

**NUMBERS 22-25**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Numbers chapter 22 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

Some of you may be familiar with the story we will be looking at tonight and some of you may not.

In saying that, as we will see, we are going to be introduced to an interesting and puzzling man by the name of Balaam. He truly is an enigma!

This man is mentioned in eight books of the Bible: *Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Nehemiah, Micah, II Peter, Jude* and *Revelation*.

Now, in saying that, let me also add this. Each time he is mentioned it is never in a good way!

And keep in mind he is mentioned more often than Mary, the mother of Jesus and many of the apostles!

So why in the world would God speak so much about a man who was very evil?

I think that the Lord has some lessons for us to learn from this man and thus, we see that he is mentioned in eight books of the Bible. I guess the Lord wants to drive home this lesson to us!

And what is interesting is that many don't know what to do with this man named Balaam, this prophet of God.

Some say that he is saved; he has to be saved because God is speaking through him.

Others say that he is not saved and that he is a pagan prophet.

Who is right?

I believe he was not saved; he never was saved, and I will show you why as we go through these Scriptures tonight.

One other point before we move on. In Numbers chapters 22, 23 and 24 we see the work of Balaam, the things that he did, the oracles that he gave.

Then, as we move into Numbers chapter 25, we will see the result of what he did, and again, it is not a good thing!

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in Numbers chapter 22, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

## **NUMBERS 22**

### **VERSES 1-4**

The focus is moving off the children of Israel for a time and we will be looking at the enemies of Israel.

At this point the children of Israel are camped on the east side of the Jordan River, and across this River is the Promise Land. On the other side is the city of Jericho, this fortified city, their first enemy they must destroy in the land of Canaan!

Keep in mind that ***“The geographical setting of ‘the plains of Moab along the Jordan across from Jericho’ would be that of the remainder of the Book of Numbers, as well as that of Deuteronomy.”*** (Cole)

Even though they did not have social media, for the children of Israel, their victories are making the news.

So much so that Balak, the King of the Moabites, was terrified of them. He thought that they were getting too close to them and that they would be next in their conquering of the land.

You see, Sihon, King of the Amorites defeated Moab and took some of their land. Then the children of Israel defeated Sihon.

So I think you can understand the concern of Balak. If Moab couldn't defeat Sihon, then they were not going to be able to defeat the children of Israel. Thus, they are in big trouble!

Now here's the thing. Did God want them to defeat Moab and take their land?

Not at all!

But why didn't He want them to?

In Deuteronomy 2:9 we are told, **“Then the Lord said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.’”**

If he would have known and believed God's Word, then he would have had nothing to fear.

What a great lesson for each of us to not only learn God's Word, but to believe it, to apply it to our lives and walk by faith.

You see, faith casts away fear!

And in these days in which you hear all the gloom and doom it is easy to get discouraged, depressed. But let me help you out on this if you are.

Jesus is still on the throne!

He knows all that is happening, and He is not worried!

He is coming back for His Bride, the Church, not might!

He wins!

His Kingdom will be established, and He will reign for one thousand years!

And thus, we trust God and His Word to us, and we don't have to fear!

Now, here in Numbers 22:4, when it speaks of "**the elders of Midian**" working with the Moabites many feel that the Midianites were nomadic people and were close by to Moab at this time.

### VERSES 5-6

All of a sudden, we are introduced to this guy named Balaam, a prophet and he was from the area of Pethor.

And Balak's solution to his problem is to call for this prophet and have him curse the children of Israel.

And Balaam was well known. We are told that "***The recovery of prophetic texts of Balaam in Aramaic from the sixth century at Deir-Allah in Jordan shows how very famous this man was in the ancient Near East, even centuries after his death.***" (Allen)

Now, where is Pethor located?

Some feel he was from the area of Mesopotamia, a town located there on the west bank of the Euphrates River.

The problem with that is that would place Balaam some 400 miles from Moab!

That is doubtful and we have found the Deir Alla Inscription back in 1967 which many feel the name "**Balaam**" is mentioned on it. That would mean that Pethor is modern Deir Alla in Jordan, which was close to Moab, and which would make more sense.

