

# Numbers 22: 1-35

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[ 0 : 00 ] Chapter 22, starting in verse 1, we'll go down to verse 35. Before we get to the text, let's just open up with prayer, and then we'll get in it together. Lord, I thank you so much just for allowing us to gather together.

Lord, we thank you for the privilege of a midweek service. Lord, we thank you for the privilege of Bible study, of Lord opening up your word, and Lord just seeing what it is that it has to say to us. So Lord, we pray that by the power and presence of your Spirit that you would speak to our hearts and minds. Lord, that the truths which we hear, the truths which we see, would be united with application in our life.

Lord, that we would not come just to collect information, not just to gather facts. But Lord, we would come to a greater understanding of who you are. And Lord, we pray that that understanding would lead us in a life of being conformed more and more to your image.

And Lord, as always, we pray that you would be glorified and honored in all that takes place this evening here, and Lord, in all areas of the church life this evening. Lord, just be glorified, be magnified, may you be lifted on high.

[ 1 : 02 ] We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Numbers chapter 22. We won't be looking at the entire chapter because the latter verses tie into chapter 23. Very familiar set of scripture to us, probably.

Maybe not the verses themselves, but the story. One of the most unique stories that we will find in the book of Numbers, if not in the entirety of the Old Testament. One which we have heard, I would think, quite often.

And we have read a number of times. And it is the story concerning Balaam, the false prophet. But we're going to get right into the text. Numbers 22, starting in verse 1. Then the sons of Israel journeyed and camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan opposite Jericho.

Now Balak, the son of Zippor, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. So Moab was in great fear because of the people, for they were numerous. And Moab was in dread of the sons of Israel. Moab said to the elders of Midian, Now this horde will lick up all that is around us, as the ox licks up the grass of the field.

And Balak, the son of Zippor, was king of Moab at that time. So he sent messengers to Balaam, the son of Beor, of Pithor, or Atpithor, which is near the river, in the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, a people came out of Egypt.

[ 2 : 15 ] Behold, they cover the surface of the land, and they are living opposite me. Now therefore, please come, curse this people for me, since they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I may be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land.

For I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed. 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 repeated Balak's words to him.

He said to them, Spend the night here, and I will bring word back to you, as the Lord may speak to me. And the leaders of Moab stayed with Balaam. Then God came to Balaam and said, God came to Balaam and said, Who are these men with you?

Balaam said to God, Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent word to me. Behold, there is a people who came out of Egypt, and they cover the surface of the land. Now come, curse them for me. Perhaps I may be able to fight against them and drive them out.

God said to Balaam, Do not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed. So Balaam arose in the morning and said to Balaam's leaders, Go back to your land, for the Lord has refused to let me go with you.

[ 3 : 22 ] The leaders of Moab arose and went to Balak and said, Balaam refused to come with us. Then Balak again sent leaders more numerous and more distinguished than the former.

They came to Balaam and said to him, Thus says Balak, the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I beg you, hinder you from coming to me, for I will indeed honor you richly and will do whatever you say to me. Please come then, curse this people for me. Balaam replied to the servants of Balak, Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not do anything, either small or great, contrary to the command of the Lord my God.

Now please, you also stay here tonight, and I will find out what else the Lord will speak to me. God came to Balaam at night and said to him, If the men have come to call you, rise up and go with them, but only the word which I speak to you shall you do.

Verse 21. So Balaam arose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the leaders of Moab. But God was angry because he was going. And the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as an adversary against him.

[ 4 : 28 ] Now he was riding on his donkey and his two servants were with him. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned off from the way and went into the field.

But Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back into the way. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path of the vineyards with a wall on this side and a wall on that side. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pressed herself to the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall, so he struck her again.

The angel of the Lord went further and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn to the right hand or the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. So Balaam was angry and struck the donkey with a stick.

And 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? Then Balaam said to the donkey, Because you have made a mockery of me, if there had been a sword in my hand, I would have killed you by now.

The donkey said to Balaam, Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I ever been accustomed to do so to you? And he said, No. 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 all the way to the ground.

[ 5 : 41 ] The angel of the Lord said to him, Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out as an adversary because your way was contrary to me. But the donkey saw me and turned aside from me these three times.

If she had not turned aside from me, I would surely have killed you just now and let her live. Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the way against me.

Now then, if it is displeasing to you, I will turn back. Verse 35, But the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, Go with the men, that you shall speak only the word which I tell you.

So Balaam went along with the leaders of Balak. Numbers 22, verses 1 through 35. Very odd story, but a very powerful story.

Someone commented that the greatest theological truths found in the book of Numbers are found in this chapter and the two which precede it, or not precede it, the two which come after it. And so we see here that we are getting into theological concepts or to truths as they pertain to God and aspects of his character and who he is.

