

Lessons from Cain, Balaam, and Korah

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Jude, who was the half-brother of Jesus, warned us about three ways that worship can be corrupted. He wrote, "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**" (Jude 11).

1. The Way of Cain (Worshipping apathetically) Cain was the first religionist and didn't understand how to worship God correctly. Cain went through the motions of worship but didn't have true faith in God (Heb. 11:4). He didn't live righteously like Abel but was evil in his behavior. First John 3:12 says, "...Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous." **Cain represents the person who regularly attends church and goes through the motions of worship, but his heart isn't right with God and lives an unholy life.**

2. The Error of Balaam (Misusing authority for financial gain) Balaam was a prophet who tried to use his prophetic gift for personal financial gain. He compromised his integrity because he "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15). Balaam was so despicable to God that he is mentioned in eight different books of the Bible (Numbers 22, Deut. 23:4-5, Josh. 24:9-10, Neh. 13:2, Mic. 6:5, 2 Pet. 2:15, Jude 1:11, Rev. 2:14). **Balaam represents deceptive pastors, evangelists, and ministers who use their positions of authority to manipulate their congregations to gain personal wealth.** God will expose their motives on the Day of Judgment.

3. The Rebellion of Korah (Usurping godly authority) Korah led a rebellion against God's leader Moses, who was the most humble man on the face of the earth (Numbers 12:3). He wanted to overthrow Moses as leader because he refused to submit to godly authority (Numbers 16). **Korah represents rebellious church members who try to overthrow godly pastors and force them out of the church.** This is a very serious sin and will bring harsh punishment from God.

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