In fact, many believe that when it says "**near the River**" in Numbers 22:5, it is speaking of the Jordan River, which again makes sense because Moab was close to the Jordan River.

VERSES 7-8

As these elders from Moab and Midian come to Balaam they make him a deal, hopefully that he can't refuse.

They brought him money to pay for his services. Balaam's response is that he needs to bring this before the **LORD** to see what He wants him to do.

Now, as you read that it would seem like he is a believer, doesn't it?

It does but he is not!

I know many will disagree with me on this but hear me out and then decide. You see, if he was into the occult, which I believe he was, then he would know the names of the various gods that were out there, he spoke to them, and he very likely knew of the God of Israel. He called on these false gods to curse and bless people and it would seem that he was better at cursing them!

Thus, for the children of Israel he knew it was the **LORD, YAHWEH**.

Balaam is nothing more than a pagan prophet who sought **ANY** god to bless and curse people by.

One writer put it like this in regard to what Balaam was doing. He wrote, "***Balaam began on a dangerous course – entertaining, planning, setting his heart on something he knew to be sin, and looking for a spiritual excuse to pursue the sin. Because of his love for money, Balaam tried to manipulate God into granting him a special exception.***" (David Guzik)

As we move on, I will show you more of why I feel Balaam was not a believer in the true and living God! And as we will see, he was not just a prophet, but he was in it for a profit!

VERSES 9-12

What is interesting to me is that God did speak to this pagan prophet, but why?

Because God will use even unsaved people to carry out His plans and purposes as we see here.

Does God speak to the unsaved; does He speak through the unsaved?

Yes, He does!

In Genesis 20:6-7 He spoke to Abimelech the King of Gerar.

He spoke to Pharaoh in dreams back in Genesis 41:25.

And in Daniel he spoke to Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon.

And believe it or not He even uses Satan to carry out His plan and purposes!

And God is very clear on what He wants him to do. He said, “**You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.**” Numbers 22:12.

There should be no confusion, but as we will see, there will be.

And here is the problem for Balaam. “*Balaam is thus trapped between the demands of Balak and the commands of God. It is this conflict that sustains the whole drama that follows.*” (Wenham)

One other point here and that is God saying that the children of Israel “**are blessed.**”

It didn't matter what Balaam did because God blessed Israel.

Yes, they did not deserve it, but God did bless them.

Make no mistake about it, the same is true for us.

To get freaked out by the enemy by what they say or do is foolish. God is sovereign. He is in control. That does not mean the enemy doesn't have power, but the enemy is not equal with God and in the end, God wins!

Thus, may we storm the gates of Hell and take back from the enemy what He has taken away!

You see, Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, **“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”**

The Church is not built upon Peter, but upon Jesus, the Rock and not the pebble or stone!

And thus, the gates of Hell will not prevail; they will not overtake the Church! May we not forget that!

I am not saying that we will not suffer persecution and for many today, martyrdom for their faith. But the Church will remain, and the Lord is in control!

#### VERSES 13-17

Balaam tells these men that he can't go with them, that was the right thing to do.

But here is the problem. As these men leave, they return with a better offer, why?

I believe Balaam left the door open to them, maybe ***“I wish I can go with you, but God won't let me!”***

In other words, ***“I really want to go and if you show me the money, maybe I will go with you.”***

And thus, they come with more people and more money. Because Balaam did not close the door to this temptation, it came back even stronger than before.

What a great lesson for us to learn, to close those doors and not leave them open even a crack, for the enemy wants to get a foothold in your life.

As you begin to let temptation compromise what you believe, you are going to lose and so too will Balaam.

Now, what will Balaam do here?

Let's read on and see.

VERSES 18-19

This is confusing. Balaam tells these men that God said no and yet, he tells them to stay the night and maybe God will change His mind!

Folks, God does not change His mind and Balaam really wanted to go, he wanted the money.

We do that with God, He tells us no and we barter and keep pestering Him that we want this or that, and that is not a good thing.

