

# Giving Up or Giving In: Part 2

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## **Numbers 22:1–13 NLT**

<sup>1</sup> Then the people of Israel traveled to the plains of Moab and camped east of the Jordan River, across from Jericho. <sup>2</sup> Balak son of Zippor, the Moabite king, had seen everything the Israelites did to the Amorites. <sup>3</sup> And when the people of Moab saw how many Israelites there were, they were terrified. <sup>4</sup> The king of Moab said to the elders of Midian, “This mob will devour everything in sight, like an ox devours grass in the field!” So Balak, king of Moab, <sup>5</sup> sent messengers to call Balaam son of Beor, who was living in his native land of Pethor near the Euphrates River. His message said: “Look, a vast horde of people has arrived from Egypt. They cover the face of the earth and are threatening me. <sup>6</sup> Please come and curse these people for me because they are too powerful for me. Then perhaps I will be able to conquer them and drive them from the land. I know that blessings fall on any people you bless, and curses fall on people you curse.” <sup>7</sup> Balak’s messengers, who were elders of Moab and Midian, set out with money to pay Balaam to place a curse upon Israel. They went to Balaam and delivered Balak’s message to him. <sup>8</sup> “Stay here overnight,” Balaam said. “In the morning I will tell you whatever the Lord directs me to say.” So the officials from Moab stayed there with Balaam. <sup>9</sup> That night God came to Balaam and asked him, “Who are these men visiting you?” <sup>10</sup> Balaam said to God, “Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent me this message: <sup>11</sup> ‘Look, a vast horde of people has arrived from Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come and curse these people for me. Then perhaps I will be able to stand up to them and drive them from the land.’ ” <sup>12</sup> But God told Balaam, “Do not go with them. You are not to curse these people, for they have been blessed!” <sup>13</sup> The next morning Balaam got up and told Balak’s officials, “Go on home! The Lord will not let me go with you.”

Many people are not familiar with this section of scripture but the importance of this prophet and his words, motives, and action tell a story that is beyond today’s message. But if we could first point out in verse 9 the question that God poses to Balaam. “Who are these men visiting you?” This should have been the first indication that God was issuing a concern. It’s not like God didn’t know who they were. This should have been the only red flag that Balaam needed. But if we are honest with ourselves...do we heed that same warning? Does the questions that God ask us bring our heart back into alignment with His word? Or are we hard headed or hard hearted to the effect that God continues His strategy to get our attention?

Balaam should have been so in tuned with the heart of God that he should not had to even answer as if God didn’t know. But his answer to God should have been the answer that he needed to hear to bring his heart into subjection to the will of God. If his heart was really with God he would have know that the Moabite king had bad intentions for the people of God. But

God will meet us where we are and will continue to pour out His heart so that we will do what is right. But if we ignore the questions and leading of the Holy Spirit then it should be of no surprise that even the voice of God can be manipulated in our hearts because we have been conformed to the ways and customs of this world. Paul addresses this in the book of Romans.

### **Romans 12:1–2 AMP**

<sup>1</sup> I APPEAL to you therefore, brethren, *and* beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service *and* spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, *even* the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

Balaam's struggle can be found in verse 13.

### **Numbers 22:13 NLT**

<sup>13</sup> The next morning Balaam got up and told Balak's officials, "Go on home! The Lord will not let me go with you."

If we think about the utterance of his words and what they reflected. The Lord will not let me go with you. This sounds as if Balaam is voicing what God wants but it's not settled in his heart. If he had to make the decision then he would be heading out with them back to Balak. And why would he made that decision? Because money was involved! His heart was divided. And in his case, it was the money but how about us ladies and gentlemen? Have we refused to fall into temptation because God says not to or because our heart leans into God's heart. If we refuse because God says not to then we prove how shallow our relationship is with Him!

