

Adult Bible Class
The Book of Numbers
Lesson #14, Chapters 23, 24 & 25

Numbers Chapter 22 Review

Balaam was a prophet from Mesopotamia who was called by King Balak of Moab to come and curse the people of Israel. The Israelites' wanderings were almost over, and they had made their way up the east side of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River where the Moabites, Amorites, and the people of Bashan lived. They are now on the plains of Moab, across the Jordan river from Jericho. The rest of the book of Numbers and the book of Deuteronomy takes place here.

God had commanded the Israelites to leave the people of Edom and Moab alone because they were related to the Israelites. However, Balak, the king of Moab, saw what Israel had done to the Amorites and the people of Bashan, and he was afraid, so he hired Balaam to curse the people of Israel. The Amorites and the people of Bashan attacked Israel to destroy them, but instead Israel destroyed *them* - and took their land which eventually became a part of the Promised Land on the east side of Jordan.

Balaam was not a good man. He was double minded, selfish, vain, and greedy of money as well as glory. He disregarded the plain commandments of God. Balaam was not a true prophet of God, but he was a false or wicked prophet - one who used divination - a soothsayer or sorcerer. Though Balaam knew the God of Israel and spoke about Him, he was not subject to Him.

Jesus said that we would be able to tell a true prophet from a false prophet by his fruit (his behavior - see Matthew 7:15-23). A prophet who claims to know God and have a relationship with Him but who behaves wickedly is a false prophet. He deceives himself as well as others.

When a person's heart is right he desires to be acceptable to God.

Romans 2:29 (NLT) No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God . . . it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.

We learn from New Testament writings that Balaam's primary sin was that he could be bought:

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you . . . **15** They have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong.

Jude 4 . . . some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives . . . **11** What sorrow awaits them! For they follow in the footsteps of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. . . .

While Balaam was not an Israelite, he apparently knew Jehovah God to the point that he had some interaction with Him. But Balaam had not submitted his heart to God. While on his way to see Balak, God stopped Balaam in his tracks and spoke to him from the mouth of a donkey. Balaam's prophetic insight had been blinded by the prospect of a great reward. God told him in no uncertain terms to speak only what He told him to say.

Numbers 22:41 The next morning Balak took Balaam up to Bamoth-baal. From there he could see some of the people of Israel spread out below him.

It was thought that it was necessary to see the object of the curse, so Balak took Balaam up on a high mountain so he could see the Israelites to curse them.

Numbers 23

Balaam Blesses Israel

Numbers 23:1 (NLT) Then Balaam said to King Balak, "Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven young bulls and seven rams for me to sacrifice." **2** Balak followed his instructions, and the two of them sacrificed a young bull and a ram on each altar.

The Moabites worshiped Baal. There were altars of Baal on high hills in Moab. Balak thought of God as he also thought of Balaam - that He could be bought! We see sacrifices taking place here - and they seem similar to the sacrifices commanded by God - but they are not the same. These are sacrifices made in a place dedicated to false gods by rebellious people for selfish purposes!

3 Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here by your burnt offerings, and I will go to see if the Lord will respond to me. Then I will tell you whatever he reveals to me." So Balaam went alone to the top of a bare hill, **4** and God met him there. Balaam said to him, "I have prepared seven altars and have sacrificed a young bull and a ram on each altar."

Balaam was a man who used divination or sorcery to get his prophecies. Here, he does things that seem like they are what a true prophet should do, but they are not. God is not going to let Balaam curse His people. God has a tight reign on this guy! Balaam tells God, "I've sacrificed to You - that ought to get me points!" The Lord ignores the sacrifice.

5 The Lord gave Balaam a message for King Balak. Then he said, "Go back to Balak and give him my message."

God takes control of those rebellious, lying lips! God had previously opened the mouth of the donkey and made it utter human speech. Now, He is going to open the mouth of one who is perhaps more stubborn than the donkey - one who is ready to deceive and curse for profit - and makes that mouth to utter truth and blessing.

6 So Balaam returned and found the king standing beside his burnt offerings with all the officials of Moab.

Numbers 23:7 This was the message Balaam delivered:

"Balak summoned me to come from Aram [Aram is another name for Syria];
the king of Moab brought me from the eastern hills.

'Come,' he said, 'curse Jacob for me!
Come and announce Israel's doom.'

8 But how can I curse those
whom God has not cursed?
How can I condemn those
whom the Lord has not condemned?

9 I see them from the cliff tops;
I watch them from the hills.
I see a people who live by themselves,
set apart from other nations.

