

THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

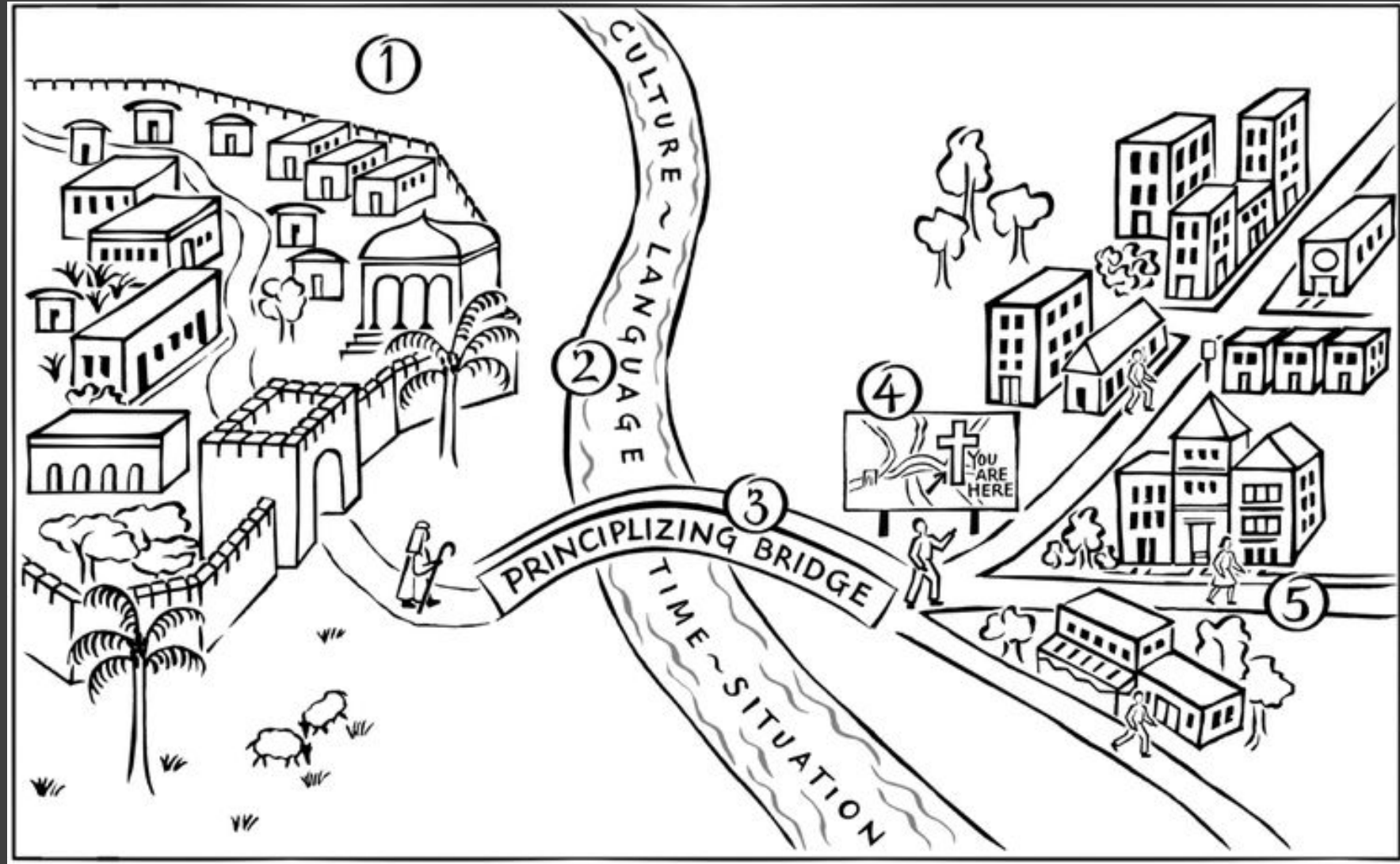
Rev. Todd Weedman



GRASPING GOD'S WORD

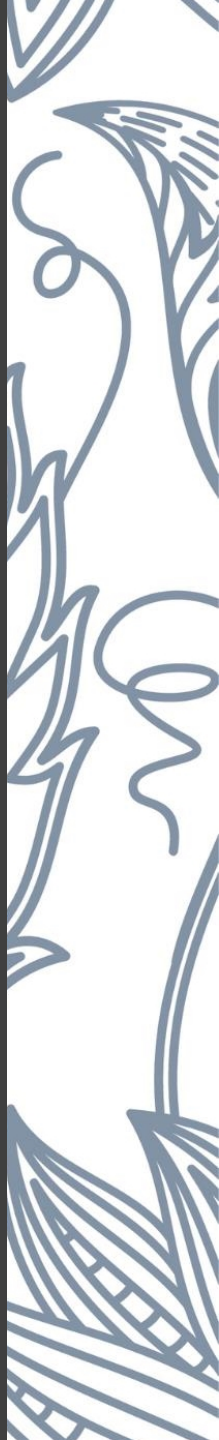
Duvall J. Scott & J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word : A Hands-On Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible*. Fourth ed. Zondervan Academic 2020.


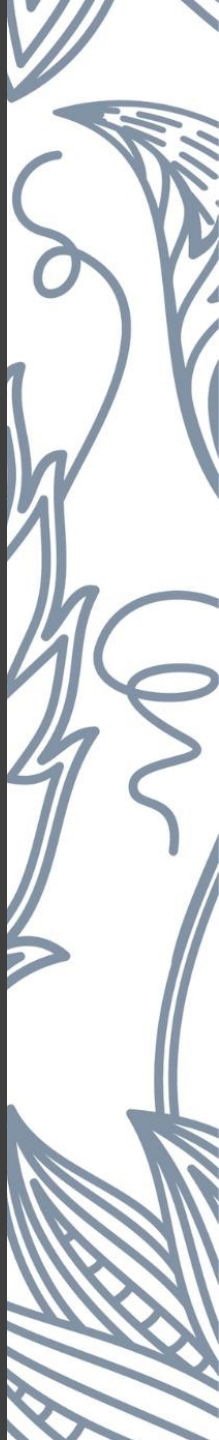
1. Grasp the Text in Their Town.
2. Measure the Width of the River to Cross.
3. Cross the Principizing Bridge.
4. Consulting the Biblical Map.
5. Grasping the Text in Our Town.





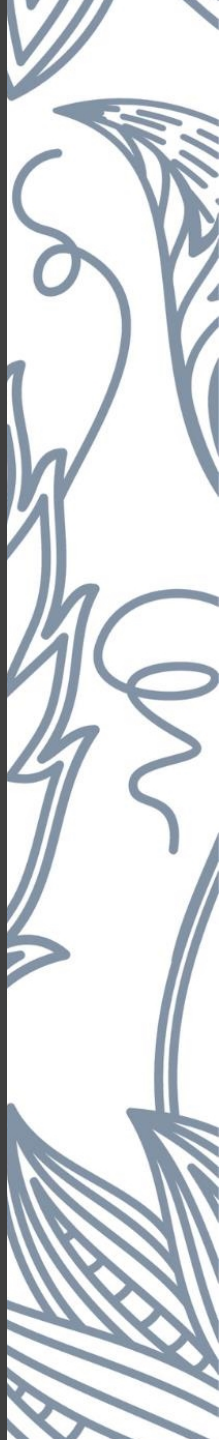
REVIEW

1. Who is the Author?
 - Jude, brother of James (Bishop of Jerusalem), and our Lord Jesus, who came to believe in Jesus as Messiah sometime between the resurrection and Pentecost. He serves as an itinerant preacher among the churches in Galilee.
 2. Who was Jude's intended audience?
 - First-generation Jewish Christians living in Galilee, among the churches that had been planted by the Apostles themselves.
 3. What is the genre of Jude?
 - Jewish-Apocalyptic style, popular in first century Palestinian Judaism, before 70 AD. Steeped in Greek speech rhetoric and Jewish Midrash and Peshet hermeneutics.
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4. When was Jude written?
 - Approximately 48 – 58 AD
 5. What was Jude's purpose for writing?
 - Jude indicates his longstanding intention to communicate with them, which has been made more urgent by a crisis in the churches. He wishes to urge his audience to contend for *the* faith, once for all handed down.
 6. What does Jude tell us about his opponents?
 - A. "Long ago designated for... condemnation"
 - B. "Ungodly people"
 - C. "Pervert grace into sensuality"
 - D. "Deny Jesus Christ"



