

Numbers 22:1-23:12 – Outline/Notes

- 22:1 – “Moab” – Moab, Balak, and Balaam are the last hurdle for Israel before the Promised Land.
- Spiritual warfare heightens as they near the land.
 - “across from Jericho” – Israel is on the banks of the Jordan, with Jericho in view.
- 22:3 – “Moab was exceedingly afraid” – The Moabites had been defeated by the Amorites. And the Amorites had been defeated by Israel. (Num. 21:26)
- God had given orders to Israel not to contend with the Moabites. (Deut. 2:9)
- 22:5 – “send messengers to Balaam” – Balak realizes that his only recourse for victory over Israel is spiritual.
- The heat and the opposition get turned up on Israel, and they don’t even know it. (Josh. 24:9-10)
 - “Pethor...by the river” – This is located near the Euphrates which is over 360 miles from Moab.
 - “Balaam” – means “to swallow up, to waste, to devastate, or not of the people.”
 - “Peor” – means “to burn up.”
 - It seems he is better at cursing than blessing.
- 22:7 – “diviner’s fee” – They are approaching Balaam like a hireling. (2 Pet. 2:15)
- “The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.” (John 10:13)
 - The NT tells us that Balaam is motivated by financial gain. (2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11)
- 22:8 – “Lord” – (Heb. “Yahweh”) He is speaking of the covenant God of Israel.
- Balaam, at one place, calls the God of Israel “my God,” blesses Israel and yet at the same times seems to oppose God and His people.
 - “...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.” (Rev. 2:14)
- 22:11 – “curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them” – Balak is realizing that he has no way of defeating Israel without supernatural help.
- 22:12 – “they are blessed” – God speaks of Israel according to their standing and not according to their present behavior and circumstances. (This is spoken as they are grumbling.)
- God is standing in the gap for Israel.
- 22:13 – “the Lord has refused to give me permission” – It seems as if Balaam is disappointed in God’s prevention. It is as if he is saying that, “God won’t let me go.”
- Balaam will not take a stand in obedience. He’s not in agreement with God and wants to disobey.
- 22:17 – “honor you greatly” – Balaam is a man with a price.
- NT believers are no longer their own; they were bought with a price...the precious blood of Jesus.
- 22:18 – “house full of silver and gold” – Balaam seems to be dropping a hint here.
- “Lord, my God” – Is Balaam for real here? There are many who claim God that are not claimed by God.
- 22:19 – “what more the Lord will say to me” – Balaam already knew; now he is trying to manipulate the word.
- “more” – Balaam wants to add to God’s word.
 - Balaam is a man with a divided heart.
- 22:20 – “If” – God gives a condition, but Balaam jumps ahead anyway.
- This seems to be God’s permissive will, but not exactly what God wants.

- 22:22 – “anger” – Balaam is driven by greed and unrighteous money.
- 22:23 – “the donkey saw the angel” – The donkey has more insight into the spiritual realms than this prophet.
- 22:28 – “the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey” – In some ways, the highest calling of any minister of the Lord is simply to be the donkey serving as the mouthpiece of Jehovah.
- This doesn’t say all that much about the vessel that God chooses to speak through.
- 22:29 – “now I would kill you” – What kind of man would kill a talking donkey?
- We tend to get angry when God hinders our disobedience.
- 22:30 – “And he said, ‘No’” – Balaam is losing an argument with a talking donkey.
- 22:32 – “perverse” – The idea is “headed for destruction.”
- 22:33 – “I would also have killed you by now, and let her live” – The donkey was selfless enough to take the beating and save its less perceptive rider.
- 22:35 – “only the word that I speak to you” – Balaam was well warned and Israel well protected even though neither of them realize it.
- 22:38 – “that I must speak” – This seems to be because of that angel.
- 22:41 – “observe the extent of the people” – Balak takes Balaam to a point where he can see an entire nation.
- The belief of the day was that you could curse a nation or an army if you could see all of it.
- 23:1 – “altars” – Balaam will offer sacrifice, but later it is called divination (v. 23). This is augury; the sacrificing of an animal and pulling out the entrails to see a message.
- 23:4 – “I have prepared the seven altars” – It seems like Balaam is trying to cut a deal.
- 23:7 – “of the east” – The idea “by the river Euphrates.”
- 23:8 – “curse whom God has not cursed” – “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you.” (Gen. 12:3)
- 23:9 – “alone” – This prophecy still holds true to the day.
- A key to Israel’s power was their set-apart position.
- 23:10 – “Let me die the death of the righteous” – Israel seems so blessed that Balaam gets jealous. (Num. 31:8)
- You cannot die the death of the righteous without also living the life of the righteous. Christianity is not just good to die by, but it is also very good to live by.
- 23:11 – “What have you done to me?” – One cannot please God and Balak at the same time.
- “blessed them altogether” – Balaam isn’t creating the blessing, but only confirming that which God has already stated.
 - “Nevertheless the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam, but the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you.” (Deut. 23:5)