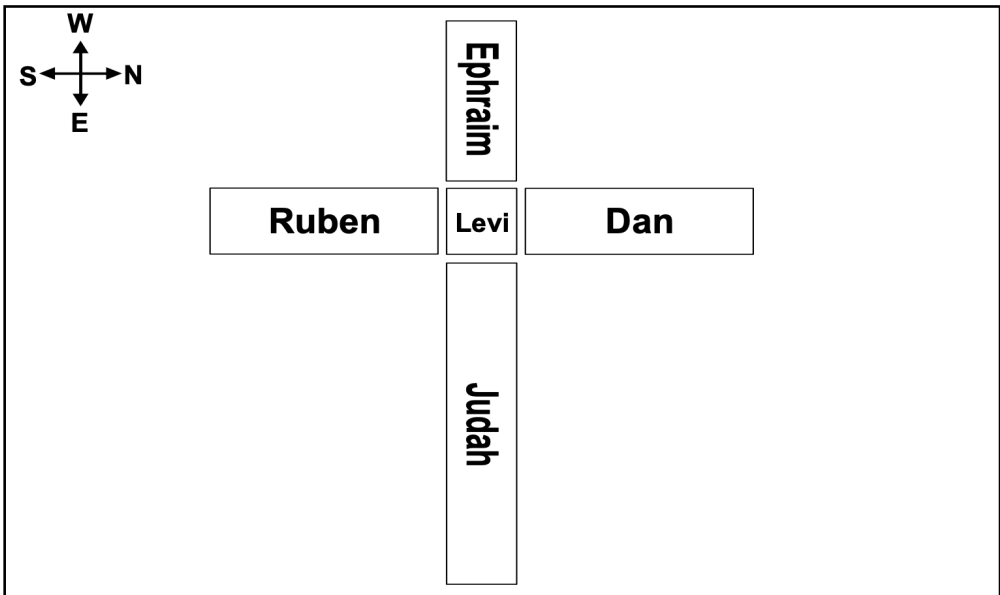


# Configuration of the Israelites Camps

	<p>JUDAH TO THE EAST  <b>186,400</b>          (NUMBERS 2:1-9)</p>
	<p>EPHRAIM TO THE WEST  <b>108,100</b>          (NUMBERS 2:18-24)</p>
	<p>REUBEN TO THE SOUTH  <b>151,450</b>          (NUMBERS 2:10-17)</p>
	<p>DAN TO THE NORTH  <b>157,600</b>          (NUMBERS 2:25-34)</p>

**2 Peter 2**  
**The Casualty of Spiritual Immaturity**  
**J.D. Farag**

KAPONO: Will you join me in a word of prayer? Heavenly Father, we thank You for this time where we can come and worship You, Lord, in spirit and in truth, Lord. For those are the people who You are looking for, Lord. And so we lift our praise and worship up to You this morning, Lord. We thank You for this opportunity to be in Your house, Lord, with Your people.

So would You speak to us, Lord, as we get into the word? Thank You for this time and thank You for our pastor. Continue to watch over him and his family. We ask this in the mighty name of Jesus, we say amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good morning. Welcome. So glad you're here. You can be seated. I want to welcome those of you that are joining us online as well. Real quick, before we get started, I want to, by way of a reminder, let you know that 7:00 p.m. this upcoming Tuesday, here in the sanctuary, we're going to have our prayer meeting. We would really encourage you to come and join with us if you're able. I know you'll be blessed if you do.

So we're going to get right to it, a lot to get to today. Really looking forward to what the Lord has for us. We're going verse-by-verse through *2 Peter*, and today our text is *Chapter 2:14-16*.

So I'll ask you to turn there if you're not there already. And then once you do, if you're able, stand, follow along with me as I read. If not, where you're seated is just fine and if preferable.

*Verse 14*, the Apostle Peter continuing in regards to these false teachers. **“With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning. They seduce the unstable. They are experts in greed— an accursed brood!**

**They [Verse 15] have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way a Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.**

**But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey — a beast without speech — [Who — who — don't get ahead of me] who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness.”**

Let's pray. If you would please join with me.

**2 Peter 2**  
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Father in heaven, thank You so, so, so much, Lord. Lord, this is our time with You, with each other in fellowship, worship, and now Your word. And Lord, we're so thankful to You for Your word and our time together today in Your word.

But Lord, unless the Holy Spirit teaches us and speaks in that still, small voice, we're not going to see what it is that You want to show to us, nor are we going to hear what it is that You want to speak to us.

