

THE WOEFUL WAY OF THE APOSTATES – PART 3

Jude 11

INTRODUCTION

- Most people have too high an opinion of themselves (Proverbs 20:6)
- People are lovers of themselves and live for their own pleasure and glory
- The world regards selfish ambition as a virtue.
- The scripture condemns such worldly ambition (Proverbs 17:19; Isaiah 5:8).
- In God's kingdom, the "quest for power" has no place (Matt 20:25-28).
- We are warned not to think we are *something*, when we are actually *nothing* (Galatians 6:3).
- Jude uses three ungodly characters from the OT to illustrate the wickedness of the apostates who corrupt churches with their leaven.

Cain represents their false worship and self-righteousness

Balaam represents their covetousness and

Korah represents their lust for power and their rebellion against God

I. THE WAY OF CAIN

II. THE ERROR OF BALAAM

III. THE GAINSAYING OF CORE

A. Confidence in the flesh

1. Korah was a Levite and first-cousin of Moses and Aaron (Exodus 6:18,21)
2. His cousin Aaron was appointed to the priesthood and another cousin Elizaphan was appointed as chief of the Kohathites (Numbers 3:30), while Korah had no special position
3. He may have felt his Levitical pedigree entitled him to a higher office

4. Some think that their ancestry will bring them into God's favour (Matthew 3:9)
5. "God has no grandchildren" (see Philippians 3:4-8)

B. Discontentment

1. Korah had a privileged role as a Levite to serve and minister alongside the priests (Numbers 16:8-10)
2. Yet he wanted more, envying Moses and Aaron (Psalm 106:16)
3. When grace is absent, there will be envy, jealousy, and discontent.

C. Rebellion against God's authority

1. Gainsaying – *antilogiai* – to speak against, contradict, oppose
2. They rebel against God's ordained leaders
 - a. This was not rebellion against bad, ungodly leadership, but against God's ordained leadership (cf. 1 Samuel 24:6)
 - b. It is common for those who are under the leadership of another to conclude that they could "do it better".
 - c. False teachers presume an office and position to themselves that God never gave them.
 - d. They attack those true men of God and falsely accuse them of evil (Numbers 16:3,13; 2 Peter 2:10)
3. They rebel against God's revealed word
 - a. God had clearly stated that only Aaron and his descendants were to be priests (Numbers 3)
 - b. False teachers refuse to submit to the authority of God's word and rebel against it (Mark 7:13; Matthew 12:41; 2 Peter 3:16)
 - c. Instead of *trembling* (Isaiah 66:2) at God's word, they *trample* it

- d. It demonstrates that they have no fear of God (Proverbs 13:13)
 4. They rebel against God Himself (Numbers 27:3)
 - a. To rebel against God's representatives is to rebel against God (1 Samuel 8:7; Acts 9:4-5)
- D. Egalitarianism
 1. Korah argued for equality among the people (Numbers 16:3)
 2. Yet this was simply a means to exalt himself to rule over the people (Numbers 16:10)
 3. These men claim to want equality, but what they actually want is power
 4. Note that in the present dispensation, all believers are priests and have direct access to God through Christ (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:5-6)
 5. However, in the church, God has appointed officers to rule over the flock (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:7, 17)
- E. An insatiable pursuit of power
 1. Note that it is not sinful to desire to lead God's people (1 Timothy 3:1)
 2. It is sinful when the goal is to glorify self, rather than to serve God and His people
 3. God's leaders must first be servants (Mark 10:44)
 4. They will do anything, including lie, to promote themselves (Numbers 16:13-14)
- F. Finally condemned
 1. Those who live for worldly power will always be disappointed
 2. God showed His extreme displeasure by destroying them in such a violent manner (Numbers 26:9-11)

3. "Perished" – to ruin and destroy utterly, but not to cause to cease to exist
4. Note that the apostates are described as already perished, so certain is their woe and judgment

G. God's grace shown to his descendants

1. Korah's children were not killed in the judgment (Numbers 26:9-11)
2. Some of Korah's descendants were greatly used by God
 - a. Samuel the prophet
 - b. The Korahites became doorkeepers and custodians for the tabernacle (1 Chronicles 9:19,31)
 - c. Heman, a chief musician of the temple, and "the king's seer" (1 Chronicles 6:22,33; 25:5)
 - d. The "sons of Korah" to whom are attributed eleven of the psalms (Psalms 42-50; 62; 72-85)
3. Wicked parents do not guarantee wicked children

CONCLUSION

1. Paul encountered many "Korahs" who rebelled against his apostleship (1 Timothy 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 1:15; Titus 1:9-11)
2. John warned of one Diotrephes, who loved pre-eminence, and abused those who got in his way (3 John 9-10)
3. Many churches today have been taken over by such power hungry men who seek only their own glory, not God's
4. Within each of us lurks a spirit of Korah that is proud, discontent and seeks to glorify self
5. Such a spirit must be crucified and replaced with the meek, humble and servant-mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5ff)
6. May we truthfully say with David: "*LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.*" (Psalm 131:1)