7. How has God historically responded to such things? Jude's 3 examples:

- A. The unbelieving after the Exodus (Num.13-14), whose faithlessness (believing neither the power nor the command of God) provoked God's wrath and punishment.
 - B. The fallen Angels (Gen. 6, I En. 6-11), whose rebellion against God by abandoning his creational purpose for themselves (and teaching or encouraging others to do the same) provoked God's wrath and punishment.
 - C. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose sexual immorality and pursuit of unnatural desire provoked God's wrath and punishment.
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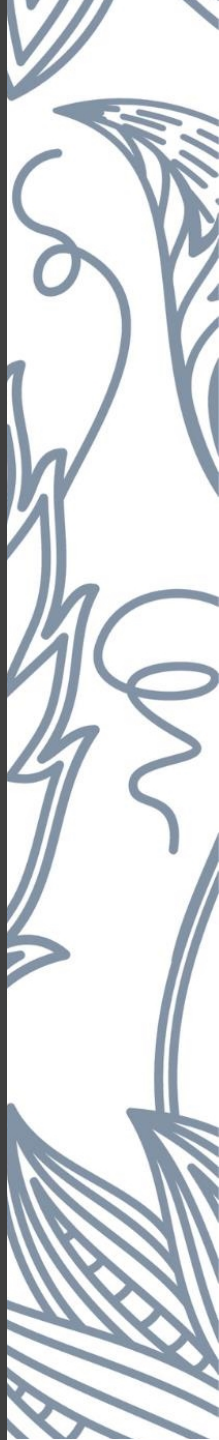



8. What indictments does Jude bring against his opponents?

- A. They are “dreamers.”
- B. They “defile the flesh.”
- C. They “reject authority.”
- D. They “blaspheme the glorious ones.”

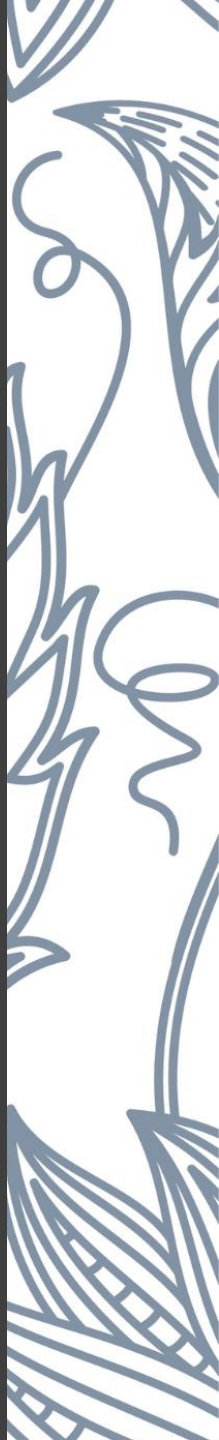
“These people, whatever they cannot perceive, they blaspheme; but whatever they instinctually—like illogical beasts—know, by this they are corrupted.”

9. To what other historical figures does Jude liken his opponents?

- A. “Walk in the way of Cain.” (Gen. 4)
 - B. “Balaam’s error.” (Num. 22-24, 31)
 - C. “Korah’s rebellion.” (Num. 16)
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Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and the comfort of your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.



