

# BALAAM

## Who Loved the Wages of Unrighteousness

### Introduction:

1. Romans 15:4 – “*whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.*”
2. We should pay close attention to the story of Balaam and Balak...

### I. The Hypocrisy of Balaam (Numbers 22:1-38)

- A. Balak, king of Moab, feared the nation of Israel (vs. 1-4).
- B. Thus, he sought to hire Balaam to curse them (vs. 5-7).
- C. But, the Lord told Balaam not to go to Balak (vs. 8-14).
  1. Notice what God says to Balaam in verse 12.
  2. Notice what Balaam tells the men in verse 13.
  3. He did not tell the whole story in order to leave the door open...
- D. So, Balak tried again to persuade Balaam to curse Israel (vs. 15-18).
- E. Then, Balaam tried to seek approval from God (vs. 19-20).
  1. In spite of his bold statement in verse 18, Balaam wants the reward of money and power.
  2. Notice God’s “if” in verse 20.
  3. Notice Balaam’s eagerness in verse 21 – literally, “*he went by his own mind (or will).*”
- F. Balaam willfully rebelled against God’s command (vs. 21).
- G. Thus, God’s anger was manifested against Balaam (vs. 22-35).
- H. Balaam finally came to Balak with the warning that he could only speak God’s will (vs. 36-38).

### II. The Blessing of Balaam (Numbers 22:39 – 24:25)

- A. Three times Balak asked Balaam to curse the children of Israel.
- B. Three times God turned his desire to curse Israel into a blessing (cf. Deut. 23:3-5; Josh. 24:8-10; Nehemiah 13:1-2).
- C. In fact, God even gave a Messianic prophecy through Balaam (vs. 15-25)!
- D. Thus, Balaam did not receive the reward he desires (vs. 10-11).

### III. The Error of Balaam (Numbers 31:13-16)

- A. Though Balaam had obeyed the Lord in speaking the inspired blessings over Israel, he was still trying to please Balak.
- B. Thus, he advised Balak on how to defeat Israel – by causing them to sin.
- C. Balaam was greedy and rebellious (Jude 11).
  1. He would speak whatever brought him the most profit.
  2. Jude declares that false teachers in his day possessed the same attitude.
- D. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness (2 Peter 2:12-16).
  1. He had forsaken the straight way for the love of money.
  2. Peter says that false teachers in his day did the same.
- E. Balaam set a trap for the children of Israel (Revelation 2:14).
  1. He helped Balak place a stumbling block before them.
  2. He helped ensnare them in idolatry.
  3. He helped ensnare them in fornication.

- F. Balaam teaches us many lessons...
1. There are wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15).
  2. It is impossible to serve both God and mammon (Matthew 6:24).
  3. To die the death of the righteous, one must live the life of the righteous (Numbers 23:10; Revelation 14:13).
  4. One who lives with the wicked will die among them (Numbers 31:8; Joshua 13:22).
  5. One must never waver from the Truth of God's Word (Prov. 23:23).
  6. The Truth must be preached (2 Timothy 4:1-2).
  7. The Truth must be defended (Jude 3).
  8. We must be careful not to cause another to stumble.

Conclusion:

1. May we learn from Balaam the need to submit our will to the Father's.
2. May we learn the seriousness of causing others to sin.
3. May we learn to treasure God above the riches of this world.