 Pet. 2:1, where those false teachers are seen as *deniers of Him, of His rights, of His claims, of His sovereignty, of His supreme authority*] but ‘**our** [only] **Lord**,’ *the One to Whom we belong, the One to Whose name we are baptised, the One Whom we profess to value and acknowledge to be our life and righteousness, and our all—denying Him!*” (William Kelly)

In Jude 4, the article appears once before “only Master and Lord,” thereby joining both appellatives together in reference to Jesus Christ; literally it reads: “the only Master and Lord of us Jesus Christ.” “Our only Master and Lord (*ton monon despotēn kai kurion hēmōn*). For the force of the one article for one person see note on 2 Peter 1:1.” (A.T. Roberston)

See extended Note on the “Granville Sharp Rule” below.

Now compare:

“But there were false prophets also among the people [Israel], as there shall be also among you false teachers, who shall bring in by the bye destructive heresies, and **deny the Master [Sovereign Master (Gr. *Despotes*)] that bought them** [*not ‘redeemed’ them, but ‘bought’ or ‘purchased’ them—the Lord Jesus purchased even these false teachers/apostates with His atoning blood and thus owns them both by virtue of being their Creator and now also by virtue of being their Purchaser with His own shed blood—who, as such, are obligated to believe on Him rather than being wicked deniers of Him, of His rights, of His claims, of His sovereignty, of His supreme authority!*], bringing upon themselves swift destruction.” (2 Pet. 2:1)

“And when it opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying [*in prayer*], How long, **O sovereign Ruler [Sovereign Master (Gr. *Despotes*)]**, **holy and true** [*both of these titles are also jointly applied by Christ to Himself earlier in Rev. 3:7*], dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth?” (Rev. 6:9-10)

“And they, having heard it, lifted up their voice with one accord to God, and said, **Lord [Sovereign Master (Gr. *Despotes*)]**, **here referring to the Father, as in Jude 4 the title refers to Christ who is declared to be our ‘ONLY Sovereign Master and Lord’, thou art the God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them.** And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings, and give to **thy bondmen** [*meaning that He is thus their supreme Lord/Master in sovereign love, to whom belongs their obedience and allegiance as absolute and primary, with singleness of purpose and devotedness of heart*], with all boldness to speak thy word.” (Acts 4:24, 29)

“And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was just and pious, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it was divinely communicated to him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death before he should see the Lord's Christ. . . **Lord [Sovereign Master (Gr. *Despotes*)]**, **now thou lettest thy bondman go**, according to thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” (Luke 2:25-26, 29-30)

Now further compare:

“No one can serve two masters [for two ‘lords’; that is, the undeniable principle is stated that one cannot serve two masters equally; one will inevitably take precedence in your obedience and allegiance]; for either he will hate the one and will love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other. **Ye cannot serve God and mammon** [you cannot thus serve, e.g., the two masters of God and money; the claims of only one can be supreme over our souls—and to God alone belongs that rightful place as supreme Lord/Master].” (Matt. 6:24)

“But now, having got your freedom from sin [as master], and **having become** [by and under grace, as part of our salvation in Christ,] **bondmen to God** [as Master, meaning that **God** is thus our supreme Lord/Master in sovereign love, to whom is our obedience and allegiance of love as absolute and primary], ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end eternal life.” (Rom. 6:22)

“James, **bondman of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ** [bondservant *equally and in the same exact sense of both* the Father and the Son, and thus with *identical claims* upon him—to Whom belong his obedience and allegiance of love as absolute and primary], to the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion, greeting.” (James 1:1)

“For the bondman that is called in the Lord is the Lord’s freedman; in like manner also the freeman being called is **Christ’s bondman**. **Ye have been bought with a price** [the price of the atoning blood of Christ, that very supreme Lord/Master; and as such] **do not be the bondmen of men** [meaning that our obedience and allegiance should never belong to mere “men” (who are mere creatures) as primary; and since this is stated in contradistinction to the fact that believers are “Christ’s bondmen,” the inescapable implication is that Christ is not simply Man. He is God become flesh in taking manhood into His Person. He is infinitely more than, not less than, Man—He is both God and Man in His Person.]” (1 Cor. 7:22-23)

“Bondmen, obey masters according to flesh, with fear and trembling, in simplicity of your heart **as to the Christ**; not with eye service as men-pleasers; but as **bondmen of Christ, doing the will of God from the soul, serving with good will as to the Lord, and not to men** [meaning that the ultimate object of our obedience should always be Christ our Lord and never mere “men,” who are mere creatures; and since this is stated in contradistinction to the fact that believers are “bondmen of Christ,” the inescapable implication (just as in 1 Cor. 7:22-23) is that Christ is not simply Man. For He is God become flesh in taking manhood into His Person. He is infinitely more than, not less than, Man—He is both God and Man in His Person]; knowing that whatever good each shall do, this he shall receive of **the Lord**, whether bond or free. And, masters, do the same things towards them, giving up threatening, knowing that both **their and your Master** [Christ our Lord] **is in heaven**, and there is no acceptance of persons with him.” (Eph. 6:5-9)

