

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**

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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.

Now on the last broadcast, I was showing you how that the modern Doctrine of Prosperity is in fact the Error of Balaam that Jude was warning us about and how that this unbiblical teaching about money brings forth discontentment in the heart of God's people. And on today's broadcast- I want to explore this point further, Let's begin our study today in **1 Timothy 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.

Now Paul was writing to Timothy here under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and the Apostle tells this young Pastor that godliness with contentment is a great gain. Now dear friends, for the most part, we have lost this gift of contentment and we are all poorer because of it. You see, godly, biblical Contentment is the best defence against worldly and carnal teachings on prosperity having any influence over your life.

The word, “contentment” comes from comes from the Greek word, *autarkeia*, (aw-tar-KAY-ah) which means: the state of sufficiency about the things of life.

Being content does not mean that you possess everything that your heart craves. No, contentment is brought about through your acknowledgement that God is the Provider of everything that you have need of and in the supernatural peace that is based in that trust- you are confident of the Promise of Scripture that God will provide that which is His Will toward the necessities of your life.

For anyone to think that getting more things makes you more content is to just prove that we don't know human nature very well. It is human nature that when we get something- we only want more. Our human natures are never satisfied- that is why as believers, we are told to kill these sinful human cravings and learn to be godly.

You see, beloved, we have to be *taught* how to serve God because serving God is counterintuitive to our sinful natures. We must be taught how to serve Christ and how to be content because if we are untaught about these Biblical principles- we will never reach a place of godly contentment.

Evilness and rebellion, and sin, and depravity does not have to be taught- we instinctively know how to sin; we instinctively know how to rebel. If you don't think that is true, just look at any child. Parents never teach their children to disobey- they work very hard to teach them to obey. Children instinctively know how to rebel against their parents without any tape or sermon or book or examples to follow. They rebel because it is in their nature to rebel.

You see, fallen Man hates God and we hate His ways and reject His Truth and sin against God all day long precisely because it is in our fallen nature to do so. Fish swim, birds fly and people sin. Nobody has to teach fish how to swim- they do so instinctively. No one has to teach birds to fly- they do instinctively. And no one has to teach people to rebel and sin- they do so instinctively.

But once we are saved- that Adamic, fallen, sinful nature is replaced with the new divine nature that loves God and loves the things of God. But even though we are saved- that new nature is surrounded by unsaved and unholy flesh, and we still live in a carnal and sinful world that is based on rebellion and lust and so all day long our new nature is hindered and fought and so we have a great need to be taught and empowered and strengthened and encouraged so that we may actually do what our new natures desire to do. So, the last thing that someone who is trying to serve God needs is for their sinful fleshly cravings to be pampered and fed. The error of Balaam feeds our sinful lusts and cravings.

So, in order to come to a place of godly contentment- we must be taught *how* to be content and that is through God's Grace and God's Spirit and through a line upon line; precept upon precept deep, serious thorough and ongoing study of God's precious Word- because no one will be content by default.

I assure you that you won't learn godly contentment by watching American Idol and you won't learn how to be content by reading Good Housekeeping or a good mystery novel or Cosmopolitan and you won't learn godly contentment by looking at the Sci-Fi channel or Fox News. And unfortunately, you probably won't learn godly contentment in many of our Churches today and you sure will never learn about how to be content by listening to the modern Doctrine of Prosperity.

Now to be discontent or to lose your contentment or to not live in godly contentment is the same thing as being ungrateful. When you

think that God *owes* you or that you *deserve* a blessing or that you are entitled to receive prosperity because you prayed the special prayer or waved the handkerchief or “exercise faith” or because you “spoke the word” or stood on one foot and screamed like a chicken and yet you don’t get that new car or that new house or that new job or that new wife or that new boyfriend, you then become very dissatisfied with that which God has already provided for you and the blessing that God already gave you suddenly becomes as nothing in your eyes and you actually despise that which God has already provided. This is the classic definition of being unthankful and this unthankfulness is at an epidemic proportion in this country. Let’s read **2Timothy 3:1-5**:

1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

According to what the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write here, unthankfulness is a sign of last day apostasy along with all of the other things that describe our current state.

The modern Doctrine of Prosperity is one of the biggest sources of this unthankfulness in the Church today.

Now although unthankfulness is an acute problem in the modern Church among God’s people, we are not the first generation that suffered from it. In the Book of **Numbers**, Chapter 11, we read about one of the most unbelievable stories of unthankfulness that the world has ever seen.

In this account- God has just delivered the people of God out of 400 years of slavery. 400 years of being beaten and made to make bricks and of starving and of being treated cruelly. And God, in His great Mercy, according to His Own Good Pleasure, remembered His oath to Abraham and sent Moses to these people and brought them out of Egypt by a strong and mighty hand.

And God didn't just bring them out. God first publicly humiliated the mightiest nation on earth with frogs and plagues and blood and lice and flies and finally the annihilation of all the first born in the entire nation of Egypt. And the Jews saw God do this.

And the Jews didn't just leave Egypt- no, God allowed them to spoil the Egyptians. The former slaves took the gold and silver and precious jewels from the former slave owners just before they left. And the Jews saw God do this.

Then, after the Jews left, Pharaoh had a change of heart and sent the mightiest army on earth after them to slaughter them all in the desert.

And the Jews saw the army coming. And God sent a pillar of fire down from heaven and divided the Jews from the army of Egypt and God told Moses to hold out a stick and God sent an east wind all that night and God divided the waters from the waters and the entire nation of Israel walked over on dry ground and God allowed the pillar of fire to go back into heaven and the army of Egypt pursued Israel into the sea and God closed the waters on the army and they all died in the waters. And the Jews saw God do this.

And the children of Israel walked through the desert and there was this rock that followed behind them and every time they got thirsty, Moses spoke to the rock and water came out of the rock and they drank and were filled. And every morning God gave them room service and brought them food and laid it on the ground. The children of God didn't have to plow a field or plant any seeds or water the crops or harvest anything. All they had to do was get up and collect the food that God already had brought to them- they didn't even have to cook it. And the children of God saw God do this.

And they walked through the desert for 40 years and their shoes didn't wear off; and their clothes didn't rot off and they weren't sick or diseased through the entire 40 years. And the children of God saw God do this.

And Moses went up into a mountain and stayed 40 days and 40 nights and the mountain was on fire at the top of the mountain and the mountain shook and trembled, and God carved into tables of stone His Law with His Own Finger. And the children of Israel saw God do this.

And in spite of all of this- it wasn't enough. After seeing all of this- the children of God cried unto the Lord and said, "*Would to God that we were back in Egypt!*" And they murmured; and they complained, and they bellyached; and they griped.

All that God had done for them was not enough. All that God had delivered them out of was not enough. All that God had provided for them was not enough. God delivered them and prospered them and fed them and watered them and clothed them and protected them and gave them His Law- but it was not enough. After all of this- The people of God were dissatisfied.

The children of Israel had become discontented and no matter how much God gave them and no matter what God did- it wasn't enough. This discontent spilled over one day and went too far. Let's read **Numbers 11:4-6**:

4 The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us meat to eat?"

5 "We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic,

6 but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna."

The manna that God had graciously provided for them to eat had become despised in their eyes. Why? Why did the children of Israel begin to despise the provision of God? They had run after the Error of Balaam and lusted after more. Because they felt that they *deserved* more; because they believed that they were *entitled* to flesh instead of manna- they despised what God had given to them.

This is the sin of unthankfulness and this is the sin of discontentment and this is the sin of the Error of Balaam and we need to be careful that what we are being taught about prosperity is not causing us to act in this very same way. And this is why we need to 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.

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