# Destined for Black Darkness

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Preacher: Tom Holland

[0:00] Well, we've been studying the sad plague of apostates in the church.

! That were named in Scripture.
And we look at them and how they behaved. But remember, we're in the 21st century. I would dare say that there are more apostates in the churches today than at any time in history.
Of course, there are a lot more churches too than there were back yonder. But we're going to look at three individuals rather briefly and then move into how Jude compares apostates with natural phenomena.
And the first apostate we're going to look at, a man that undoubtedly many of you will recognize his name, is Cain.
[1:20] That's with a C. And the Word of God says, Woe to them, for they have gone the way of Cain. The Word of God uses that word woe to describe how horrible the judgment of apostates will be when they are brought before the judge of the universe.

Yet that reality comes closer with every tick of the clock. And the first individual we'll look at tonight is Cain, who most definitely parted from the truth that he had been given.
And Cain is a type or model of people who departed from the truth down through the ages. And we find this story all the way back in Genesis 4 beginning in verse 1.
And I'm sure the story is quite familiar to us. But I'm going to read it anyway. Now the man, I'm talking about Adam.
Now the man knew his wife. And she conceived and gave birth to Cain. And she said, I have gotten a man with the help of Yahweh.
[2:55] And again she gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel was a keeper of flocks. But Cain was a cultivator of the ground.

So one kept flocks and one farmed the land. Nothing wrong with either one of those things. I'm glad we have them both.
So it happened in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to Yahweh of the fruit of the ground. Abel on his part also brought of the first fruit of his flock and of their fat portions.
And Yahweh, the sacred name of God, had regard for Abel and for his offering. But for Cain and his offering, he had no regard.
So Cain became very angry. And his countenance fell. And then Yahweh said to Cain, Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?
[4:15] If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is lying at the door and its desires for you.

But you must rule over it. And then Cain spoke to Abel, his brother, and it happened when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and killed him.
I worked a lot of homicides in my career. This was the first one. I wasn't there to work that one. But here we have a homicide. And then Yahweh said to Cain, Where is Abel, your brother?
You think God knew? Cain said, I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper?
And the Lord said, What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground.
[5:35] And now cursed are you from the ground, which has opened its mouth, to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you.

You will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth. And Cain said to Yahweh, My punishment is too great to bear. Behold, you have driven me this day from the face of the ground, and from your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.

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And it will be that whoever finds me will kill me. So Yahweh said to him, whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.
And Yahweh appointed a sign for Cain so that no one who found him would strike him. So we see the Lord God place a sign, and not a written sign, but He put a sign on Cain, and no one seeing Cain would slay him.
And there's been speculation for generations. What was that sign? What was that mark? And I have a saying, it's kind of original with me, very little is, if God's silent, we should be too.
[7:26] He didn't tell us what the sign was. There's something interesting here that is easily overlooked. The fact that Cain's sacrifice was unacceptable is a clear indication that God had previously explained to Cain what constituted a proper and an acceptable sacrifice.

Cain wouldn't be able to say, well, I didn't know that. Or I would have done it. Cain knew that God required a blood sacrifice.
God had told him that. That was the only way he could worship correctly and appropriately. And it's the only way we can worship appropriately.
And of course, our blood sacrifice was the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary. The problem that Cain had is he was trying to worship God in a manner that he himself had created or invented.
Obviously, Cain had rejected God's appropriate form of worship and transplanted into a blasphemous form.
[8:57] This revealed to God his heart. God knew what Cain was up to. Jude referred to people that were proud and self-willed as apostates and he said they've gone the way of Cain.

There's no question that Cain was religious, but his religion was rank disobedience.
He was disobedient to God because it was a bloodless sacrifice. And you know, there's so many people and I've come across some of them over the years, they believe the test of acceptable worship is sincerity.
If you're just sincere, you'll be okay. Look in your concordance. That word's not in there. That's not the test.
And when God informed Cain that his worship was unacceptable, he exploded in jealousy and in anger.
[10:14] he was so mad, he murdered his brother Abel whose worship had been accepted by God. There's a great commentary on this in the book of Hebrews.

verse, by faith, Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain through which he was approved as being righteous.
God approved his gifts and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks to us. Here we are thousands of years later, half a world away talking about him.
By the way, that's Hebrews 11.4. Now I feel certain that Abel did not fully understand what his offering was and why it was superior to his brothers, but it was in truth pointing to Christ and the cross.
Well, we've got another apostate we're going to briefly mention. This guy's name is Balaam.
B-A-L-A-A-M.
[11:37] Second part of verse 11 in Jude. And for pay, they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam.