### **Numbers 22:14–20 NLT**

<sup>14</sup> So the Moabite officials returned to King Balak and reported, "Balaam refused to come with us." <sup>15</sup> Then Balak tried again. This time he sent a larger number of even more distinguished officials than those he had sent the first time. <sup>16</sup> They went to Balaam and delivered this message to him: "This is what Balak son of Zippor says: Please don't let anything stop you from coming to help me. <sup>17</sup> I will pay you very well and do whatever you tell me. Just come and curse these people for me!" <sup>18</sup> But Balaam responded to Balak's messengers, "Even if Balak were to give me his palace filled with silver and gold, I would be powerless to do anything against the will of the Lord my God. <sup>19</sup> But stay here one more night, and I will see if the Lord has anything else to say to me." <sup>20</sup> That night God came to Balaam and told him, "Since these men have come for you, get up and go with them. But do only what I tell you to do."

The enemy knew that he could continue to entice or manipulate the word of God if he continued to show up with words of persuasion and things that would cause Balaam to change his mind. It

was at this point for Balaam that it was obvious that his heart was not in the first answer that he gave. Notice what the report stated to Balak...Balaam refused to come. Even the officials knew that Balaam's heart was not in his answer.

Balaam had given a religious answer. Let me give you an example. Imagine you are a kid and your friends invite you join them down the road to play ball. You go ask your parents but they tell you no and not to leave the yard. So now you have to give the news to your friends and what is the word that you give them? My parents said I can't go. So what happened here is that you shifted the reasoning of why you could not go is because your parents said no. But if you were the one to make the decision then you would have said yes. This is exactly what happened with Balaam. Balaam's heart was positioned for what was beneficial to himself. Why would he even need to acquire from the Lord when God had already gave him a response. Balaam portrayed false humility within his approach and God gave him what was really in his heart. This is not the only time that we see this within scripture. Turn with me to [1 Samuel 8:4-9](#)

### **1 Samuel 8:4-9 NLT**

<sup>4</sup> Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel. <sup>5</sup> "Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have." <sup>6</sup> Samuel was displeased with their request and went to the Lord for guidance. <sup>7</sup> "Do everything they say to you," the Lord replied, "for they are rejecting me, not you. They don't want me to be their king any longer. <sup>8</sup> Ever since I brought them from Egypt they have continually abandoned me and followed other gods. And now they are giving you the same treatment. <sup>9</sup> Do as they ask, but solemnly warn them about the way a king will reign over them."

Samuel warned the people of how a king will take their sons and will make an army and assign some generals and captains. Their sons will be forced to plow the fields and harvest crops. Some will be blacksmiths and forge weapons that will be used in war and your sons will be killed. The king will take your daughters and force them to cook and be servants of the king. The king will take a tenth of your cattle and a tenth of your grains. And not only will your children be slaves but you will be slaves and you will beg for relief, but the Lord will not help you. And watch how the people responded...

### **1 Samuel 8:19-22 NLT**

<sup>19</sup> But the people refused to listen to Samuel's warning. "Even so, we still want a king," they said. <sup>20</sup> "We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will judge us and lead us into battle." <sup>21</sup> So Samuel repeated to the Lord what the people had said, <sup>22</sup> and the Lord replied, "Do as they say, and give them a king." Then Samuel agreed and sent the people home.

Proof that God will allow us to have what is in our hearts even though it is beyond His will for us. Our covetousness has control of our heart and we justify what we want even though His word has declared for it to be wrong. Where is our heart at church? While I was in prayer this week the Lord specifically told me to address your hearts and call out the very things that has

drawn us away from scripture throughout this series and moving forward. He continued with tell me that this will be what separate SLM from other churches. Addressing the matter of our heart. And just like Balaam had a decision to Give up his heart and Give in to the heart of God. Balaam was enticed because he was conformed to the world. Scripture clearly states that the love of money is the root of all evil....its the love of something more than God. Have we become so in love with what we want in the place of what God wants? Our mouth will tell on our hearts! Watch what happens next with Balaam!

