

BALAAM'S ERROR

A LESSON FROM NUMBERS 22-24

"Now an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: 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"

~ 2 Peter 2:15

1. Balaam's Error

- a. Why this lesson? For our example and learning - 1 Cor 10:6-8; Rom 15:4
- b. Balaam a and his error repeated throughout the Bible as a warning
- c. Jude 11 "error of Balaam" is related to greed and reward
- d. 2Pet 2:15 "way of Balaam" is forsaking the right way, loving wages of unrighteousness

2. Numbers 22-24

- a. Num 22:1-7 – Balak hires Balaam to curse Israel with "rewards of divination"
- b. Num 22:8-22 – Balaam tries to add to what God said (v19), and takes away (v20-21)
- c. Num 22:23-34 – Balaam turns from the right way, but his ass is saved
- d. Num 22:35-41 – Balaam goes to the high place of Baal to see all Israel
- e. Num 23:1-12 – Balak displeased with Balaam's first word from God
- f. Num 23:13-26 – Balak tells him to be quiet if he can't say what he wants (2 Tim 4:3?)
- g. Num 23:27-24:9 – Balaam tries to hide his actions from God on Peor, but can't
- h. Num 24:10-25 – Balak shames Balaam - "the LORD hath kept thee back from honour"
- i. Deu 23:4-6; Neh 13:2 – It was in the law not to seek their "peace and prosperity"

3. The Doctrine of Balaam (Numbers 25)

- a. What was worse than Balaam's own error was his influence after Num 22-24
- b. Balaam's story continues after Numbers 24 - see Num 31:16 and Rev 2:13-14
- c. The doctrine of Balaam is a stumbling block causing others to err – Num 25
 - i. Num 25:1-3 – After Balaam's influence God was angry at Israel
 - ii. Num 25:4-9 – The plague because of Balaam's doctrine – BaalPeor
 - iii. Num 25:10-18 – Phinehas blessed, but Zimri cursed – Ps 106:28-31
- d. Balaam knew compromise with peace/prosperity would affect Israel more than a curse
- e. The most effective way of destroying people, country, church, empire is from inside
- f. Jesus said Matt 12:25 "a house divided", and in Matt 13:22 thorns would catch some
- g. 1Tim 6:9-10 – The love of money is the root of all evil – some have pierced...
- h. Shittim means "thorns" and it is used as a reminder – Deu 4:3-4, Hos 9:10
- i. Balaam's curse didn't hurt Israel, but his stumbling block did – 1Co 8:9, Rom 14:13
- j. 1 Cor 10:23 – all things are lawful under grace, unlike then, but not all are expedient
- k. Paul says to flee the ways, the error, and the doctrine of Balaam – 1 Tim 1:3, 6:3