**Jude 11c Blind Greed of Balaam** ｩ**2019 WF Cobb Truthbase.net *DailyTruthbase.blogspot***

Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah

**I. Greed=addiction to more** (for security or significance/worth→**feel good**) renders us insensitive/blind to God's purposes (to bless) His provision of our felt and real needs, & the needs and welfare of loyal donkeys and God's people (our responsibilities to them), disqualifying us from worship/blessing

Mk 7:21 out of the heart *(trained values)*, proceed evil thots, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness/**greed**, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile/disqualify a man (from a rlshp with God) *Ps 51:10*

2Pt 2:14 They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. 15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16 but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. 17 These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness

Isa 56:11 they are greedy dogs which never have enough. They are shepherds who cannot understand; All look to their own way, Every one for his own gain

**II. Balaam blindly sought personal profit at the expense** of others and God's plan; thus died the death of the unrighteous *-Num 31:8*

Balaam should have stopped after the first time God said no, and not advised how to undermine God's blessing (by making them \unworthy/defiled)

Donkey demo humble service and said the same thing the angel did. Saw what the “eyes open” prophet couldn't because he was blinded by his greed

Num 23:19 “God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? 20 Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

21 “He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him,

Num 25:1 Israel began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. 2 invited to the sacrifices of their gods, 3 Israel was joined to Baal of Peor

Polemic cx Bal who was said to give: insight, ways to make wealth, and clever inventions

31:8 Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword. 14 Moses was angry with the officers...15 you kept all the women alive? 16 Look, these women caused the children of Israel, thru the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, plague 24k *[Phinehas to the rescue! 25:11-12*]

**III. God did not make us to be satisfied by things** *Midas* but by loyal love relationships with Him and others

Rev 2:4 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine/teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

**A. *Psych Today****: “ultimate addiction”. Driven to acquire with no end in sight, but it's subject to the law of diminishing returns Possessions are a poor mask/substitute the poverty of a bad self image. Unconsciously link fundamental human value to financial net worth.. Not only doesn't it satisfy, harming our motivation for living, but in the process harms others Nothing is enough to the [person] for whom enough is too little." ~ Epicurus*

Heb 13:5 Let your conduct be w/o covetousness; be **content** with what you have; He said: I will never leave you nor forsake you *Dt 31:6-8 Josh 1:5*

How reconcile the command to be content with aspirations of greed? Pursuing $ success almost inevitably comes at the expense of spiritual success; you can't serve God and mammon nor have sense of belonging and connectedness and mutual rlshps obliterated in the desire for more $ *Phil 4:11 1Tim 6:8*

**B.** **What are the warning signs of uncontrolled greed?** *#1 MBA in world https://knowledge.insead.edu/blog/insead-blog/seven-signs-of-the-greed-syndrome-4624*

1. Overly self-centered behavior becomes the first give-away of greedy people. Greedy people are always saying “me, me, me” with very little regard for the needs and feelings of others *cx Golden rule.* Greedy people are highly talented in taking credit for work done by others.
2. Greedy people lack empathy. Caring—being concerned about the feelings of others—is not part of their repertoire. As such, they have little qualms about causing pain to others. Their inability to empathise, their lack of genuine interest in the ideas and feelings of others, and their unwillingness to take personal responsibility for their behavior and actions makes them very difficult people to be with.
3. They are never satisfied. They truly believe that they deserve more, even if it comes at someone else’s expense.
4. Greedy people are into the short run; they are focused on satiating their immediate needs and leave it to others to cope with the consequences.

**IV. Greed is idolatry** thru ignorance of its Causes (independence from God) and Consequences (loss of inheritance vs contentment)

Lk 12:15 Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses 19 "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." 20 God said: 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided? 21 So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." 30 all these things worldlings seek after, but your Father knows you need these things. 31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

2Cor 9:8 God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

Phil 4:11 I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things thru Christ who strengthens me.

