

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 (הלך 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 חֻצוֹת 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

וַיֵּלֶךְ	בְּלָאֵם	עִם	בָּלָק	וַיָּבֹאוּ	קִרְיַת	חֲצוֹת:
H1980	And Balaam	H5973	with Balak	and they came	H7155	unto Kirjathhuzoth
	H1109		H1111	H935		H2351

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