

II Peter 2:15-17

15-16. They have FORSAKEN the RIGHT WAY and gone ASTRAY, following the WAY of BALAAM the son of Beor, who loved the wages of UNRIGHTEOUSNESS; but he was REBUKED for his iniquity: a dumb DONKEY speaking with a MAN'S VOICE restrained the MADNESS of the PROPHET.

- **Jude 11** "Woe to them! For they have _____ in the _____ of Cain, have run _____ in the _____ of _____ for _____, and perished in the rebellion of Korah."

Definition: "They have FORSAKEN the RIGHT WAY and GONE ASTRAY" - Forsake means to quit or leave entirely, to abandon. God says that **He Himself is the "Fountain of Living Water."** When Peter says, "They have FORSAKEN the RIGHT WAY" it is the same as saying **they have forsaken the Lord and His way.** "They have gone astray" refers to people going their own way and living in sin, rather than God's way.

- **Acts 13:9-10** "Then Saul, who also is called Paul, _____ with the _____, looked intently at him and said, 'O full of all deceit and all fraud, you _____ of the _____, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease _____ the straight _____ of the _____?'"
- **Isaiah 53:6** "All we like sheep have gone _____; we have turned, every one, to his _____; and the Lord has laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all."
- **Judges 21:25** "In those days there was no king in Israel: _____ did what was right in his _____ eyes."
- **Jeremiah 17:13** "O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who _____ You shall be ashamed. Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have _____ the _____, the _____ of _____ waters."

Definition: "The WAY of BALAAM" - In the book of Revelation, Jesus Himself calls this "the doctrine of Balaam". Doctrine means teaching, so it is the teaching or ways of what Balaam did back in the Old Testament days. This teaching is basically to "put a stumbling block" in the way of God's people, and to seduce them and get them to worship and serve idols and commit sexual immorality (adultery, fornication, and all sexual sins). **Balaam's motives for doing this were GREED and covetousness,** because he finally turned away from God in order to receive the amount of money that was being offered to him. The background of Balaam is found in Numbers, chapters 22, 23 and 24. Chapter 22:4-7 says, "'Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time. Then he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beorto call him, saying, 'Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! Therefore, **please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed.**'" So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the diviner's fee in their hand, and they came to Balaam". I believe Balaam was a genuine prophet in the beginning, because God spoke to him directly, but he turned away from the Lord and went his own way, even going into witchcraft and divination, all for the "diviner's fee" or money that was being offered to him. In Numbers 22:12, it says, "And God said to Balaam, 'You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.'" Balaam kept trying to get God to change His mind and curse Israel, but God would not curse them or let

Balaam curse them, so Balaam eventually used other means to ruin and bring down God's people Israel. **He INFILTRATED them with false doctrine, teaching them that it was okay to have SEX with the PAGAN WOMEN from the surrounding nations, and to worship their gods.** In the book of Revelation, we see Jesus condemning the church at Thyatira for allowing a woman who claimed to be a prophetess to lure and deceive His people in the same manner - sexual sins and idolatry. **In today's churches, there are many men and women who are false prophets and so-called prophetesses.** We must be discerning and beware of them and avoid those churches who are letting these people teach and seduce their congregations.

- **Numbers 31:15-16** "And _____ said to them, 'Have you kept all the women alive? Look, these women _____ the children of _____, through the _____ of _____, to trespass _____ the Lord in the incident of Peor', and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord."
- **Revelation 2:14** "But I have a few things _____ you, because you have there those who hold the _____ of _____, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things _____ to _____, and to commit _____ immorality."
- **Revelation 2:20-22** "Nevertheless I have a few things _____ you, because you allow that _____ Jezebel, who calls herself a _____, to _____ and beguile (seduce, trick) My _____ to commit _____ immorality and to eat things sacrificed to _____. And I gave her time to _____ of her _____ immorality, and she did _____ repent. Indeed, I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit _____ with her into great tribulation, unless they _____ of their deeds."