So Lord, will You speak as only You can and are always so faithful to. You know right where we're at. You know our hearts, every heart in this, Your church. So Lord, speak to our hearts. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

You can be seated. Thank you.

So I want to talk with you about The Casualty of Spiritual Immaturity. Spiritual immaturity exposes believers' vulnerability to false teachers and, by extension, false teachings.

And in our text today, the Apostle Peter, true to form, by the Holy Spirit, will draw upon an Old Testament example to embed this important principle, namely those who, like the false prophet Balaam loved money, and in greed attempted [*Keyword, attempted*] to pronounce a curse on God's people.

Now we're going to come back to him and this at the conclusion of our time together. But it is of paramount importance that we understand the needless casualties resulting from what Balaam taught Balak to do.

Now we're going to see, as Peter refers to it here, the greed of Balaam, and in Revelation it's the doctrine of Balaam. And by the way, today's Update was in concert with and goes together with today's teaching in 2 Peter, and this by way of what we're going to see shortly in the letter to the Church of Pergamos.

Because there, Jesus has John write to that church about this Balaam. And here, Peter does the same thing. So again, we'll come back to that.

But I'm going to approach the text by first addressing who it is that Peter is talking about and who it is that Peter is talking to and perhaps more importantly, why? So let's start with who he's talking about.

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I found ten characteristics. You might find more. But ten. The first of which is those who have eyes full of adultery.

These are the people that have this insatiable lust of the flesh. They're probably in church looking for women to prey on. Don't look at the person sitting next to you. In fact, don't do that for the next nine either.

But this is very descriptive, isn't it, that Peter is giving us this detail by which to identify these false teachers?

The second one is they are those who never stop sinning.

Now, wait a minute. You mean you could stop sinning?

No. We will always sin in these tents, these bodies, this flesh, this fallen world. What this is referring to by saying that they never stop sinning is that they have an unregenerated inability to sin less.

Stay with me. When you're regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit, indwelling you as a born-again believer, born-again of the Spirit of God, it's not that you're sinless, it's that you sin less, not more.

Well, these guys are not regenerated. They have no Holy Spirit. And instead of sinning less, they sin way more better. They sin a lot more. *[A lot more]*

Third, those who seduce the unstable. Now, this one is kind of the main point here. But they are seductive, seeking out the unstable and the vulnerable. And they can smell them a mile away. And that's what they're looking for. And they're looking to seduce those who are, if you will, seducible.

Number 4: Those who are experts in greed. This is interesting. What Peter is saying here is that they've mastered the skill and the expertise in the area of greed. They're pros at this.

And number 5: Those who are an accursed brood. This carries with it the idea of those who have brought upon themselves a curse, and they are, as such, cursed.

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Number 6. I'm going through these quickly because we've got ten more. Just letting you know ahead of time. Number 6: Those who leave the straight way. These are those who – this is deliberate, by the way. They have chosen to leave the right path.

And this is in concert with number 7: Those who wander the wrong way. They know the difference between right and wrong, and they've chosen the wrong path. And they wander knowingly down the wrong path, having deliberately chosen to leave the right path.

Number 8: They are those who lead others astray. This is actually their whole purpose. They have an agenda. They have a desire, a strong desire to lead others down their wrong path.

And number 9: Those who follow the way of greed, like Balaam. These are those who have been seduced by greed, and they are those who pursue ill-gotten gain.

Simply put, they're all about the money, which is number 10: They love wicked wages.

They're given over to a love of money, which Paul, writing to Timothy says is the root of all kinds of evil, not money, the love of money.

Money is neutral. Money can do good things and money can do evil things. It's neutral. It's not the money. It's what you do with the money. And if you love money, then that is the root of all kinds of evil. So that's who he's talking about.

Now, why is it important that we understand that this is specifically who he's talking about?

Two reasons.

Number 1, they're not Christians. Oh, they're in the church with Christians, as we're going to see in a moment. They talk like Christians. They've got the lingo down. They kind of look like Christians. They've got – have you seen their Bible? They've got a fish on the back of their car. Come on!

No, they're tares among the wheat. Goats among the sheep. And they're false. And they're wreaking havoc and doing untold damage to the church.

And this is what Peter is warning them about. And this is who Peter is talking about, these kinds of people.

Now who's he talking to? Christians who are immature.

