

# BALAAAM'S LOVE OF MONEY [1]

(Num. 22:1-22)

**INTRODUCTION:** Balaam is a most intriguing person. He was the son of Beor. (vs. 5) He lived in the city of Pethor, which was by the Euphrates River, in Mesopotamia, (vs.5; Deut. 23:3,4) He was a Gentile through whom God spoke, (text) How did he obtain knowledge of the true God? How much Divine knowledge did he possess? How many Gentiles were prophets of God? I do not know the answer to these questions. Abraham was from this area. (Gen. 11:27-32) Abraham sent a servant back to Mesopotamia to find a wife, who believed in Jehovah, for Isaac. (Gen. 24:1-10) The PULPIT COMMENTARY states, "It remains then to consider how Balaam, living in Mesopotamia, could have had so considerable a knowledge of the true God; and the only satisfactory answer is this, that such knowledge had never disappeared from that region." (VOL. II, pg. 289)

## I. BALAK, KING OF MOAB, WANTED BALAAAM TO COME AND CURSE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

- A. Israel was now *"encamped in the plains of Moab"* (vs. 1)
  - 1. They had been denied safe passage through Edom (Num. 20:14-20)
  - 2. At Hormah, the Canaanites, who came out to fight against them, were *"utterly destroyed"* (Num. 21:1-3)
  - 3. Sihon, the king of the Amorites, foolishly denied the humble request of the Israelites to travel through his land. These Amorites were soundly defeated (Num. 21:21-32)
  - 4. Og, the king of Bashan, went out to fight against Israel. *"And Jehovah said unto Moses, Fear him not..."* (Num. 21:33-35)
  - 5. The Israelites would not have fought against these people and taken their land if they would have allowed them to safely pass through their land
- B. The people of Moab were *"sore afraid"* for they said, *"Now will this multitude lick up all that is round about us..."* (vs. 2-4)
- C. Balak knew that Balaam had the power to bring blessings on people or put a hex on them. He wanted to hire Balaam to "curse" the Israelites (vs. 6)

## II. BALAAAM'S FIRST ANSWER TO BALAK'S EVIL PROPOSITION

- A. Important men from Moab and Midian came to Balaam *"with the diviner's fee in their hand"* (vs. 7 NKJV)
- B. Wisely, Balaam wanted to know what God's will was in this matter before he made his decision (vs. 8)
  - 1. We should always pray, *"Thy will be done."* (Mt. 6:10)
  - 2. If God's will is to be followed by us, we must know His will and conform our wills to His (Jn. 4:31-34)
- C. God very clearly made known His will to Balaam. He said, *"Thou shalt not go with them..."* (vs. 9-12)
  - 1. Balaam did not MISUNDERSTAND the Lord!
  - 2. We can understand God's will for us! (Eph. 5:17)
  - 3. God did not reveal His words and preserve for the purpose of causing confusion (I Cor. 14:33)
- D. Balaam's answer was, *"No"* for he said, *"...Jehovah refuseth to give me leave to go with you."* (vs. 13)

- E. If the Bible's account of Balaam's life ended here, we would consider him to be a righteous, God-fearing, faithful prophet

### III. BECAUSE BALAAM WANTED TO GO AND RECEIVE RICHES AND HONOR, GOD ANGRILY PERMITTED HIM TO GO

- A. "Balak rightly judged that Balaam was not really unwilling to come, and that it was only needful to ply him with more flattery and larger promises." (Ibid., pg. 291)
1. Consider Balaam's answer and you see that he placed the responsibility for his refusal to go completely upon the Lord (vs. 13)
  2. If your son, or daughter, is asked by friends to go out with them and you tell him, or her, "No", he or she, might tell their friends, "My Mother and Father will not let me go with you."
  3. This implies that the person wants to go, but someone else is responsible for their failure to go
- B. Balaam knew what was right and said what was right when he was confronted with a second invitation (vs. 15-18)
- C. However, Balaam's heart was not right for if it had been he would not have sought further instruction from the Lord. What part of the word "No" did Balaam not understand? (vs. 19)
1. While it is important to know God's will, this alone is not pleasing to God
  2. To please God, we must know His commandments and obey them from the heart (Mt. 15:7-9)
    - a. (Read Isaiah 29:13)
    - b. The footnote in the ASV on the word "*taught*" reads, "*learned by rote*"
  3. One may say, "I love Jesus", but does this statement come from the HEART?
  4. One may recite God's plan of salvation, but does he, or she, believe it must be obeyed?
  5. You came to this worship service, but did you come: out of habit; or because you would upset your parents, or husband, or wife, or friends if you did not; or because you REALLY LOVE THE LORD?
- D. Today, many understand the Lord's law concerning marriage and divorce, but they are not content with His answer and are seeking further instruction (Mt. 19:9)
- E. Since Jehovah gave Balaam permission to go, why was He angry? (vs. 20-22)
1. Have you ever given your children permission to do something that you really did not want them to do, but you gave in because they kept pestering you for permission?
  2. Did you ever feel angry about their doing it?
  3. We anger God when there is sinful desire in our hearts
  4. Because the Israelites demanded to have a king, God gave them one, but their demand angered Him (I Sam. 8:1-9; Hosea 13:11)

**CONCLUSION:** God has clearly revealed His plan for the salvation of our souls from the eternal fire of hell. One must: believe that Jesus is God's Son and our Savior (Jn. 8: 23,24; Mt. 16:16); repent of his, or her, sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30); confess their faith in Jesus as God's Son. (Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:37 KJV); be baptized into Christ death for the remission of their sins (Rom. 6:3; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38); remain faithful in God's service (Mt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10). Do you truly believe in your heart that if you meet these conditions, God will give you eternal life with Him?