

## Episode 12: Jude 11-12

### *The Apostasy of Korah (6)*

In our last episode we explored the connection between Cain, Balaam, and Korah to the mysterious number of **666** and the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. We covered the first two (**6's**) of **666** and the stories of Cain and Balaam. Today, we will pick up with the third (**6**) of the mysterious **666**.

The third example is found in the rebellion of Korah, which is represented by those who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ—those who are seduced by “**the boastful pride of life**” e.g., the lust for power and authority over the people.

The story of Korah is found in **Numbers 16**. Korah was a Levite who served in the tabernacle. However, Korah was not satisfied with his position, and he did not like the way Moses and Aaron were leading the masses; therefore, he decided that he should have a shot at leadership. He led 250 men, who were well known leaders in the community, to challenge Moses leadership. They said:

#### **Numbers 16:3**

You have gone too far! The whole community of Israel has been set apart by **Yahweh**, and he is with all of us. What right do you have to act as though you are greater than the rest of the **Yahweh's** people?

Hearing this accusation, Moses fell on his face before God. He then told Korah and his 250 men to appear before **Yahweh** with their incense burners in hand, and said:

#### **Numbers 16:7-11**

Then we will see whom **Yahweh** chooses as his holy one. You Levites are the ones who have gone too far! Then Moses spoke again to Korah: "Now listen, you Levites! Does it seem insignificant to you that the God of Israel has chosen you from among all the community of Israel to be near him so you can serve in **Yahweh's** Tabernacle and stand before the people to minister to them? Korah, he has already given this special ministry to you and your fellow Levites. Are you now demanding the priesthood as well? **Yahweh** is the one you and your followers are really revolting against! For who is Aaron that you are complaining about him?"

Moses makes the point that **Yahweh** is the one who established leadership. In fact, neither Moses nor Aaron asked to have these roles; they were chosen. If you remember the story, Moses even pleaded with God to choose another man.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the complaint of Korah and his pathetic rebellion was not really against Moses or Aaron, but against **Yahweh** and His wisdom.

I love the way Moses did not try and defend his turf; he just turned to **Yahweh** and let Him handle the

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<sup>1</sup> See **Exodus 4:1-17**

problem.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Moses made the point that they, the Levites, ought to be satisfied with how God had gifted and determined to use them. They were chosen to minister in the tabernacle, to be near **Yahweh's** presence and minister before the people. That was a heady role, but for Korah it was not enough; he wanted more power, he wanted control. He even went about inciting division and stirring up all the people against Moses and Aaron.

The next morning, they gathered at the tabernacle and **Yahweh** told Moses to get the people away from the tents belonging to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (the leaders of the rebellion) and instructed them to not touch anything that belongs to these men, or they will be destroyed. Accordingly, the people separated themselves, but Dathan and Abiram defiantly stood at their tent entrances with their wives and kids.

Then Moses said to the people that if these men die a natural death, then **Yahweh** did not send him; but if they die an unusual death, such as the ground opening and swallowing alive both them and their families, with all their belongings, then these men have shown contempt for **Yahweh**.

The words had hardly finished coming forth from his mouth when the earth not only opened and swallowed them alive, along with their families and belongings, just as Moses said, but then it closed back up again and sealed them in their doom. The scriptures say they all fell alive into Sheol (presumably the bad part which we know generically as "hell"). Then, as if that did not adequately get the point across, fire came forth from **Yahweh** (from the Ark of the Covenant) and consumed the 250 men who were holding the lanterns which burned incense before **Yahweh**.

There is a lot to be said about **Yahweh's** judgment of apostates, but the morale of this story centers on the boldness of these mere men who thought they had better judgment and wisdom than God. They rejected God as their leader, they rejected God's appointed leaders, and they decided that when it came to managing their own lives, they could do the job better. **This is the sin of Korah captured in the boastful pride of life.**

Does it sound familiar? In multiple podcasts, we have talked a lot about the ways we play God over our own lives in search for the power, authority, and control. Then as this lust blossoms in the garden of religion, we seek to have that power, authority, and control over others. And far too often when position and authority are granted it is man's choosing and not that of **Yahweh**.

It is interesting that Korah used a Biblical concept to aid in his attempted manipulation. He appealed to the general priesthood of all believers. According to **1 Peter**, we have all been called, we have all been set apart, we are all priests; therefore, we can all lead.<sup>3</sup> And while that is true, God has also selected specific people to lead, and He has gifted them accordingly.<sup>4</sup> We must not ignore one Biblical truth for another.

<sup>2</sup> This is evidence that Moses was not controlled by the "boastful pride of life." Moses did not "own" his position; hence, he was not trying to wrestle Korah for control. Rather, He looked to **Yahweh** to be his defender.

