

# **THE WOEFUL WAY OF THE APOSTATES – PART 2**

Jude 11

## **INTRODUCTION**

- The “cargo cults” of the Pacific islands are characterised by a desire for material possessions and wealth.
- Much of modern day Christianity is possessed by the same covetous spirit.
- Balaam is something of an enigma.
- He prophesied the word of God, and delivered some of the most beautiful descriptions of Israel and the Messiah found in all of Scripture.
- Yet at the same time his heart was far from God and his counsel led to the deaths of thousands of Israelites.
- Ultimately he was executed and is now in hell.
- Balaam mentioned three times in New Testament:

Peter describes the *way* of Balaam (2 Peter 2:15-16)

Jude describes the *error* of Balaam (Jude 11)

Revelation describes the *doctrine* of Balaam (Revelation 2:14)

- Balaam represents the man whose heart is covetous and who sins in order to gain reward.
- He represents the man whose actions are evil, causing others to sin.

## I. THE WAY OF CAIN

## II. THE ERROR OF BALAAM

### A. Covetousness

1. "Ran greedily" – to rush tumultuously without restraint.
2. Religion becomes a means to gain wealth (1 Timothy 6:5; Titus 1:10-11)

### B. Rebellion against God's will

1. A way that is *perverse* (Numbers 22:32)
2. A way that is *madness* (2 Peter 2:16)

### C. Forsaking God in the time of temptation

1. Balaam's faith was tested and shown to be vain
2. The test of a man's character is what it takes to stop him.
3. The apostates of Hebrews 6 describe Balaam's condition (Hebrews 6:4-6)

### D. They are not what they claim to be

1. He bore the title of *prophet* (Numbers 24:15-16; 2 Peter 2:16)
2. God describes him as a *soothsayer* (Joshua 13:22)

## E. Compromise with God's enemies

1. Christians do not form ties with those who hate God (2 Chronicles 19:1-2)
2. Such people are not to be received into Christians' houses (2 John 10-11)

## F. Causing others to sin

1. This incident is recorded in Numbers 25, Balaam's involvement is found in Numbers 31:16
2. These false teachers will happily cause God's people to sin and bring them under God's chastisement, if it brings gain to themselves (Revelation 2:14)
3. They are *hirelings* who care not for the sheep (John 10:11-13)
4. It is spiritual fornication when God's people unite with the world (James 4:4)
5. Covetousness is idolatry (Colossians 3:5)

## G. Ultimately judged for their sin

1. He desired to "die the death of the righteous" (Numbers 23:10)
2. Yet he died as one of God's enemies (Numbers 31:8; Joshua 13:22)
3. God's severest judgments are upon those who cause others to sin (Matthew 18:6)

## **CONCLUSION**

1. There are many people who have a form of religion, yet do not have Christ.
2. True Christianity is not comprised in outward forms and ceremonies but of the heart being brought to life and made new through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 6:15)
3. There are many Balaams in our day who love wealth and the sins of the flesh more than God.
4. We must be on our guard against such deceivers, lest we be led into fornication and idolatry and suffer the judgment of God (1 Corinthians 10:8,12).