I like the way one writer summed this up for us. He wrote,

***“Honey,” said the preacher, “we just got an invitation to go to a bigger church in a bigger city with a bigger salary. So I’m going to go upstairs to pray about it.”***

***“Do you want me to pray with you?” asked his wife.***

***“No,” the preacher answered. “You stay down here and start packing.”***

- Jon Courson's Application Commentary Old Testament,  
Vol. 1: Genesis-Job, p. 510

Isn't that the way it is. We say we are going to God to seek His advice, His answer but we have already made up our mind and that is a very dangerous place to be.



VERSES 20-21

Why did God let him go?

As you read this it seems like God changed His mind. But I thought God is unchanging, so what is going on here?

I think what we see here is that there is the *perfect will of God* and for Balaam He was not to go to Balak.

But Balaam refused to listen to God and thus, there is the *permissive will of God* and He will let Balaam go but he is only to speak the words that He gives to him.

The perfect will of God for our lives is obviously what is best for us. The permissive will of God, that path is not as good and there are many problems along the way. May we not only seek after God's will for our lives, but also obey what God has told us!

Now I do realize that some do not believe in the perfect and permissive will of God. Let me give you an example from the Scriptures to show you that there is this perfect and permissive will of God for our lives.

In II Kings chapter 20 we see that King Hezekiah was sick. And the Lord spoke to the prophet Isaiah and told him to go and tell the King to get his house in order because he was going to die!

And Hezekiah was not happy, and he wept and cried to the Lord and the Lord told Isaiah to go back and tell Hezekiah that He will give him another 15 years.

The perfect will of God was for Hezekiah to die, but he was not satisfied with that, so the Lord gave to Hezekiah His permissive will, which did not end well.

Let me show you what I mean.

First, we see that there was this get well present you might say, that was sent from the King of Babylon and Hezekiah was so pleased that he showed them **“all the house of his treasures – the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory – all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.”** II Kings 20:13.

Because of what Hezekiah did, Isaiah told him that the Babylonians will come and take all that you have! Not a good thing and it did not happen in his days but in his son’s days and onward.

Strike one!

Also, during those added 15 years Hezekiah had a son by the name of Manasseh and he was a wicked son and a wicked King in the Southern Kingdom of Judah!

Listen to what we are told of Manasseh in II Chronicles 33:1-9, **“Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. He also built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, ‘In Jerusalem shall My name be forever.’ And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to**

**Solomon his son, ‘In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers - only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.’ So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.”**

Strike 2!

And Manasseh was taken prisoner to Babylon, and I believe there in Babylon he returns to the Lord, but it was too late for the nation, they too were going into captivity!

Strike 3!

You see, God’s perfect will was for Hezekiah to die.

His permissive will was to give him 15 more years and look at what happened in those 15 years!

May we learn the lesson!

#### VERSES 22-27

Think about this for a minute. If God let Balaam go, then why was He angry with Balaam?

Because He did not want him to go but Balaam refused to listen to the perfect will of God and went.

One writer put it like this, ***“God does not make the wrong way smooth for one who has extorted permission to follow it.”*** (Watson)

For Balaam, his heart’s desire superseded God’s perfect will.

As he travels to Moab on his donkey, an Angel of the Lord, which I believe is a Christophany or an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ. Now some feel that this is just an angel, which it could be, but when you see what He says, it seems to be the Lord.

And what we see is that this Angel blocks his way.

What is interesting here is that Balaam's donkey has more spiritual insight than Balaam. As Balaam tries to go one way the donkey turns the other, then he goes another way, and he turns a different way and finally the donkey just sits down!

The donkey knew not to go but Balaam refused to listen!

One writer has this insight, *“Up to this point Balaam has been portrayed as a man of great spiritual stature, who can meet with God when he wants and whose words have tremendous effects on the fate of nations. Here his spiritual blindness and powerlessness are disclosed. He cannot see the angel of the LORD standing in his path, though his donkey can.”*

(Wenham)

How important it is for us to be sensitive to God and not go down a path that He has closed. God can use others, He can use circumstances and situations, He can even use a donkey to try to awaken us out of our spiritual sleep and obey His Words. May we listen!