10 Who can count Jacob's descendants, as numerous as dust?
Who can count even a fourth of Israel's people?

Let me die like the righteous;
let my life end like theirs."

11 Then King Balak demanded of Balaam, "What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies. Instead, you have blessed them!"

12 But Balaam replied, "I will speak only the message that the Lord puts in my mouth."

God will not allow Balaam to curse Israel. Balaam even gets sentimental, saying, "*Let me die like the righteous,*" which is the cry of evil men who desire the *reward* of goodness but who do not submit to the *discipline* of it. Balaam will not get paid by Balak in this life because he could not curse Israel, nor will he have the righteous reward of the next.

Balaam's Second Message

13 Then King Balak told him, "Come with me to another place. There you will see another part of the nation of Israel, but not all of them. Curse at least that many!"

Balak is losing control of his prophet. He is desperate for even a partial curse. If Balaam is forbidden to curse all of them, maybe he could curse some of them!

14 So Balak took Balaam to the plateau of Zophim on Pisgah Peak [this is the area of Mt. Nebo]. He built seven altars there and offered a young bull and a ram on each altar.

15 Then Balaam said to the king, "Stand here by your burnt offerings while I go over there to meet the Lord."

16 And the Lord met Balaam and gave him a message. Then he said, "Go back to Balak and give him my message."

17 So Balaam returned and found the king standing beside his burnt offerings with all the officials of Moab. "What did the Lord say?" Balak asked eagerly.

18 This was the message Balaam delivered:

"Rise up, Balak, and listen!
Hear me, son of Zippor.

19 God is not a man, so he does not lie.
He is not human, so he does not change his mind.
Has he ever spoken and failed to act?
Has he ever promised and not carried it through?

KJV: 19 God is not a man, that he should lie;
neither the son of man, that he should
repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it?
or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it
good?

It is natural for men to change their minds or break their word, but God is not like that - as Balak thought. Balak is now dealing with God and not man. God remains true to His first intention - to bless Israel.

Numbers 23:20 Listen, I received a command to bless; God has blessed, and I cannot reverse it!

21 No misfortune is in his plan for Jacob;
no trouble is in store for Israel.

For the Lord their God is with them;
he has been proclaimed their king.

22 God brought them out of Egypt;
for them he is as strong as a wild ox.

23 No curse can touch Jacob;
no magic has any power against Israel.

For now it will be said of Jacob,
'What wonders God has done for Israel!'

NKJV: For there is no sorcery against Jacob,
Nor any divination against Israel.

God's people should have no superstitious fears. God's people should not be involved in the occult in any way, nor should they fear it in any way. Balaam's usual means of cursing using the occult was powerless against Israel. The Lord's protection renders occult powers harmless.

24 These people rise up like a lioness,
like a majestic lion rousing itself.
They refuse to rest
until they have feasted on prey,
drinking the blood of the slaughtered!"

25 Then Balak said to Balaam, "Fine, but if you won't curse them, at least don't bless them!"

26 But Balaam replied to Balak, "Didn't I tell you that I can do only what the Lord tells me?"

Balaam's Third Message

27 Then King Balak said to Balaam, "Come, I will take you to one more place. Perhaps it will please God to let you curse them from there."

28 So Balak took Balaam to the top of Mount Peor, overlooking the wasteland.

This was another place of Baal worship in Moab, and we are going to read about it later in this lesson - as Israel miserably fails God in that place.

29 Balaam again told Balak, "Build me seven altars, and prepare seven young bulls and seven rams for me to sacrifice." **30** So Balak did as Balaam ordered and offered a young bull and a ram on each altar.

Numbers Chapter 24

Numbers 24:1 By now Balaam realized that the Lord was determined to bless Israel, so he did not resort to divination as before. Instead, he turned and looked out toward the wilderness, **2** where he saw the people of Israel camped, tribe by tribe. Then the Spirit of God came upon him, **3** and this is the message he delivered:

"This is the message of Balaam son of Beor,
the message of the man whose eyes see clearly,

Numbers 24:4 the message of one who hears the words of God,
who sees a vision from the Almighty,
who bows down with eyes wide open:

5 How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob;
how lovely are your homes, O Israel!

6 They spread before me like palm groves,
like gardens by the riverside.

They are like tall trees planted by the Lord,
like cedars beside the waters.