<sup>3</sup> **1 Peter 2:9-10**

<sup>4</sup> **Ephesians 4:11-16**

## The boastful pride of life, the lust for power, authority, and control is the third (6) of 666.

This idea is picked up in the letters which Jesus wrote to Ephesus and Pergamum where God expressed His disdain for the Nicolaitans (a name which means power or victory over the people), and to Thyatira where the power to rule over God's people was demanded by a prophetess due to her unique gifting (*Thyatira* comes from the Greek words, *thea*, "a female deity, goddess," and *tyrannos*, "a tyrant or ruler.")<sup>5</sup>

If we look at how Jude used these 3 metaphors, he lets us know that the road of apostasy is never stable and is a slippery slope of corruption. **If these people cannot manipulate God to get what they want by being good for Him, then they will pillage the followers of God to take what they want. And when that is not enough, they will demand the power, the authority, and the right to control the people, regardless of what God wants. And they will force their will on both the people of God and those that God has set apart and chosen for His work.**

Cain, Balaam, and Korah speak to us from eternity past to warn us of the horror of following wrong belief and embracing unbelief. Let us never be found in that sordid company of fiends.

### *Psalm 1*

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of **Yahweh**, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For **Yahweh** knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

## Summary of Jude 11 (666)

**Personal Goodness (6).** From **Cain** we understand how the apostasy inherent in the "religion" of Christianity is deceptive, inviting, and ever so alluring. We find ourselves convinced, at some deep emotional level in our soul, that we can be good for God and that God is obligated to appreciate and honor all our sincere acts of worship, service, obedience, and sacrifice by blessing us.

**APOSTASY ALWAYS STARTS WITH THE ELEVATION OF THE ME.  
THIS IS THE LUST OF THE FLESH.**

Our *flesh* desires nothing more than to be "like God".<sup>6</sup> By the way, the idea that we can be "like God"

<sup>5</sup> See *Revelation 2:6, 15, 18-28*

<sup>6</sup> *Genesis 3:5*

(all it takes is a little bite) is the very first wrong belief which has been imprinted on the soul of every person who has ever lived. I like to call it the “**Eve-Imprint.**”

**Greed (6).** Balaam taught us how the lifeblood of apostasy is greed. For Balaam, greed was all about money and lifestyle. However, for most of us, greed happens to take the form of what we most want out of this life and what we most want God to provide for us given our present circumstances.

Greed is a barrier to truly knowing God. It reveals that what we really want is what God can give us and not just God Himself. We want the benefits that come with Jesus (like heaven and His getting us out of tight spots), but we do not really want to know Him as a person, since that means believing in His name, knowing Him in His suffering, and agreeing that He can go to war against everything in us that stands in rebellion to Him and fights against His rule as the **I AM** over our lives.

Not surprising, so few have been willing to both say and live under the declaration: **not my will, but your will be done.** Instead, those who abandoned themselves for the sake of gain, find every which way to attempt to manipulate God, the people of God, their gifting, and so on, to get what they want out of this life. It is the greed of Balaam’s error and the church is infected by this disease. In fact, in **Jude 16** the Spirit readdresses these issues, but from a slightly different angle. In **Jude 16**, the Spirit specifically addresses the leaders in the religion of Christianity and shines light on the fact that they will use anyone for the purposes of accomplishing their own desires, be it ministry or otherwise.

**Power and Control (6).** Those who walk in the way of **Korah** are those who desire to ultimately be in control of their own lives. They do not want the authority that **Yahweh** has established to be over their lives; and, in so doing, they reject our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. They want the power, they want the control, they want the adoration of the people, and they want the following of those faithful to them.

Those who follow in Korah’s rebellion want the power, the rule, the authority, and they want it now. They are tired of someone telling them what to do. Therefore, they manipulate spiritual principles to manipulate the people of God to help them achieve their objectives. They are aggressive in finding others who will support their leadership, but in so doing they not only destroy their own lives but the lives of all those whom they corrupt with their arrogance, defiance, and rebellion.

### **Jude 12**

These are in your love-feasts craggy rocks; feasting together with you, without fear shepherding themselves; clouds without water, by winds carried about; trees autumnal, without fruit, twice dead, rooted up; wild waves of a sea, foaming out their own shames; stars wandering, to whom the gloom of the darkness to the age hath been kept.

I quoted mostly from Young’s Literal Translation. It is a bit clunky, but I like the clarity of the translation. In this passage, the Spirit suddenly moves the focus of His lens away from these apostates and turns it directly toward those who have been impacted by these apostates.

The idea is that by now those to whom Jude is writing are to have had some notion that “these people” who have crept into their fellowship were bad people, but clearly, they did not. **They were allowing this destruction to take place right in front of their faces.** Therefore, the Spirit gives us His 12<sup>th</sup> triad. **These**

are uniquely intended to expose apostasy in a demonstrative attempt to wake up believers to the very real dangers that these apostates pose to the health of the body.

## Triad 12: “craggy rocks,” “shepherding themselves,” “clouds without water.”

### *Craggy Rocks*

The idea of the craggy rocks is that these people can shipwreck your life and destroy what is most precious to you (your faith and your relationships); and, like a dangerous reef hidden beneath the waves, you will not even see it coming. You will be sailing forward unawares and suddenly your ship is torn apart, and then it is too late. If you are not watching out, if you are not on guard, if you are not looking at the maps or learning from the wreckage that has previously been splattered about the water, then you will similarly be destroyed.

Many have grown up with the religious lie, that is a twist on the truth, which says that we are not to be judgmental and that we are to be tolerant of others and just “love” each other. And while that is a nice and lofty sounding principle that is so befitting of good religion, it can also kill you. Moreover, it is extremely manipulative as those who tend to throw that reasoning out there have no idea what the Spirit means by love.

We are to be discerning of the truth, always standing for the truth,<sup>7</sup> and not be like fools who are unaware of what is happening around them. Besides, loving others with God’s *agape* love is the standard, not what we define as love. That means that **Yahweh** who is *agape* love must love others through us.<sup>8</sup> And we know what that means for those who let Him love through them: **WAR!** A war of personal possession, which so few have been willing to let God wage. Besides, if the quip about just “loving others” were true, Jude should never have written this letter, as it is quite “un-loving” in its tone, intent, and accusations (sarcasm noted).

The problem we face is that these apostates clearly know how to act like they belong. Jude is addressing those who knew the words, the lingo, the behavior, the attitudes, the customs, and so on; and who have become skilled at hiding what was truly inside their hearts. So, they could feast anytime they wanted, and everyone was completely unaware of their insidious duplicity.

But they can be found out, and the Spirit is saying that we can know them because the fruit of their lives speak louder than their words or their claimed authority. Jesus gives us an example to follow as He boldly addressed the apostates of His day, which also just coincidentally happened to be the spiritual leaders of the time (it was not really a coincidence, as it is the way of **Korah** to worm one’s way into a controlling leadership position).

Those leaders looked the part, they had the title, the role, the position, the education and training, the authentication and accompanying prestige, as well as the full authority granted to them by the “religious system.” But they were dead on the inside. Jesus called them whitewashed tombs.<sup>9</sup> They had nothing to offer but rot and stink; and if was not for their pretty externals, no one would be interested in them. They epitomized the meaning of **666** and the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the boastful pride of

<sup>7</sup> **2 Corinthians 13:8**

<sup>8</sup> **1 John 4:7, 16**

<sup>9</sup> **Matthew 23:27-28**

life.

The outside of their cup was nice and clean, but the inside was filthy.<sup>10</sup> They were blind men who led the blind off cliffs of religious doom.<sup>11</sup> They knew about God, but they did not know God by His name (they would not even speak His memorial name given to all generations). As such, they did not know how to lead anyone to **Yahweh**. They were hypocrites who wrapped people up in their religious rules and requirements yet never lifted their finger to truly help anyone. In fact, they were unable to help anyone because they themselves needed the help.

Moreover, by the way Jesus addressed them, it is clear they knew they were living a lie; yet they were unwilling to entertain the idea that there might be another way other than that which had been passed down to them from the previous generations. Besides, they loved their spiritual legacy and lifestyle more than they loved God. They had been seduced by the lusts of the *flesh*, the lusts of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life, proving that the love of the Father was not in them.<sup>12</sup>

The most amazing thing, however, is that Jesus did not placate these leaders just because they ran the “religious system” and had the power and the people in their hands. No, He was discerning and called-them-out for what they truly were: children of their father the devil.<sup>13</sup>

I am sure Jesus’ followers were shaking in their boots whenever He confronted the spiritual leaders; but He did it none the less. Jesus’ followers had to learn the lesson to not judge with eyes of the *flesh* (which is a **ME** centered form of judgment) but to judge only with the eyes of faith. They had to learn the lesson that it is the honor which comes from God that is important and not the honor that comes from man.<sup>14</sup>

**WE ARE TO FOLLOW JESUS’ EXAMPLE IN ALL THINGS;<sup>15</sup> HENCE, THIS SORT OF JUDGMENT IS THE GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE OF HIS FAITHFUL ONES.<sup>16</sup>**

## Deeds of the Spirit

Like Jesus, Jude writes because these apostates were fully integrated into the church and were part of the church’s most intimate acts of fellowship, and that was their love (*agape*) feasts—the time when they all came together and shared a meal, took communion, and worshiped **Yahweh**.