[ 6 : 48 ] Up to this point, the book has been consumed with the wilderness wonderings of God's people. Not only their wilderness wonderings, but also their wilderness failures. And if you remember, last time we were together, we looked at Numbers chapter 21.

I told you as we read the 21st chapter that that would be the last record of the movement of God's people. That is actually found in chapter 20, and then it goes into chapter 21. And in chapter 21, we saw them battling the two kings of the Ammonites.

We saw them battling the kings and arising victorious. Those on the other side of the Jordan River. Not those in the promised land, but those on the other side, Sihon and Og.

And we've seen how they came to the place where Moses would die. They came to the place which is opposite Jericho, and they proceeded north, and they fought the battles of Sihon and Og, and evidently, they just turned around and came right back south.

Because when we come to Numbers 22, they're in the plains of Moab, opposite the city Jericho. So if you're looking at a map, Jerusalem would be here. You had the Sea of Galilee up here, the Jordan River running down, the Salt Sea here.

[ 7 : 54 ] Jerusalem's kind of here. The Jericho's here, and they are right here on the other side of the Jordan River. It's as clear as mud, right? It's right there in the maps in the back of your Bible. So they are in the plains of Moab, positioned, ready to cross the Jordan River and go to battle.

They're not fighting. They're not moving. They're not doing anything else. It says they are camping, and they are waiting. They're waiting what we would call the book of Deuteronomy, that God would speak to them, the second telling of the law.

That's what goes on in the book of Deuteronomy. For those of you that are reading through or have just read through the book of Deuteronomy and your yearly reading plan, that's where that takes place. Moses stands up, and he tells them all this thing to prepare them for Joshua's ascension to leadership that Joshua would lead them across.

So they're at that place, and they're camping out. They're not doing anything else. They're not fighting. They're not battling. They're not complaining. They're not murmuring. They're going to fail in the next couple of chapters.

Very, very large. Actually, very big failure. But they're not doing anything else but waiting. And they're waiting for the time when the Lord says, okay, it's time to cross.

[ 9 : 00 ] But what I want you to see this evening as we begin to open up this portion is the invisible battles of the Lord. The nation had fought their battles against the two Amorite kings.

They had fought the battle against Sihon when he came out to oppose them, and then they had fought the battle against the king Og when he had come out to oppose them. Both of those battles, they had arisen victorious.

And in both of those battles, they had captured land which God had previously promised to Abraham in Genesis chapter 15. This was not land that was taken in addition to the promised land. And this was a portion of the promised land. If you remember, the Abrahamic promise includes the land from the sea to the great river.

The river, which by the way is the one that Balaam is living next to, is the Euphrates River, not the Jordan River. Okay, and it's to go all the way down to the Nile River. It's a large portion of land in which the Israelites have yet to ever possess all of the land God has promised them because they failed to take it.

[ 10 : 08 ] But a portion of that land was the land that belonged to Sihon and Og. That's why God led them into battle. And they fought for it. And they arose victorious. And now they're back in the place of waiting.

But what I want you to see and want you to be amazed at is even when the people weren't fighting, God was fighting for them. And he was fighting battles which really they knew nothing of.

Because so often, we get so consumed at the spiritual battles we must fight, but we fail to see how many battles the Lord fights for us. And here in this place of camping, in this place of waiting, we want to look and see how the Lord is fighting the battles for them and the invisible battles which they knew nothing of.

Because if they had known of them, then they would not have entered into the sin with the Moabite women, which would get them in a huge amount of trouble in just a couple of chapters. But these are battles that the Lord is fighting while the people are waiting.

These are not things which they are putting their hand to. As a matter of fact, the only thing that we know concerning the people of Israel are they were camping and waiting. They were waiting for God to give them the word.

[ 11 : 17 ] They were waiting for Moses to declare to them the writings that are in the book of Deuteronomy, to repeat for them all that God had done, to repeat his praises, his blessings, and his cursings, and hand the mantle over to Joshua and then to ascend Mount Nebo and die there in the plains of Moab.

They were waiting for that time. But while they were waiting, God was fighting for his people. We understand this and let us stand in awe and wonder of this, that in times in our stillness, God is always, always fighting for us.

We as his people have a valiant warrior. He is the warrior of the Lord. And I, you know, it's the captain of the Lord's army. And I've told you that before. When Joshua goes in and he's going around the walls of Jericho and he's trying to consider what it is he should do and he's praying through it, Joshua encounters this man and is referred to as the captain of the Lord's army.

And I love how Joshua says, are you for me? Are you for my enemies? And we know how this man responds. This man responds, neither. I'm neither for you nor I'm for the enemies. I'm a totally different entity.

I'm a totally different person. I am for myself. And I said that that is the angel of the Lord with a capital A. That is, I think, a Christophany. It is an appearance of Jesus in the Old Testament.