#### VERSES 28-30

As you read this story and you look at what Balaam is doing, talking to his donkey, does anyone think, *“Hey, he is talking to his donkey and his donkey is answering him?”*

I would and I do. Now I know of Mr. Ed the talking horse but a talking donkey!

What is interesting is that Balaam is having a conversation with his donkey, and he is losing!

But why isn't Balaam shocked by this?

It is possible that this false prophet, this pagan prophet was used to this demonic activity. It was normal for him. The only difference here is that God is speaking to Balaam through this donkey. He wanted to kill the donkey and yet, as the donkey reminded him, he has always been faithful to him!

As Christians, our brothers and sisters in the Lord can come alongside us and God can use them to correct us.

Now, like Balaam our response may be to kill them, maybe not physically but with our words for what they are telling us! Instead of doing that, maybe you should listen to what they are saying and bring it before the Lord and then listen to Him.

Yes, God does use others to get our attention! And if you are that person correcting another, don't be too prideful about that, God used a donkey to speak for Him!

### VERSES 31-33

Here we see Balaam bow before this Angel, and that is another reason why I think this is an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ. (Numbers 22:31)

Also, in Numbers 22:32 we see that this Angel of the LORD tells Balaam, "**because your way is perverse before Me.**"

If this were just an angel, it would not be a sin against him personally!

But if this were the Lord, it would make sense.

And the idea behind the word "**perverse**" is that of "***going the wrong way or in a rash manner.***"

God told Balaam not to go and he did so anyway, he did it his way!

VERSES 34-35

Why was Balaam so wishy-washy in what he wanted to do?

Because he was more interested in the money than what God desired.

In II Peter 2:15-16 we are told, **“They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.”**

You see, Balaam loved money, wealth, possessions and that was his sin, it caused him to disobey what the Lord wanted.

In Jude 11 we are told, **“Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.”**

Isn't it interesting, isn't it amazing what people will do for money.

So Balaam is on his way to see Balak.

VERSES 36-41

Balak comes out to meet Balaam, something Kings did not usually do. They sent representatives to meet guests. But Balak wanted the children of Israel cursed and he wanted Balaam to feel welcomed so he could do what the King wanted!

Keep in mind that Balaam wanted wealth, and as he meets Balak the King, the King tells him, ***“Not a problem! I can give you all that you need!”***

But there is a catch, a little matter that needs to be dealt with, what Balaam is to do. He must curse the children of Israel if he wants to get paid.

And Balaam tells the King that he can only speak what the Lord gives him to speak, which sounds good, but it may only mean that if it doesn't happen, if they are not cursed, it is not his fault!

And God will speak through Balaam in a powerful way, but again, I don't believe he was saved.

And now for the work to begin we see the King take him to a high mountain overlooking the camp of Israel.

What did they see from this vantage point?

The camp of Israel and remember how they set up camp, from above you would see the shape of a cross with the Shekinah glory right in the middle, God dwelling right in the middle of that cross!

The Tabernacle, with the Holy of Holies in the center is where God dwelt. And they would set up camp due east, due west, due north and due south from the Tabernacle. And as you looked at the numbers of each tribe and how they camped, we see the picture of a cross being made!

Did they know what it meant? I doubt it but that is what they were looking at.

## **NUMBERS 23**

### **VERSES 1-3**

As you read this it seems that Balaam is sacrificing to God and thus, he must be saved. Again, I don't see it that way. Folks, God never instructed His people to do what Balaam is doing. Thus, this was a part of a pagan ritual.

In fact, in Ezekiel 21:21 we are told, **“For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he shakes the arrows, he consults the images, he looks at the liver.”**

In other words, the Babylonians were seeking direction in who to do battle with by examining the liver of a dead animal. It was a pagan practice known as hepatoscopy!

Thus, it would seem that Balaam is doing something like this in the sacrificing of these animals, trying to appease the LORD so He would speak to Him, something he did when he tried to contact other gods!

#### VERSES 4-6

And we see that God gave this pagan prophet words to say to Balak regarding the children of Israel.