“Bondmen, obey in all things your masters according to flesh; not with eye services, as men-pleasers, but in simplicity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatsoever ye do, labour at it heartily, **as doing it to the Lord, and not to men** [not as doing it to mere ‘men,’ but as primarily and ultimately unto the Lord]; knowing that of **the Lord** ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance; **ye serve** [as bondservants] **the Lord Christ** [‘the Lord Christ,’ **Jehovah Christ**, is thus our supreme Lord/Master, in contradistinction to mere ‘men,’ mere creatures].” (Col. 3:22-24)

“Simon Peter, **bondman and apostle of Jesus Christ**, to them that have received like precious faith with us through the righteousness of **our God and Saviour Jesus Christ** [this latter declaration is an explicit expression of the His absolute Godhood, which is implicit in and required by the former declaration which sets forth His supreme Lordship/Mastership (in Peter’s boast of being the ‘bondman of Jesus Christ’)].” (2 Pet. 1:1)

The fact that we can only serve **one master/lord** in the primary, highest and ultimate sense—and **that that Master/Lord must be God**—is one of the strongest scriptural proofs of the truth of the *Triunity* of God and of Christ’s *absolute deity* in particular. For Christ is declared to be our **only** Master and Lord (Jude 4) [and supreme “Lord of lords” (see Rev. 17:14 and 19:16)], and as such **He must be Jehovah God** (see Deut. 10:17 !). Yet, because of the fundamental truth of the *Triunity* of the Godhead, such an absolute assertion *excludes neither* the Father nor the Holy Spirit as being our supreme Master/Lord (see, e.g., 2 Cor. 3:18 with respect to the Holy Spirit, “the Lord the Spirit”). In fact, since we are servants of both God the Father **and** the Lord Jesus Christ *equally and in the same exact sense* (James 1:1), the two Persons must be One God, else there would be two separate, independent Lords whom we thus serve primarily and absolutely, thereby contradicting our Lord’s words in Matt. 6:24, and all other divine revelation of the *Triunity* of God throughout scripture. (**Note:**

This very truth is embedded in one of the (now fully revealed) Triune titles of God in the Hebrew scriptures: Adonai, a plural form of Adon, meaning ‘Lord,’ ‘Master.’)

Note on the “Granville Sharp Rule”:

“In Greek, when two nouns are connected by *καί* [‘and’] and the article [‘the’] precedes only the first noun, there is a close connection between the two. That connection always indicates at least some sort of *unity*. At a higher level, it may connote *equality*. At the highest level it may indicate *identity*. When the construction meets three specific demands [as they do, e.g., in *Tit. 2:13*, *2 Pet. 1:1*, *1:11*, *2:20*, *3:18*, and *Jude 4*], then the two nouns **always refer to the same person**. When the construction does not meet [all three of] these requirements, the nouns may or may not refer to the same person(s)/object(s).”

“Statement of the Granville Sharp Rule: both substantives (nouns, participles, adjectives) always refer to the same person in the article-substantive-*καί*-substantive (TSKS) construction when [each of the following is true]:

- both are personal
- both are singular
- both are non-proper (i.e., common terms, not proper names [not proper names such as “Paul,” “John,” “Moses,” “Joshua,” etc.]”

“In other words, in the TSKS construction, the second noun [i.e., *substantival adjective, substantival participle, or noun*] refers to the *same* person mentioned with the first noun when [each of the following is true]:

- (1) neither is *impersonal*;
- (2) neither is *plural*;
- (3) neither is a *proper* name.

{‘A *proper* noun is defined as a noun which *cannot* be “pluralized”—thus it does *not* include titles. A person’s name, therefore [as in “*Peter*,” “*James*,” “*Daniel*,” “*Jeremiah*,” etc.], is proper and consequently does not fit the rule. But *θεός* [*God*] is not a proper noun because it can be pluralized—thus when *θεός* is in a TSKS construction in which both nouns are singular and personal, it fits Sharp’s rule [and thus *always* refers to *one and the same* Person].’}

[The same is true, e.g., of *Pater, Father*, which, while it is the *name* of one the Persons of the Triune Godhead, it is not grammatically a “proper” name in that it can be “pluralized.” Thus in the expression “*the God and Father*” (Eph. 1:3, 1 Pet. 1:3, etc.) both “God” and “Father” refer to **one and the same Person.**]

“Therefore, according to Sharp, the rule applied **absolutely only** with personal, singular, and non-proper nouns. **The significance of these requirements can hardly be overestimated . . .**” (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, pp. 270ff)

Thus the TSKS construction in *Tit. 2:13*, *2 Pet. 1:1*, *1:11*, *2:20*, *3:15*, and *Jude 4* **all absolutely** refer to **one and the same person**, for all three requirements are met, including the fact that neither of the two nouns is a *proper* name—i.e., “**great God and Saviour**,” “**God and Saviour**,” “**Lord and Saviour**,” “**only Master and Lord**”—in reference to Jesus Christ. Amen!