[ 12 : 30 ] He is the one who is standing on his own truth and he is fighting for his people. God had a plan for his people. Here we meet him again. I think it is a Christophany, also an angel of the Lord who is standing in the way of Balaam and his donkey.

And the reason I think that is because he attributes God's characters to himself. He uses himself in the first person sense here. He says, your way is in opposition to me.

Not to God, but to me. I'm standing in your way because it is in opposition to me. So he begins to use personal pronouns that God alone could do. So we see here that God is fighting this battle.

He's fighting it for his people. Because that which God was calling to happen had all these battles going on. And I want you to see just three of them. Three battles that the people knew nothing of that God was fighting.

First, we see him fighting the battle with powers. Paul says, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the powers and the principalities of the air and the spiritual force of darkness, right? And I believe that Paul was speaking when he said powers was the rulers of this world.

[ 13 : 38 ] And so here we see, as others have attributed this, that he is fighting it with the powers of this world, the nations that were raging against them. It says that the sons of Israel journeyed and they camped in the plains of Moab.

And they were camped out in this area beyond the Jordan River and waiting. And all of a sudden, Balak, the son of Zippor, saw all the people of Israel and began to get a little disturbed. And the reason he began to get a little disturbed, God had said, the fear of you will go before you and the people will hear and they will tremble.

God had promised his people that I will go before you and their hearts will melt. It's the very thing that the two spies found when they went into Jericho. The people of Jericho were terrified of the Israelite nation.

They were terrified because they had heard what they had done when they left Egypt. They had heard how the Lord had sustained them for 40 years. They had heard what they had done to Sihon and Og. They had heard how God had caused them to be victorious.

So God had put the fear of his people in the hearts of those who were going to oppose them. And here we see that Balak and the people of Moab are very much in the same position.

[ 14 : 40 ] What Balak and the sons of Moab did not know is that God had told Moses in the Israelite nation leave Moab alone. Remember I told you that?

They couldn't touch Moab. God had told them to leave Moab alone because Moab were the descendants of Lot. And since they were descendants of Lot they had been connected to Abraham and the blessings of Abraham had flowed upon the descendants of Lot.

That's why they had to travel north and get into Amorite territory and oppose the Amorites. The Moabites God had said leave them alone. We see that in Deuteronomy. I told you the greatest commentary on Scripture is Scripture Deuteronomy chapter 2 and 3, right?

Moses says you could not go into the Moabite territory because God had told us to leave them alone. But they didn't know that. Balak didn't know that, right? All he knew was here was a people who just wiped out the superpowers of our region.

Sihon had defeated the Moabites previously in history to this. They had this taunt song of Sihon that he would come in and take in some of the Midianite and Moabite regions. And then the Israelite people went in and defeated Sihon and used his taunt song to taunt their people, right?

[ 15 : 53 ] And said if Sihon was strong, we're stronger because we've just taken him captive. And they were going around defeating the people that were seen as big. Ahch was a giant. I mean literally. His bed was like I think it was six feet wide and nine feet long.

Maybe 13 feet. I had to go back and look at my math again. He was a big guy, right? He was a big giant of a man. And they had taken these superpowers and they had wiped them off. Not just to feed them.

They had wiped them completely off the face of the earth. They had annihilated them. Taken all their cities. Taken all their regions. And they were living in them. So Balak looks at this and he says,

we're next. These are the people I was terrified and now look at the Israelite nation.

So Balak is looking and said, they're going to wipe us off like the ox licks up the grass off the ground. They're just going to come through here and they're going to plow through us. And Balak happened to be king in that region.

So now all of a sudden he is a power. He is in a position of power so much so that he has this great plan. He says, I know what I will do. And then we have to follow this.

[16:56] We have to follow the line of thought of these people. Before I go out to battle them the way Sihon did. Before I go out to battle them the way Og did. I'm going to try to get people on my side.

I'm going to try to have them cursed before I fight them. That way they're fighting underneath the curse rather than fighting underneath a blessing. And Balak knew in the position he held he would be able to use all the power he had to sway things to go his way.

He sent a delegation to Balaam. Balaam said wait let me find out I'll get to Balaam later right?

Balaam said let me find out what I can do and Balaam said I can't go with you.

Balak is a man of power. He says I have greater men to send. I have more dignified dignitaries to send. I have more money to send. So he sends them the second time to Balaam.

He says I can enrich you all you could ever want to be enriched. I am in a place of power. I just need you to do something for me. What I want you to see here is that even those in a place of power have no power in the realm of God against his people.

[18:09] Because God is fighting the battle with those in places of power. History has shown this. When we read the history books and we read the historical accounts of the suffering of God's people how many times people of power have tried to annihilate and completely wipe out the people of God.