7 Water will flow from their buckets;
their offspring have all they need.

Their king will be greater than Agag;
their kingdom will be exalted.

8 God brought them out of Egypt;
for them he is as strong as a wild ox.

He devours all the nations that oppose him,
breaking their bones in pieces,
shooting them with arrows.

9 Like a lion, Israel crouches and lies down;
like a lioness, who dares to arouse her?

Blessed is everyone who blesses you, O Israel,
and cursed is everyone who curses you."

10 King Balak flew into a rage against Balaam. He angrily clapped his hands and shouted, "I called you to curse my enemies! Instead, you have blessed them three times. **11** Now get out of here! Go back home! I promised to reward you richly, but the Lord has kept you from your reward."

12 Balaam told Balak, "Don't you remember what I told your messengers? I said, **13** '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.' I told you that I could say only what the Lord says! **14** Now I am returning to my own people. But first let me tell you what the Israelites will do to your people in the future."

Balaam's Final Messages

15 This is the message Balaam delivered:

"This is the message of Balaam son of Beor,
the message of the man whose eyes see clearly,
16 the message of one who hears the words of God,
who has knowledge from the Most High,
who sees a vision from the Almighty,
who bows down with eyes wide open:

17 I see him, but not here and now.
I perceive him, but far in the distant future.

A star will rise from Jacob;
a scepter will emerge from Israel.

Many students of the Bible see the above verse as a Messianic prophecy.

It will crush the heads of Moab's people,
cracking the skulls of the people of Sheth.

18 Edom will be taken over,
and Seir, its enemy, will be conquered,
while Israel marches on in triumph.

19 A ruler will rise in Jacob
who will destroy the survivors of Ir."

The great king of Israel, King David, attacked and conquered both the Moabites and the Edomites during his reign (2 Samuel 8:2, 14).

20 Then Balaam looked over toward the people of Amalek and delivered this message:

"Amalek was the greatest of nations,
but its destiny is destruction!"

King Saul defeated the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15:2). God said through Samuel the prophet, *"I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt"* (see Exodus 17:8).

21 Then he looked over toward the Kenites and delivered this message:

"Your home is secure;
your nest is set in the rocks.

22 But the Kenites will be destroyed
when Assyria takes you captive."

23 Balaam concluded his messages by saying:

"Alas, who can survive
unless God has willed it?"

24 Ships will come from the coasts of Cyprus;
they will oppress Assyria and afflict Eber,
but they, too, will be utterly destroyed."

25 Then Balaam left and returned home, and Balak also went on his way.

Balaam was hired to curse Israel, but was constrained to bless them.

Isaiah 54:17 (NKJV) No weapon formed against you shall prosper,
And every tongue which rises against you in judgment
You shall condemn.
This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord,
And their righteousness is from Me,"
Says the Lord.

Numbers Chapter 25 - A Zeal for the Lord

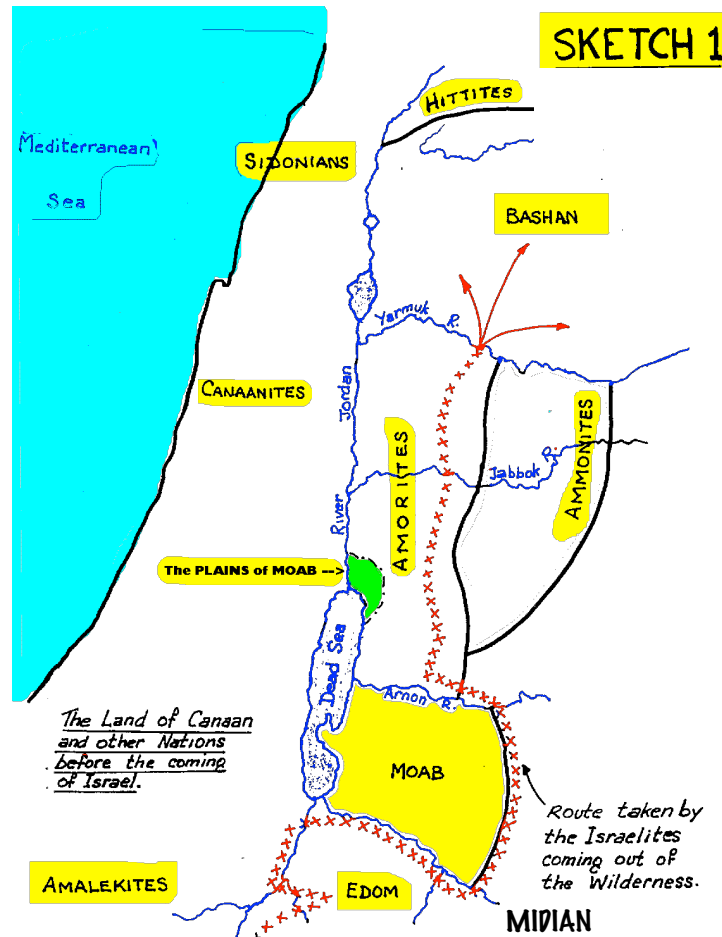
Moab Seduces Israel

Numbers 25:1 (NLT) While the Israelites were camped at Acacia Grove, some of the men defiled themselves by having sexual relations with local Moabite women. **2** These women invited them to attend sacrifices to their gods, so the Israelites feasted with them and worshiped the gods of Moab. **3** In this way, Israel joined in the worship of Baal of Peor, causing the Lord's anger to blaze against his people.

4 The Lord issued the following command to Moses: "Seize all the ringleaders and execute them before the Lord in broad daylight, so his fierce anger will turn away from the people of Israel."

5 So Moses ordered Israel's judges, "Each of you must put to death the men under your authority who have joined in worshipping Baal of Peor."

Three times in three different places Balaam told King Balak to build seven altars for his pagan sacrifices. From their high vista they could see the people of Israel on the plains of Moab below. The third time was on top of Mount Peor.



As we study the book of Numbers we notice that some chapters leave out important facts that have to be found in other portions of Scripture in order to get a complete picture. Such is the case in this chapter. Let's read some of these key points found elsewhere:

Numbers 31:16 "These are the very ones [wicked women] who followed Balaam's advice and caused the people of Israel to rebel against the Lord at Mount Peor. They are the ones who caused the plague to strike the Lord's people.

Revelation 2:12 "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Pergamum . . .

13 "I know that you live in the city where Satan has his throne, yet you have remained loyal to me . . .

14 "But I have a few complaints against you. You tolerate some among you whose teaching is like that of Balaam, who showed Balak how to trip up the people of Israel. He taught them to sin by eating food offered to idols and by committing sexual sin. **15** In a similar way, you have some Nicolaitans among you who follow the same teaching.

These Scriptures tell us what is missing from our story - that Balaam, who was not allowed by God to curse Israel, instead taught the Moabite women (and the Midianites who were in league with them) that they could bring Israel's downfall by causing them to worship idols and commit sexual sin. In those days, a part of idol worship was committing immoral acts. Balaam was not allowed to personally curse

Israel, so he cunningly brought them to defeat by their own sinful actions. Keep reading chapter 25:

Numbers 25:6 Just then one of the Israelite men brought a Midianite woman into his tent, right before the eyes of Moses and all the people, as everyone was weeping at the entrance of the Tabernacle. **7** When Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest saw this, he jumped up and left the assembly. He took a spear **8** and rushed after the man into his tent. Phinehas thrust the spear all the way through the man's body and into the woman's stomach. So the plague against the Israelites was stopped, **9** but not before 24,000 people had died.

10 Then the Lord said to Moses, **11** "Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest has turned my anger away from the Israelites by being as zealous among them as I was. So I stopped destroying all Israel as I had intended to do in my zealous anger. **12** Now tell him that I am making my special covenant of peace with him. **13** In this covenant, I give him and his descendants a permanent right to the priesthood, for in his zeal for me, his God, he purified the people of Israel, making them right with me."

14 The Israelite man killed with the Midianite woman was named Zimri son of Salu, the leader of a family from the tribe of Simeon. **15** The woman's name was Cozbi; she was the daughter of Zur, the leader of a Midianite clan.

Remember Paul's admonition concerning this part of the Old Testament:

1 Corinthians 10:6 These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did, **7** or worship idols as some of them did . . . **14** So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols . . . **20** . . . I am saying that these sacrifices are offered to demons, not to God. And I don't want you to participate with demons.

Israel had been in a pattern of complaining and rebellion ever since they left Egypt. On many occasions the people of Israel died as consequences for their sin and rebellion. God tried to shape and mold the people so they would be ready to enter the Promised Land. It seemed that the incident with the brazen serpent had finally turned things around, but here we see Israel succumbing to idolatry once again, which in those days was combined with immorality. Idolatry insults God, for He is ignored, dishonored, and replaced as the one who deserves worship and honor. Immoral acts insult a person's spouse for he/she is ignored, dishonored, and replaced as the one who deserves honor. Hence, these two great sins often went together in those days because they are foundationally the same.

Israel's sin was great, but reached the height of audacity when Zimri brought Cozbi into his tent right in front of the elders and Moses. *All shame of sin was gone*, and when this happens, sin is at its worst. Understand that what made this episode so bad is that all shame was gone! Sinners weren't hiding their sin!

While in this day no righteous person would think of doing the violence that Phinehas did, yet in his time God was the King of the nation of Israel, and the enemies of Israel were the enemies of God. In those days, when God's people or God's way of worship was threatened, God's people were supposed to take action under God's law for His nation. Phinehas had the authority to take action.

We must look beneath the surface of what took place to get to the meaning for us as Christians. What Phinehas did was right for the time in which he lived as is seen by God's commendation for what he did. For the moment, lay aside the fact that violence was done. The key to understanding why God elevated what

Phinehas did to such a high level is that Phinehas was full of zeal for the Lord, hating sin as much as God does. Phinehas is, in fact, a great Old Testament type or picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. What Phinehas did was commended by God and brought atonement for the people, and Phinehas received promises from God.

Why is Phinehas a type of Jesus Christ? Because of his zeal. Read what is said about him in one of the Psalms:

Psalm 106:28 Then our ancestors joined in the worship of Baal at Peor;
they even ate sacrifices offered to the dead!

29 They angered the Lord with all these things,
so a plague broke out among them.

30 But Phinehas had the courage to intervene,
and the plague was stopped.

31 So he has been regarded as a righteous man
ever since that time.

Zeal is a funny thing. When it is based on pure motives and when it is governed by current laws of the times, it is a powerful thing, accomplishing much for God's kingdom. However, zeal can easily degenerate into fanaticism or bad behavior. For example, a person can be zealous for worship but then later turn his worship into a selfish thing - for attention. We could think of a few examples of zeal that has lost its pure motives.

But Phinehas, as a type of Christ, showed proper zeal. What he did was in the will of God for that moment, and his motives were pure. God had brought about the deaths of 24,000 people by a plague in response to Israel's great sin. When Phinehas brought about the death of these two who so brazenly sinned before God and everybody, his actions were an atonement that stopped the plague. He actually *saved lives* by what he did. He was zealous that sin had to be stopped so the plague against the people would end.

Remember what we read earlier. The command went forth:

Numbers 25:4 The Lord issued the following command to Moses: "Seize all the ringleaders and execute them before the Lord in broad daylight, so his fierce anger will turn away from the people of Israel."

5 So Moses ordered Israel's judges, "Each of you must put to death the men under your authority who have joined in worshipping Baal of Peor."

However, Phinehas was the only one that was motivated by holy zeal to obey God's command. No one else had the heart or zeal for it. It pleased God - to see His own hatred for sin and His own desire to make sin stop - in this man, Phinehas.

There are two points to Israel's sin that we should notice. First, there was their own weakness. Second, there was Balaam's plan to see them fall. Jesus said in Revelation 2 that Balaam taught the Moabites how to trip up the people of Israel by teaching them to sin by committing immoral acts and to eat food offered to idols. The Bible says that each man is drawn away of his own lust (James 1:14), but besides this, there is evil that is working against the will and purposes of God. We can see both of these in action in the story at Mount Peor.

By the way, the Hebrew word, *Peor*, means “opening.” The enemy of our soul is looking for a doorway, an opening to get us to sin against God. The church teaches holiness of living so that there are as few openings as possible to cause us to stumble and fail God. Evil people (and the demons that motivate them) are cunningly working to get God’s people to fail. Israel had just come through battles with the Amorites and the people of Bashan. Now they were camped on the plains of Moab, waiting. This was new to them, to have neighbors nearby. They had time, they had new neighbors, and Balaam used all of this to cause them to sin greatly against God. Never mind that Balaam wasn’t allowed to curse them so Moab could destroy them - instead he took advantage of their weaknesses by getting the Moabite and Midianite women to cause them to sin! Just as King David sinned with Bathsheba when he stayed at home instead of going to war, the Israelites in our story found themselves idle, and because they were idle they began to worship idols! This moment of rest and safety turned into one of the most dangerous times in the whole forty years! This younger generation of Israel had not yet faced the temptations that caused their now deceased parents to fail so greatly in the golden calf incident. When the temptation came here at Mount Peor, they failed - miserably.

