



Daily Verse and Comment

Jude 1:11

(11) 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.

New King James Version

Jude relates that those he is warning against "have . . . perished in the rebellion of Korah." The crux of Korah's story appears in the opening verses of Numbers 16:

Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with 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 some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown. They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?" ([Numbers 16:1-3](#))

Korah and his ilk make common cause with their fellowman to achieve their own ends. Theirs was a message of equality and populism, but all they were really concerned about was their own positions.

What they said contained a measure of truth: The whole congregation was technically holy (meaning it had been set apart), and yes, the Lord was among them. However, what these men had overlooked is that [God puts people where He wants them](#). In verses 8-10, Moses points out the honor and privilege God had already given to these men, but this was not enough for them. They wanted to climb further up the ladder. In verses 11 and 30,

Moses says that their agitating for change in the God-given order of things was, in reality, an assault against God and a rejection of Him. They did not trust the way that God had ordered His congregation, believing that they could do a better job! In the end, they all died terrifying deaths because of their rebellion against their Sovereign.

Sadly, even after their swift judgment, the seeds of rebellion they had planted continued to grow. The next day, the whole congregation—the one that was "holy" and had "the LORD among them"—complained against Moses and Aaron, accusing them of killing "the people of the LORD." In response, God sent a plague, and when it was all over, an additional 14,700 people had died! Not only that, but a great many more would have died if it had not been for the intercession of Moses and Aaron. Verse 45 suggests that God was ready to consume every single Israelite except for Moses and Aaron.

This example is especially relevant within the church of God today, as we see leaders and would-be leaders jockeying for position and influence. We see titles like "apostle" and "prophet" being taken on, but it is not obvious that God has installed them in those offices. We see men agitating to be out front, not content to serve from behind. The apostle Paul spends a significant amount of space explaining that those in the Body have been placed where God wants them ([1 Corinthians 12:18](#)), just as God placed Moses, Aaron, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in their respective positions. God considers it rebellion to push against His ordering of things, warning in [Proverbs 24:21](#) not to associate with those trying to bring about such a change. The verb tense in [Jude 11](#) concerning Korah indicates their fate is already sealed: They are doomed to perish.

— David C. Grabbe

To learn more, see:

[A Warning from Jude \(Part Three\)](#)

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