The concern of the Spirit is that when the body gathers, there is an inherent vulnerability as we naturally tend to let down our guard and trust ourselves to one another, which in practice is a good thing and is necessary for us to experience true intimacy. But God’s *agape* love has so many faces. The Spirit would say that in God’s *agape* love, togetherness, openness, trust, and intimacy are not exclusive of

<sup>10</sup> **Matthew 23:25-26; Luke 11:39**

<sup>11</sup> **Matthew 15:14**

<sup>12</sup> **1 John 2:15-16**

<sup>13</sup> **John 8:44**

<sup>14</sup> **John 4:39-44**

<sup>15</sup> **Ephesians 5:1; 1 John 2:6**

<sup>16</sup> **See Psalm 149**

discernment and judgment; rather, they go hand in hand.

Think about it, the only way we can truly be open, trusting, and intimate is when we are **safe**. But if we are surrounded with those who are secretly looking to rule, control, exercise power over us, and so on, then we put ourselves at greatest risk when we trust them.

**WE MUST BE WILLING TO LOOK AT THE FRUIT OF PEOPLE'S LIVES AND TRUST OURSELVES TO THEM ONLY IN SO FAR AS WE CAN TRUST OURSELVES TO JESUS WHO LIVES IN THEM.**

If we do not see Jesus proved out in their faith, proved out in their relationships, proved out in *agape* love, then we must be wary and not fully trust ourselves to them or else we risk getting severely damaged like a ship that is smashed against craggy rocks.

This does not mean that we are not to be in relationship with people who are struggling with their faith; it just means that we do not give ourselves to them in personal vulnerability. Again, Jesus set the example for us to follow.

We are told that although many people believed He was the Messiah, Jesus did not trust Himself to them, because he knew what people were really like. No one needed to instruct Him about human nature.<sup>17</sup> Despite the fact that people were willing to follow Him, Jesus knew that without the Holy Spirit controlling their lives, they could flip-flop at any moment from shouts of "hallelujah" to shouts of "Crucify Him."

Furthermore, the Spirit prompts us to be mature enough to distinguish between the fruit of the Spirit and good religious behavior. He expects us to be mature enough to know when someone's life produces God's *agape* love and when it produces a religious sort of love. In some circles, people claim that they have *agape* love just because they call themselves "Christians" and gather to do Christian things—as if God's *agape* love is part-and-parcel with having said the "sinner's prayer."

**SINCE GOD IS AGAPE LOVE, AGAPE LOVE, COMES ONLY BY POSSESSION:  
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SPIRIT OF GOD POSSESSES A PERSON IS THE EXTENT TO  
WHICH GOD'S AGAPE CAN FLOW FROM THEIR LIVES.<sup>18</sup>  
NO ONE CAN MANUFACTURE AGAPE LOVE, THEY CAN ONLY BE A VESSEL OF IT.**

In addition, *agape* love is identifiable by its fruit of love, which is: joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.<sup>19</sup> It is also a sort of love that is patient, kind, is not jealous, does not brag and is not arrogant, and does not act unbecomingly. It does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into-account, or even consider a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but

<sup>17</sup> John 2:23-25

<sup>18</sup> 1 John 4:8, 16

<sup>19</sup> Galatians 5:22-23

rejoices with the truth. It is a love that bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Accordingly, *agape* love never fails.<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, if this sort of love marks a person's life, then it is probably very safe to trust that Jesus is living in and through them. Now, that does not mean they will always walk in this manner, but this sort of love ought to be ever increasing in their lives.

Did you notice that this description of *agape* contained not a single reference to Christian service, deeds, gifting, or obedience? Thus, if a person's life is not marked increasingly by this sort of unselfish, unprotected, and freely given love, then we better be careful and not be fooled by position, title, gifting, authority, power, service, deeds, ministry, personal success, or by any religious act.

## Deeds of the Flesh

The Spirit is **WARNING** us to take off our religious blinders and examine the lives of those who are in control or who want to be in control. We are to be realistic about whether their lives are ever increasing with the manifestation of *agape* love or if their lives more accurately reflect the deeds of the *flesh*: bitter jealousy, un-forgiveness, selfish ambition, pride, arrogance, disorder, boastfulness, sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, rudeness, outbursts of anger, irritability, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, impatience, wild parties, demanding one's own way, and other things like these where they consider themselves before others, take care of themselves before others, and are unwilling to yield to others.<sup>21</sup> Even if it is all wrapped up in good Christianity and done in Jesus' name!

The point of the first part of this triad is that these apostates will shipwreck our lives but with discernment and judgment we can know and should know the apostates in our midst and not fall prey to their religious licentiousness.

Well, we only covered the first part of this 12<sup>th</sup> triad, "craggy rocks" but we will pick up with the rest of Jude 12 and the rest of this triad in our next podcast.

<sup>20</sup> **1 Corinthians 13:4-8**

<sup>21</sup> **James 3:13-16; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7**