

# Who Are These Men With You?

## Numbers 22:1-41

Balaam was a Gentile seer, a complex character

### What?

**Recognize who makes you wise, and who encourages compromise**

A hidden agenda—

*Psalm 1:1, ESV—Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers*

The Moabites were afraid of the Israelites, so King Balak sent messengers and money to summon Balaam to curse the Israelites—but God prevented him

This is where God asked him the epic question

Balak sent more officials with a promise of great reward

God's will was that Balaam should not go, but at the second request, **He handed Balaam over to his desire**

Then God intervened in anger because of what was arising in Balaam's heart, and spoke to him through his donkey

God thwarted Balak four times by using Balaam to bless Israel, but that isn't the end of the story

Then the Midianites lured the people to worship Baal, with feasting, bowing down and immorality, resulting in a plague

31:16—it turns out that Balaam incited the immorality

*II Peter 2:15-16, ESV—They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness*

**Balaam was mad with covetousness** growing in his heart

Ironically the donkey was obeying the Lord, unlike Balaam

When God didn't allow Balaam to curse Israel, Balaam decided to **go a different route to get some remuneration**

The Jesus Connection—

*Revelation 2:14, ESV—But 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.*

Some in Pergamum were **teaching compromise**

**The Big Question—“Who are these men with you?”**

Once again, God didn't want to know the answer

He wanted Balaam to answer the question for himself

God wanted Balaam to see that **the men were His enemies**, and that there was **a spark of evil desire in his own heart**, that the influence of these men might fan into flame

### So What?

Put God's epic question to yourself, **“Who are the people you keep company with, who influence you”**

Those who should influence us are **godly, wise, mature believers**—whom we should question constantly

No one learns to follow Jesus in isolation

A mentor teaches **when to act and when to pray, when to lead and when to follow, when to speak and when to be silent**

The final say—Paul

*Philippians 1:9-10, ESV—And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ*

### Now What?

Consider any influences you should turn away from

Consider whom you might adopt as your influencer