Definition: "A dumb DONKEY speaking with a MAN'S VOICE" - This really happened! This may be one of the most humorous stories of the Old Testament, in that God used a donkey to speak to Balaam, but it is still a very serious matter. For one thing, **it shows that God can use ANYONE to speak for him, and we should not think we are too unlearned or unworthy to preach or teach if God has called us to that ministry. It also shows that GOD will NOT TOLERATE disobedience from anyone who claims to be a prophet of God,** so no one should get puffed up with pride, thinking that they are so special, and that God can't do His work without them.

- **Numbers 22:25, 28, 31-33** "And when the _____ saw the _____ of the Lord, she pushed herself against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall, so he struck her again." (Vs. 28) "Then the Lord _____ the _____ of the _____, and she said to Balaam, 'What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?'" (Vs. 31) "Then the Lord _____ Balaam's _____, and he saw the _____ of the _____ standing in the way with his drawn _____ in his hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. And the _____ of the _____ said to him, 'Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand _____ you, because your way is _____ before _____. 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 _____ you by now, and let her live.'"

Definition: "He saw the ANGEL of the LORD standing in the way" - The word "angel" means messenger. Not always, but many times in the Old Testament, **the person known as "The Angel of the Lord" was really Jesus** in His pre-incarnate

form as the Second Person of the Godhead. Pre-incarnate means before He came to earth to be born as a human being, the Man Christ Jesus (incarnate means "in the flesh"), but He always existed as God the Son, with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We know it is an appearance of God Himself, and not just an angelic being, because **He says, "Your way is perverse before Me."** If it were just an angelic messenger, he would have said, "Your way is perverse before the Lord."

17. These are **WELLS without WATER**, clouds carried by a tempest, to whom **the GLOOM of DARKNESS** is reserved FOREVER.

- **Jude 12-13** "These are _____ in your love _____, while they _____ with you without fear, serving only _____; they are _____ without _____, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging _____ of the sea, foaming up their own _____; wandering stars for whom is _____ the _____ of _____ forever."
- **Colossians 1:13** "He _____ us from the _____ of _____ and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love."

Definition: " WELLS without WATER" - False prophets are likened to "wells without water" because God has called Himself the true fountain of living water, and yet said the people had tried to dig for themselves cisterns or wells that can hold no water. Just as a thirsty person would be terribly disappointed to see a well up ahead, but then only to arrive and find out it had no water, these false prophets and teachers are dangerous, because those who trusted in them will be much more than disappointed when they stand before God and find out that they have believed a lie!

- **Jeremiah 2:13** "For my people have committed two _____: they have _____ Me, the _____ of _____ waters, and hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns, that can hold no _____."

Definition: "The GLOOM of DARKNESS is reserved FOREVER" - This is referring to hell and the eternal punishment of those who have rejected God's salvation in Jesus Christ. Not only will there be eternal flames in hell, as it is described as the Lake of Fire, but **it will be eternal darkness forever. There will be no partying with your friends in hell, as some non-believers like to think and joke about it.** There will be darkness, burning and torment in eternal flames, and no communication with anyone else. God's word uses "darkness" as a symbol of sin, and also **Satan's kingdom is referred to as "the kingdom of darkness"** (Colossians 1:13) even now, but that darkness will continue on forever in hell.

- **Matthew 22:13** "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer _____; there will be _____ and gnashing of teeth.'"
- **Matthew 25:30 & 46** "And _____ the unprofitable _____ into the outer _____. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Vs. 46) "And these will go away into everlasting _____, but the righteous into eternal _____."
- **Revelation 20:14-15** "Then Death and Hades were _____ into the _____ of _____. This is the second death. And anyone who was _____ found written in the _____ of _____ was cast (thrown) into the _____ of _____."
- **Revelation 21:27** "But there shall by no means enter it (heaven) anything that defiles, or causes an _____ or a _____, but only those who

are _____ in the _____ of
_____."