

11-29-20
WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM?

Revelation 2:12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

Revelation 2:13 I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Revelation 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Revelation 2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Revelation 2:16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

We are going through the Old testament in our Bible studies and we came across the story of Balaam and Balak, in the book of numbers. What is interesting is that Jesus warns His New Testament church to be careful about the doctrine of Balaam.

Apparently this is a error that lives on in the New Testament church even till this day. It is something that we could become guilty of and we need to watch in our midst.

What exactly is the doctrine of Balaam?

This is what we are going to talk about this morning.

WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM?

First we need to review the story of Balaam.

- 1. WHEN ISRAEL WAS PASSING THROUGH THE BOADER OF MOAB, Balak sought to hire Balaam to come and curse Israel through his divinations.**

Apparently Balaam knew enough about Israel and their God to know that he could not curse them even if he wanted to. Apparently he wanted to but he was not able to.

- 2. Every time, Balaam went to seek through divinations to curse Israel, the spirit of God turned his prophesies into blessings.**

Balaam could not curse Israel even if he tried. He did go after divinations but that did not work.

- 3. Finally he stopped seeking after divinations and just advised Balak that he could not defeat the Israelites.**

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM?

- 1. The First Thing we learn about Balaam is that he knew the will of God but in his heart wanted to go after rewards contrary to God's Will.***

This was evident in the incident with his donkey.

II Peter 2:15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

II Peter 2:16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

God opened the mouth of a donkey to rebuke Balaam.

The Doctrine of Balaam is a very subtle sin that starts with the heart. Balaam knew what the mind of the Lord was, but in his heart he loved the wages of unrighteousness. He wanted the reward of Balak.

He said the right thing, but in his heart he wanted to do the opposite.

- 1. Notice how God exposes what is in our hearts.***

Balaam asked God twice about going with Balak's servants.

When God answers we need not ask again.

Sometimes God will allow us to do what we want to do just to show the consequences of getting out of His will.

YOU SEE, GOD NOT ONLY WANTS YOU TO KNOW WHAT HIS WILL IS, HE WANTS YOU TO WANT TO DO HIS WILL FROM THE HEART.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Why did God allow Balaam to go the second time he asked? It was to teach future readers of this account the way He works.

God will let you do what you want, to teach us the consequences of sin.

So many times we confuse God's permissive will with God's perfect will.

Just because God allows us to do something does not mean that is God's will that we do it.

God allowed Adam and Eve to eat from the forbidden tree, but God forbade it and punished them for it. Could God have stopped them? Yes He could have, but that was not the way He works. He allowed men to sin to teach everyone something.

So those who fall prey to the doctrine of Balaam will often deceive themselves into thinking they are in the will of God when in fact they are in rebellion to His will.

II. THOSE WHO FALL PREY TO THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM ARE MOTIVATED BY WORLDLY GAIN.

Balaam was a reprobate prophet.

Why did he do what he did? Money. Most of the time we get out of the will of God seeking filthy lucre.

I Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

II Peter 2:15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

II Peter 2:16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

Jude 1:11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

NOTICE WHAT ENTICED BALAAM:

Numbers 22:17 For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.

Just saying what you know about the will of God is not enough.

Numbers 22:18 And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.

Simon made the same mistake.

Acts 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

Acts 8:19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 8:20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

Acts 8:21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

Acts 8:22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Acts 8:23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

Balaam was an example of end time preachers.

He really wanted the rewards that Balak offered him. That was evident by him asking the Lord again, even after the Lord told him clearly what His will was concerning Israel.

The error of Balaam was that he got too anxious to gain an income through his prophesying career! He was too anxious for ministerial success!!!!

WHAT WAS PAUL'S DESCRIPTION OF MINISTERIAL SUCCESS:

For some the ministry is just a way to make a living. I resolved many years ago that I would never get anything from the ministry but food convenient.

Paul himself was no doubt the greatest of the apostles, but he said when he ministered he worked to provide his own necessities.

I Corinthians 9:16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

I Corinthians 9:17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

I Corinthians 9:18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

I Corinthians 9:19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

II Corinthians 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

II Corinthians 12:13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

II Corinthians 12:14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

II Corinthians 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

II Corinthians 12:16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

Acts 20:33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

Acts 20:34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

II Thessalonians 3:7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

II Thessalonians 3:8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

II Thessalonians 3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

II Thessalonians 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

At one time I had someone ask me how you can make money doing ministry. I said if it is ministry it is not for money. I see a lot of people that try to mix ministry with business. I don't think the two work together. In business you don't limit your clientele to Christians. When you do ministry and open it up to the world is it still ministry? This is why ministry is accurately called a non profit organization. It is faith based not based on principles of profit.

III. THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM INVOLVES JOINING UP WITH THE WORLD.

Numbers 24:14 And now, behold, I go unto my people: come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.

Revelation 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Balaam advertised and gave advice to Balak.

The Doctrine of Balaam is to have the world join up with God's people.

Balaam basically suggested to Balak that you can't defeat them from without, you need to join them from within! In other words join up with them. Make a union with them through subtlety.

We read that immediately after Balaam gave his advice to Balak that Balak set in motion a strategy to join up with Israel rather than to fight against them.

We read about this in Numbers 25:1-5

Numbers 24:25 And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way.

Numbers 25:1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

Numbers 25:2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

Numbers 25:3 And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

Numbers 25:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.

Numbers 25:5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor.

This is the awful price that was paid for joining up with the world.