Now, the people of Israel set out and camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan at Jericho. And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was in great dread of the people, because they were many. Moab was overcome with fear of the people of Israel. And Moab said to the elders of Midian, "This horde will now lick up all that is around us, as the ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak the son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River in the land of the people of Amaw, to call him, saying, "Behold, a people has come out of Egypt. They cover the face of the earth, and they are dwelling opposite me. Come now, curse this people for me, since they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

So the elders of Moab and the elders of

Midian departed with the fees for divination in their hand. And they came to Balaam and gave him Balak's message. And he said to them, "Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, as the Lord speaks to me." So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam. And God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men with you?" And Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, 'Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth. Now come, curse them for me. Perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.'"

God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go to your own land, for the Lord has refused to let me go with you." So the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."

Once again Balak sent princes, more in number and more honorable than these. And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Let nothing hinder you from coming to me, for I will surely do you great honor, and whatever you say to me I will do. Come, curse this people for me.'" But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more. So you, too, please stay here tonight, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me." And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men have come to call you, rise, go with them; but only do what I tell you." So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.

But God's anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as his adversary.

Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey, to turn her into the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. And when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again. Then the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"

And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you." And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No."

Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. And the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me. The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live." Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me.

Now therefore, if it is evil in your sight,

I will turn back." And the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you." So Balaam went on with the princes of Balak.

When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at the city of Moab, on the border formed by the Arnon, at the extremity of the border. And Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not send to you to call you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?" Balaam said to Balak, "Behold, I have come to you! Have I now any power of my own to speak anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that must I speak." Then Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth. And Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent for Balaam and for the princes who were with him. And in the morning Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-baal, and from there he saw a fraction of the people.

And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." Balak did as Balaam had said. And Balak and Balaam offered on each altar a bull and a ram. And Balaam said to Balak, "Stand beside your burnt offering, and I will go. Perhaps the Lord will come to meet me, and whatever he shows me I will tell you." And he went to a bare height, and God met Balaam. And Balaam said to him, "I have arranged the seven altars and I have offered on each altar a bull and a ram." And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." And he returned to him, and behold, he and all the princes of Moab were standing beside his burnt offering. And Balaam took up his discourse and said,

"From Aram Balak has brought me, the king of Moab from the eastern mountains: 'Come, curse Jacob for me, and come, denounce

Israel!' How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce whom the Lord has not denounced? For from the top of the crags I see him, from the hills I behold him; behold, a people dwelling alone, and not counting itself among the nations! Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!"

And Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and behold, you have done nothing but bless them." And he answered and said, "Must I not take care to speak what the Lord puts in my mouth?"

And Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place, from which you may see them. You shall see only a fraction of them and shall not see them all. Then curse them for me from there." And he took him to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah,

and built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar. Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here beside your burnt offering, while I meet the Lord over there." And the Lord met Balaam and put a word in his mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus shall you speak." And he came to him, and behold, he was standing beside his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the Lord spoken?" And Balaam took up his discourse and said,

"Rise, Balak, and hear; give ear to me, O son of Zippor: God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? Behold, I received a command to bless: he has blessed, and I cannot revoke it. He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob, nor has he seen trouble in Israel. The Lord their God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them. God brings them out of Egypt

and is for them like the horns of the wild ox. For there is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel; now it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, 'What has God wrought!' Behold, a people! As a lioness it rises up and as a lion it lifts itself; it does not lie down until it has devoured the prey and drunk the blood of the slain."

And Balak said to Balaam, "Do not curse them at all, and do not bless them at all." But Balaam answered Balak, "Did I not tell you, 'All that the Lord says, that I must do'?" And Balak said to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there." So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, which overlooks the desert. And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

When Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go, as at other times, to look for omens, but set his face toward the wilderness. And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. And the Spirit of God came upon him, and he took up his discourse and said,

“The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, the oracle of him who hears the words of God, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down with his eyes uncovered: How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! Like palm groves that stretch afar, like gardens beside a river, like aloes that the Lord has planted, like cedar trees beside the waters. Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters; his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. God brings him out of Egypt and is for him like the horns of
the wild ox; he shall eat up the nations,

his adversaries, and shall break their bones in pieces and pierce them through with his arrows. He crouched, he lay down like a lion and like a lioness; who will rouse him up? Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you.”

