

Jude 1:11

“Ignoring, opposing and rebelling against God’s Word”

- I. Intro
- II. Vs. 11a The way of Cain
- III. Vs. 11b The error of Balaam
- IV. Vs. 11c The rebellion of Korah

I. Intro

In the 11th verse Jude delivers a three-fold declaration of woe to those guilty of being false teachers. It is issued because of three sins that they have willingly entered into. Jude uses these three examples of these sins that were visible in three historical figures in their past: *The way of Cain, the error of Balaam* and *the rebellion of Korah*. Each of these needs to be examined to fully comprehend the specific sin associated with each of these false teachers, so get ready to write down references for later study and turning in your Bibles. There are FOUR general observations:

1. First, these three historical figures of false teachers is placed at the mid-point of the letter, right between the illustrations drawn from the spiritual battle between GOOD and EVIL as seen in Michael the archangel and Satan and the examples Jude draws from nature in verses 12-13. And it reminds me of *the contrast between the book of Acts and this little letter of Jude is that Acts describes the acts of the apostles and Jude describes the acts of the apostates!*
2. A second observation is that apostasy and false teaching is not confined to one group or class of individual as *these three examples are very diverse: Cain was a farmer; Balaam was a prophet; and Korah was a leader and prince in Israel. False teachers can come from any group or denomination and can spring from prophets, princes, and ordinary people, from pulpits, palaces, and poorhouses.* Individually Cain, Balaam, and Korah each illustrate specific aspects of what it looks like when someone falls away from the truth of God’s Word and as such together they form a complete picture.
3. A third observation is seen in the negative progression in false teaching! Note the order that these three historical figures are placed in the text: *Cain enters a wrong way; Balaam runs greedily in error; and Korah perishes in rebellion!* What Jude seems to suggest is that *those that are involved in false teaching have entered into the slippery slope that accelerates downhill to destruction and becomes increasingly more difficult to stop once started!* In fact, nowhere in this little letter of Jude does he ever suggest of their being able to halt the process or turning back towards truth; there is no hope found for apostates and false teachers in Jude’s writing; their doom is as certain and they have a reservation

at the eternal resting place of blackness of darkness forever, (verse13)!

4. The fourth general observation is found in the contrast between who Jesus is and the departure these three false teachers made. In John 14:6 *Jesus describes Himself as: **THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE!*** These apostate false teachers would NOT have Him rule over them and to do so they knowingly exchanged the: **The WAY OF CHRIST for *the way of Cain*, THE TRUTH OF CHRIST for *the error of Balaam*, and THE LIFE OF CHRIST for *the perishing of Korah!*** Apostacy and false teaching begins with a **WAY**, it then leads to a **RUN** in the wrong direction, and it always ends **PERISHING** in rebellion.

II. Vs. 11a The way of Cain

Vs. 11a What we will now investigate is what Jude specifically meant in “The way of Cain”. We find Cain’s story in Genesis 4:1-15 with the first seven verses of that passage informing us that Cain brought a sacrifice to God of the fruit of the ground that due to the fall of his parents was now cursed by sin. In comparison Able the younger son brought what had been prescribed by God at his parents fall and that was a blood sacrifice of a lamb. We know that both these boys (who were now men) had been taught the truth of the only way to approach God was through the blood of an innocent substitute as Hebrews 11:4 tells us that Able brought his lamb “by faith” which means that Able did so by believing what God had revealed about the only way to approach Him. Cain, on the other hand, offered what he thought was more aesthetically more pleasing to him than a slain lamb! But to do so it meant that Cain had to “set aside” God’s Word on the shed blood as the only basis of approaching a Holy God from the place of sinful man. Cain’s offering was pleasing to him, it represented his works, his goodness, and his effort as the basis of approaching God! When a so-called Bible teacher sets aside the teaching of the necessity of Jesus shed blood upon the cross as the only basis of our relationship with God then they are doing that which Cain did. The false teacher may not become a murder like Cain, but they have taken Cain’s position as a false teacher by rejecting God’s ONLY WAY of salvation. Hebrews 9:22 reminds us that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” There were two paths

that day in Genesis according to Matthew 7:13-14 “the narrow gate that Able took” and the “broad way that Cain choose”! Able choose the narrow gate, the difficult way which lead to life. Cain to choose the broad way that many traverse that leads to destruction. All of humanity is divided by these two diverging paths and they take the sojourner on a journey to two different destinies. Jude tells us that Cain went down the wrong path and God in His mercy told Cain as much and gave him an opportunity in Gem 4:7 to go back and do what he knew was right. **It is a sad state in our hearts that we who can know intellectually the truth can arrive in the hardness of our heart where what we know is true no longer convicts our hearts!** We need to be warned that the **“Free choice of today determines the unchangeable destiny of tomorrow”!** When the Holy Spirit’s restraint of the Word of God is thrown aside their remains little to slow down the sinful inclinations of our corrupt flesh! Simple put **the “Way of Cain” is ignoring God’s word!** Specifically as it relates to the false teacher setting aside the necessity of the cross of Christ or deemphasizing the importance of the work of Christ by emphasizing the works of man!

