

NUMBERS 22

REVIEW...

- **NUMBERS 1-12 - ORGANIZE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TO TRAVEL / JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND...**
- **NUMBERS 13-16 - REFUSING TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND / REBELLION OF KORAH...**
- **NUMBERS 17-19 - ROD OF AARON / THE ROLE OF THE PRIESTS-LEVITES / RED HEIFER...**
- **NUMBERS 20-21 - THE 40TH YEAR...**
 - Israel arrived at Kadesh - the same place where they had sent out the 12 spies!
 - Only the first 3 years of the wandering are recorded for us in chapters 15-19...
 - Between the end of chapter 19 and the start of chapter 20 ~ 37 years elapsed...
 - It is now the 40th year - most who were over 20 had died - including Miriam Moses sister...
 - There was no water - so God commanded Moses to speak to the Rock...
 - Instead Moses struck the Rock - misrepresenting God to the people...
 - Because of this one mistake - Moses was forbidden to enter into the Promised Land...
 - Aaron also was not allowed to enter - died there on the border - Eliezar became High Priest
 - Rejected by their relatives the Edomites - Israel had to travel the long way around...
 - There was no food or water - Israel complained - God sent deadly serpents...
 - Israel repented - Moses set up a bronze serpent - if they looked to it they would live
 - Israel arrived at the Eastern border of the Land...
 - They conquered and wiped out King Sihon of Amorites and King Og of Bashan
 - Possessing the Land east of the Jordan from the Dead Sea - to Mt. Hermon!

OBEDIENT TO THE LORD... (4 THINGS)

- **1ST - THE FEAR OF MOAB... VS. 1-4 READ NUMBERS 22:1-21**
 - The children of Israel were camped opposite from Jericho - on the plains of Moab...
 - This is the final camp of Israel before crossing over into the Promised Land...
 - Their next stop would be to cross the Jordan River and attack the city of Jericho...
 - But it would be several months before they were ready to begin the conquest...
 - Moses still had to recite the Law to them for a 2nd time - Deuteronomy (*the 2nd telling*)...
 - Then Moses would climb up Mt. Nebo and die - Joshua would lead Israel into the Land!
 - The Moabites...

- The Moabites were close relatives to the Children of Israel...
 - Lot was the nephew of Abraham - compromised and moved to the city of Sodom...
 - When God rained down fire and brimstone on the wicked city - **Genesis 19**
 - Lot and his two youngest daughters hid from the devastation in the mountains...
 - The daughters apparently believed that everyone had perished in the destruction
 - Morally corrupted by living in Sodom - their solution was to get pregnant by their father
 - On two different nights they got Lot drunk – he did not know what happened...
 - The younger gave birth to a son/brother – Ben-Ammi – father of the Ammonites
 - The older gave birth to a son/brother – Moab – father of the Moabites
- Now over 400 years later they had lost all knowledge of the God...
 - A consequence of living for the world – sacrificing our kids to the world...
 - Perhaps not as bluntly as Lot - but as we live in the world our children watch...
 - If we are living for the world – then they will follow our example...
 - Do our kids see us always caught up in the care of this world...
 - Do they see us living our lives for Jesus – just on Sunday – or every day
- The Moabites were sick with fear...
 - They saw the millions of Israel filling their plain - a vast and powerful army...
 - They saw what Israel did to King Sihon and King Og (*nations mightier than Moab*)...
 - They had heard what the God of Israel had done to the Egyptians...
 - The 10 plagues that had brought the world's first super power to their knees...
 - The greatest powers of man - were nothing compared to the power of the LORD...
 - * **Psalms 20:7** - "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God."
 - We tend to look to man for help – money / resources / answers to our problems...
 - It's easier to trust in someone we can touch and see - then to trust in God...
 - The problem is men are limited – and can't always help...
 - Men have limited abilities and resources – only God has limitless!
 - Moab knew they were next...
 - Israel will eat us up just as easily as a cow chews the grass of the field...
 - In other words - Israel was going to 'mow them down' - they did not stand a chance!
 - They united with Midian (*the same tribe Moses had married into*) against Israel...
 - But they did not try to come at Israel militarily - they knew they were no match...
 - Greater nations than them had already fallen to the strength of these former slaves...
 - Instead they wanted to curse Israel - get God to turn His back on His people...
 - God will never turn His back on us - He will always be there to fight for us!
 - And with God on our side there is nothing that can come against us - **Romans 8:31**
 - But Satan is smart - he knows he cannot directly come against God's people...
 - Instead he tries to get us to compromise our walk with the Lord...
 - If Satan can trip us up with sin - he can get us to turn our back on the Lord!
- **2ND - BALAAM SON OF BEOR... vs. 5-21**
 - A prophet of God... vs. 5-6