And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he struck his hands together. And Balak said to Balaam, “I called you to curse my enemies, and behold, you have blessed them these three times. Therefore now flee to your own place. I said, ‘I will certainly honor you,’ but the Lord has held you back from honor.” And Balaam said to Balak, “Did I not tell your messengers whom you sent to me, ‘If Balak should give me his house full of silver and gold, I would not be able to go beyond the word of the Lord, to do either good or bad of my own will. What the Lord speaks, that will I speak’? And now, behold, I am going to my people. Come, I will let you know what this people will do to your

people in the latter days.”

And he took up his discourse and said,

“The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, the oracle of him who hears the words of God, and knows the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down with his eyes uncovered: I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!”

Then he looked on Amalek and took up his discourse and said,

“Amalek was the first among the nations, but its end is utter destruction.”

And he looked on the Kenite, and took up his discourse and said,

“Enduring is your dwelling place, and your nest is set in the rock. Nevertheless, Kain shall be burned when Asshur takes you away captive.”

And he took up his discourse and said,

“Alas, who shall live when God does this? But ships shall come from Kittim and shall afflict Asshur and Eber; and he too shall come to utter destruction.”

Then Balaam rose and went back to his place. And Balak also went his way.

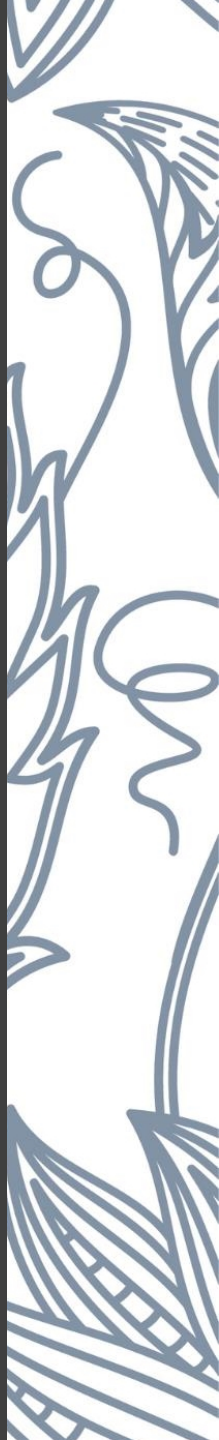


BALAAM'S ERROR?

- What exactly was Balaam's error?
 - To the contemporary reader, it seems like Balaam was obedient to God's instruction, and was unwilling to curse Israel.

“Moses said to them, “Have you let all the women live? Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the LORD.” – Num. 31:15-16

“I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.” – Rev. 2:14



Balak being very angry that the Israelites were not cursed, sent away Balaam, without thinking him worthy of any honour.

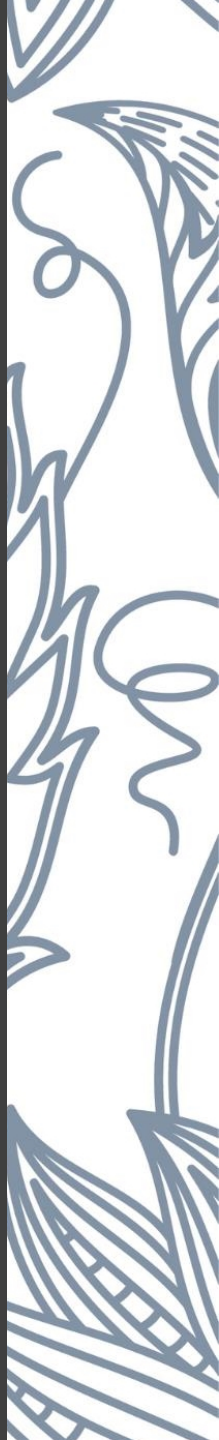
Whereupon, when he was just upon his journey, in order to pass the Euphrates, he sent for Balak, and for the Princes of the Midianites, and spake thus to them: "O Balak, and you Midianites that are here present: for I am obliged even without the will of God to gratify you. 'Tis true, no entire destruction can seize upon the nation of the Hebrews; neither by war, nor by plague, nor by scarcity of the fruits of the earth: nor can any other unexpected accident be their entire ruin. For the providence of God is concerned to preserve them from such a misfortune: nor will it permit any such calamity to come upon them, whereby they may all perish. But some small misfortunes, and those for some small time, whereby they may appear to be brought low, may still befall them. But after that they will flourish again, to the terror of