**V. Greed must be killed** with the truth of its consequences and embracing truth that God gives us all we need to be content

1Tim 6:10 love of money=a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves thru with many sorrows

Col 3: 5 put to death fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness/**greed**, which is **idolatry**. 6 'cs of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, *cf 1Cor 6:10 & Eph 5:5* not inherit; *1Cor 5:11* not keep company with...nor even eat with greedy or idolater Christian

Eph 5:3 fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness/greed, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints;

**Questions for Reflection/Discussion/Response:**

1. Why do you think the 10 commandments begin with idolatry and end with greed? Are those internal or external sins?

2. Could you be content with just food and clothing? Can you be content with what God has already provided? Why want more?

3. Can you point to a time when you murdered greed? How did you do it? Does it stay dead? How can you make it extinct?

Numbers

22:9 Then God came to Balaam and said, “Who are these men with you?” 10 So Balaam said to God, “Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, 11 ‘Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out. 12 And God said to Balaam, “You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.”13 So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, “Go back to your land, for the Lord has refused to give me permission to go with you.” 14 Balaam refuses to come with us.”

17 for I will certainly honor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. Therefore please come, curse this people for me.’ ”

18 Then 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 word of the Lord my God, to do less or more. 19 Now therefore, please, you also stay here tonight, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me.” 20 And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, “If the men come to call you, rise and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do.” 21 So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.

22:22 Then God’s anger was aroused because he went, and the Angel of the Lord took His stand in the way as an adversary against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. 28 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?” 29 And Balaam said to the donkey, “Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!” 30 So the donkey said to Balaam, “Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since I became yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?”

And he said, “No” 31 Then the Lord opened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. 32 And the Angel of the Lord said to him, “Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand against you, because your way is perverse before Me. 33 The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live.”34 And Balaam said to the Angel of the Lord, “I have sinned, for I did not know You stood in the way against me. Now therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn back.”

35 Then the Angel of the Lord said to Balaam, “Go with the men, but only the word that I speak to you, that you shall speak.” So Balaam went with the princes of Balak. 38 And Balaam said to Balak, “Look, I have come to you! Now, have I any power at all to say anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that I must speak. 23 Then Balaam said to Balak, “Build seven altars for me here, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams. 3 Then Balaam said to Balak, “Stand by your burnt offering, and I will go; perhaps the Lord will come to meet me, and whatever He shows me I will tell you.” So he went to a desolate height. 4 And God met Balaam, and he said to Him, “I have prepared the seven altars, and I have \5 Then the Lord put a word in Balaam’s mouth, and said, “Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak.” 6 So he returned to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, he and all the princes of Moab.8 “How shall I curse whom God has not cursed? And how shall I denounce whom the Lord has not denounced?10 Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his!”12 So he answered and said, “Must I not take heed to speak what the Lord has put in my mouth?”

15 And he said to Balak, “Stand here by your burnt offering while I meet the Lord over there.” 16 Then the Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, “Go back to Balak, and thus you shall speak.” has the Lord spoken?”

18 Then he took up his oracle and said:“Rise up, Balak, and hear!

19 “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do?
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? 20 Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

21 “He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him,
22 God brings them out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox.

23 “For there is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, ‘Oh, what God has done!’
26 So Balaam answered and said to Balak, “Did I not tell you, saying, ‘All that the Lord speaks, that I must do’?”

27 Then Balak said to Balaam, “Please come, I will take you to another place; perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there.”

24:1 Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his face toward the wilderness. 2 And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

3 Then he took up his oracle and said: “The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened,
4 The utterance of him who hears the words of God, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open:

9 “Blessed is he who blesses you and cursed is he who curses you.”

10 Then Balak’s anger was aroused against Balaam, and he struck his hands together; and Balak said to Balaam, “I called you to curse my enemies, and look, you have bountifully blessed them these three times! 11 Now therefore, flee to your place. I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the Lord has kept you back from honor.”

12 So Balaam said to Balak, “Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, 13 ‘If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord, to do good or bad of my own will. What the Lord says, that I must speak’? 14 And now, indeed, I am going to my people. Come, I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the latter days.”

15 So he took up his oracle and said:

“The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, and the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened; 16 The utterance of him who hears the words of God,
And has the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open:

17 “I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel,
And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.

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25 So Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way.

Dt 233 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; forever, 4 because they did not meet you with bread and came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. 5 Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you,

because the LORD your God loves you. 6 You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

Josh 13:22 Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them.

Josh 24:9 Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you.

10 But I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand.

Neh 13:1 no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God, 2 because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing.