

Numbers 22:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjath-huzoth.

Analysis

And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjathhuzoth—Balaam's journey (הַלֵּךְ halakh) with Balak toward the cursing mission marks the prophet's fatal compromise—traveling where God had forbidden (22:12), motivated by promised rewards (22:17-18). The destination **Kirjathhuzoth** (קִרְיַת חֻזוֹת) Qiryat Chutzot, 'city of streets/marketplaces') was likely a Moabite border town staging the encounter with Israel.

This verse demonstrates the subtle progression of compromise: Balaam initially refused Balak's request (22:13), then inquired again seeking God's reversal (22:19), received conditional permission (22:20), but proceeded with wrong motives (22:21-22). Peter warns against prophets who 'have forsaken the right way' following 'the way of Balaam who loved the wages of unrighteousness' (2 Peter 2:15).

Historical Context

Balaam was a renowned Mesopotamian diviner (from Pethor near the Euphrates, 22:5) hired by Moab's king Balak to curse invading Israel (ca. 1407 BC). Despite claiming to serve Yahweh, Balaam's mercenary prophetic practice led to fatal compromise and later death in Israel's judgment on Midian (Numbers 31:8).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Balaam's progression (clear refusal → seeking reversal → conditional obedience with wrong motives) warn against rationalized compromise?
2. What 'Kirjathhuzoth destinations' (places God forbids but we pursue anyway) might you be traveling toward despite initial prohibitions?
3. How can believers discern the difference between God's permissive will (allowing us to proceed) versus His perfect will (what He desires)?

Interlinear Text

חִצּוֹת: קָרַי תְּ בְּלָעַם עִם בְּלָעַם בְּלָעַם וַיָּלֹךְ
H1980 And Balaam H5973 with Balak H1111 and they came H935 H7155 unto Kirjathhuzoth H2351

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