



Moab & Midian

3rd October 2

The chapter begins...*And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.*

² *And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.*

³ *And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.*

This happened immediately after the king of Moab had taken Balaam to three separate locations to curse Israel. But as we have discovered each time the plan was thwarted and Balaam was caused to bless Israel. This meant that Balaam did not receive the honour and riches that he had been promised. It is clear that this man was motivated by money - to have been prepared to have travelled all the way from Aram by the river Euphrates, south to the land of Canaan. We are not informed in the narrative here of how Balaam concluded his negotiations with Balak and the Princes of

Midian. But the Apostle Peter under Divine inspiration makes it clear that it was Balaam who was responsible for the downfall of the nation of Israel at this juncture, that he had supplied the advice that's the women of Midian should seduce and lead astray the leaders of Israel and in this way get upon themselves a curse for their bad and wicked behaviour.

2 Peter 2:13 -16: And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet...

This passage is very informative.

It confirms

- **that Balaam was motivated by money**
- **that he was insincere, and that the blessings he uttered were not his own words**
- **that the nation of Israel had elements within who were all too easily led astray and were unstable**
- **that Balaam would have observed and been aware of the weakness of some men whose eyes are full of adultery**
- **that Balaam knew how to exploit this**
- **as an arch manipulator of society, he is typical of false prophets and priests and politicians found today**

In Revelation 2:14 we can read: But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the

children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

This also gives additional information: that Balaam consulted and talked with Balak, having come up with the idea, and teaching Balak how to put the plan into action. So the king of Midian didn't even think of the idea, but it had to take a false prophet to teach the kings of the world how to manipulate and corrupt society. This is exactly what the false church – especially Roman Catholicism has done over many centuries, they have influenced kings and rulers to control their populations in certain ways – using various threats, fears, and false teaching to convince a gullible – and unstable people to think in a specific way. Today we are paying the price of what the Balaam like Popes have done for nearly 1700 years.

People still believe they go to heaven when they die, that if they sin it is the devil doing it and not them etc. False doctrine is because of men like Balaam. These are very evil men, and deserve the punishment due, as Peter adds in his letter previously referred to :

¹⁸ For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

What is the remedy? God who is a God of love said:

⁴ And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.

⁵ And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.

There are always men like Balaam who lead astray. But there was no excuse for some of the leaders of Israel who were not on their guard, but also had eyes full of adultery, were unstable souls, and were so easily led astray, with no regard to the example they were

supposed to be setting, proving that they were insincere men, and knew the law of God, and therefore were worse than Balaam.

It seems that not all Israel were happy with the behaviour of their elders, and went to the tabernacle to mourn, lament and express their sorrow at the terrible corruption which had set in at the highest level. On the other hand, it may be that they were also taken in by the preaching of Balaam, and were worshipping a false god as in Ezekiel 8:14: *Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.*

Let us assume this was not the case, as it is not good to always think the worst! So imagine their disbelief when some of their elders paraded their new foreign girlfriends – from their arch enemy – gloating in their sexual depravity: *⁶ And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

And The vile behaviour was abhorrent to many of them, but it took the brave decisive action of Phinehas, the grandson of the high priest to actually do something about it. How many times in the history of the Ecclesia do people get all upset and wring their hands and bemoan the corruption and bad behaviour of certain members of the congregation, but do not have the guts to do anything about it, instead preferring peace, and to remain in the background, and to leave it to someone else, with the excuse ooh it isn't my place to do anything.... , this young man had no such reservation... it was black and white to him...*he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.*

⁹ *And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.* This shows just how many were involved, and allowed themselves to be deceived. But being deceived is not just the fault of the deceiver. The serpent was a liar, but Eve chose to be deceived. Following false doctrine is a choice, God has made the Truth plain. They were drawn away of their own lusts and enticed. See James 1:14.

In contrast Phinehas was commended Psalm 106:29-31:

Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them. Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed. And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

His name means mouth of brass, brass is a symbol for judgement, and this he did well, by executing the will of God, which as being in the office of priest, it was his duty to do.

On the other hand the leader of Israel who was so brazen in his lust with the woman from Midian was Zimri, which means praiseworthy. – He only sought the praise of men, not of God.

The woman - he was literally smitten with – was Cozbi which in Hebrew means deceitful. So true is the Proverb: Proverbs 31:30: *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: ... but the woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.*

Like all false religion, the truth is corrupted, and everything becomes back to front! The deceitful woman was being paraded and praised.

The spear was thrust through the lovers in their tryst, joined together forever in their sin and death. It was sin in the flesh stopped in the very act. Phinehas, the judge and priest, a type of Christ, who executed sin in the flesh in himself most effectively, to stay the plague of death upon all people.

But the temptation is to look upon this scene of blood and judgement, and wag the head, and effect horror against such dreadful events.

But the Apostle Paul addresses the Ecclesia and says: (1 Corinthians 10:8,9: *Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. let us tempt Christ, ...* Paul recognised the same traits in all people, the way us, we, are vulnerable to the ideas of Balaam-like people, because of the tendency to listen to the serpent lies: But Paul goes on to explain, that there is no excuse, or justification to give into temptation: 11,13:

Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come... There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Brother Terry