

IMAGINE:

- **Something you would like to do or like to have ...**
- **What is God's role, place or part ...???**

Numbers 22:1-6

Then the people of Israel set out and camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan at Jericho. ²And **Balak** the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. ³And Moab was in great dread of the people, because they were many. Moab was overcome with fear of the people of Israel. ⁴And Moab said to the elders of Midian, "This horde will now lick up all that is around us, as the ox licks up the grass of the field." So **Balak** the son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, ⁵sent messengers to **Balaam** ... to call him, saying, "Behold, a people has come out of Egypt. They cover the face of the earth, and they are dwelling opposite me. ⁶Come now, **curse this people for me**, since they are **too mighty** for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

Numbers 22:7

So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the **fees for divination** in their hand. And they came to Balaam and gave him Balak's message.

Numbers 22:8-12

And he said to them, "Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, as the **Lord** speaks to me." So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam. ⁹And **God** came to Balaam and said, "**Who are these men with you?**" ¹⁰And Balaam said to **God**, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, ¹¹'Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth. Now come, curse them for me. Perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.'" ¹²**God** said to Balaam, "You shall **not go** with them. You shall **not curse** the people, **for they are blessed.**"

Recognize the conflicts:

- **Voice of the 'world' appealing to the desires of the flesh vs. God's will**
- **General, vague, distant God vs. Personal God (Elohim v. Yahweh)**
- **The use of religious camouflage vs. biblical conviction**

Numbers 22:13-15

So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go to your own land, for the Lord has refused to let me go with you." ¹⁴So the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us." ¹⁵**Once again** Balak sent princes, **more** in number and **more** honorable than these.

Balak knows the power of worldly appeal and human approval.

→ **Do we/Balaam know how to detach ...? To renounce ...?**

John 8:29

And He who sent me is **with** Me. He has **not** left me alone, for I **always** do the things that are **pleasing to Him**.

Numbers 22:19

So you, too, please stay here tonight, that I may know **what more** the Lord will say to me.”

Why do we put question marks where God has put periods?

Why do we presume God is not interested in every single facet of our life?

The presence of God should always lead us to the preeminence of God.

Numbers 22:20-21

And **God** came to Balaam at night and said to him, “If the men have come to call you, **rise, go with them**; but only do what I tell you.” ²¹So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.

God’s Will: definite and permissive

Numbers 22:22

But **God's anger was kindled** because he went, and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as His **adversary** ...

God is always with us but that does not mean that He is for what we are doing.

Numbers 22:22b-23a

... Now he was riding on the **donkey**, and his two servants were with him. ²³And the donkey **saw** the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand ...

Balaam & his donkey:

- **Goes into field → Gets struck (v. 23)**
- **Presses against a wall → Gets struck (v. 24)**
- **Lays down in the path → Gets struck (v. 25)**

Numbers 22:28-30

Then the Lord **opened the mouth** of the **donkey**, and **she** said to Balaam, “What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?” ²⁹And Balaam said to the donkey, “Because you have **made a fool of me**. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you.” ³⁰And the donkey said to Balaam, “Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?” And he said, “No.”

There is a **foolish me** –

- That is **appealed to** and **supported by** the world and our desires, stubbornness, opinions and emotions
- Too often we **live and fight** for this ‘foolish me’

There is a **version of Christianity** that appeals to **foolish me**

- It reinforces our **lifestyles**
- It keeps ‘**self**’ in the place of **preeminence** and/or tolerates ‘**mixture**’

There is a **foolish me** –

- That God works to **stop and wound/break/kill**

1) Recognize that **nothing accidental** happens → God’s sovereign arrangements

a) God is personal, persistent and patient → His gracious jealousy

Numbers 22:31a

Then the Lord **opened the eyes** of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand ...

2) Resisting God occurs on two basic fronts:

a) Living in **darkness** → need for inner light/illumination

b) Loving **ourselves too much** → need for breaking & dethroning

Numbers 22:31b

... And he **bowed down** and **fell on his face**.

3) Realize God wants us **pliable** (not perfect!) in His **presence**

Numbers 22:32-33

And the angel of the Lord said to him, “Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because **your way is perverse** before me. ³³The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have **killed you** and let her live.”

3) Realize God wants us **pliable** (not perfect!) in His **presence**:

a) There is danger of bringing **perverseness** into God’s presence

➤ Let’s not **divide** our lives (or our hearts) anymore!

➤ Let’s submit to **examination** & thorough dealings!

b) There is a **path** forward ...

Numbers 22:34-35

Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, “I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road **against me**. Now therefore, if it is evil **in your sight**, I will turn back.” ³⁵And the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, “Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you.” So Balaam **went on** with the princes of Balak.

“MY GOD – Yahweh!

- ***I now see that everything comes from You. My experiences of the past 5, 10, 20 years ... have all come from You!***
- ***All of these were permitted and done with one purpose in mind—That Your Presence might be shown through me.***
- ***I have been foolish. I did not see this. I have done many things to hide, save, and support my foolish self. I have wasted time.***
- ***Today, I see Your hand and I willingly bow before You. I commit myself to You once again or for the first time as I place myself and my trust under the blood of Your Perfect and Only Son Jesus and submit to His leadership from this point forward.***
- ***May there be no turning aside and no turning back. Amen***