

NUMBERS 22,23,24

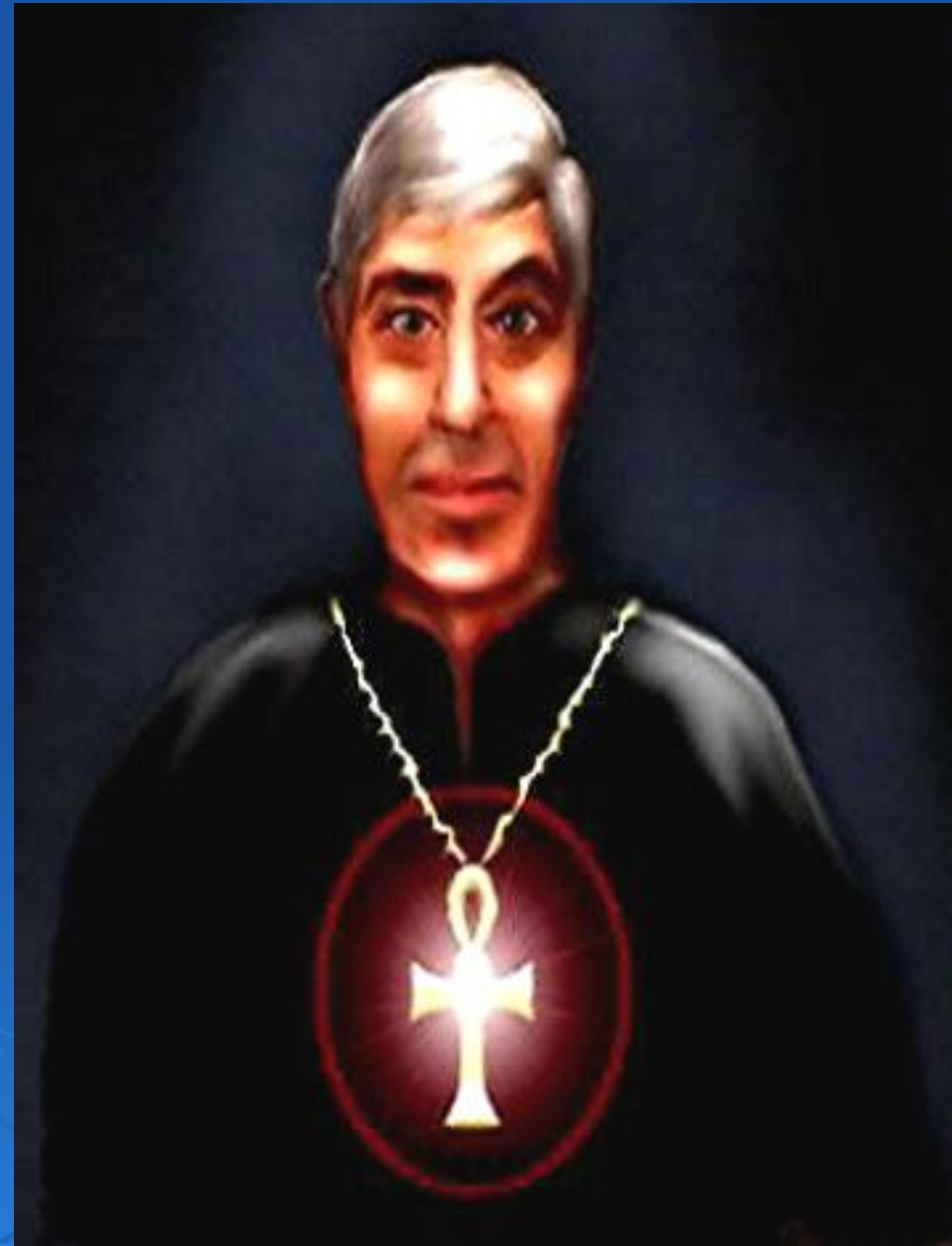
BALAAM AND BALAK



- Balaam and Balak story has great theological depth
- An embellished story likely based on an actual event
- King Balak of Moab asks the Mesopotamian Diviner Balaam to come and curse Israel
- Messianic overtones

PRINCIPLE OF FALSE PROPHETS

- Balaam shows that being inspired by God does NOT of itself indicate righteousness
- Pagan kings and prophets CAN at times foretell the future
- Satan can disguise himself as light
- Best protection is to know ALL the Word of God so as to better discern



GOD APPEARS TO GENTILES 3 TIMES TO WARN THEM



- The Lord appears and speaks to Abimelech, Laban, and now Balaam
- Balaam truthfully tells Abba about the men coming to him that he might curse Israel
- Yehoveh tells Balaam that he **CANNOT** curse “His People” because they are **BLESSED**
- 1) Spiritually impossible to curse that which God blessed
- 2) Physically dangerous to curse (impede, harm) God’s People



MORAL NEUTRALITY?

