

"The Mystery of Balaam"

Part 2

Numbers 22-25

Introduction: Last week in our study of false prophets we started to look at a man named Balaam. The New Testament presents him as a false prophet. Balaam is found in Numbers 22-25, and it is in these chapters that we find him in a scene where the king of Moab has called him to curse the nation of Israel. In this we have considered several points.

I. The Error of Balaam

Notice Numbers 22:1-7

Jude 1:11

¹¹ *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

The error of Balaam was his greed.

II. The Way of Balaam

2 Peter 2:15

¹⁵ *Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*

The error of Balaam was his greed, and the way of Balaam was that his greed controlled him. He became focused upon the riches offered to him by Balak.

Notice Numbers 22:8-22a

This is where we stopped last week. Balaam was permitted to go but when he went the Lord's anger was kindled against him. Why? God knew his motive. He should have been going with a desire to glorify God but instead he was focused upon the riches and the promotion promised to him. He was determined to curse Israel and get the riches.

Had Balaam not had a donkey smarter than he was Balaam would have died.

Notice Numbers 22:22-35

Before we get into this text I wanted to stop and point out something important. This is a text that the critics love to use to say the Bible is not accurate because they say that it is

impossible for a donkey to talk. Then they will point to the story of Jonah and say that it is impossible for a man to survive in the belly of a great fish for three days.

But we who know the Lord understand that God can cause a donkey to talk, and he can keep a man alive in the belly of a fish for three days. The key is set forth in the beginning of God's Word.

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Exodus 20:11

¹¹ *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day:*

If God can create this world and all that is in it in six literal days, He can certainly make a donkey talk. For anyone who believes in evolution I would say that person has more faith than I do to believe that all of what we see came about by itself or out of nothing.

When I see a sports car or something with intricate design it would make no sense to say it happened on its own. If I found a Rolex watch and I said it came about over millions of years even an evolutionist would know better. It is far too detailed to just come together on its own. So is the human body and this universe we live in. God has made man and He has made all that is in this world. Just like the Rolex, there had to be a designer, and so with man and this world there has to be a Designer.

Now let us get back to Balaam. He is so set on the riches that he is not even surprised by the talking donkey.

A. The dangers of the desires of the flesh.

Application:

Let us learn from this that the desires of the flesh can be very dangerous. People can get so caught up in the desires of the flesh that they miss all the warnings that God puts before them. They become blind to what is happening around them and when God does something to stop them, they miss the stop sign and they run the intersection.

God often allows things to happen to get the attention of people who are in need of salvation and many times people miss it or they explain it away.

Matthew 28:11-15

¹¹ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

¹² And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

¹³ Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

¹⁴ And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

¹⁵ So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

B. God knows our thoughts.

Notice Numbers 22:32 again.

The Angel of the Lord tells Balaam that his way is PERVERSE before him. The word PERVERSE means "RECKLESS." God knows why we do what we do. We can deceive people, but you will never fool God.

Psalm 139:1-5

O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.

² *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*

³ *Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*

⁴ *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.*

⁵ *Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*

God knows exactly what our motives are. Let us understand that when there are road blocks it is not wise to push your way through. It can be very dangerous. Balaam ignored God's perfect will and was now living in God's permissive will.

Notice Numbers 22:34 again.

I want you to notice that Balaam is STILL trying to find a back door. It did displease the Lord as was demonstrated by the talking donkey. But Balaam is still bent on getting the riches.

III. Balaam meets Balak

Notice Numbers 22:36-23:12

As Balaam searches for a back door he finds none. Instead of cursing Israel he ends up pronouncing a blessing. Balak rebukes him and I want you to notice the question of Balaam.

Notice Numbers 23:11-12 again.

"Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?"

Here is a man who is not saved, and he makes a very powerful statement.

Application:

There should never be a time when we do not take heed to speak the full TRUTH of God's Word. People need to hear the Truth and if we do not speak the Truth no one else will. The world is under demonic deception today and many are caught up in worrying about missing out on life. But you never hear of any fear of hell. Satan has led many people to live in such a way that they have no time for God. They are trying to just live life to the fullest without God.

Hebrews 2:14-15

¹⁴ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

People need to be reminded that there is something far greater to fear than death and COVID, and that is HELL.

Let me show you a man who lived life to the fullest and then died in his sin.

Luke 16:19-24

¹⁹ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

²⁰ And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

²¹ And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

²² *And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;*

²³ *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

²⁴ *And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.*

Let us get back to Balaam again.

Notice Numbers 23:10 again.

I want you to notice the wish of Balaam. He wanted die the death of the righteous and that his end would be as Jacob's.

Here was a man who loved money and riches more than he loved God. He was bent on cursing Israel. He was bent on going around God's will. But he wanted to die the death of the righteous.

Application:

Balaam is like many people today. They want to live like HELL and then they want to die the death of the righteous. People don't want to go to church, they don't want to read the Bible, they don't want to worship God, they don't want to sing His praises, but they want to go to heaven.

Let me just say that anyone who abstains from these things would not want to go to heaven because that is what heaven will be filled with and if you do not like it here you will not like it there!!

If you have no desire for the Bible, if you have no desire for church, if you have no desire to gather with God's people then most likely you are not saved.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18a

¹⁷ *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

¹⁸ *And all things are of God,*

When you get saved there will be a desire for the things of God. If you are not living the life of the righteous then you will most likely not die the death of the righteous.

Notice Numbers 23:13-24

There is much for us to see here and so we shall gather a little today and the rest next week.

A. God's Faithfulness.

Notice Numbers 23:19-20 again.

Balaam makes it very clear that God is true to His Word. He had told Balaam to bless Isarel and that is what would happen.

Application:

There are many applications here but the one which comes to mind is the promise of eternal life to all who come to Jesus Christ.

John 3:36

³⁶ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

There is nothing that can take away our eternal life. We have been justified and that will never be reversed.

Romans 3:23-25

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Conclusion:

Are you sure you know Him as Savior?