

BIBLE CHALLENGE 2018

WEEK 45

The Bible Challenge 2018 Intro and the reflections and notes for each week may be found at biblechallenge.pendletonchurch.org

Read 4 chapters per day

November 5-11: Song of Songs 7-8; 1 Timothy 1-6; 2 Timothy 1-4; Titus 1-3; Jude; Lamentations 1-5; 1 Peter 1-5; 2 Peter 1-2

An elegy is a mournful poem, sometimes a musical lament, composed for the purpose of reflecting on someone who has died. Lamentations is a series of five elegies about Jerusalem. It is attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, reflecting his deep burden of knowing God's love for and sorrow over the people as God disciplines them by leaving them in captivity. Recall why the people were being disciplined, and consider the letters from Paul to Timothy and Titus, as well as Jude's letter to those God has called and loved. They focus on themes of the need for church order, holding firmly to the truth, and contending for the faith as we live out God's expectations for our earthly lives regarding holiness in relationship to God and others.

Jude's letter refers to certain people who have:

- "taken the way of Cain" (see Genesis 4 – the belief in religion of his own making rather than abiding by the will of God)
- "rushed for profit into Balaam's error" (see Deuteronomy 23:4-5; Numbers 22-24 – reasoning that because of Israel's sin God would allow him to curse Israel and be seen as greater than the true prophets of Israel)
- and people who will come to destruction as those in "Korah's rebellion" (see Numbers 16 – Korah denied the authority of Moses as God's chosen spokesperson and also intruded inappropriately into the office of the priests).

Do you observe people in today's culture whose actions and attitudes are reflected in some way by these biblical models? What about in the church? How do these attitudes contrast with the standards of faith and action God has established for believers? How might these impact one's ability to live in eternal life with God?

Balaam is also referred to in 2 Peter concerning false teachers. We find in Peter's epistles some looking back at the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy in the person of Jesus and His divine power, grace, and the salvation He promised. Peter looks forward to promises made by Jesus that have not yet been fulfilled. Can we look in faith to the record of God's dealings with Israel as well as to Peter's writing to find promises from God for our lives today? Why or why not? Can we gain insight into discerning whether someone is a true or false prophet in today's church?