

Lesson 1: Balak & Balaam

Central Point: Be not Ignorant of the devil's devices

When it comes to Satan's tactics and strategies, he's not much of an originalist; he keeps peddling the same ole recycled and repackaged junk as he has since the beginning. Partly because it does work; history and human nature repeats itself. 2 Corinthians 2:11, *"In order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes."*

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, "Look! This is something new"? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time.

- The Bible does an amazing job of recording the nature of God, man and the devil
- There is no reason for us to be ignorant about the challenges in this life
- **Please Read: Numbers 22:1-12**
- **Question:** "What do you think about Numbers 22:12? Please comment."
- Observation: Interesting that Balaam was on speaking terms with God

So Balaam was a magician or soothsayer who was summoned by the Moabite king Balak to curse the Israelites before they entered Canaan. Balaam lived in ARAM in the town of Pethor on the Euphrates River. A curious mixture of good and evil, Balaam initially wavered when he was asked by Balak to curse the Israelites.

- **Please Read: Numbers 22:13-35**
- Apparently Balaam did not follow the Lord's instructions as he was supposed to
- Though Balaam did not see the angel, his donkey was aware of his presence
- Balaam, beat his donkey three times- love how the Lord opened the donkey's mouth

Proverbs 12:10, "A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel."

- Balaam offered to return, but was warned a second time to only speak what he's told

Numbers 22:38

"Well, I have come to you now," Balaam replied. "But can I say just anything? I must speak only what God puts in my mouth."

- **Please Read: Numbers 23:1-13**
- It must have been frustrating for Balak, after three attempts Balaam only blessed Israel
- **Question:** "How is it that God could use a man like Balaam?"
- If God can use a donkey, He can also use Balaam to accomplish His purpose- Josh. 24:10
- Apparently God overrode the first two attempts by sorcery, but notice the third time
- **Please Read: Numbers 24:1-14**

Numbers 24:9, "May those who bless you be blessed and those who curse you be cursed!"

- I love verse 9- this speaks of the covenant that Israel had with God
- Numbers 23:23, "There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel."
- **Please Read: Deuteronomy 23:3-6**
- 1 John 4:4, Praise God we have the greater One inside of us

Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, And their righteousness is from Me," Says the Lord."

- Num. 24:25, "Then Balaam got up and returned home and Balak went his own way."
- **Question:** "Do you think Balaam was a good guy and just went home?"

Since the curse of witchcraft would not work, Balaam knew what would get Israel in trouble with the Lord- pagan revelry, idol worship and sexual immorality that's associated with it. Balaam's greed for money was a stumbling block to Israel by telling Balak to appeal to the sinful desires of the flesh and entice Israel into sin and open the door to the devil that way.

- False teachers in the early church likewise used this old trick of appealing to the flesh
- **2 Peter 2:15-19-** "The way of Balaam" peddling spiritual things for profit- greed!
- **Jude 11-** "The error of Balaam" enticing God's people to sin- obligate God to judge them
- **Revelation 2:14-** "Teaching of Balaam"- to indulge in the selfishness of pagan revelry
- Balaam sided with Moab and got what was coming to him in Numbers 31:8; Josh. 13:22
- **Please Read: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

These things have been written down for our benefit to learn how the enemy operates and have no illusions about the vulnerabilities of human nature. Praise God as children of God in the New covenant we have so many more advantages to overcome in this life.

- To be forewarned is to be forearmed