

Last Week We Talked About:

Week 36 - CHUKAT (Statute or Decree)
Numbers 19:1–22:1; Judges 11:1–33; Hebrews 9:1–28

Be an Eternal Nation
Removal of Death

Live Eternal, Think Eternal, Talk Eternal, Walk Your Faith Out Eternal!
The Laws of Nature will be Suspended from you if you Keep God's Laws!

This Week:

Week 37 - BALAK (Destroyer) - Numbers 22:2–25:9; Micah 5:6–6:8; 2 Peter 2:1–22

“And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites,”
Numbers 22:2

Last week's Parasha (Torah portion) ended with Israel seeking to pass through the land of the Amorites on their way to the Promised Land. The Amorites responded with war, but with God's help, Israel defeated them.

In this week's Parasha, we see the overpowering strength of God's blessing on Israel. When Balak, the king of Moab, sent a sorcerer named Balaam to curse Israel, he found that he could not do so.

**“There is only one way that you may be defeated;
that is, through your own sin, by turning away from God.”**

The Tongue is Mightier than the Sword

“Death and Life are in the Power of the Tongue,”
Proverbs 18:21

Key Passage:

“When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, **you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations.**”
Deuteronomy 18:9

Although Balaam was commissioned to pronounce a curse over Israel, he found he could only issue a blessing, saying,

“How shall I curse whom God has not cursed?”
Numbers 23:8

Many might come against the nation of Israel, but no one can curse those whom Adonai Himself has blessed!

God's Promise is Everlasting (He will Never Forget and He will Never Break)

“I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” **Genesis 12:3**

John 12:46-50 – Jesus Only Says and Does what the Father tells Him to Say and Do . . .

⁴⁶ I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. ⁴⁷ If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; **for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.** ⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ **For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.** ⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. **What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”**

John 12:48-50 – The Holy Spirit Only Says and Does what the Father tells Him to Say and Do . . .

⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ **For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.** ⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

John 14:21-26 – And He who Keeps God's Commandments, Loves Me . . .

²¹ **Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”** ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³ Jesus

answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

1 John 2:4-6 – Whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar . . .

⁴Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,⁵ but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

1 John 3:4-6 – No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him . . .

⁴Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.⁵ You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

The **Moabite King Balak**, whose *name means waste or to lay waste*, wanted to lay waste the nation of Israel. To his dismay, he found that he was unable to do so because of God's blessing upon her.

Why did King Balak feel so threatened by Israel that he felt the need to have her cursed? It is because Balak, along with his elders, had heard of the Israelites stunning victories over the mighty enemies of Sihon and Og.

Jesus also referred to Balaam, saying to the Believers at Pergamum:

Revelation 2:12-17

To the Church in Pergamum

¹²“And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

¹³“‘I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴But I have a few things against you: **you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam**, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. ¹⁵So also you have some **who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans**. ¹⁶Therefore **REPENT. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth**. ¹⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.’

the Nicolaitans: Jesus is very clear in expressing his feelings concerning the deeds and doctrine of the Nicolaitans, “he hates ‘them’ (the deeds and doctrines)”. What was this doctrine, and does it still exist today? Jude 14, “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the GRACE of GOD into lasciviousness (luh-siv-ee-uhs: *a license for immorality – unbridled lust, excess, wontedness, outrageousness, shamelessness.*); and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. **Romans 3:31**, “*Do we make void (nullify) the law through faith? God forbid (Not at all!): we establish the law (Rather, we uphold the law).*” By their refusal to obey God's Commands, they deny our Lord Jesus Christ and what he taught (Titus 1:16, Deut 28:15, Ro 1:32). **2 Peter 2:1**, “*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily (priv-i-ly: secretly – to introduce or bring privately or craftily) shall bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction,*” **2 Peter 2:2-3**, “. . . And through covetousness shall they with false words make merchandise of you . . .” (We are to stay alert to false teaching, as Jesus teaches in Matthew 24:4, 11) **2 Peter 2:15-16**, “*Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved gain from wrongdoing,*” **2 Peter 2:17-19**, “. . . they allure through the lusts of the flesh . . . while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.” **The Nicolaitans abused the doctrine of GRACE. Their doctrine made the law of God of no effect, “By ‘believing’ we are released from being doers of the word.”** Jesus never taught this, HE HATED IT! This is His Plan for US: 1) We Repent, 2) He Forgives, 3) We then Obey His Commands. He blesses and rewards our obedience we grow closer to Him through sanctification: WE FOCUS ON BUILDING HIS KINGDOM AND NOT OURS.