You want to make some money? Be like Balaam. Apostate teachers, and we abound with them in our day, in our country, have a fundamental motive behind their false teaching and practice of religion.
They want to be paid. It's a way to make money. In our day, the wealthiest false apostate teacher is Kenneth Copeland.
by leaps and bounds. Estimated net worth of $760 million. Only person comes close to that in my plumber.
I won't look at him. Copeland lives on 1,500 acres near Fort Worth where I was a detective. he built a small mansion 18,000 square feet and that day it cost $7 million to construct.
[12:59] He pays no property tax. He listed it and defended it in court that his property is for religious purposes. Copeland owns and flies a fleet of aircraft including a Gulf Stream 5 valued at $36 million and the airport he built allows him to drive up to his front door and get out of the airplane and go into his house.

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Kenneth Copeland rushed headlong into the air of Balaam. You can read about Balaam in the book of Numbers we want tonight chapters 22 to 24 with additional information in chapter 31 but it talks about Balak and Balak was the king of Moab.
Moab were people located near the Dead Sea in modern Jordan and they were primarily enemies of Israel and tried to prevent them from entering their land on the trek from Egypt.
They were named after Moab whose mother was one of the daughters of Lot and you remember the story.
She got her father drunk he committed incest with his two daughters and this daughter was born Moab.
[14:39] thus Moab's father and grandfather were one and the same person Lot after he had escaped from Sodom.

one person that came out of all this was a Moabite woman by the name of Ruth.
Great study. John Piper wrote a five chapter book on her. She lost her husband and so when her mother-in-law Naomi moved back to Israel even though Ruth was not a Jew she loaded up and said I'm going with you.
Naomi tried to talk her out of it thinking she'd be better with her own people but she insisted and she married a guy by the name of Boaz.
Boaz and Ruth are in the genealogy of Christ. She was the great grandmother of King David and they're in there.
[16:10] Balak was the king of Moab who hired the prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites as they traveled toward the promised land after their exodus from Egypt.

Balak tried desperately to keep them from settling in the land near him. God turned Balaam's intended curses into blessings instead. And Balak's story shows how no one can ever truly thwart God's plans for his people.
Including his church by the way. The history behind this was Balak hired Balaam to devise a plan to lure Israel into idolatry and immorality.
ultimately God had a angel and donkey owned by Balaam prevent him from carrying out his plan hatched with Balak.
Now what's our lesson concerning Balaam? He is a prime illustration of false teachers who love wealth more than faithfulness and obedience.
[17:23] there's an interesting passage concerning Balaam and Balak in the book of Revelation chapter 2 verse 14 it was written to the church of Progammon but I have a few things against you you have there someone who holds the teachings of Balak who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality we have one more individual in Jude's book it's found in verse 11 and it's a guy named Korah K-O-R-E-H it just says in perish in the rebellion of Korah the book of Numbers in the Old Testament presents the story of Korah he was a cousin of Moses he was a Levite Korah participated in important duties in the tabernacle these are recorded in

Numbers Deuteronomy and First Chronicle he was passed over to be a priest he wanted to be a priest they passed over him and his anger burned within him so he hired a couple of guys Dathan and Abraham along with 250 other men to join him in a rebellion against Moses this is what Korah had to say against Moses and Aaron they were God's chosen vessels number 16 3 you've gone far enough for all the congregation are holy every one of them and Yahweh is in their midst so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of Yahweh the men of Korah referred to as holy were going to overthrow and kill Moses and Aaron and here's how the Lord God almighty handled it number 16 verses 32 to 35 the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up and their households and all the men who belonged to
Korah with their possessions so they and all that belonged to them went down to Sheol alive and the earth closed over them and they perished from the midst of the assembly then all Israel who were around them fled at their outcry for they said lest the earth swallows us up fire also came from Yahweh and consumed the 250 men who were bringing near the incense there's more following God's sweeping judgment against the rebellious followers of Korah the Lord knew every one of the men who were sympathetic to his cause the Lord sent a plague and it killed every one of them that were sympathetic numbering 14,700
Israelites that staggering number is proof of Korah's sweeping influence among the people they were spread far and wide and these are the very people that will share in the judgment of their

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apostate leaders this is how God explains it in the book of Revelation Revelation chapter 20 and the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are they will be tormented day and night forever and ever and then I saw a great white throne and him who sits upon it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away and no place was found for them and then I saw the dead the great and the small standing before the throne and books were opened and another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds and the sea gave up the dead which were in it and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them and they were judged every one of them according to their deeds and then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire this is the second death the lake of fire if anyone's name is not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire believers names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world next Jude is going to give us five natural phenomena to describe the apostates that plague the church not only in the past but even today until the Lord returns