- Balaam's thought was to do the King's bidding, make some money, and go home
- Balaam had no intention of personally persecuting or harming the Israelites
- Balaam like the UN: an ambivalent diplomat
- He was NOT pro-Moab, nor anti-Israel
- WITH THE LORD, THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS BEING MORALLY NEUTRAL!
- NOT to acknowledge Israel's God-given blessing IS cursing Israel

“YEHOVEH WILL NOT LET ME GO”



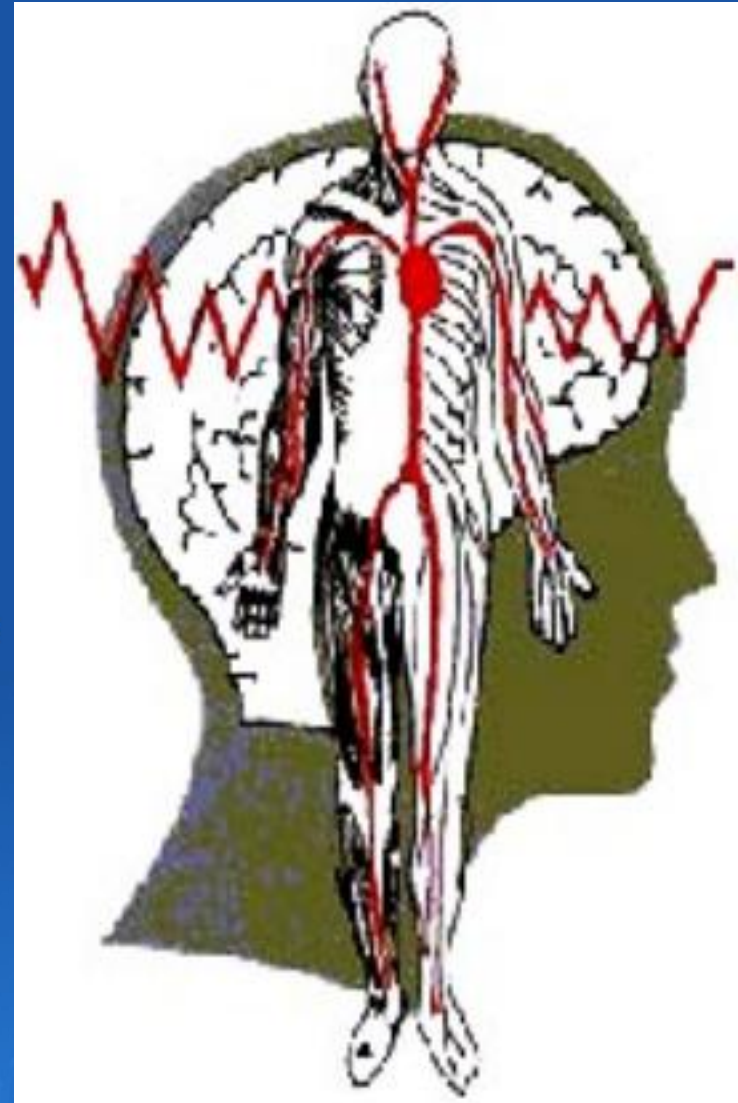
- Balaam KNOWS God's name!
- But to Balaam Yehoveh is NOT the only god
- Balaam refuses the King's delegation to come to Moab
- Vs. 18 "Yehoveh my elohim"
- Balaam had no allegiance to the God of Israel
- Balaam was a spiritualist, he believes in the spirit world