One writer said, *“Despite the pagan and unsavory actions of this ungodly man, the Lord deigns [consents] to meet with him and to speak through him. This is utterly remarkable. We often say that God will never use an unclean vessel. This is not quite accurate. God may use whatever vessel he wishes; the issue concerns what happens to an unclean vessel when God has finished using it for his purposes. It appears that such vessels are tossed aside, dashed on the road.”* (Allen)



VERSES 7-10

Instead of cursing Israel, Balaam blesses God's people! The camp of Israel was divided into 4 parts and Balaam is basically saying, ***"If you can't count ¼ of the camp you will not be able to count the number of people in the entire camp. God will multiply them."***

I don't think that is exactly what Balak wanted to hear, it was not what he paid for!

VERSES 11-12

Obviously Balak is not happy with Balaam and Balaam blames God for what he has done. Maybe he didn't want to lose out on the money!

One other point here. God is blessing His people and they are completely unaware of what is going on. They are down in the camp complaining about this and complaining about that.

How can they be so carnal?

Before we answer that, are we unaware of the blessings that God has poured out upon us, not sure what is going on, and thus, we complain?

It is something to think about!

VERSES 13-17

Here is the second oracle of Balaam, but this time Balak takes him to a different location.

The reason for this is that they saw territorial gods, that they were over certain areas and thus, a new location may produce different results.

And once again they are looking down upon the camp of Israel.

VERSES 18-24

Balaam rebukes Balak saying that God does not lie about His people; He does not lie at all!

He said that He would bless them and that is exactly what He will do!

He will not change and thus, God is not done with His people, He will fulfill His promises to them.

Also, it says that God did not see any iniquity in the children of Israel, any wickedness in them – how did He miss that?

Because He saw the nation as justified by the shedding of the blood and thus, their sin was covered and He saw them as they will be, not as they are!

And God does the same with us; He sees the finished product you might say!

Also notice what verse 23 says, **“For there is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, ‘Oh, what God has done!’”**

I don’t believe in curses against God’s people because God is for us.

There are those who are superstitious, believe in generational curses and so on. God tells Balaam, ***“No, not against My people!”***

Think about it, ***“God’s blessing is so powerful and irrevocable that even the most renowned divination expert of the day could not counter its effectiveness. Only God could rescind his blessing upon Israel.”*** (Cole)

VERSES 25-26

You can understand the frustration of this King. Balak can't take it. He tells Balaam that if he is not going to curse them then don't say anything at all!

So far this is not such a good deal for Balak!

VERSES 27-30

Balak figures the odds are in his favor, the third time has to be good. He will take him to a different location and now he has to curse the children of Israel.

So once again up on a mountain looking down upon the children of Israel and the pagan sacrifices are being offered up.

**NUMBERS 24**VERSES 1-2

Balaam tried on the two previous occasions to use sorcery; enchantments to curse Israel and that didn't work at all!

Thus, now he just looks down upon the camp to curse them and the Spirit of the Lord comes down upon him.

God is once again going to speak through this pagan prophet!

VERSES 3-9

In this third oracle Balaam speaks of the abounding blessings of God upon the children of Israel. How, when they go into the land of Canaan, they will be like strong trees planted by abundant flowing waters.

VERSES 10-13

Balak tells Balaam that the deal is off; if he can't curse Israel then he won't get paid. He did not keep up his end of the deal.

And here we see the voice of Satan come forth as Balak tells Balaam, "**I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the Lord has kept you back from honor.**"

Those same lies were spoken to Eve in the Garden of Eden, that God was holding some blessing back from them and thus, go ahead and take a bite!

We are told in Genesis 3:4-5 of this encounter that Eve has with Satan, "**Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'**"

Folks, that same lie is spoken today and many still fall prey to it, they listen and go down that path!

God is not keeping blessings from you; He is trying to protect you from the danger that is out there, the schemes of the Devil!

VERSE 14

Balaam is going to return home but before he does, he is going to give one more oracle regarding the children of Israel, a freebee you might say! But again, this is not going to be good for King Balak!

VERSE 15-24

Here is the fourth and final oracle of Balaam and in this we see the pagan prophet speak of the coming Messiah who will come and rule over the nations.

Specifically, we see him also speak of the surrounding nations: Moab, Edom, Amalek and the Kenites, and what is going to happen to these nations down the road.