### **Numbers 22:21–30 NLT**

<sup>21</sup> So the next morning Balaam got up, saddled his donkey, and started off with the Moabite officials. <sup>22</sup> But God was angry that Balaam was going, so he sent the angel of the Lord to stand in the road to block his way. As Balaam and two servants were riding along, <sup>23</sup> Balaam's donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The donkey bolted off the road into a field, but Balaam beat it and turned it back onto the road. <sup>24</sup> Then the angel of the Lord stood at a place where the road narrowed between two vineyard walls. <sup>25</sup> When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it tried to squeeze by and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam beat the donkey again. <sup>26</sup> Then the angel of the Lord moved farther down the road and stood in a place too narrow for the donkey to get by at all. <sup>27</sup> This time when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down under Balaam. In a fit of rage Balaam beat the animal again with his staff. <sup>28</sup> Then the Lord gave the donkey the ability to speak. "What have I done to you that deserves your beating me three times?" it asked Balaam. <sup>29</sup> "You have made me look like a fool!" Balaam shouted. "If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!" <sup>30</sup> "But I am the same donkey you have ridden all your life," the donkey answered. "Have I ever done anything like this before?" "No," Balaam admitted.

So Balaam saddled his donkey and went on his way thinking that he was doing the will of God. All because now the Lord had change His mind. Yet another sign that should have been so obvious. As if the Lord was at one point against it but now He is okay with it.....and you know what is so startling about this scenario? So many people are in the same shoes as Balaam! They have followed their heart instead of God's word.

As Balaam continue to be outraged because the very thing that he would used to get him to where he wanted to go continued to resist him. The path may have been straight and forthright but God was continuing to seek for Balaam's heart. And continually Balaam did not see what the Lord was doing because he was blinded to what he desired.

But I want us notice that even when things seemed to be out of balance, Balaam still justified his actions. SO... what was out of balance or outside of the normal? That's right...a talking donkey. And I'm not talking about Shrek and Donkey. God physically allow the donkey to speak. And what did the donkey speak? TRUTH! But why wasn't Balaam surprised that the donkey had spoken? The perverseness of Balaam's heart grew more and more conformed to the ways of man than the ways of God. This is why it's of no surprise that Balaam answered the donkey's question. But here is where is gets more interesting:

### **Numbers 22:31–35 NLT**

<sup>31</sup> Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the roadway with a drawn sword in his hand. Balaam bowed his head and fell face down on the ground before him. <sup>32</sup> "Why did you beat your donkey those three times?" the angel of the Lord demanded. "Look, I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me." <sup>33</sup> Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey." <sup>34</sup> Then Balaam confessed to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned. I didn't realize you were standing in the road to block my way. I will return home if you are against my going." <sup>35</sup> But the angel of the Lord told Balaam, "Go with these men, but say only what I tell you to say." So Balaam went on with Balak's officials.

Here is the lifestyle that so many are in this morning...For a brief moment Balaam's eyes were opened to what was going on Verse 32 was purposed to penetrate his heart because the Angel of the Lord said that He had come to block the path that he was on. And verse 34 shows the admittance of his sin. But then hear the words of Balaam once again. "I will return home if you are against my going." I will do what you tell me to do but not because I want to. Look deeper at this...against my going. Balaam was once anointed as prophet and now he was a self appointed prophet. This is the western church today. We were appointed at child but now we justify what our hearts want and not what the word of God declares. Self appointed christians is the society we are now living in. Like we have said before that everyone is a christian until it becomes biblical. Balaam continued own and followed his own heart and the end result was death. In Balaam's case it was a physical death but for the many it will be a spiritual death. Sin will not be allowed in heaven cause if God allows it then He would have to change the judgement of Satan. And it cannot be change because God's word is forever settled in heaven. Heaven and earth will pass away before His word does.

Those that are here today are at the crossroads of a decision to make. Will you give up your heart and give in to the heart of God? Let me pray with you today!