

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

Chapter 10- The Error of Balaam **Jude 11** 114 The Error of Balaam- Part 7

WOSM Monday 04/14/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing in our Journey through the Epistle of Jude and today I want to see what Jude meant when he pronounced an everlasting and eternal condemnation upon the heretics who bring in false doctrine and ungodly teaching into the House of God. So, let's read verse 11 of Jude again together:

Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

We are continuing to examine what Jude meant when he wrote about the Error of Balaam. Over the last 50 years or so, the Christian Church has been bombarded with strange, unbiblical teachings about Faith and Money and Prosperity and healing that has become accepted as normal, Scriptural teachings, which they are not.

Now as I say that I must also say that there are those within those teachings who genuinely are saved, who love the Lord and who are serving Christ with all their heart- so as I mention these things, I once again must say that I have no right or power or authority to impugn the heart of any man. I am not questioning their Salvation or their sincerity- but I absolutely reject the bulk of their teachings and I reject the thrust and purpose and results of their teachings about these issues, and I have an obligation to cry out against this false teaching as being a perversion of what the Bible declares about these important issues.

Jude gave the Church a clear warning about the Error of Balaam. Jude says that Balaam ran after this error for reward. You

are free to disagree with me about what I am saying about this, but you are not free to disagree with Jude. What I say is not inspired- but what Jude wrote here as. We must not dismiss the Error of Balaam. If the Error of Balaam is not what I am saying that it is, then you have an obligation to then tell me what Jude did mean when he wrote it- because we must agree that he meant *something* when he said it; he meant *something* when the Holy Spirit inspired him to write it; and he had *something* in mind, and it was of such great importance that it is in the Word of God.

What I am trying to do is to echo the warning that Jude made that ungodly men have crept into the Church to do three things. These men, whom Jude said were ordained for condemnation attack the Gospel of Jesus Christ- most specifically Grace to turn God's holy and precious Grace into something that gives license to sin. These heretics also attack the Person of Jesus Christ and the very Nature and Character of God.

In verse 11, Jude is telling us that these same men are like Cain and Balaam and Korah in their own personal lives and in their teachings. I would guess that most people would have no idea what "the way of Cain" or the "Error of Balaam" or the "Gainsaying of Korah" means. So, they would skip over verse 11 and go through the rest of the Epistle and then feel as though they understand what Jude wrote.

But when Jude wrote this, he had something very specific in mind. And it is our responsibility as stewards of the Gospel of God to exegete and research and explore and dig down and ponder and analyze and search out the meaning of what the Holy Ghost meant so that we may clearly preach exactly what God the Holy Spirit put into this verse so that all men may hear and believe and trust and alter their lives in whatever way is appropriate so that they may become obedient to that which God has said.

And Jude is giving all of us a clear warning that the heretics that Peter prophesied would come are now in the Church doing the things that he describes in this Epistle. So, we must be willing to find out what Jude mean, and we must also be willing that when we see what he meant that we can throw down anything that would be in accordance with his warning.

Much of what the modern teaching about prosperity is in direct conflict with the clear admonition of Scripture about money; material possessions; and the heart. And we must resist the temptation to validate an unscriptural teaching on the grounds that it works or that it is popular or that it did something productive for us. If any teaching is in conflict with Scripture, then it is wrong and bad and sinful and evil and wicked and should be rejected by the Church- no matter how many people ascribe to it or how many people approve of it. The validity of a teaching does not lie in me giving it my approval; the validity of a teaching lies in whether or not God gives it His approval and God, through the single source of His Word does not give approval to much of the modern Doctrine of Prosperity that has swept the Church.

Many try to justify the Error of Balaam by using father Abraham as the source of validation and that is a tragic mistake.

I understand that Abraham was fabulously wealthy. I agree that God blessed him greatly. But I also understand that Abraham built an altar every time he turned around and I also understand that Abraham loved God so much and he trusted God so much that he was willing to sacrifice his own son when God told him to. So don't you dare use Abraham as your model of prosperity unless you are willing to use Abraham as your model of obedience and your model of service and your model of humility and suffering and trust.

