

The Judgment of False Teachers – Part 8

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Jude applies the apocalyptic judgments of the past to the false teachers of the present
2. aim – to cause us to seek the purity of the gospel of grace and warn those who attempt to pervert it
3. passage – Jude 5-16

b. outline

1. The Judgments Upon Rebels (Jude 5-7)
2. The Judgments Upon Blasphemers (Jude 8-13)
3. The Judgments Upon Malcontents (Jude 14-16)

c. opening

1. returning to our examination of **Jude 11**
2. **thesis: part 2 (v. 8) – those who come to pervert the grace of God in the gospel start from a basis of emotionalism rather than an objective standard of truth, and they ignore (or deny) the grave danger that they put themselves (and others) in by doing so**
 - a. **IOW:** those who “blaspheme” are belittling the evil spiritual realm by failing to grasp the danger of being manipulated by it – **i.e.** those who are **driven by emotion** are easy prey for manipulation
 - b. so, Jude continues this thesis by turning to speak more *specifically* of the danger the false teachers bring upon themselves and their hearers by using **three (3) examples** of such men
 1. **Cain** – a man who flirted with the danger of thinking that *he* set the terms of approaching God
 - a. the false teachers teach the same: **come to God on your terms**
 2. **Balaam** – a man who flirted with the danger of thinking that he could suit his *own* ends
 - a. the false teachers teach the same: **come to God for your desires to be fulfilled**

II. The Judgments Upon Blasphemers (Jude 8-13)

Content

d. the woe upon the blasphemers (v. 11)

4. the danger of perishing in the way of Korah
 - a. the context of the story
 1. **because:** the events of **Numbers 16 drive at the very heart Israel herself**
 2. after the descendants of Israel come out of Egypt at the Exodus and cross the Red Sea,
 3. they come to the wilderness of Sinai and receive the law of God (**i.e.** he *relates* to them)
 4. (**before the spies**) as a part of this relationship, God establishes the *priesthood*
 - a. starting in **Exodus 26**, God instructs the building of a *tabernacle* (**a tent of meeting**)
 - b. and, it is **the line of Aaron** that is set aside *specifically* to be its priests (**Exodus 28:1**)
 1. they were clothed with special robes, signifying their unique status and purpose
 2. they were uniquely consecrated, set aside to this role to serve God as **mediators**
 5. the **Levites** were *exempted* from the allotment of the Promised Land, to serve the priests
 - a. they would have no inheritance of land, but would be “interspersed” amongst the other tribes
 1. they were to receive an allotment of land around each city in Israel (**Numbers 35:2ff**)
 2. they were to receive six (6) cities of refuge, where they would protect “manslayers”
 - b. they were appointed by God to serve the priests (**i.e.** as their helpers) at the tabernacle
 1. they were to set up and tear down the tabernacle, and carry it from place to place
 2. they were to guard the tabernacle from intruders and those unable to enter
 3. they were to help the priests minister around the tabernacle however it was needed
 - c. **note:** all of this is treated by God as a **special honor** amongst the people
 1. they were recognized by God as the “*firstborn*” of Israel (**Numbers 3:11ff**)
 2. they were to be honored amongst the people and cared for wherever they lived
 3. they were often given special gifts for their service (**e.g.** wagons, **Numbers 7:5ff**)
 6. the clans of the Levites are listed in the genealogy of Moses and Aaron (**Exodus 6**)
 - a. Moses and Aaron’s father was Amram, the son of Kohath, the second-born son of Levi
 1. **note:** there is undoubtedly a “gap” between Kohath and Amram, given the 400 years
 - b. Moses/Aaron’s uncle was Izhar; Izhar’s firstborn son was Korah, the man of **Jude 11** ...

