

Numbers 22-25 – 7 January 2021

“God’s Permissive Will”

Introduction

*Israel has been in the dessert for almost 40 years b/c of disobedience, now they’re on the plains of Moab!

*Today we get the story of the prophet Balaam

*Balaam, from Mesopotamia, was a prophet who knew Jehovah God – Many would have known the God of Adam & Noah

*Balaam is faced with a job offer...a good one

*Turns out he’ll have to sin to make the money

*How does God’s servant handle a situation like that?

*So tonight Balaam will have to navigate thru God’s will for his life. Will he look for God’s perfect will?

We’ll see 3 steps of settling for God’s permissive will for your life instead of His perfect will

1st step of settling for God's permissive will is pushing on a locked door (Chap 22:1-41)

Chap 22:1-7 – *Don't think evil, but think good*

Read Chap 22:1-4

1. King Balak was wrong to think Israel would attack Moab.
2. God commanded Israel not to attack their brothers Moab and Edom (Deut 2:4-9)
3. Look for good, don't be expecting evil behind every corner

Read Chap 22:5-7

1. Balak asks to hire Balaam to curse Israel
2. Read Deut 23:4 – Not only Moab shouldn't curse Israel, but they should have helped Israel
3. We need to be looking to be helpful

Chap 22:8-14 – *Balaam prays & God says not to curse*

Read Chap 22:8-14

1. Balaam prays and asks God, this is a good step
2. He even obeys God by not going

Chap 22:15-22 – *Balaam pushes on a door he knows is locked & God allows it to open*

Read Chap 22:15-17

1. Balak asks a 2nd time to hire him for more \$\$
2. This is just the enemy being persistent
3. Reminder that sin will always look GOOD

Read Chap 22:18-19

1. Why pray when you already have your answer?
2. You're begging for a different answer rather than to simply know the mind of God
3. THIS is pushing on a locked door

Read Chap 22:20-22

1. God tells Balaam to go. Not b/c it's good.
2. God's permissive will not His perfect will

Chap 22:23-31 - *Example of pushing on a locked door*

Read Chap 22:23-27

1. Physical example of fighting or praying against the Lord's will instead of for His will
2. Just as Nathan taught David thru the parable of the sheep

Read Chap 22:28-31

1. People get puffed up b/c God spoke thru them; remember God can even speak thru an ass.
2. An animal could see clearer than Balaam b/c the donkey wasn't blinded by greed

Chap 22:32-41 - *Confession and waiting on God*

Read Chap 22:32-35

1. Balaam confesses b/c he sees, he now believes
2. Blessed is he who hasn't seen yet believes

Read Chap 22:36-41

1. Balaam is holding back b/c he wants to hear from God first.
2. Is he learning his lesson of not opposing or getting ahead of the Lord and His will?
3. Now we see Balaam has pushed open a door that God has locked shut!

2nd step of settling for God's permissive will is walking w/ uncertainty inside a door you never should have entered (Chap 23:1-24:25)

Chap 23:1-13 – *1st attempt to curse is a blessing*

Read Chap 23:1-6

1. Balaam offers and gets a word from God
2. Remember he's working for Balak whom he knows wants him to curse Israel...this is confusing

Read Chap 23:7-10

1. Balaam's 1st blessing of Israel
2. Vs 9 – “shall dwell alone” – in their own land

Read Chap 23:11-13

1. Balak rebukes Balaam; offers Balaam to try again
2. Balak wants to try same thing from diff place

Chap 23:14-30 – *2nd attempt to curse; also a blessing*

Read Chap 23:14-17

1. Balaam offers & gets a 2nd word from God

Read Chap 23:18-24

1. Balaam's 2nd blessing of Israel
2. Vs 21 – God doesn't see ANY of Israel's sin!
 - a. God sees His children covered in the blood!

Read Chap 23:25-30

1. Balak rebukes Balaam 2nd time
2. Vs 25 – “Just be quiet & don't say anything!”
3. Balak offers to try again for a 3rd time
4. Vs 29 – Now Balaam is offering to do it again!
 - a. Def of insanity....
 - b. Perfect exp of a Christian wondering why God seems confusing to him.

Chap 24:1-13 - *3rd attempt to curse is a blessing*

Read Chap 24:1-9

1. Balaam's 3rd blessing of Israel
2. Vs 5 – “How good are thy tents”
 - a. Balaam sees them camped in a cross!
3. Vs 7 – Read from the Septuagint – Leave w/ you

Read Chap 24:10-11

1. Balak rebukes Balaam 3rd time
2. As Ahab telling Elijah that he was the one “troubling Israel”, Balak says obeying God is bad
 - a. That’s wrong!
 - b. Obeying God didn’t get him in trouble, disobeying God by coming, got him in trouble

Read Chap 24:12-14

1. This is the turning point that ruins Balaam
2. He advises to have Israel sin w/ whoredoms
3. Being in a place he never should have been, leads Balaam to sin further

Chap 24:15-25 – *Prophecy to the nations*

Read Chap 24:15-25

1. Balaam prophecies to the nations
2. Vs 17/19 are prophecies of Messiah to come
3. Just giving counsel & God’s pearls to the ungodly aids the ungodly in their sin

3rd step of settling for God's permissive will is Living w/ results of being where you never should have been (Chap 25:1-18)

Intro

1. So Balaam didn't curse Israel in words, but he enabled the enemies of Israel to cause them to sin.
2. Read Num 31:16 – We read of the sin of Peor in chap 25

Chap 25:1-9 – *Whoredoms and stopping it!*

Read Chap 25:1-5

1. Balaam's counsel was to have Israeli men get lustfully involved w/ the women of Moab/Midian
2. This was used as a stepping stone to get the to commit to serving false gods
3. So Balaam's counsel was basically, "If you can't beat 'em, corrupt 'em".

Read Chap 25:6-9

1. Interesting that some think the priests only ever worship in the tabernacle and that's it.
2. All it takes is for 1 person to stand up & fight
 - a. When gossip starts; 1 person can change a room
 - b. When thoughts of lust start; 1 person can affect a whole party
3. Notice the difference between what Phinehas does vs. what the Pharisees do w/ "the woman caught in adultery"
 - a. Pharisees brought only woman for judgement
b/c they're just looking for a fight from the Law.
 - b. Phinehas brought man & woman to judgement
b/c he was looking for peace with the Lord.
 - c. Deal with the complete situation

Chap 25:10-18 – *Phinehas blessed; Midianites vexed*

Read Chap 25:10-18

1. So Phinehas' reward for believing God
2. And Midianites punishment for great sin

Conclusion

All this b/c Balaam couldn't obey the Lord in the 1st place

1. **He began pushing on a door he knew God has locked**
 - a. II Pet 2:16 – Peter tells us that Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness
 - b. Don't pray if God has already given the answer, don't be blinded by greed or lust!
2. **He began walking w/ uncertainty inside the door he never should have entered**
 - a. Balaam couldn't figure out what to do while there b/c he shouldn't have been there!
 - b. In Rev 2:14 John tells us Balaam “taught the enemies of God how to stumble Israel”
 - c. Helping God's enemies causes unintended sin
3. **Now he has to live w/ the results of being where he never should have been**
 - a. Jude tells us in vs 11, Balaam problem was that his eyes were set on greed...for himself

It's never too late to turn, confess and obey the Lord.

Just as Phinehas has showed us today!