The fact of the matter is that I don't know five people on this earth that walk with God like Abraham did, myself included, and I don't know five people that wouldn't be dramatically changed for the worse if they were to suddenly come into great wealth and prosperity. And this goes to the real issue here. The real issue is not about money or wealth or goods or possessions- no, the real issue is the condition of the heart. All of our stuff are objects that have no soul and are neither good nor evil in and of themselves. But the Apostle Paul gave us the Heart of God on this matter in **1Timothy 6:3-11**:

3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

4 he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

6 But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.

Balaam coveted after money and he is forever condemned for it. Balaam promoted God and the things of God for money and he is forever condemned for doing so. Balaam rejected Truth on account of money and he is forever condemned for doing so. And Balaam ignored God's Will so completely that God gave a voice to a donkey so that Balaam could have a conversation with an animal so that he could be shaken out of his hard hearted sin and repent and be saved.

I just described to you the Error of Balaam and I also just described to you a large portion of the modern Doctrine of Prosperity. It is the Error of Balaam in our day and we are told to not run after it.

Beloved, we must be aware from our time of studying the Bible that the biggest enemy of the Cross is not the devil-no, the biggest enemy of the Cross of Jesus Christ is the "self" of Man; it is the heart of Man; it is the unrepentant; hard; unbowed; and unbroken spirit of Man that is in continuous rebellion against God.

Since that is true, and since God knows full well that it is the heart and the self and the sprit of man that is Man's greatest problem-then God would never do anything that builds those things up. God would never do anything that would promote those things. God would never do anything that would ignite the fire that would

elevate those things.

Everything and anything that promotes the self of Man is the enemy of Jesus Christ. Everything and any thing that promotes the heart of Man is the enemy of Jesus Christ. Everything and any thing that promotes the spirit of Man is the enemy of Jesus Christ. That is why Jesus and Paul and the men that God used to write the Bible told us over and over and over to do strange things that on the surface seem to be counter productive to “getting ahead” in this life.

These men of God were inspired to write strange sounding words like “*turn the other cheek*”; weird words like, “*I must decrease so that He may increase*”. Forgotten words like what Paul said in **Romans 8:13:**

For if you live according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

And what he said in **Galatians 2:20:**

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

... and in **Galatians 5:24:**

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

...and again in **Galatians 6:14**

But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

The modern Error of Balaam promotes and exalts and extols the very opposite of these qualities and attributes and actions. That is why it is the enemy of Jesus Christ. The Word of God clearly condemns the Error of Balaam and so should we.

Now I am fully aware that this kind of preaching is not popular. It has never been popular, and it never will be popular. No man that

seeks to build up himself wants *anyone* including God to tell him he is in sin. Nobody who is trying so hard to build up his own self wants to hear that he is the enemy of Jesus Christ. Nobody who is working so hard to be important and to get ahead in this life and to become proud and arrogant about his own accomplishments wants to hear that he is in fact a lost sinner.

It wasn't popular when Jesus told people to beware of covetousness and when the Son of God told the rich young ruler to sell everything that he had- the words of our Lord made this man very, very unhappy and sad. It wasn't popular when Paul wrote the things we have just read. And it wasn't popular when Peter and James and John preached and taught and proclaimed the very same things.

But they did preach this. And they were faithful to cry out against covetousness and lust and greed and pride and arrogance that periodically rises up in the best of saints and they were faithful to warn us about the inherent dangers of wealth and prosperity and peace and safety.

And the Church has a 2,000 year history, the most of which is written down, where almost without exception, continuously for over two millennia, the Christian Church has uniformly cried out against the very things that Balaam did and the very things that the modern Prosperity Doctrine promotes and extols.

I tell you that we must repent, and we must return to the foot of the Cross and we must rediscover the glory and the beauty of being contented with that which God has provided and we must learn the ways of God once again and we must reject the error of Balaam and we must all earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. Well, I've got to stop right here. But please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our Journey through the Epistle of **Jude**. May God help us all.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse- by- verse Journey through the **Epistle of Jude**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.