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Revelation 2:16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Why is it that our nation is in shambles morally today?

Why is it that decency and morality are now a thing of the past?

How is it that we have given ourselves over to perversion at every turn?

Marriages and family are a thing of the past.

Maybe the Lord is fighting against us with the sword of his mouth!.

No one talks about separation from worldliness anymore.

You hear little being preached on it.

What then does this mean?

II Corinthians 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

II Corinthians 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

II Corinthians 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

II Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

II Corinthians 6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

What was the mistake of Balaam? He gave Balak some advice and counsel.

Numbers 31:16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

What was that advice? Don't fight against the people of God. Join them!

The last thing that Moses was told to do before he died was to fight against the Midianites because of this error.

Numbers 31:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Numbers 31:2 Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.

Numbers 31:13 And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.

Numbers 31:14 And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.

Numbers 31:15 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?

Numbers 31:16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

Numbers 31:17 Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.

Numbers 31:18 But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.

Numbers 31:19 And do ye abide without the camp seven days: whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.

Numbers 31:20 And purify all your raiment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of goats' hair, and all things made of wood.

IV. HOW DOES THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM ACT OUT IN THE CHURCH TODAY?

The doctrine of Balaam is so subtle that upon first glance it looks like Balaam is good. After all what did Balaam say that was wrong?

1. The Doctrine of Balaam involves bad teaching.

It involves a subtle doctrine or teaching that counsels people to join up with the ungodly. To tear down the walls of separation between God's people and the people of the world.

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Balaam taught that it was ok to join the world with the people of the church hoping to further a cause but not according to God's standards.

Today this takes place through teaching to tear down barriers of standards and holiness in order to accommodate more people.

What did Balaam do that was so wrong?

Did he not enquire of the Lord about going to Balak? Did he not say he would only say and do what God told him to do?

How sad it is that people know what is right but wanting to do what is right is quite another thing. Why did God let Balaam go to Balak? He did it so that we could read and learn how God has a disdain for fornication and Idolatry and worldliness amongst His people.

The God of this world is not the God of the Bible. Will you join up with the world and receive the blessings of God?

2. THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM INVOLVES MIXING ELEMENTS OF IDOLATROUS WORSHIP WITH CHURCH WORSHIP.

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Numbers 25:3 And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

There was a corruption in the way they worshipped, intermingled worship of world idolatry with worship of the true God.

3. THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM INVOLVES a breakdown of their standards of morality. Sexual revolution.

Do you know that God wanted His people to be different than the inhabitants of the land? He wanted them to live different, act different, worship different.

What they ate was to be different.

How they dressed was to be different.

How they worshipped was to be different.

Their laws were different..

But you say, preacher, that was the Old Testament we are in the New Testament.

Yes. Writing God's law on tables of stone never worked. This is why God gave us something far better, it is called the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit writes God's law in our hearts.

Who then is the Holy Spirit?

Is it not the same spirit that came upon King David?

Is it not the same Spirit that Moses had?

The same Spirit that Joshua had?

The same Spirit that Daniel had?

Why the story of Balaam? God let all this happen to teach us that someone like Balaam can act all pious and self righteous about only wanting to do what God wants him to do, but in his heart he actually wants the opposite. He really wanted to be rewarded and liked by the world. This is the real reason people want to tear down the walls of separation between the Church and the world.

They say the right things but they run with the Midianites.

They know the right things but they want to be rewarded by the world.

The Doctrine of Balaam is very much alive in the church today.

I Peter 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

I Peter 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

II Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Has anything changed? No the doctrine of Balaam is very much alive in 2020.

Application:

But you say preacher how are we going to win the world if we are separate from the world? The answer is simple.

What the world is doing is not working.

They need to see something better. Something more wholesome. Something that works.

I Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

I Corinthians 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

I Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

The whole context of this passage is separation unto godliness. The church had a morality problem and they were allowing it. Paul said:

I Corinthians 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

I Corinthians 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

BE CAREFUL OF FALLING INTO THE ERROR OF THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM!

V. HOW DO WE FOLLOW THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM TODAY?

We really don't have the meats being offered to idols today.

So just how do we commit this sin?

What two things were happening with the Midianites?

1. FIRST THE PEOPLE COMMITTED ACTS OF FORNICATION. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT.

We need to teach moral purity in the church.

Marriage needs to be sacred and adultery, fornication, and sexual impropriety should not be named in the church.

Why is it that we do not abhor sin like the Lord abhors sin? We should pray and ask the Lord to help us see sin as God sees it.

Why do we desire to do what God hates? What is the appeal of the forbidden?

Proverbs 5:15 Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

Proverbs 5:16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.

Proverbs 5:17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

Proverbs 5:18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

2. The Second Thing The People did was worship the gods of the Midianites.

Idolatry is putting anything equal or above our God.

The Lord should come first in our lives.

There are many forms of Idolatry today.

A Covetousness is Idolatry.

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

B. Pleasures of this world can become an idol.

Philippians 3:18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

Philippians 3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Philippians 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

II Timothy 3:4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

C. Other:

In essence whatever you put first above God is an idol.

3. The Third thing they did was yoke up with non believers.

II Cor 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

II Cor 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

II Cor 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

II Cor 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

II Cor 6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The greatest yoke is that of marriage, and in Numbers 25, Balak sent sent woman from Moab to commit whoredom with the men of Israel. So it is through the ages more men have left the church because they married the wrong woman.

This was the fall of Solomon.

Nehemiah 13:26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.