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Please hear my heart on this. I don't mean to be offensive when I say this. But these are Christians who have never matured spiritually.

I think of the writer of Hebrews, just I mean, exhorting, even rebuking these immature Christians like, you guys should be teachers by now. But you're still on milk. You guys should be eating steak by now. That's what I'm talking about.

But you can't because you don't have teeth. You've never teethed. You're still babes. You're still infants in the Lord. You're still on milk spiritually. You've never grown up. And this is who Peter is talking to. The immature Christian.

And number 2, by extension, the vulnerable Christian. Those who are low hanging fruit if you will, an easy prey for the enemy because they have no spiritual defenses, nor do they possess any spiritual discernment. They're just vulnerable. They're just sitting ducks to these false teachers that are preying on them. P-R-E-Y-I-N-G, by the way.

Number 3: Christians who are unstable. Those who have never been established on the solid and firm foundation on and in the Word of God. They never got grounded. Oh, they're saved. They're born-again. They're believers. They have the Holy Spirit indwelling them, but they've just never really developed a solid foundation.

And number 4: Christians who are naive. Now, I need to spend a little bit of time on this, and I hope you'll see why here in a moment.

You know, sheep are gullible, right? And we are sheep. And nothing wrong with that because I want to be a sheep, if Jesus is my shepherd.

I do take issue with this movement as of late, within the last several years, and I know where it came from, and I don't want to go there. I'm not in the mood. But where this word was framed, "sheeple." Don't be sheeple.

Wait. Don't be sheeple? I want to be a sheep because I'm the sheep of His pasture, and He's the good shepherd. And so no, I want to be a sh-sheeple? Whatever.

But here's the thing with sheep, they're very gullible and naive and harmless, by the way. Have you ever been threatened by a sheep? The answer is no. No.

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Which is why the wrath of the Lamb in the Book of Revelation is so intriguing to me. They're hiding themselves from the wrath of the Lamb.

Boy, you know you've really done it when the Lamb is full of wrath, okay? I mean, not a sheep. They're not threatening, and they're so harmless, and they're kind of adorable. They're a little messy. But they're just sheep.

But we, like these kinds of Christians, can be more harmless as a dove than we are shrewd as a serpent. Jesus said, **"I send you out as sheep among wolves."** And be shrewd, be prudent. Be harmless as a dove, harmless as a sheep. But you better be shrewd. Don't be so naive. Don't be so naive. We're going to – well, that's the next one.

Number 5, might as well get this one over with. If I haven't offended you yet, I will now. Christians who are illiterate. Those who do not read, know, or understand the word of God. They're biblically illiterate and ignorant.

There. Are you offended now? Can we just get this on the table.

The Apostle Paul, by the way, **"Don't be ignorant."** Inference: We can be ignorant. Wouldn't that make sense? If the Apostle Paul is inspired by the Holy Spirit to write, **"Don't be ignorant,"** wouldn't it stand to reason it's because they were being ignorant?

You're ignorant. Don't be an ignorant Christian. Don't be an illiterate Christian.

Because here's the thing. You're in a world that is hostile towards you, and you have an enemy who really, really hates you and wants to destroy you. And don't be ignorant of Satan's strategies and devices and the wiles of the devil, as the King James renders it.

But we're so trusting as Christians. Let's take this church setting, for example. Just bear with me.

The leadership and the staff and the elders and the pastors, one of the things that we're on guard all the time for is this is a public assembly, an assembling together, okay?

But it's also a magnet. Because we want to envelop and welcome and embrace and love on people. And wolves love that. So they put on their sheep suit, try to slip in unaware, under the radar, with their Bibles to look like they're one of us. But they're not.

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And when it comes to being biblically ignorant and illiterate, all they have to do, and they're good at it, they're better at it than we are, sadly, in some cases. All they have to do is just take some Scripture passage just a little bit out of context.

We're like, oh, I didn't know that! (Goofy laugh) They got you. You ignorant fool.

Okay, I'm sorry. I took it too far, maybe.

They got you. Shame on you. Now please, don't misunderstand. I'm not talking about the new believer who's just come to Christ. You are an infant in Christ.

Can I just say, enjoy it while it lasts? Because it gets much more complicated as you get older. But just enjoy! You're on fire for the Lord. You're in love with the Lord. You've just come to the Lord. It's like, "Praise the Lord!"

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about somebody that came to Christ but never grew up. I want to say, "Grow up!" There, grow up. It just feels better to say, "Grow up!" Why can't you just grow up? Act your age.

Okay. Do you understand what I'm saying here? You should know better. You know, when life hits, and life hits, you had better know the Word of God and the God of the word, and you better be grounded in it and literate in it and well-versed in it, because if you're not, you're going down.

I don't know how else to say it. And it's a sad commentary. And I put this on pastors, and I include myself in this exhortation because it will come back on pastors, as James says.

Because you've got people coming to your church, pastor, and you're not grounding them in and teaching and preaching the word of God. What are you telling them? Stories?

When they get the diagnosis, how's that going to help them? When they got the wolf in sheep's clothing that's already seducing them, that's on you, man. That's on you.

When they get the call that every parent dreads about their son or daughter, and you've not taught them the word of God, the word of life, that's on you.

They're illiterate. They don't know what to do. They're vulnerable, and they're,(Sighing) I'll say it one more time, ignorant.



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Number 6: Christians who are worldly. These are those who still have an attraction to and an appetite for this world and the things of this world. It's a proclivity. It's a bent. They still have this attraction to the world. They've not lost their lives in this world. They're still friends with this world, as James says, which means you're at enmity with God.

And it's also spiritual adultery. They haven't unfriended the world on social media. They've accepted the friend requests from the world and they're friends with the world.

No. We're the church. We're the Christian the world, but the world should not be in us. And that's who Peter is talking to is the Christian who has allowed the world to come in.

Number 7: Christians who are discontent. These are those who are not godly with contentment, which Paul again in the context of this love of money, *Chapter 6, "Godliness with contentment is great gain."*

They're not content in Christ. These are the kind of Christians that are always looking for the next thing. You know, nothing wrong with books and conferences.

Of course, nowadays I don't know any more. But, you know, there are— this next conference, this next book, this next series.

Why are you not content? See, when you're discontent, you're looking for something to fill the contentment that you do not possess. And that makes you, again, a sitting duck.

Number 8: Christians who are weak. Let me explain this one. Because Paul said, "**When I'm weak, then I'm strong.**" He's boasting in his strength in the Lord, not his own strength.

Now this is a Christian who's not strong in the Lord. Their strength is not from the Lord and the power of His might.

These are Christians who are living their Christian life in the energy of their own flesh. The power of the Holy Spirit is foreign to them. Their strength does not come from the Holy Spirit. Their strength comes from themselves, which is why they're so weak.

And there's a spiritual weakness. They do not possess spiritual strength, the strength of the Lord.

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Number 9, and this one's interesting. Christians who are uncommitted. What do you mean? Well, again, don't look at the person sitting next to you.

These are Christians, they're our brothers and sisters in Christ, but they're always back and forth, man. They're inconsistent. You cannot rely or depend on them.

They're the kind of Christians who say, Yeah, I'm in! You're like, yeah, right. I'll believe it when I see it. But you can't rely on. They're just not committed. They're indecisive.

James again, refers to them as double-minded. They're riddled with doubt. Tossed about. They're not – they're just not committed. There's no commitment.

And by the way, commitment plays a role, not in salvation, that's by grace, but sanctification. There's a commitment when we commit our lives to Him, surrender our lives to Him.

They're just, I'm not ready to commit yet. Yeah, I'm kind of undecided. I need to think about it. You know, let me sleep on it.

Well, you can sleep all you want. You're just not committed. You're uncommitted.

And lastly, and this is a biggie, I guess they're all biggies, Christians who are distracted. That's who Peter is talking to. These are Christians who are easily sidetracked.

And let me say it like this. I put it in my notes this morning, kind of last minute. You know how we say, 'Give me your undivided attention.' That means that our attention can be divided, distracted, sidetracked. We're not focused. We're not concentrated because we're distracted.

So here's what that looks like. And again, I'm not talking about you here. You guys are amazing. Talking about other carnal Christians in other churches.

But they sit in a service like this – again, not you, not you, and not the person sitting next to you, okay? But they'll sit in a service like this, and their mind's wandering like, oh, I wonder, should I go to Costco this afternoon?

[ Laughter ]

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Come on, let's be honest. It's not funny. But, you know, we have, they have [*They*] have clinical... They, it's always they. I'd like to meet 'they' someday, right? I'm waiting for the day when somebody comes up to me, introduce themselves and says, Hi, my name is They. You're They! Oh! Hey, this is They! This is – anyway, enough of...

But they have clinical terms for this. And again, it's not that funny when you have this or have a loved one who has this, but attention deficit disorder. You just, you cannot focus and concentrate because you're so distracted. God does not have your undivided attention. And your mind is all over the place.

And could it be – just I want you to consider this. Could it be that the enemy knows that, which is why he wants to distract your mind, especially when you're talking about something like this.

He wants to put that thought – he can't read your mind, but he can put a thought in your mind. And it's when we allow that in, and it kind of plants that seed and then it germinates, and he can plant that thought and that distraction and get us over here and oh, oh! That's urgent!

Well, yeah, but this is important. See, Satan wants us to be over here distracted by that which is urgent because he knows that we need to be focused on that which is important. He wants to get us distracted. And that's who Peter is talking to.

Why?

Well, in order to better understand the why question, we need to circle back to Peter's reference to the greed of Balaam, which was the catalyst to what John refers to in Revelation as the doctrine of Balaam. Doctrine: teaching.

By the way, this is interesting. It should be noted that Balaam is mentioned in Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Nehemiah, Micah, here in 2 Peter, Jude, and Revelation.

One commentator observed that Balaam is talked about more in Scripture than Mary, the birth mother of the savior of the world. And there's a reason he is. And we need look no further than to where it all began back in the Book of Numbers, Chapters 22 - 25.

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It all started with Balak, the king of the Moabites, being threatened by the numbers of the Israelites. So this prompted Balak, who was motivated by fear, to hire Balaam, who was motivated by greed. And there's an enormous amount of money involved appealing to Balaam's greed, which is why he agreed.

Did you like that play on words? I did that first service. It went over better.

But his greed is what made him agree to curse the Israelites. But the problem is, he can't curse them.

Why can't he curse them?

Because God is for them. And so instead of a curse, you know the account, how this went down, instead of a curse coming out of his mouth, the most glorious and magnificent blessing came out instead. I c-c-command the blessing of God upon you. He couldn't do it. He couldn't curse them.

And this after the well-known and often-quoted account of Balaam's donkey who I love very much and affectionately refer to, and I refer to him often because I identify with him. That's my story and I'm sticking with it.

If God could speak through a donkey, He can speak to me. And I mean that, by the way, and Lord knows my heart when I say that, by the way.

It's also an account in Scripture that is yet another reminder. I don't need more, but it's a reminder that God has a sense of humor. God invented humor and laughter, which has medicinal. God has a sense of humor.

And the humor isn't so much in that this donkey is speaking to Balaam. It's that he's talking back to the donkey. He's not just talking back to the donkey, He's in an argument with the donkey.

And he is furious with the donkey because God is speaking through this donkey to try to get the donkey to stop Balaam from going to curse the Israelites. And I love this account.

By the way, this is all in the Book of Numbers. Have you heard of this book? You know what the Book of Numbers is about? Numbers.

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Does that seem boring to you? Nothing could be further from the truth. One of the most exciting books in all of the Bible, along with all the other books in the Bible.

But the Book of Numbers is amazing. We're going to see here in a moment one such case. But the detail is in this exchange between the donkey – and I won't use the King James word for donkey, but he's having this, you know, argument with Balaam who's actually abusing it, beating him up.

And the donkey's like, man, how long have I been your donkey? A long time, right? Have I ever done anything like this?

No.

Well, then why are you beating me?

He's answering the donkey. I'm thinking, God, I love your sense of humor.

So finally, He then has the Lord, it's Jesus, a Christophany, appear to him, and says, okay, Balaam, try as you may, you're only going to say what I allow you to say, because you're obviously hell-bent, quite literally, on getting that money from Balak, who's, in fact, the detail is that it's a house full of gold. That's a lot of money, and that's why he wants to get that money.

So he says, okay, you greedy – you know, I'll let you fill in the blank on that one. Go ahead. But you're only going to say what I let you say.

So he fails to curse the Israelites. And the reason he fails is one of the most fascinating in the entirety of Scripture. And here's why.

We're told with specificity the total numbers of and configurations with the 12 tribes of the Israelites, divided into four camps. And it's found in a very boring chapter in the very boring *Book of Numbers Chapter 2*.

I can pretty much rest assured venture to say that none of you have any verse in *Numbers Chapter 2* as a life verse. **“And the numbers of the Israelites to the North were...”**

Wow, that's my life verse man. (Chuckle)

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No, it's all a list, very specific, of the 12 tribes of Israel, arranged, configured in four camps with the tabernacle right in the center.

Now, why is that important?

Well, we're told that the totals of all the tribes, with the exception of the Levites, the priestly tribe, who were numbered according to their armies, came in at 603,550.

Wow, Pastor, praise the Lord. That's so exciting. Why do I need to know that?

Oh, you need to know that because this is what Balaam would have seen.

You've got the tabernacle in the center. *John 1:14* **"The word became flesh and tabernacled among us,"** in the midst of us, becoming one of us.

Even the tabernacle, our study of the tabernacle was just so fascinating. Three sections: the Trinity. Seven furnishings: the number of completion. The holy of Holies: in the shape of a cross, the tabernacle, and subsequently the temple.

The camps of the Israelites, why the specificity with the numbers? Because that camp was further down, more numbers. That would have made that one longer.

This one was a little bit shorter at the top, and then off to the sides they're pretty much the same. That's the cross, before the Roman cross had even been invented.

And that's why Balaam, try as he may, could not curse them because of the cross and because of the Christ. This is *Romans 8:1*. **"There is therefore now [No curse] no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus."**

Everything points to the person of Jesus Christ and the finished work on the cross by Jesus Christ. From the very beginning, all the way through, the Scriptures testify of Me, Jesus said, "You search the Scriptures, and you stand there and you're looking at the fulfillment of everything that you're searching the Scriptures for." I was there in Genesis 1:1.

I'm losing my breath. Let me catch my breath.

You know, the priests when they would do the wave offering, right? And this is not the wave offering. The wave offering like this. (Up and down, side to side) Shape of a cross. A type, a picture, a foreshadow of the coming Christ who would take upon Him the curse of sin.

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So it's already been paid for. He took it. It's not on you. It was on Him. That's why there's no curse on you. There cannot be a curse on you.

Okay, Pastor, thank you so much for that artwork.

You like my graphics there? I spent some time on that. Anyway... But we still have a problem, don't we?

What's the problem?

Well, we know that Balaam ultimately succeeded in bringing a curse upon the Israelites in the end. That's what we were told in *Revelation Chapter 2*, which we'll talk about in a moment.

So the question is, how? If he couldn't curse them outwardly by pronouncing the curse on them, then how was he ultimately able to succeed and get all that money, which he did? And the answer, quite simply, and might I add, sadly, is that he taught Balak to seduce them with the Moabites.

It's a textbook case of if you can't beat them, join them. See, the gates of hell won't prevail against the church, but it can join the church.

And this is what Peter is saying. Balaam is alive and well in your church. Balaam was alive and well. The doctrine of Balaam, the teaching of Balaam was alive and well in the Church of Pergamos. And Balaam is alive and well in the last days church, seducing and deceiving inwardly, knowing it cannot be done outwardly.

So instead of bringing judgment and chastisement on God's people, we, in effect, bring it upon ourselves. That's the doctrine of Balaam because of the greed of Balaam.

This is why I titled the Prophecy Update today, Satanically Seduced, Doctrinally Deceived. The deceived doctrinally, the seduced satanically are those immature, vulnerable Christians that the Balaams prey on. Again, P-R-E-Y.

I think we do err greatly when we're naively dismissive of the casualties of seduction satanically and the ensuing deception doctrinally.

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Do you know what the casualties were when this happened back in *Numbers, Chapter 25*? So Balaam taught Balak – cause see, I can't curse them, but here's how you can get them cursed. Make the check out too because he wanted his money. I can't curse them outwardly, but why don't you get those – because he's the king of the Moabites.

He said, why don't you have a beauty pageant? Miss Moab. Get all your Moabite women, and I mean get them all dressed up seductively, and have them seduce the Israelite men and marry them, a mixed marriage. Talk about that in a moment.

And when they do that, then they'll start worshiping their gods, the gods of the Moabites, and be given over to idolatry. And then that will arouse the anger of their God. And they'll bring it upon themselves from within.

The casualties so avoidable that day, *Numbers 25:9* tells us, **“...those that died in the plague [It was a plague] were 24,000.”**

Let's just put that into perspective. Let's say Kaneohe proper is 40,000 people. That's more than half of the population of Kaneohe died because of this. Unnecessary casualties. We refer to them as casualties of war.

Well, we're in a spiritual war, and these are the casualties. And they could have been avoided. So unnecessary.

And this is why Peter is referencing Balaam. He's warning us and hoping to spare us the casualties in our day. And this is also why Jesus has John warn the church in Pergamos, in the *Book of Revelation Chapter 2*. Let me just read the first part of this letter.

**“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos [Some of your translations read Pergamon] Write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you where Satan dwells. [How would you like to live in the same town that Satan lives in?] But I have a few things against you, because you have there [In your church] 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.”**



## **2 Peter 2**

### **The Casualty of Spiritual Immaturity**

**J.D. Farag**

That brought it upon themselves. That's how Balaam finally succeeded. It wasn't outward. It was inward. He basically got them to do his job for him and he got paid for it. That's not very fair.

Couple of things here. Just, we're almost done. Very important.

The name is the nature. You understand that, right? Throughout Scripture, the name is the nature. And this is – there's no truer sense of this than the only name given among men whereby we must be saved, the name above all names, the name of Yeshua, Jesus, Salvation.

So the name is the nature. And Pergamos is no exception. It's a combination, a compound word, two Greek words meaning mixed, perverted, elevated, marriage. Per = perverted. Gamos = gamy. Think monogamy. Polygamy, Perverted marriage. Mixed marriage.

The name is the nature. The nature of this church in that day accurately describes this mixed marriage, this perversion, corruption to worldly government so as to be elevated by it.

And so to the church today holds to this doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to seduce Israelite men into mixed marriages with Moabite women. That's what Peter is saying.

And oh, by the way, the reader in that day would have got it. Oh, he brought up Balaam. They read the Book of Numbers. They're not illiterate. They know exactly what happened. They're very well versed in that account. And for Peter to make that connection, they got it.

Oh, wow, thank you, Peter. Thank you, Peter. You're trying to protect us. You're trying to protect us because the thing about seduction, it's very seductive. The name says it all, right?

Oh, I would never be seduced.

Really? Seducing is very seducing.

Oh, I would never be deceived.

If you're deceived, how do you know you're deceived?

That was better.

If you're seduced, how would you know you've been seduced?

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The name describes the very nature of what's happened to you. You're so deceived, you don't even know you're deceived. You're so seduced, you don't even know you're seduced.

Well, yeah, but I'm not...

Well, wait a minute. Not so fast. Would you agree with me that the church today is in the condition it's in because of this? We mix it up with the world. And we've been corrupted, seduced, deceived.

And if Peter were here. Wow, wouldn't that be cool? Guest speaker today: The Apostle Peter. Yeah, we're like this.

If Peter were here today, standing behind this pulpit, as is my privilege to do every week, he would say to us who have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church: Be on guard. Don't let your guard down. These Moabites, these false teachers, these false teachings.

I'm tempted to give you an example, just real quick, if you don't mind. This is a biggie.

I'm going to grab hold actually of two because they kind of go together. The New Apostolic Reformation. It is a false teaching that teaches that Christians have to take over all areas of society before Jesus can come back. That is not biblical. That is a false teaching.

And if you don't know the word of God, you're going to fall for that and be seduced by that and deceived by that. And that's on you. It's not on me because I'm yelling at you every week and spitting and screaming and telling you not to fall for it.

Yeah. Okay. This okay, Lord? Yeah, it is okay.

Calvinism. Five-point Calvinism. From the pit of hell. You're telling me that **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes..."** That's the elect. *Ephesians 2:8-9*. **"You're saved by grace, through faith..."** **"It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any [Who's the elect] should boast."**

Well, I can take you all the way through the Scriptures on that one. I won't.

Secessionism.

Excuse me. What'd you say?

That the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased, they're not for today.

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You know, I forget who I was talking to. But that gets a little bit too dangerously close to the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Because what that says is that the gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased. They're not available? I don't have those. Oh, that ended with the church age?

You're grieving the Holy Spirit, certainly. You're potentially quenching the Holy Spirit. And I pray God you're not blaspheming the Holy Spirit. The gifts of the – secessionism.

One more? I mean, while we're at it. I'm on a roll, right? Well, there's a whole list of them. I won't do that to you. I won't do it to me. It's not good for me, because I can do it.

How about Replacement Theology? You know what that is? That's this false teaching, demonic doctrine. You know the devil has doctrine too. Doctrines of devil's, *1 Timothy 4:1*. Seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. He has doctrine, this demonic doctrine that people are following after and being deceived by.

This is a demonic doctrine. This is of the devil that the church replaces Israel as God's chosen people. That God is through with the Jew. That's Replacement Theology.

Now, if I don't know my Bible, I'm like, we do?