- The king of Moab - Balak (*devastator*) - sent messengers to the prophet Balaam...
 - Apparently Balaam had the 'power' to bless or curse people...
 - If Balaam could curse Israel - Balak might be able to militarily defeat them!
- A non-Jewish prophet...
 - Balaam is one of only a handful of non-Jewish prophets in the Old Testament...
 - Also included are Job / Enoch / and Noah (*all who lived before Abraham - 1st Jew*)...
 - But there is no doubt Balaam both knew the LORD - and that the LORD spoke to him...
 - Balaam even referred to God by his true name - vs. 8 - Yahweh!
 - The Old Testament focuses solely on the history of Israel - not the whole world...
 - The reason is because Jesus came from the Jews - and the Bible is about Jesus!
 - That does not mean God was not working in other nations - Balaam is an example...
 - God does not want anyone to perish - from the beginning loved the whole world!
 - **John 3:16** - "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..."
- The 1st answer of Balaam... vs. 7-14
 - The messengers from Balak came and offered Balaam a diviner's fee (*bribe*)...
 - Balaam had them spend the night so he could inquire from the Lord...
 - God told Balaam - 'you will not go with these men - curse Israel - they are blessed!'
 - So Balaam sent the men back to Balak - obeying the command of the LORD...
 - I have met people who live in fear of curses - look for people to bless them...
 - Yet the blessing in life don't come from a person - they come from knowing the Lord...
 - And when we know the Lord - we have nothing to fear from the curses of men!
- The 2nd answer of Balaam... vs. 15-21
 - Balak sent back more prominent officials (*he went from mayors to congressmen*)...
 - Offering much more money - much more honor - anything if Balaam would come...
 - Balaam wisely answered - 'you could offer me a house full of silver and gold'...
 - 'I could not go beyond the Word of LORD - to do more or less'...
 - Satan does not waste his efforts - if he can get us to reject God for 20 pesos he will...
 - But if we refuse to compromise - he will put grander temptations before us...
 - Bembem was praying about helping - jobs offers came rolling...
 - Satan is always looking to see if we have a price - what will we sell out for...
 - But in truth there is nothing in this world worth more than our salvation!
 - **Mark 8:36** - "How do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your soul..."
 - Balaam had them spend the night - so he could 're-inquire' of the LORD...
 - One has to question why Balaam needed to re-inquire - God doesn't change His mind
 - More likely Balaam was thinking about the 'reward' he had been offered...
 - Hoping maybe - just maybe - God might reconsider and let him go...
 - And God did let Balaam go - but be careful to say only what God told him!