Jude tells us these false teachers are like hidden reefs waterless clouds fruitless autumn trees wild sea waves and wandering stars and the first thing mentioned there in Jude first part of verse 12 is hidden reefs these are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feast and they will feast without fear caring for themselves hidden reefs pose a dual danger even to large ships one they can't be seen you don't know there was a reef down there made of coral so they can't be seen second they're made up of coral and they have a capacity to sink large vessels and Jude mentions here love feasts given the fact that we live in a fallen world where sin abounds our minds can easily drift into thoughts that are sinful when it comes to love feasts it was not always so in the early days of the church they would assemble together and bring food so at the appropriate time they can enjoy a meal together we've done that tonight we did that here what Easter Sunday morning in Jude's day false teachers turned the love feast into an orgy apostates again are interested in self gratification and then it mentions another phenomena of nature waterless clouds we live in Oklahoma we're familiar with clouds without water we had some today we had some with water too they bring the promise of much needed rain but often times they don't deliver that's the way of apostate false teachers they promise spiritual blessing but cannot deliver and the term without water is most instructive it is mentioned in Matthew and Luke both times it is a reference to the wanderings of evil spirits

[25:29] Jude is comparing apostate false teachers to evil spirits by doing so he is making a connection between apostates and their satanic sources the third phenomena is fruitless autumn trees autumn trees without fruit doubly dead uprooted I love autumn I love it Diane hates it she has allergies I don't the air is cool in the morning particularly at 630 and she's not going to get up for half a day that's between us and I like autumn because you're getting closer to a time when you can have at least a small fire in the fireplace migrating birds are stopping by filling themselves up for the long migration autumn is a time when farmers and gardeners are anticipating a harvest of course all too often there's no harvest and the farmer has to look to next year and begin making plans then to fertilize plant and water in the hopes that it will bring in a crop now autumn trees without fruit is a picture of a barren harvest

Jude compares false apostate teachers to a barren harvest he went so far as to call them doubly dead apostate false teachers are fruitless because there's no spiritual life in them and additionally they are uprooted that means they're dead at the very core that's how dead they are listen to what the Lord said Matthew 15 13 every plant which my heavenly father did not plant shall be uprooted and then the Lord talks about two more phenomena the first one being wild sea waves wild waves of the sea casting up their own shame like foam the scriptures often use references to the sea as a symbol for those who are lost often the sea was referred to as Gentiles listen to what Isaiah said Isaiah 57 but the wicked are like the tossing sea for it cannot be quiet and its waters toss up refuge and mud there is no peace says my God for the wicked my parents lived in Puerto Rico for 11 years I visited them often during college and after and many times storms would hit the island I could drive to the shore and I had two choices the Atlantic Ocean or the Caribbean and the beach particularly the Atlantic side would be littered with trash and with debris and that trash was worthless Jude said they're like foam not much market for foam apostate false teachers are like foam of a beach and these apostates display all forms of heresy deception immorality irreverence and insubordination and finally

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Jude compares the false teachers and their followers with wandering stars very interesting I used to think that must be planets or the moon or something but wandering stars for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever and I read some good commentaries now we know they're not stars they're not even planets we don't know precisely what they are but they're certainly not stars as we know the large burning balls of gas hydrogen!
hydrogen or helium and other matter the Lord Jesus created them in an instant time and named them and he knows all their names those stars most likely wandering stars to Jude were probably references to meteors we called them shooting stars when I was growing up well I I'm still growing up but when I was a little kid we called them shooting stars and they're brilliant for a couple of seconds and then they're gone apostates appear for a brief period of time they create damage and havoc and then disappear in fact the utter blackness of hell has been reserved for them forever false teachers are among many churches they're in there remember the words of [31:36] Christ in John 14 verse 6 I am the way and the truth and the life the apostate false teachers are the ones who chose the way of Cain over the way of Christ apostates chose the heir of Balaam over the truth of Christ and they chose the death of Korah over the life of Christ so let's close with prayer until next time gracious God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ we lift up his name because there's no other name under heaven by which we are saved Lord may we identify any apostate we may come across may we cling to

Christ for he is true truth he is our savior and lord and he is our soon returning king be with this church lord may always preach Jesus and him crucified until that day that the eastern sky opens and the lord jesus descends with a shout and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of god we pray this in jesus name amen Thank you.

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