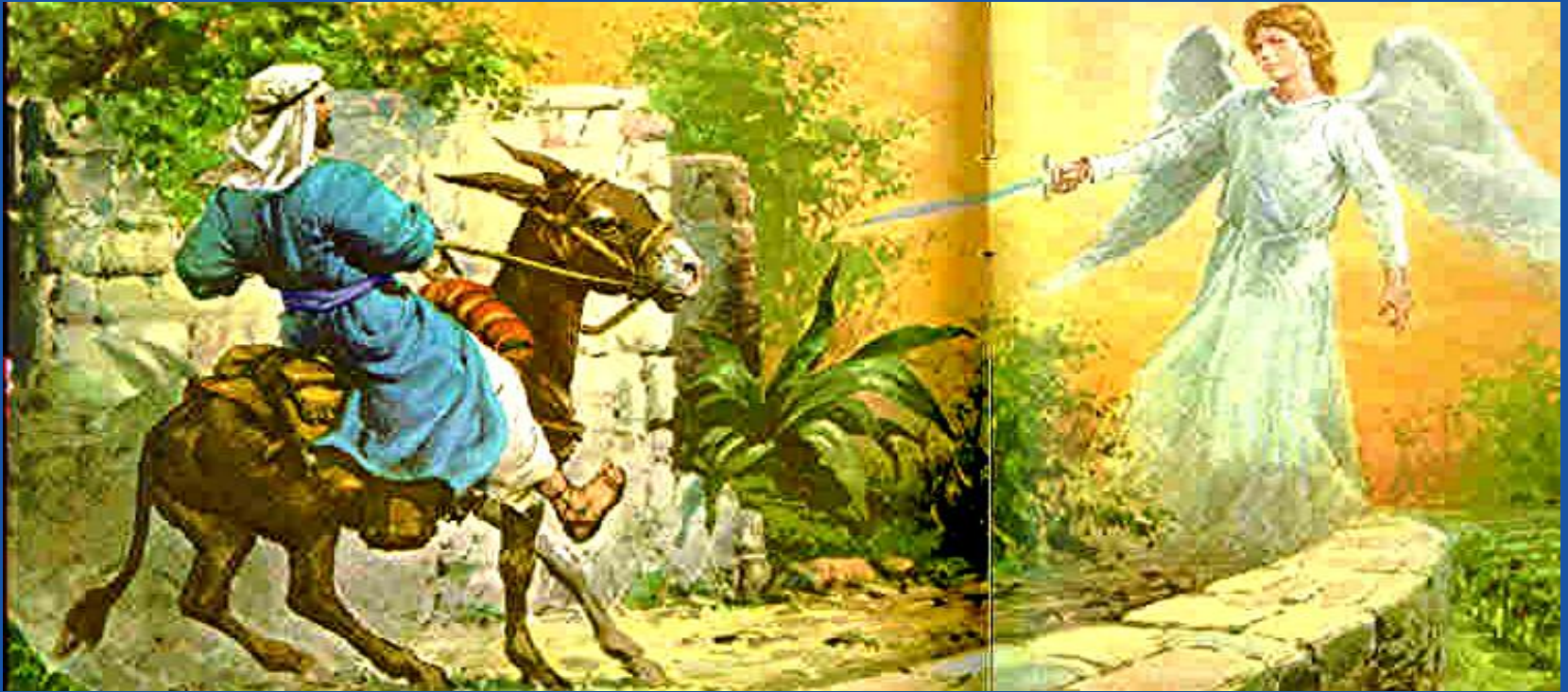
“WHAT ELSE WILL THE LORD SAY.....”

- Balaam was a good salesman
- The 2nd group of men, higher dignitaries, are asked to stay overnight
- Balaam wants to bargain with the Lord
- NEGOTIATION is the basis of Divination
- Balaam is going to try to summon Yehoveh in a dream
- Dreams are INFERIOR inspiration as compared to the fully conscious type of inspiration experienced by God’s true prophets

BALAAAM'S FREE WILL

- Did God change his mind?
- No. Was a progression of circumstance
- Was not a moral or theological principle being changed
- This was a matter of FREE WILL
- Balaam WANTS to go to Balak
- Balaam going to Balak despite the Lord saying “don’t go”, because he wanted the job and the money!





- Angel of Yehoveh shows up
- Balaam doesn't see Him, but donkey DOES!
- 3 times the donkey encounters the Lord, and each time stops and gets a beating for it from Balaam
- Balaam was determined to disobey the Lord and get that money

THE DONKEY SPEAKS!

- Balaam blind to what is going on
- Donkey asks if she has EVER behaved this way before
- Balaam NOW sees the Lord and falls on his face in dread
- The Lord confronts Balaam and asks why he was beating his donkey?
- Yehoveh says if the donkey hadn't stopped, He would have killed Balaam



THE ROADBLOCK



- Spouses, parents, what do we do when one desperately wants something, but the other one says NO!?
- The one saying NO isn't necessarily right
- However, we should stop and take pause to approach the Lord for guidance
- Perhaps the Lord is stopping a great mistake, or we're being saved from His discipline
- Balak: "Lord, if you **STILL** disapprove.."

BALAK GREETES BALAAM



- Balak chides Balaam for not coming immediately
- A great feast is prepared in Balaam's honor
- People of that era believed that a curse was real and efficacious
- They go up to a high place called Bamoth-Ba'al (high place of the god, Ba'al)
- Balaam had to SEE Israel in order to curse them

THE NUMBER 7

- The number “7” was of divine importance throughout the known world
- Old Babylonian clay tablet: “....**set up 7 altars, 7 incense burners.....7 sheep...**”
- Ibn Ezra: number 7 is prominent in the Hebrew religious event calendar: 7 days, 7 years, 7th month, 7 sprinklings of blood
- After sacrificing on 7 altars, Balak asks Balaam to perform the curse
- Instead, Balaam BLESSES Israel!
- Balaam also prophesies a glorious future for Israel

