

# Balaam

**Balaam was one of those Old Testament characters who, though not one of God's chosen people, was willing to acknowledge that God existed and was a powerful Creator God.**

But Balaam did **not** believe that God was the only true god.

**The record of Balaam's life exposes the deception of maintaining an outward façade of spirituality over a corrupt inward life.**

**Balaam was a man who was ready to obey God's command as long as he could profit from doing so.**

This mixture of motives, obedience and profit, eventually led to Balaam's death.

**Although he realised the awesome power of Israel's God, his heart was occupied with the wealth he could gain in Moab.**

Eventually each of us lives through the process of exposing who and what we are will somehow come to the surface, destroying any masks we may have put on to cover up our real selves.

**Efforts spent on keeping up appearances would be much better spent in finding out, with God's help, the sins in our lives and how we can be forgiven and cleansed of the penalty that they bring, [Romans 6:23].**

The Creator God already knows all what we think are hidden sins and wrong motivations, [Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:10].

Balaam was widely known for his effective curses and blessings, [Numbers 22:1-6].

**Neither Balaam or Balak had any idea who they were dealing with.**

**1 John 4:1** [New King James] *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*

We need to test the spirit which was giving Balaam the power to be a soothsayer, able to predict the future but also to influence it by his predictions.

**1 John 5:19-21** [New King James] *“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”*

This has been true ever since Eve was seduced by Satan into disobeying the Creator God's command.

**When we read the account of the discourse between the Creator God and Balaam we get the impression that he was a prophet of God!**

**John 11:49-52** [New King James] *“And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, ‘You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.’ Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.”*

**Here we have an example of how God used a man who hates the work He was doing through His Son, Jesus Christ, to make a profound prophetic statement. A person can be a true prophet of God at times yet serving false spirits at other times, [Numbers 22:1 – Numbers 24:25].**

With a complete change of direction Balaam sought to lure the Israelites into idol worship, [Numbers 31:16] which he knew would bring down the wrath of God on Israel. Was he hoping that the king of the Moabites would reward him for his influence over Israel?

**2 Peter 2:15** [New King James] *“They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;”*

**Balaam is given as an example of those who had fallen away from the Truth because they would rather gain wealth and satisfy their fleshly lusts.**

**Jude 11** [New King James] *“Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.”*

Balaam is linked to a murderer and a rebel, all of these had selfish motivations.

**Revelation 2:14** [New King James] *“But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”*

**The worship of idols, anything we place before our serving our Creator God, is referred to as the “doctrine of Balaam.”**

Churches who preach the “*health and wealth doctrine*” could be listed in this way.

**What we can learn from Balaam’s life is that our motives are just as important as our actions, and where we place our treasure is where our motives and heart will be, [Matthew 6:25-33].**