- b. the details of the story (**Numbers 16 in paraphrase**)
1. **vv. 1-3** – Korah (and his allies) come with a complaint before Moses and Aaron
 - a. **note:** this event occurs *after* the spies and the curse of God – during the 40 years
 - b. Korah develops an alliance with Dathan, Abiram, and On (from Reuben) and 250 chiefs
 1. **note:** it is *possible* that Korah believed that convincing some from Reuben would bolster his chances, given that Reuben was the *firstborn* of Israel
 2. the 250 chiefs are from the “assembly” (**i.e.** the whole of Israel) – well-known men
 3. Korah convinced “outsiders” (**i.e.** non-Levites) and men of renown (**i.e.** throughout Israel) to his position – this makes it a **general rebellion** against the ways of the Lord
 - c. **the complaint:** if *everyone* in Israel is “holy” before the Lord, then why is the priesthood limited to *only* the family of Aaron (and Moses, by extension)?
 1. “*exalt yourselves above the assembly*” = give yourselves a *special position* in Israel
 - a. **note:** it is only Moses’ statement in **v. 10** that clarifies what Korah is asking: **Korah wants to be a priest, not just a Levite**
 - b. **i.e.** he wants the honor to enter the tabernacle and offer sacrifices – but, he also wants the *greater honor* (position) that the priests have before God (and the people)
 2. “holy” (**in this context**): not *sinless*, but *in relationship* to God = everyone in Israel has a *covenant relationship* with God, so everyone should be allowed to serve the Lord *directly*
 - a. **i.e.** the right to serve God (in the tabernacle) should not be limited to just one family
 - b. (**keep this thought for later**) Korah’s complaint has a certain “validity”, but only within the framework of the New Covenant – in *this* covenant, God *must* limit the tabernacle service to a specific line of consecrated *men*, thus Korah’s request is a **rebellion**
 1. **i.e.** true, the people are in relationship to God (holy), but that relationship is utterly dependent upon the tabernacle service for a *continuing act* of atonement
 2. **vv. 4-11** – Moses responds to Korah
 - a. first, Moses instructs Korah and his “company” to bring censers of incense before the tent (along with the priests) and the Lord will choose from amongst them
 1. censer = a container used to burn incense, typically swung on a chain to disperse smoke
 2. **note:** Moses is “setting them up” – it is a violation of the law for *anyone* other than the priests to offer incense before Lord (**i.e.** unauthorized incense; **Exodus 30:9**)
 - b. second, Moses appeals to the Levites to remember their special place before the Lord
 1. **i.e.** your special place is given by God and is a great honor *above all the rest of Israel*
 2. **i.e.** when you attempt to “expand” what God has given you, you rebel against *him*
 3. **vv. 12-15** – Moses responds to Dathan and Abiram (the Reubenites)
 - a. **note:** the Dathan prominent in *The Ten Commandments* (E.G. Robinson) envisioned here
 - b. **note:** the On of **v. 1** is not mentioned again in the narrative (**i.e.** did he *repent*?)
 - c. Moses calls for them to come to him for a meeting, *but they reject his invitation*
 1. their complaint is about being “trapped” in the wilderness – being taken from a land “*flowing with milk and honey*” (**i.e.** Egypt) to a wilderness existence
 2. apparently, they have forgotten a) their slavery, and b) their rebellion against going into the Promised Land *in the first place* – **i.e.** they act very much like *children*
 3. the issue of Korah is probably just *pretext* to them – they don’t really care about being priests, they just want the “better life” promised them before (**see below**)
 - c. so, Moses asks the Lord not to “*respect their offering*” = to judge them in their sin
 1. “*I have not taken one donkey from them*” = I have done nothing to them myself; all of their “misfortune” is entirely their own doing in rebelling against the Lord
 4. **vv. 16-35** – God responds to Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and the 250
 - a. **remember:** in **Jude 11**, the false teachers are said to have “*perished in Korah’s rebellion*”
 1. Cain did not die (he was cursed to wander the earth); Balaam *eventually* died, specifically at the hands of an army of men raised up to destroy the Midianites/Moabites (**Num. 31**)
 2. but, Korah’s fate is more *intense* and *immediate* – what Jude wants us to consider ...
 - b. the members of Korah’s “team” bring their censers to the tabernacle, and Korah stirs up the *entire assembly of Israel* to meet them there (probably a bit of overconfidence!)
 - c. God comes down in his glory and tells Moses and Aaron to “*separate*” themselves
 1. **i.e.** he has purposed to destroy *the entire nation* for this gathering
 2. however, *as before*, Moses intercedes for the people and God relents (**see below**)
 3. God instructs the people to move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram
 - a. **note:** it would appear that the act of the people dispersing from the tabernacle causes Korah, et. al. to run back to their own tents, (probably) hoping the incident is over

4. but, after Moses' warning, the earth opens up and swallows the households of Korah, et. al., and fire comes down from the Lord to consume the 250 offering the incense
5. they "go down alive into Sheol" = they go down to the "place of dead"; lit. buried by God
5. **vv. 36-50** – God responds to the entire nation in their response to the incident
 - a. he instructs Eleazar the son of Aaron to hammer the censers into new plates for the altar
 - b. but ... the next day, the people grumble against Moses and Aaron: "you have killed the people of the Lord" (i.e. what gives you the right to do this?)
 1. **seriously**: they blame Moses for the earth opening up and fire coming from heaven?
 - c. God then sends a plague upon them that kills 14,700 before Aaron can atone through the use of *his own* incense between them and God
- c. the application of the story to **Jude 11**
 1. **question**: what is a **priest**; what does a priest do that makes him unique?
 - a. **answer**: a priest is a *mediator* – a priest stands between a holy God and unholy men, to "arbitrate" between them by bringing the means necessary to *reconcile* them
 - b. the priests of the Old Covenant continually offered sacrifice to atone for the people
 - c. but, Christ is the *ultimate priest* – he mediates between God and the elect with his own life, death, and burial as the means to reconcile a people to God *perfectly* and *completely*
 - d. **1 Peter 2:9** speaks of Christians as a "*royal priesthood*" = a *new* priesthood in which every believer acts as a mediator between God and man (i.e. in what Korah envisioned)
 1. **not to offer a sacrifice for the reprobate, but to offer a sacrifice to the reprobate**
 2. **i.e.** bringing the *completed* offering of Christ, for the rebel to repent and receive
 - e. **Christians have been given the high honor of being the priestly line of Christ, serving the king to do his will in the world, to serve him in the ways that he has prescribed**
 2. but, the false teachers "*perish*" in the rebellion of Korah = they teach that believers are free to serve in ways *contrary* to what God has prescribed; **i.e. outside of their proper place**
 - a. **e.g.** the belief that you get to "tell" others (i.e. leaders) how the church is to operate or what your relationship to it is to be
 - b. Korah believed that he could "be a priest" even though God had established his place as a Levite – **he wanted to prescribe his own place**, rather than the one given him by God
 - c. **the false teachers "pervert" the gospel of grace "into sensuality" by making the faith "all about me" – that what God has called us to is our personal "place", even if that means compromising the truth of what his desires for us truly are**
 2. **principle: unlike Korah, we must "take dominion" over our tendency to listen to those who would diminish where God has placed us in favor of the more "appealing" message of doing what we please**
 - a. (unlike Cain) come to God on *his* terms, (unlike Balaam) sacrifice our desires *for his*, and (unlike Korah) love where God has placed us as we seek to do his will