VERSE 25

Both men depart home, each not satisfied with what has taken place.

Balak did not see Israel cursed and Balaam did not get the money he had hoped for, or did he?

Let's look at Numbers chapter 25 because we have seen the work of Balaam, now we will see the results of what he did or how he took the matter into his own hands!

**NUMBERS 25****VERSES 1-3**

The women of Moab came before the men of Israel and seduced them, enticed them to sin. They were all dressed up, wearing their short little skirts; make-up to the hilt and the men of Israel fell for it.

You see, many of the pagan religious practices were centered around sexual immorality and thus, as they got the children of Israel to have sexual relations with them, it was based on the worship of their gods!

Since Balaam could not curse the children of Israel, he got the children of Israel to move away from the blessings of God and by doing so they were cursing themselves!

Who gave Balak this plan?

I believe it was Balaam for we are told in Numbers 31:16, **“Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.”**

And in Revelation 2:14 Jesus tells us in His letter to the church in Pergamos, **“But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”**

In other words, Balaam told Balak, ***“Look, I can’t curse these people, but you can get them to curse themselves by having them turn from the Lord!”***

And guess what, it worked then, and it still works today. May we not fall prey to these devilish schemes but learn the lesson God is showing us!

And I do believe that Balaam was paid for his counsel, but he only enjoyed it for a short time.

In Numbers 31:7-8 we are told, **“And they warred against the Midianites, just as the Lord commanded Moses, and they killed all the males. They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of those who were killed - Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.”**

Balaam was killed!

Yes, there is pleasure in sin, if there wasn't no one would fall into it. But that pleasure is short lived and in the end is death!

#### VERSES 4-5

God wanted those who were sinning, the leaders to be hung and placed for all to see as a warning so others will not go down that same path. All those who joined themselves to the Moabite and Midianite women, these leaders were to be killed.

These verses tell us that they joined themselves to Baal of Peor! The word **“joined”** is a Hebrew word that speaks of being fastened or linked together.

You see, light and darkness can't mix. You can't be joined to this world and still serve the Lord!

God was not pleased with that back then and He is not pleased with it today!

Paul puts it like this in I Corinthians 6:15-20, **“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For ‘the two,’ He says, ‘shall become one flesh.’ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”**

What have you joined yourself to?

I pray it is the Lord!

#### VERSES 6-9

Talk about arrogance and pride! Here is a man, seeing the judgment of God upon the children of Israel for their sin, and he parades himself past Moses with this Midianite woman, so this immorality went even beyond the Moabites!

And he brings her into his tent to have sex with her!

Can you imagine!

Now Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the High Priest, has had enough, he can't take it any longer and he grabs a javelin and goes into their tent and thrusts them through.

Kind of killing two birds with one stone you might say!

One man took a stand, and it made a difference, the plague was stopped.

Tragically, in this plague 24,000 people died!



Now, if that is true why are we told in I Corinthians 10:8, “**Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell.**”

Why the discrepancy of 1,000 between these two verses?

Paul speaks of 23,000 in one day so maybe the plague lasted longer than a day.

The other thought may be that in Paul’s total he does not include the leaders, 1,000 of them. I tend to see it that the 1,000 leaders were not counted in Paul’s numbers.

### VERSES 10-13

We see here that Phinehas was zealous for the Lord, and he brought the atonement of God to the people.

What about you?

Are you zealous for God?

Are you bringing the atonement of God that is found in Jesus to the people?

You see, one man made a difference and folks, one man or one woman can make a difference today.

If God is for you or more correctly if you are for Him, nothing is impossible!

### VERSES 14-18

Balak thought he was now safe, but he wasn’t. God told His people to attack the Midianites every chance they had.

But I thought Balak was a Moabite?

He was but at this time the Midianites were mingled with the Moabites.

Now this may seem harsh, but it is not.

If you don't do battle with the flesh on a daily basis, at every chance you have, then you will succumb to it!

As I close this evening let me leave you with these words from Paul as he wrote in Romans 13:11-14, **“And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”**

May we take heed and obey and put on the Lord Jesus Christ each and every day!