III. Vs. 11b The error of Balaam

Vs. 11b Balaam’s story and tragic life is found in several places: Num. 22-24, Deut 23 and in the New Testament in 2 Peter 2:15 and her in Jude 11b. Combining all those texts you will quickly see that Balaam was a “greedy” prophet and I suppose instead of the normal way of spelling the word he would spell it P.R.O.F.I.T. Balaam’s illustration of false teaching happens as the young nation of Israel was at the end of their 40 year wilderness wondering and on the verge of entering the land of promise. As the nation camped in the plains of Moab, Balak the king along with other leaders banded together in a joint effort for Moab and Midian out of fear of what Israel had done to the nations that opposed them. In Deut. 23:4-5 Moses sums up the situation that involved Balaam when he wrote, *“because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor*

of Mesopotamia, to curse you. Nevertheless, the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam, but the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you.” What we learn is that the fear of Israel caused Balak and the leadership to conspire together to cause the prophet Balaam to curse Israel of their behalf. And even though God told the prophet in Numbers 22:12 that all such effort would have no effect as God said, *“You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.”* Deprived of the rewards that Balak promised Balaam covetous heart still tried five times to supersede God’s word! First by going even after God told him not to and there he was met on the path by a Donkey whom he was riding refused to move due to an angel that stood in his way with a drawn sword. So, the donkey who had more common sense than Balaam turned aside. This prompted Balaam to strike the donkey and this scene repeated itself two more times until we are told in verse 28 that the Lord opened the mouth of the female donkey who asked, *“What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times.”* This causes a dialog between Balaam and his donkey which the greed of Balaam is visible in the fact that he never questions once why he was able to have a conversation with his donkey! It is only after the Lord opens the eyes of Balaam that he realizes that the donkey had saved his life and repents. But this is repeated through four failed attempts to fulfill the contract of Balak only to prophecy blessings instead of a curse. Deprived of his rewards promised by Balak Balaam’s covetous ways conceived an evil plot whereby God would judge Israel and that was to send the beautiful women Midian and Moab to seduce the Israelite men to commit sexual immorality. In the 25th chapter of Numbers in verses 2-3 the plan was successful as the daughters of the Moabites and Midianites seduced the sons of Israel and further caused them to sacrifice to their gods instead of the true God of Israel and in Num. 31:16 we are told that the plan laid forth by Balaam worked as there was a plague among the Israelites. In

Revelation 2:14 Jesus' records this with regards to the church at Pergamos in reference to Balaam saying, "*I have a few things against you, because you have their those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*" The rest of the story of Balaam is that the rewards of Balak and his rebellion against God's word destroyed him as Joshua 13:22 records his end when we read that, "*The children of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them.*" The error of Balaam is the sacrificing of the eternal riches of Christ for the temporal treasure of this life! His was the lust for pleasures of sin for a season and the greed for the treasures of this life! The nearsightedness of gaining what the world craves at the cost of your own eternal soul! The pursuit of what the world craves at the cost of the blessings of God. And this all happened to Balaam when he went after the error of this world instead of the Word of God! Cain ignored the Word of God; Balaam opposed the Word of God!

IV. Vs. 11c The rebellion of Korah

Vs. 11c Our final illustration of false teachers is found in Exodus 6:18-21 and Numbers 16:31-33 in the story of Korah rebellion. Korah was a Levite and cousin to Moses that under his leadership instigated a rebellion against the authority of God's servants Moses and Aaron. It reached its crisis when according to Num 16:31 the ground split apart under them as they became the first examples of a "church split". Korah reject Moses not only as a leader but as mediator whom God had appointed to stand between Him and His people. Korah spoke evil of those chosen by God. Now today we have one mediator according to 1 Tim 2:5-6 "*we have one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all..*" Moses was a typology of Jesus and Korah shows what false teachers do in that they set themselves up as the mediator

between God and men and to do so they need to remove Jesus as the only mediator. Korah encouraged another truth that was at the expense of the ONLY truth! Again, *Cain ignored the Word of God, Balaam opposed the Word of God and Korah rebels against the Word of God.* *These three examples are always signs of false teachers: Ignoring God's Word, Opposing God's Word or Rebelling against it!*