Phinehas killed Zimri and Cozbi who were joined together in an immoral act. Idol worship and immoral acts are closely linked. Idol worship is a sin against God. Immoral acts are sins against a person’s own body. Paul said:

1 Corinthians 6:13 . . . Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. . .

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. **19** 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? **20** For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

In our story, Phinehas put to death the evil doers. Likewise, Christians are to “mortify” the sins of the flesh in their own selves. *What happened on a national level to Israel is a picture of what happens to each individual Christian in his heart.*

Romans 8:12 Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. **13** For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

Colossians 3:5 So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don’t be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshipping the things of this world. **6** Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming.

According to the law of Israel for that day and time it was right that these sinners should die (this type of sin was deserving of the death penalty under the Law of Moses, and furthermore God commanded that the elders execute the ringleaders). Since the elders didn’t have the heart to bring it to pass, it was right that Phinehas (as a priest) did.

Destruction of the Midianites

Numbers 25:16 Then the Lord said to Moses, **17** “Attack the Midianites and destroy them, **18** because they assaulted you with deceit and tricked you into worshiping Baal of Peor, and because of Cozbi, the daughter of a Midianite leader, who was killed at the time of the plague because of what happened at Peor.”

We are going to jump ahead in the book of Numbers and read the conclusion to this story.

Numbers 31:1 (NLT) Then the Lord said to Moses, **2** “On behalf of the people of Israel, take revenge on the Midianites for leading them into idolatry. After that, you will die and join your ancestors. . .”

6 Then Moses sent them out, 1,000 men from each tribe, and Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest led them into battle. They carried along the holy objects of the sanctuary and the trumpets for sounding the charge. **7** They attacked Midian as the Lord had commanded Moses, and they killed all the men. **8** All five of the Midianite kings . . .died in the battle. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword.

9 Then the Israelite army captured the Midianite women and children and seized their cattle and flocks and all their wealth as plunder. . .**12** they brought them all to Moses and Eleazar the priest, and to the whole community of Israel, which was camped on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River, across from Jericho. . .**14** But Moses was furious. . .

15 “Why have you let all the women live?” he demanded. **16** “These are the very ones who followed Balaam’s advice and caused the people of Israel to rebel against the Lord at Mount Peor. They are the ones who caused the plague to strike the Lord’s people. **17** So kill all the boys and all the women who have had intercourse with a man. **18** Only the young girls who are virgins may live; you may keep them for yourselves.

It was *the women* of Midian who had brought about this great sin in Israel. Balaam had taught them well. Though it may seem a horrible thing, Moses, like Phinehas, was trying to save lives and stop the spread of sin in Israel by commanding that the Midianite women should die.

The spiritual lesson for us is that we must “put to death” those things in our own hearts that would cause us to sin and betray the Lord. We must not listen to teachers that say that God doesn’t care if we sin. We must develop the right kind of zeal that hates sin in ourselves. In our day, the battleground is in our hearts. This is a battle we must have the heart and zeal to fight.

The End of Balaam

Balaam died along with those who were slain in God’s war of vengeance. Here is a man who had every opportunity to bow the knee to the God of Israel. God spoke to him, dealt with him, gave him many chances. Yet his heart was never right. What a mixture of light and darkness in one person - and darkness ruled! What a bundle of contradictions! The fact that Jesus (in the book of Revelation) warned against people in the churches such as Balaam should be well noted. There are those in the church that would like to bring people down to their level - the level of sin, rebellion, and self-centeredness. These people talk about God, even

know Him to a certain extent, but *God's will* means nothing. They do what they want for their own gain.

Balaam knew just enough truth to sound spiritual, but his heart was not right. Many people fall into this category. They talk about God, they get an answer to prayer or they are healed, but they do not follow God's will nor do they strive to please Him. They have incorrect ideas of who God is and what He expects, and they don't bother to seek Him or His Word to find out! They do not walk in the Spirit because they don't have the Spirit. They cause others to do wrong because they think they are right!

Phinehas brought atonement to the people of Israel. Phinehas led them into battle to put an end to the wicked Midianites and Balaam, and they carried the Ark of God with them. There would be no entering the Promised Land without Phinehas!

Likewise, Jesus Christ went to the cross for us. With zeal he completed what needed to be done to bring atonement. He leads each one of us in our spiritual battles, and very soon He will return to this earth to lead that last battle that will result in His being crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. Then, we can finally enter into that promised rest.