those that brought those mischiefs upon

them. So that if you have a mind to gain a victory over them for a short space of time, you will obtain it by following my directions. Do you therefore set out the comeliness of such of your daughters as are most eminent for beauty, and proper to force and conquer the modesty of those that behold them; and these decked and trimmed to the highest degree you are able. Then do you send them to be near the Israelites camp; and give them in charge, that when the young men of the Hebrews desire their company, they allow it them. And when they see they are enamoured of them, let them take their leaves; and if they intreat them to stay, let them not give their consent, till they have persuaded them to leave off their obedience to their own laws, and the worship of that God who established them; and to worship the Gods of the Midianites and Moabites: for by this means God will be angry at them." Accordingly, when Balaam had suggested counsel to them, he went his way.



BALAAM'S ERROR?

- This interpretation, which is validated in the New Testament provides context for the events portrayed in Numbers 25.
 - Upon the advice of Balaam, Balak had the Midianites send their daughters to seduce the sons of Israel, both to their beds and to worship god, Baal.
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While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said to Moses, "Take all the chiefs of the people and hang them in the sun before the Lord, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel." And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you kill those of his men who have yoked themselves to Baal of Peor."

And behold, one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite woman to his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the people of Israel, while they were weeping in the entrance of the tent of meeting. When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear in his

hand and went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced both of them, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. Thus the plague on the people of Israel was stopped. Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

And the Lord said to Moses, "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the people of Israel in my jealousy. Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace, and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel.'"


The name of the slain man of Israel, who was killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, chief of a father's house

belonging to the Simeonites. And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi the daughter of Zur, who was the tribal head of a father's house in Midian.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Harass the Midianites and strike them down, for they have harassed you with their wives, with which they beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of the chief of Midian, their sister, who was killed on the day of the plague on account of Peor."


BALAAM'S ERROR?

- Why, after blessing Israel three times – and now, well on his way home – would Balaam turn around and make this suggestion to Balak? Two ancient sources offer insight:
 - Philo of Alexandria, *On the Life of Moses* I.268: “Balaam, being allured by the gifts which were already proffered to him, and also by the hopes for the future which they held out to him, and being influenced also by the rank of those who invited him, began to yield, again alleging the commands of the Deity as his excuse, but no longer with sincerity.”
 - Mishnah, *Avot* 5.19: *Whoever possesses these three things, he is of the disciples of Abraham, our father; and [whoever possesses] three other things, he is of the disciples of Balaam, the wicked. A good eye, a humble spirit and a moderate appetite he is of the disciples of Abraham, our father. An evil eye, a haughty spirit and a limitless appetite he is of the*




disciples of Balaam, the wicked. What is the difference between the disciples of Abraham, our father, and the disciples of Balaam, the wicked? The disciples of Abraham, our father, enjoy this world, and inherit the world to come, as it is said: “I will endow those who love me with substance, I will fill their treasuries” (Proverbs 8:21). But the disciples of Balaam, the wicked, inherit gehinnom, and descend into the nethermost pit, as it is said: “For you, O God, will bring them down to the nethermost pit those murderous and treacherous men; they shall not live out half their days; but I trust in You” (Psalms 55:24).