No, you don't. God is not through with the Jew. My Bible says He has an everlasting covenant with the Jew.

You know what an everlasting covenant is? Thank you. It's a covenant that's everlasting, never-ending.

And by the way, truth be made known, you don't want God to be through with the Jew because God has a covenant with the Jew. And if God were through with the Jew, then how secure are you?

What do you mean?

Well, we have a covenant. It's the new covenant. So if God's going to be through with the Jew who He has a covenant with, and so too does God have a covenant with me and you, and if God is through with the Jew, then what's to say He's not going to be through with me and you too?

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These are false teachings, false teachers. And these are the people that Peter is warning us about. And he's speaking very specifically.

I love, again, *1 Timothy 4:1*, "**The Spirit expressly speaketh...**" Explicitly, expressly, specifically. Did I get enough S's and spits in there?

In other words, this is clear, in no uncertain terms. There should be no question mark on it that in the last days people are going to fall away from the faith and pursue these seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

The implication is they're going to be alive and well and pronounced in the last days church. And they are! It's heartbreaking.

Okay, let's close. Some of you are saying, please, Jesus. Let's not be quick to dismiss this. Okay? Please. Me with you. I'm speaking of myself too.

Because we're all prone, like with the Israelites, to be seduced by the world's Moabites into idolatry and sexual immorality. We all know what sexual immorality is.

What about idolatry? Not so much. Idolatry as anything or anyone that takes the place of Jesus Christ in your life. That which has your devotion, attention, like we just talked about, your time, what you're devoted to, what you're in love with, what you spend time with.

If what or who you spend time with and have your affection and attention on is not Jesus, that's called idolatry. That's an idol. That's an idol. It's idolatry.

I think we're too quick as Christians, whenever we hear the word idolatry, we just say, Yeah, those Israelites, man!

Jeremiah, we're going to finish, by the way, Thursday night, 7:00 p.m., we're going to finish Jeremiah Chapter 52. What did it take us? Over a year? Amazing book.

And then Lamentations after. That's going to be fun. Judah was taken into captivity for 70 years in Babylon because of idolatry. They were given over to the idolatry.

And God's like, man, you guys like idols, do you? I'm going to send you to an all-expense paid trip to Babylon, idol capital of the world. You're going to get your fill of idols. And by the time I'm through with you, you'll want nothing to do with them. That's idolatry.

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And I think we're too quick as Christians in our day to look on the Israelites in that day and just assign idolatry to graven images.

I don't have anything like that in my house. Might be in my garage. Oh, it might be mounted to the wall. I even have a...

Am I hitting too close to home now? That's an idol. It's called idolatry. It's alive and well. And the Balaams of this world will do everything, stopping at nothing to this end.

And it's for this reason that it's incumbent upon every Christian to be aware, be on guard of our vulnerabilities, growing in grace and maturing in Christ. **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.”**

You know, I think some of us are malnourished. No wonder we're so weak. We've not been strengthened and fed and nourished by the Word of God. So all the enemy has to do is snap his fingers and down we go.

But when you're strong in the Lord, in the power of His might, you've been nourished by the bread of life: Here comes the enemy. I've been expecting you.

Actually, he won't even come because he knows. Just skip that address. He was in the word. We're not getting him. Go down the street.

In fact, if you're anything like me, you just give him the address of – anyway, that's bad. Love your neighbors. Just love your neighbors.

Okay. That's the end of the sermon.

Kapono, come on up. And why don't you stand up again? These closings are very smooth, right? I've been working on those still.

Oh, Lord, thank You. This was interesting and intense in a way. But oh, Lord, thank You so much. This is a warning we need to take heed to.

Oh, Lord, it's so subtle, isn't it? And I thank You for the Holy Spirit, the discernment of spirits. Lord, I thank You for Your word, Your word of truth that exposes the faults. I thank You for Your word as a rock-solid foundation upon which to build our Christian lives, immovable.

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Lord, I don't think there's a one of us here that wants to be vulnerable. Please protect us,  
Lord. Protect our families, our children, our marriages, our church family. Please protect us,  
Lord. May this never be found in our midst, in this Your church.

I know You love this body of believers so much more than I ever could. And You're so  
protective of us, this little church here on the windward side of the island. So Lord, I thank  
You. Please, God, let us take this to heart and take heed to this because it's a matter of life  
and death, really. Thank You, Lord. We love You so much. In Jesus' name. Amen.