- When I was a kid - I learned quickly if I did not like an answer Dad gave - ask Mom...
 - Trying to manipulate my parents to get the answer that I wanted...
 - I did not understand they were far wiser than I was - had a good reason to say no
 - When God gives us an answer we don't like - we might want to ask again...
 - Thinking maybe if we ask on a different day / with different words - He'll say yes...
 - What we miss is God is a whole lot wiser than we are - and says no for good reasons!
 - I knew a man who asked God to give him a beautiful woman he knew as his wife...
 - God said no - and the man was VERY disappointed - kept asking to no avail...
 - Many years later (*married to a different woman*) he met the woman again...
 - The moment he saw her - THANK YOU JESUS - she was no longer a beautiful woman!
 - God will never keep anything from us that would be a blessing to us...
 - But He will keep us from things we want - that He knows will harm us!
- **3RD - A TALKING DONKEY... vs. 22-35** **READ NUMBERS 22:22-35**
 - The anger of the Lord... vs. 22...
 - No sooner had Balaam set out for Moab - than God's anger kindled against Balaam...
 - God sent an Angel of the LORD to kill Balaam along the road!
 - This might seem like a contradiction - God said Balaam could go...
 - But God only allowed Balaam to do what he wanted - and there were consequences...
 - God is a gentleman - He will never force us to do anything - He gives us free will...
 - If we insist we want to disobey the Lord - He will let us...
 - We must not mistake our freedom - as God's approval of our choices...
 - When we disobey the Lord - we open ourselves up to the consequences of our sin!
 - God can use a donkey - three close calls.... vs. 23-30
 - Balaam's donkey saw the Angel on the road (*Balaam could not see the Angel*)...
 - So the donkey swerved into a field to avoid the Angel - Balaam beat the donkey...
 - The Angel came again - stood at a narrow point between two vineyards...
 - The donkey pressed up against a wall to squeeze by - Balaam beat the donkey...
 - The Angel came a 3rd time - positioned himself so there was no way around...
 - The donkey saw the Angel - sat down refusing to move - Balaam beat the donkey...
 - The Lord opened the mouth of the Donkey...
 - The donkey asked - 'What have I done to you so that you beat me these 3 times?'
 - Balaam yelled back - 'If I had a sword in my hand I would kill you!'
 - The donkey answered - 'Have I not always been a good donkey to you?'
 - Balaam acknowledged he had been a good donkey - then God opened his eyes...
 - What is most amazing is not that a donkey talked - it's that Balaam argued back!
 - So often we limit what God does in our lives...

- We look at our abilities - our gifts - and think how could God use us...
- If God can use a stubborn donkey - He can use any of us for His work...
- If God can open the mouth of a donkey to speak - He can speak through us!
- Speak ONLY the word I speak to you... vs. 31-35
 - Balaam saw the Angel with sword drawn ready to strike him on the road...
 - He was sent because Balaam had perverted/twisted the Lord's word...
 - Balaam had twisted his mind to convince himself he was 'obeying the Lord'...
 - But in reality he was only following his greedy selfish desires...
 - We can justify anything in life - any choice we make - if we want to...
 - I was not gossiping - I was letting them know so they could pray...
 - I was not stealing - I was just borrowing and will return it soon...
 - We are not forgiven by our twisted justification - we will be judged by God's Word!
 - If it displeases you - I will go back...
 - There should have been no question the Lord was not happy with Balaam...
 - He had just tried to kill him three times with an Angel from the Lord!
 - Yet Balaam was so determined to get his 'reward' he still wanted to go...
 - So he was told again to go with them men - but only say what God told him to say...
 - If we insist on going forward in the sin in our lives - He will let us...
 - If you hit your head against a wall - it hurts / but some of us don't learn the 1st time...
 - We have to hit our head against the wall of sin many times before we learn...
 - The Lord is very patient with us - hoping eventually we will learn our lesson...
- 4TH - I HAVE NO POWER OF MY OWN... VS. 36-38
 - Balak the King of Moab came out to meet Balaam...
 - Balak questioned why Balaam had hesitated to come - was the reward not good enough
 - The world around us will always be quick to question our choices...
 - Why would you listen to the Lord - don't know you how much the world has to offer...
 - When Jen was serving at an orphanage - many told her she was wasting her life...
 - But the world can only offer us a cheap imitation of the riches God has planned for us!
 - Balaam told the King - 'I have not power to bless or curse'...
 - All Balaam could do was repeat what the Lord had told him to say...
 - So Balak took him up to the high places of Baal - pagan god of the Moabites...
 - From there they could see the whole camp of Israel...