

***The Curse of Balaam***  
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**Introduction:** One person can do much good or much harm to the people of God.

- A. We can see this through Adam and Jesus Christ. **(Rom 5:15)**
  - 1. We need to build up every member. What is the potential of one child?
  - 2. There is also a need to be watchful. The greatest threat to God's people always comes from within.
- B. The Lord wishes us to understand and be aware of men like Balaam.  
**(Jude 3-4, 11-13)**
  - 1. When men lose control of their hearts, doctrine does not matter anymore.
  - 2. These men will, in time, leave a local group. The question is: "Who will they take with them?"
  - 3. The handling of God's word is an indicator of the heart! Allowing a leaven to remain among God's people will result in many being destroyed.

***I. Balaam was at one time a faithful prophet of God***

- A. There is a legitimate debate about this. He is called a prophet. **(2 Pt 2:15-16)**
  - 1. He was a Gentile who lived in Pethor in Mesopotamia **(Deut 23:4)**
  - 2. He is also called a "soothsayer." **(Joshua 13:22)**
  - 3. He offered sacrifices contrary to the Law.
  - 4. I believe he was a prophet who God spoke with who later became a soothsayer.
- B. He accurately spoke of the character of God.
  - 1. He pointed out that a real prophet could only speak what God gave him.  
**(Num 22:18, 38)**
  - 2. He also clearly recognized the folly of fighting God. **(Num 23:8)**
  - 3. He taught that God is not like man or subject to him! **(Num 23:19-20)**
  - 4. He knew to worship God and offer sacrifices to Him. **(Num 23:1-2)**
- C. Balaam as a prophet could lose control of his heart.
  - 1. Balaam has similarities to Judas. Judas preached and worked miracles.
  - 2. Judas also had a hidden sin that started in his heart and grew into actions.  
**(Jn 12:4-6)**
  - 3. The Corinthians who has spiritual gifts were so warned. **(1 Cor 14:32)**
  - 4. Paul set an example and urged Timothy to do so. **(1 Cor 9:27, 2 Tim 2:20-22)**
  - 5. This is a progression that will lead you to a place that you never dreamed you would be.

***II. Balaam lost his heart***

- A. God will allow his people to be tested.
  - 1. The purpose of a test is to expose the heart and help one draw closer to God.
  - 2. The faithful Christian will fail some test with the goal that eyes may be opened to real repentance. Abraham and Peter had failures. **(Lk 22:31-32)**
- B. Balaam was called upon by a King who offered great riches. **(Num 22:5-7)**
  - 1. Balaam's reputation came from God. Balak did not know God.

2. Elijah made it clear that God's prophets were not for hire. (**2 Kgs 5:15-16**)
  3. There was a great conflict in Balaam's heart. He had to make the choice to put the worldly desire to death. There would be a "winner" for his heart.
  4. A clear stand will keep one away from temptation!
- C. Balaam would not be satisfied with the plain response from God. (**Num 22:12-19**)
1. God's word is rarely hard to understand. Men can then make plain applications.
  2. Some are like children who will not take "no" for an answer. God is not like the pushover parent!
  3. The first outward step away from God is when Balaam wanted to know "what more the LORD will say to me."
  4. This is the driving force among worldly religions. "Necessity is the mother of invention."

### ***III. Balaam lost his head***

- A. By not being satisfied with what the Lord had revealed God's anger was kindled.
1. In mercy God attempts to turn the heart of Balaam.
  2. He is caught up in a passionate obsession. Obsession has its own reality; has no concept of waiting; will pay any price and is very powerful.
  3. Obsession cannot see the future and its consequences. (**Heb 12:16 17**)
- B. Balaam shows the characteristics of "madness."
1. His donkey speaks to him and he is unfazed! (**Num 22:27-30**)
  2. God then "opened Balaam's eyes" to see the angel of the Lord with a drawn sword. Will the sight of the certain judgment of God change him? (**Num 22:31-34**)
  3. While Balaam speaks only what God says, the temptation grows greater. There was a reason God told him not to go!
  4. The idols of the heart must be destroyed. Playing middle ground is being like a yo-yo. Your idols may win. (**Ezk 14:1-4**)

### ***IV. God's people were cursed by Balaam***

- A. Those who are among God's people can do great damage.
1. We read about how Israel cursed itself. (**Num 25:1-3**)
  2. How did this happen? Balaam found a way to get his money. (**Num 31:16; Deut 23:4-5**)
  3. Balaam knew how to attack God's people and sold himself to God's enemies for money. (Ex. Examples of bitter preachers making havoc of the flock of God)
- B. The doctrine a Balaam must be defeated in the church! (**Rev 2:14-17**)
1. Instead of money there can be other worldly allures. (Ex. "Growth" and numbers)
  2. Those who are dissatisfied with Bible authority and stir the passions of the unstable. (**Rom 16:17-18**)
  3. Do not neglect to accept a "thus says the Lord!" Do not ridicule those who are "watchful!" (**Acts 20:30-31**)

***Conclusion:*** Let us destroy all idols! (**1 Jn 5:21; Col 3:5**)