hidden manna: Jesus is the ‘manna’ from heaven – the spiritual sustenance we need – and it is promised to us – John 6:48-51, 58.

white stone, with a new name written on the stone: The best theory regarding the meaning of the white stone probably has to do with the ancient Roman custom of awarding white stones to the victors of athletic games. The winner of a contest was awarded a white stone with his name inscribed on it. This served as his “ticket” to a special awards banquet. According to this view, Jesus promises the overcomers entrance to the eternal victory celebration in heaven. The “new name” most likely refers to the Holy Spirit's work of conforming believers to the holiness of Christ (see Romans 8:29; Colossians 3:10).

Numbers 22:1-35

Numbers 22:1-6

Balak Summons Balaam

¹Then 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 the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River in the land of the people of Amaw, 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.”

they are too mighty for me – The Hebrew phrase, Atzum hu mimeni (“**He is mightier than me**”) also translates, “**He is mightier from me**.” For in truth, the might of the people of Israel is **Moshiach** (or “**Messiah**”, refers specifically to a future Jewish king from the

Davidic line, who is expected to save the Jewish nation, and will be anointed with holy anointing oil and rule the Jewish people during the Messianic Age.), **who is descendent of Balak** (Ruth the Moabite, ancestress of King David, is a descendent of Balak)!

Genesis 19:30-38

Lot and His Daughters

³⁰ Now Lot went up out of Zoar and lived in the hills with his two daughters, for he was afraid to live in Zoar. So he lived in a cave with his two daughters. ³¹ And the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the earth. ³² Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve offspring from our father.” ³³ So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father. He did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁴ The next day, the firstborn said to the younger, “Behold, I lay last night with my father. Let us make him drink wine tonight also. Then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve offspring from our father.” ³⁵ So they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁶ Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. ³⁷ The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab. **He is the father of the Moabites to this day.** ³⁸ The younger also bore a son and called his name Ben-ammî. He is the father of the Ammonites to this day.

It is written, “If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,’
‘Nor does **DARKNESS** obscure for You; the night shines as the **DAY**, **DARKNESS IS AS LIGHT.**’” Psalms 139:12

DARKNESS (darkness: figuratively – misery, destruction, death, ignorance, sorrow, wickedness)

DAY (day: luminous, glorious)

Numbers 22:7-30

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. ⁸ 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. ⁹ And God came to Balaam and said, “Who are these men with you?” ¹⁰ And Balaam said to God, “Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, ‘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.’” ¹¹ ¹² God said to Balaam, “You shall not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.” ¹³ 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.” ¹⁴ So 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. ¹⁶ And they came to Balaam and said to him, “Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: ‘Let nothing hinder you from coming to me, ¹⁷ for I will surely do you great honor, and whatever you say to me I will do. Come, curse this people for me.’” ¹⁸ But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, “Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, **I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more.** ¹⁹ So you, too, please stay here tonight, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me.” ²⁰ 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.” ²¹ So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.

Balaam's Donkey and the Angel

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.** Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. ²³ And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey, to turn her into the road. ²⁴ Then the angel of **the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side.** ²⁵ And when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again. ²⁶ Then **the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left.** ²⁷ When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. ²⁸ 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?” ²⁹ And 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.” ³⁰ *And 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.”*

Also, a message of Perspective for Balaam to see the Whole of History of Israel . . . Looking Bigger . . . Instead of just seeing the Edge of History, and not the Big Picture . . . the consequential exploitation of the Smaller Picture of Israel that was being shown him through Israel's enemy, Balak.

In Judaism, some consider his name to mean without a nation or people (**bli – am**), suggesting that by going to curse Israel he became excluded or cut off from a place in the World to Come (**Olam haBah**).

