

The New Testament Church
The Book of Jude #6 – Jude 1:11b; (Numbers 22:1-12) – The Error of Balaam
February 16, 2025 - Pastor Paul Jehle

I Introduction and review of Jude - called to contend as well as continue in the faith

- A. Book of Jude - a summary of truths preparing the early Church for a “test” of evil rising
- B. A review of lessons one through four – Jude 1:1-7
 - 1. **Called** to faith and family – first test in Kingdom manifestation – Jesus is our example
 - 2. **Content** - opposition causes us to clarify our beliefs (apologetics) – for original gospel
 - 3. **Continue** - overcome sinful obstacles by the persevering of the Holy Spirit
 - a. We learn to live under spiritual and natural authority
 - b. Walk in the way of the cross rather than the “way of Cain” – lust of flesh - **pleasure**

II Continuing in the Faith – Avoiding the Error of Balaam – Jude 1:11b

- A. ...have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit – the lust of the eyes - **power**
 - 1. Is all profit a sin? – no, Mt. 25:14-30 in parable of talents, Jesus endorses productivity
 - 2. Lk. 12:15 and Phil. 4:11-12 – life is not measured in amount of things; but contentment
 - 3. The error is greed - “the love of money” – the root of all evil – 1st Timothy 6:10
- B. What was the Error of Balaam? – a deceptive heart in a lust for wealth, power and fame
 - 1. Who was Balaam? – a prophet of God? A prophet of evil? Neither, an enigma
 - a. A foreigner, son of Beor, an Aramean (Num. 23:7); a diviner – divination for a fee
 - b. **God can use anyone He pleases but He only validates those with a heart after Him**
 - 2. Numb. 22-24 – Balak, king of Moab, feared Israelites spiritually – wanted to curse them
 - a. He praises Balaam “who you curse is cursed, who you bless is blessed” - powerful
 - b. God says to Balaam “you shall not go with them; shall not curse, they are blessed”
 - c. Balak tempts with fame & money – Balaam “says” he won’t go beyond God’s Word
 - d. He asks God again – God says if they come to you, go, but he goes anyway (v. 22)
 - e. Strikes donkey 3 times, God opened the donkey’s mouth! **God will use anything!**
 - f. God opened Balaam’s eyes – God was his adversary! The donkey saved his life!
 - g. Balaam goes to Balak, and he brings him to the high places of Baal – fertility god
 - h. Balaam instructs Balak to build seven altars and offer seven bulls and rams (ritual)
 - i. Balaam blesses Israel there, on Pisgah (wisdom), then Peor (gap), where he had the same offerings given and again blessed Israel (and rise up as a Lion / lioness!)
 - j. Balaam’s 4th prophecy on “latter days” – A star shall come out of Jacob, a scepter shall rise out of Israel... - 24:17 – **God used Balaam to guide Wise Men to Jesus!**
- C. Balaam’s heart of a love of money and sexual immorality hinders the next generation:
 - 1. Num. 31:15-18 – Balaam inspired sexual immorality among Israelite men...
 - 2. 2nd Peter 2:15 – “follow the way of Balaam... loved the wages of unrighteousness”
 - 3. Rev. 2:14 – “doctrine of Balaam, taught Balak to put a stumblingblock – immorality”
- D. Lessons from Balaam – How do we overcome self-deception and greed?
 - 1. Mt. 6:24 – “cannot serve God and mammon” – **a motive of service comes before profit**
 - 2. **Warning: your mind will justify what your heart chooses – your heart motive is the key**
 - 2. 1st Tim. 6:5-9 (godliness is gain) – instead, embrace “**godliness with contentment**”
 - 3. Ja. 4:15 – seek **God’s will** when it comes to business and employment – not just profit
 - 4. The generations are at stake – **discern pure motives and character** not just “prophecy”
 - 5. Following God is not just doing what is good, but what is **righteous from the heart**