

Numbers 22:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned;
for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now
therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.

Analysis

Balaam confesses to the angel 'I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.' The conditional 'if it displease thee' reveals incomplete repentance—true contrition doesn't offer to obey only if God still objects. Balaam sought permission to continue despite acknowledging sin, showing how confession without heart change manipulates grace.

Historical Context

The angel permitted Balaam to continue (v.35) while reinforcing restrictions, testing whether Balaam would honor limitations. Balaam's subsequent attempt to find ways to curse Israel (through causing them to sin, 31:16) proved his confession was lip service, not genuine repentance.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does conditional obedience ('if You still object') reveal uncommitted hearts beneath confessions?
2. What's the difference between confessing sin and genuinely repenting of the desires behind it?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	חָטָאתִי	יְהוָה	מֵלֶאךָ	אֶל	בָּלָעַם	וַיֹּאמֶר
	I have sinned	of the LORD	unto the angel		And Balaam	said
H3588	H2398	H3068	H4397	H413	H1109	H559
בְּדֶרֶךְ	לְקִרְאָתִי	נָצַב	אֶתְּהָ	כִּי	יָדַעְתִּי	לֵא
	against	not that thou stoodest			for I knew	
H1870	H7125	H5324	H859	H3588	H3045	H3808
לִי:	אֲשׁוּבָה	בְּעֵינַי יָבֹ	בָּרַע	אִם	וְעַתָּה	הָ
	I will get me back again					
H0	H7725	H5869	H7451	H518	H6258	

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 15:24 (Sin): And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

2 Samuel 12:13 (Sin): And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

1 Samuel 15:30 (Sin): Then he said, I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

1 Samuel 26:21 (Sin): Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

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