

Numbers 22:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Balaam responds to Balak's messengers: '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.' This statement appears noble—claiming inability to violate God's word regardless of payment. Yet Balaam's heart proved divided, ultimately finding a way to harm Israel (31:16), showing how apparent submission to God's word can mask underlying greed (2 Peter 2:15-16, Jude 11).

Historical Context

Balaam was a non-Israelite diviner who had genuine contact with Yahweh, demonstrating God can speak through unexpected sources. However, his love of money led him to find indirect ways to curse Israel by causing them to sin, showing that hearing God's word doesn't guarantee obedient heart.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How can you claim to honor God's word while secretly seeking ways around its restrictions?
2. What does Balaam's divided heart teach about the danger of loving money while claiming to serve God?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	and said unto the servants	If Balak	אָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן
answered And Balaam	and said	H413 unto the servants	If Balak H518
H6030 H1109	H559	H5650	H1111
וְיִתְּפַרְּקֵן יְהִי כָּלֵק לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	full me his house of silver and gold	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן
would give If Balak	full	me his house	of silver and gold
H5414 H0 H1111	H4393	H1004	H3701 H2091
אָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	full me his house of silver and gold	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן
I cannot go beyond	the word of the LORD	my God	to do less
H3201 H5674	H853 H6310	H3068	H6213 H6996
אָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	full me his house of silver and gold	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן
אָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	full me his house of silver and gold	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן	לְאָמַר בְּלֹעַ מִן עַנְיָן
or more			
H176	H1419		

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 24:13 (Word): If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the LORD saith, that will I speak?

1 Kings 22:14 (References Lord): And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.

2 Chronicles 18:13 (References God): And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.

Numbers 23:26 (References Lord): But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the LORD speaketh, that I must do?

Numbers 22:38 (Word): And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.

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