The reality that Balak and Balaam ignored is that God has promised (God's Word says) to bless those who bless the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and to curse those who curse us. (Genesis 12:3)

Numbers 22:31 -35

³¹ 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. And he bowed down and fell on his face.** ³² 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.** ³³ The 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.**” ³⁴ Then Balaam said to the angel

of the Lord, **“I have sinned (Repented, stop doing it his way and started doing it God’s way), 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.”**³⁵ And 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.

There is only one way that Israel may be defeated; that is, through her own sin — by turning away from God. This is what happened to the people of Israel in this Parasha. Although Balak and Balaam failed in bringing a curse upon Israel, they brought destruction upon themselves by committing sexual immorality with the Moabite women and worshipping their god, Baal-Peor.

“So Israel was **joined** to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.” **Numbers 25:3**

Joined – like a yoke of oxen.

2 Corinthians 6:14

¹⁴Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

Leviticus 19:1-2

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, **You shall be holy**, for I the Lord your God am holy.

Hebrews 12:14

¹⁴Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Numbers 31:7-16

⁷They warred against Midian, as the Lord commanded Moses, and killed every male. ⁸**They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their slain, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. And they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword.** ⁹And the people of Israel took captive the women of Midian and their little ones, and they took as plunder all their cattle, their flocks, and all their goods. ¹⁰All their cities in the places where they lived, and all their encampments, they burned with fire, ¹¹and took all the spoil and all the plunder, both of man and of beast. ¹²Then they brought the captives and the plunder and the spoil to Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the people of Israel, at the camp on the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

¹³Moses and Eleazar the priest and all the chiefs of the congregation went to meet them outside the camp. ¹⁴And Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war. ¹⁵Moses said to them, “Have you let all the women live? ¹⁶Behold, **these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the Lord.**

Numbers 25:1-9

⁹Nevertheless, **those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.**

Seeing His Chosen People worship pagan gods enraged God and resulted in a plague that **killed 24,000 Israelites**. Scripture reveals that it was Balaam, who counseled the Midianites to ruin Israel through association with their women. (*Numbers 25:1-9, 31:7–16*)

24,000 – 8 x 3 = New Beginning of Perfection.

The Rabbis, therefore, also discern another meaning of the name of Balaam as **bilu-am**—one who confused the nation.

What happened in the end to Balaam? After being ridiculed by his own donkey, who miraculously tried to save him by telling him about the end that lay before him, Balaam finally died in a battle with the Israelites. (*Numbers 31:8*)

So ended the life of one who was motivated by greed and selfish ambition rather than by God’s righteousness.

The Book of Jude underscores the error of false prophets like Balaam: “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.” (*Jude 1:11*)

What was this grave error of Balaam that was serious enough to be included alongside Cain, who murdered his brother (*Genesis 4*), and Korah, who led a rebellion against Moses that resulted in the deaths of many Israelites (*Numbers 16*)?

Matthew 7:21-27

I Never Knew You

²¹“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³And then will I declare to them, ‘**I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.**’

Build Your House on the Rock

²⁴“**Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them** will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶And **everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them** will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Lesson 17 of Jesus’ Discipleship Making Process: Fruit Inspection

With the giving of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost following Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, power was given to the Church to prophesy and

perform signs and wonders. However, it would provide an opportunity for false prophets and teachers to creep in unnoticed and destroy God’s people from within. Jesus foresaw this time of deception and warned the disciples that in the last days false prophets would come and mislead many. Knowing that some would be able to both speak in His name and perform signs and wonders that would come to pass, Jesus instructed His disciples to use a third method to test the prophets and teachers: the test of character. *“You will know them by their fruits”.*

These false prophets are difficult to detect because they disguise themselves as members of Jesus’ flock but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Acts 20:29-30). Based on the book of Jude verse 11 it appears that the false prophets and teachers have three basic traits in common. Jude says, *“For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.”*

Cain, Balaam and Korah have several things in common with one another. Each of them intimately knew God, heard Him speak, and was placed in a position of prominence by God. They each worshipped God and made offerings to Him. However, none of them was content with God. Each was motivated by covetousness and wanted to override God authority by doing things their own way. And each of them was responsible for the death of God’s people.