- “In first century Jewish tradition... Balaam’s main flaw was encouraging Balak to entice Israel into sin, in particular some sexual sin... [He] was seen as particularly notorious because he did his prophesying for pay. Thus he was a greedy seducer of Israel. This description fits Jude’s view of the false teachers.” – *Ben Witherington III*
- “Jewish tradition remembered Balaam primarily as a man of greed, who for the sake of reward led Israel into debauchery and Idolatry. The parallel with Jude’s opponents will be that, like Balaam,



they were enticing the people of God into sexual immorality, and in doing so because they received financial rewards for their teaching. It may also be relevant that Balaam was in some sense a prophet, who received revelation in dreams and visions.” – *Richard Bauckham*



Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" When Moses heard it, he fell on his face, and he said to Korah and all his company, "In the morning the Lord will show who is his, and who is holy, and will bring him near to him. The one whom he chooses he will bring near to him. Do this: take censers, Korah and all his company; put fire in them and put incense on them before the Lord tomorrow, and the man whom the Lord chooses shall be the holy

one. You have gone too far, sons of Levi!"

And Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you sons of Levi: is it too small a thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do service in the tabernacle of the Lord and to stand before the congregation to minister to them, and that he has brought you near him, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you? And would you seek the priesthood also? Therefore it is against the Lord that you and all your company have gathered together. What is Aaron that you grumble against him?"

And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and they said, "We will not come up. Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you must also make yourself a prince over us? Moreover, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and

vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up.” And Moses was very angry and said to the Lord, “Do not respect their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, and I have not harmed one of them.”

And Moses said to Korah, “Be present, you and all your company, before the Lord, you and they, and Aaron, tomorrow. And let every one of you take his censer and put incense on it, and every one of you bring before the Lord his censer, 250 censers; you also, and Aaron, each his censer.” So every man took his censer and put fire in them and laid incense on them and stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron. Then Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the Lord appeared to all the congregation.

And the Lord spoke to Moses and to

Aaron, saying, “Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.” And they fell on their faces and said, “O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation?” And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Say to the congregation, Get away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.”

Then Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spoke to the congregation, saying, “Depart, please, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be swept away with all their sins.” So they got away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, together with their wives, their sons, and their little ones. And Moses said, “Hereby you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do

all these works, and that it has not been of my own accord. If these men die as all men die, or if they are visited by the fate of all mankind, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall know that these men have despised the Lord.”

And as soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. And all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, “Lest the earth swallow us up!” And fire came out from the Lord and

consumed the 250 men offering the

Incense.

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Tell Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest to take up the censers out of the blaze. Then scatter the fire far and wide, for they have become holy. As for the censers of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar, for they offered them before the Lord, and they became holy. Thus they shall be a sign to the people of Israel.” So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned had offered, and they were hammered out as a covering for the altar, to be a reminder to the people of Israel, so that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, should draw near to burn incense before the Lord, lest he become like Korah and his company—as the Lord said to him through Moses.

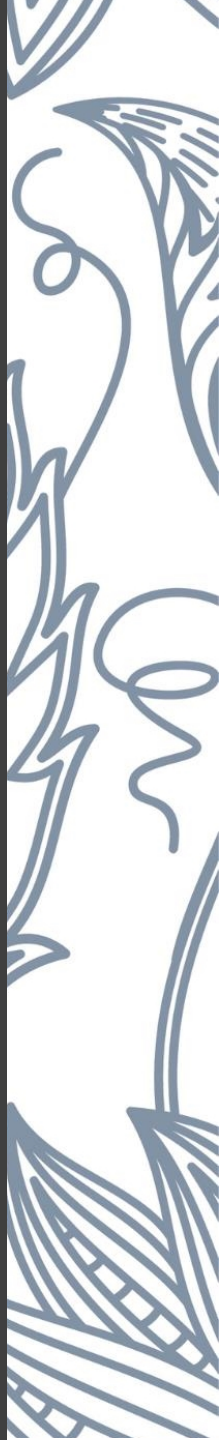
But on the next day all the congregation of