These men’s primary focus was self-promotion. Their actions show they were motivated by personal gain not by the love of God and man. Cain (Genesis 4), Balaam (Numbers 22-25) and Korah (Numbers 16) are used in Scripture as examples that wrong motivation can occur in the three different aspects of man: body, soul, and spirit. The way of Cain involves the body. It is satisfying the desires of the flesh and is evidenced by 1) unholy living in the midst of the people of God. The error of Balaam is satisfying the desires of the soul by greed and is evidenced by 2) teaching that causes the people of God to fall. The rebellion of Korah involves the spirit. Its basis is pride and consists of grumbling and complaining against God, His leaders and His ways. It is evidenced through 3) causing division in the people of God.

Again, Peter referenced Balaam in his warnings to Believers—may the people of God today take heed:

“They have left the straight way and wandered off to **follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.** But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man’s voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.

“These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. For they mouth **empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.**” (2 Peter 2:15–18)

Therefore, deciding that it would be too risky to fight Israel directly, they **hired a “spiritual mercenary,”** Balaam, who was **a heathen sorcerer,** to put a “hex” on their enemies. Although we may consider this an ancient superstition, many practice such magic even today.

The Bible strictly forbids the people of God to practice such sorcery; neither are we to seek guidance from astrologers, sorcerers, psychics or those who consult with the dead:

“When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

Deuteronomy 18:9-13

“For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you.”

The word divination comes from the Latin *divinare*, meaning “to foresee” or “to be inspired by a god.” To practice divination is to uncover hidden knowledge by supernatural means. It is associated with the occult and involves fortune-telling or soothsaying, as it used to be called.

From ancient times, people have used divination to gain knowledge of the future or as a way to make money. The practice continues as those who claim supernatural insight read palms, tea leaves, tarot cards, star charts, and more.

God tells us His view of divination in **Deuteronomy 18:10:** *“There shall not be found among you . . . anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens.”* **First Samuel 15:23** compares rebellion to the “sin of divination.”

*“For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
he has also rejected you from being king.”*

Practicing divination is listed as one of the reasons for Israel’s exile (2 Kings 17:17). Jeremiah 14:14 spoke of the false prophets of the time, saying, “They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds.” So, compared to God’s truth, divination is false, deceitful, and worthless.

¹⁷ *And they burned their sons and their daughters as offerings and used divination and omens and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger.*

2 Kings 17:17

As Luke traveled with Paul and Silas in the city of Philippi, he recorded an encounter with a diviner: “We were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of

divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling” (Acts 16:16). **The girl’s ability to penetrate mysteries was due to a demon that controlled her.** Her masters received “much gain” from their slave. **Paul eventually exorcised the demon** (verse 18), **freeing the girl from her spiritual bondage** and angering the slave owners (verse 19).

Divination in any form is sin. It is not harmless entertainment or an alternate source of wisdom. Christians should avoid any practice related to divination, including fortune-telling, astrology, witchcraft, tarot cards, necromancy, and spell-casting. The spirit world is real, but it is not innocent. According to Scripture, those spirits that are not the Holy Spirit or angels are evil spirits.

Christians need not fear the spirits involved in divination; neither are Christians to seek wisdom from them. The Christian’s wisdom comes from God (James 1:5).

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-divination.html>

As the world becomes darker and more terrifying, many people seek guidance and comfort from such sorcerers and others skilled in the occult arts; but **as God’s people we are to “come out from among them and be separate.”** 2 Corinthians 6:17

The adversary of humankind seeks to deceive and enslave people through a variety of methods - false doctrines mixed with true doctrines, false religions, fleshly temptations—through spiritists, books, TV, and more.

1 Timothy 4:1-16

Some Will Depart from the Faith

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, ² through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, ³ who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

A Good Servant of Christ Jesus

⁶ If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. ⁹ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

But those who follow Jesus actually have an advantage that is superior to any of those methods. Believers have the Holy Spirit to lead and guide them into all truth; therefore, they do not need to stumble around in the kingdom of darkness looking for direction from those who serve the evil one.

John 14:25-26 – The Holy Spirit will Teach and Bring to Remembrance all that the Heavenly Father has Said to Say and Do . . .

²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

God promises that if we seek Him with all of our heart, we will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13), and that those who are His sheep will hear His voice (John 10:27).

He has not left us to our devices wondering which way we should go.