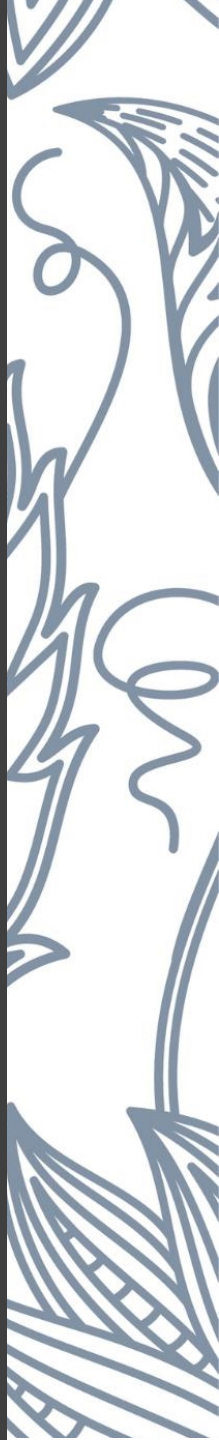
the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and against Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the Lord." And when the congregation had assembled against Moses and against Aaron, they turned toward the tent of meeting. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Get away from the midst of this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces. And Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer, and put fire on it from off the altar and lay incense on it and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from the Lord; the plague has begun." So Aaron took it as Moses said and ran into the midst of the assembly. And behold, the plague had already begun among the people. And he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead


and the living, and the plague was stopped. Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in the affair of Korah. And Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting, when the plague was stopped.



KORAH'S REBELLION

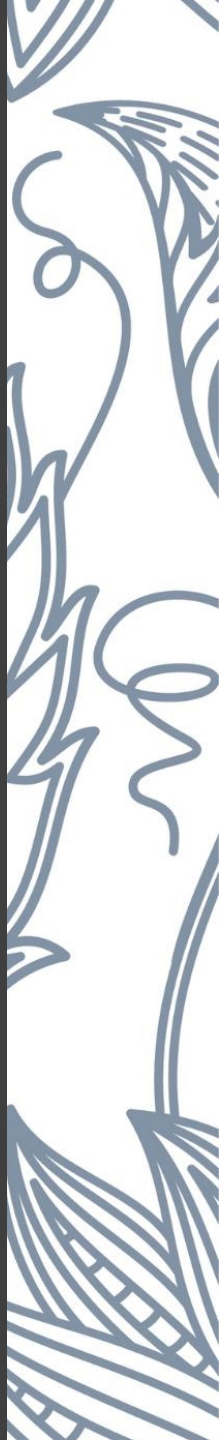
- Incensed by their sentence, rather than grieving their sin and repenting, the people blame Moses, and accuse him of lording over them.
 - Rather than submitting to the authority of God's judgment delivered through Moses, the leaders of the tribe of Levi and the tribe of Reuben declare autonomy.
 - Moses addresses Korah (a Levite) separately from Dathan and Abiram (Reubenites).
 - Korah's claim is as a (fellow) Levite, challenging Moses as the authority over Israel.
 - Dathan and Abiram emphasize the priesthood of all in the covenant community, rejecting all Levitical authority, even refusing to attend Moses' challenge at the Tabernacle to see whom God favors.
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- God commands his representatives to warn the people of the coming judgment, to separate themselves from the guilty.
 - Jude is referencing this story as an illustration of the attitudes and behavior of his own opponents, and as a demonstration of the judgment that awaits them.
 - A model for dealing with those who reject authority and rebel against God's law:
 1. Teach all that God has commanded.
 2. Warn those who are in error.
 3. Separate from those who persist.
 4. Intercede on their behalf.
 5. Leave the work of judgment to God.



“Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.”

“Jude arranges the series in ascending order from walking on a road, to abandoning oneself to error, to perishing in a rebellion. The suggestion is that the opponents are on a similar course.” – PHEME PERKINS, *Peter, James and Jude*, p. 152.

- Cain was a rebel who did not believe God's judgment would come. He challenged God's authority in order to live according to his own greed and lust, enticing others to join in his sin.
 - Balaam was a prophet for money, enticing others to join him in sin for his own financial gain.
 - Korah was a priest whose pride led him to reject Godly authority, enticing others to join in his rebellion, bringing disaster upon the whole congregation.
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NEXT WEEK...

- Hidden reefs.
 - Shepherds feeding themselves.
 - Waterless clouds.
 - Fruitless trees.
 - Wild waves.
 - Wandering stars.
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