Take Away the Yoke from your Midst and be Satisfied and Rebuilt

⁹ . . . If you take away the yoke (false teaching) from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, ¹⁰ if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. ¹¹ And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. ¹² And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

¹³ “If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; ¹⁴ then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” Isaiah 58:9-14

Although Balaam possessed legendary powers, they were tiny compared to God’s power.

Three times Balaam tried to curse Israel and three times he involuntarily blessed them instead.

Over the centuries, many peoples and nations have tried to destroy Israel, like Balak, but none have succeeded in wiping Israel off the map as they have desired.

Why has Israel survived against all odds even till today?

It is because of God’s covenantal promise to the seed or offspring of Israel:

“Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (The LORD of Hosts is His name): ‘If those ordinances depart from before Me,’ says the LORD, ‘then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever.’” (Jeremiah 31:35–36)

God has blessed the Jewish People, and they are as secure as the stars in the sky.

Even though God has made the survival and ultimate salvation of Israel secure, Psalm 83 prophesies that in the Last Days, a confederacy will be formed before our very eyes that intends to wipe out the name of Israel forever:

“They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, ‘Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.’” (Psalm 83:3–4)

Numbers 24:15-16

Balaam’s Final Oracle

¹⁵ And he took up his discourse and said,
“The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,
the oracle of the man whose eye is opened,
¹⁶ the oracle of him who hears the words of God,
and knows the knowledge of the Most High,
who sees the vision of the Almighty,
falling down with his eyes uncovered:

1 Corinthians 15:45-49

⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

Again, although, Balaam was commissioned to pronounce a curse over Israel, he found he could only issue a blessing, saying,

“How shall I curse whom God has not cursed?”

Numbers 23:8

Many might come against the nation of Israel, but no one can curse those whom Adonai Himself has blessed!

Again, God’s Promise is Everlasting (He will Never Forget and He will Never Break)

“I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Genesis 12:3

And as we read Balaam’s final attempt to Curse God’s People, we see God’s Word reigning TRUE in the midst of attempted repeated curses, both Blessing and Futuristic Messianic Redemption:

Numbers 24:17-20

¹⁷ I see him (type of messiah/David – natural), but not now (future messiah/Jesus - spiritual);
I behold him (type of messiah/David – natural), but not near (future messiah/Jesus - spiritual);
a star shall come out of Jacob (type of messiah/David – natural),
and a scepter shall rise out of Israel (future messiah/Jesus - spiritual);
it shall crush the forehead of Moab (type of messiah/David – natural)
and break down all the sons of Sheth (future messiah/Jesus - spiritual).
¹⁸ Edom shall be dispossessed;
Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed.
Israel is doing valiantly.
¹⁹ And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion
and destroy the survivors of cities!”
²⁰ Then he looked on Amalek and took up his discourse and said,
“Amalek was the first among the nations,
but its end is utter destruction.” (Israel Defeats the Amalekites - Exodus 17:8-16)

And therefore, finally, we learn the essence of this message, “There is only one way that you may be defeated; that is, through your own sin, by turning away from God,” as demonstrated by God’s own judgments:

“Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the Lord.” Numbers 31:16

“¹⁴But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality . . . ¹⁶Therefore **REPENT. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.” Revelation 2:14-16**

So let us take God's Instructions as our action towards REPENTANCE (defined as “stop doing is our way and start doing it God's way”), as read in Deuteronomy 18:9 and Jude 3-23:

**“When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations.”
Deuteronomy 18:9**

Jude

Judgment on False Teachers

³Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write **appealing to you to contend for the faith** that was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴For **certain people have crept in unnoticed** who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, **who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality** and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. ⁵Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—⁷just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which **likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.**

⁸Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. ⁹**But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.”** ¹⁰But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. ¹¹*Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.* ¹²These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; ¹³*wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.*

¹⁴It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, **“Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones,** ¹⁵**to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”** ¹⁶These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

A Call to Persevere

¹⁷**But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ¹⁸They said to you, **“In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.”** ¹⁹**It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.** ²⁰**But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,** ²¹**keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.** ²²And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

Next Week's Reading:

Week 38 - PINCHAS (Phinehas / Dark Skinned)
Numbers 25:10–29:40 (30:1); Jeremiah 1:1–2:3; 1 Peter 3:8–4:19