And while the people of God may look helpless and hopeless God always sustains his people. And God not only sustains his people it has been quoted I think it was Richard Warnbrandt who said that the blood of the martyrs has been the fertilizer or the seed of the gospel.

That every time God's people have been persecuted the greatest the church has grown the strongest. And we have seen this over and over and over again. That was not Richard Warnbrandt that was John Fox who wrote Fox's book of martyrs.

I apologize for that. Warnbrandt later picked up the voice of martyrs. But John Fox who wrote the first Fox's book of martyrs I think it was in the late 1700s says even then every time we see persecution the church does not die or diminish rather it flourishes and grows.

Over and over and over again we see this. When Hudson Taylor had taken his mission work China Inland Missionary Society and they were doing this great mission work inside of China and they were there and they were seeing an indigenous church grow inside of inland China.

[19:24] He was the first man to ever take on Chinese dress Chinese culture and to look like the people he was reaching. And all of a sudden people were coming to faith and then the rebellion of China that took place in the 1700s came to be to the point that all Englishmen had to get out.

So Hudson Taylor and all of the people with him had to leave and the great concern was when we leave will the church die or will the church grow? And they had to leave for a number of years and they had to get out and all the missionaries was gone.

An astounding thing happened when they came back. The church had not only grown, it had multiplied. It was bigger than they could have ever anticipated because the powers of that country could never kill what God was doing among his people.

But unfortunately what we find out even though we read this historical accounts, we can even today look and see that some of the biggest and strongest and greatest churches exist in places where the church is not supposed to exist.

places that are closed to the gospel. But unfortunately though these things are true, God's people still live with an unfounded fear of people of some world power.

[20:32] How do we know that? Because we're silent when someone with more power than us is around. And we're silent when someone with more power than us says that we should be. But we see here that one of the invisible battles that God fights for his people is he opposes the powers that oppose them.

I really believe that God holds the king's heart in the palm of his hand and he turns them how he wants. And he does what he wants in the world because God fights the battles that we know

nothing of.

So we rejoice in the opportunities we have because God opposes the powers that oppose us rather than living in fear of those powers that oppose us. The second thing that we see that God opposes in the battle he fights is the battle against principalities and that is the spiritual warfare.

Now we understand as God's people that we fight spiritual battles as well. But this is the thing this theme that seems to make us at times feel like we're getting on the edge of fanaticism when we start speaking of spiritual warfare and we start speaking of spiritual things.

This is even something that Daniel himself when praying if you remember when Daniel was praying in the book of Daniel and he had the messenger of the Lord that was sent to him and he said that the prince of Persia had opposed him until the archangel had come and helped him defeat this angel that God had sent an answer to Daniel that as soon as Daniel prayed God sent one of his angels and said go give him his answer and while he was on his way he was opposed by the prince of Persia which is a good way of saying a satanic demonic force right and that demonic force opposed him in the spiritual realm and it wasn't until Michael the archangel came down and helped him defeat the prince of Persia that that angel could reach Daniel and give him the answer the interpretation to his dream now just sit there and think about that just for a moment Daniel prayed God answered that prayer and was going to answer it through an angel the angel was hindered because he was opposed by a demonic force and was delayed in getting to Daniel until the archangel came and helped him defeat the prince of Persia so that

[ 22 : 43 ] God's messenger could deliver that angel or that message to Daniel now to me Daniel's just sitting there going why isn't God answering me what's taking so long because if you remember Daniel says I was sick I was weak I couldn't eat the vision disturbed me I had no idea what its interpretation was and the whole time Daniel was just trying to think why haven't I gotten an answer and the whole time Daniel was thinking what's the answer God was fighting a battle and we see it here because Balak and his power thought well I'm not going to oppose them in might alone I'm going to try to oppose them in the spiritual realm of darkness so Balak sends a delegation to Balaam you know there are anti-biblical not anti-biblical that's the wrong words extra-biblical or other scriptures non-biblical passages of historical records that we have a man named

Balaam the son of Beor who is from this region known as a prominent soothsayer so all that does is just kind of validate this individual that we have here same region same time extra-biblical text it's a historical book that speaks of this well known this famous soothsayer or this famous fortune teller whose name happened to be Balaam and all of a sudden the Bible seems to be accurate so let us not ever be surprised when historical records affirm for us the biblical text but Balaam had a reputation that preceded him Balaam had a reputation as being the greatest soothsayer or magician of his day that should not surprise us because he lived by the Euphrates River the Euphrates River was a region that led into Babylon and that Babylonian region is the same place that Abraham known as Abram had come from and that was also the birthplace of paganistic worship worship very polytheistic worshipping of a multitude of gods more than likely that is the place where we have the tower of Babel being built and man started becoming his own god would have been that region of

Mesopotamia and Babylon there but anyways this place was just kind of a hotbed for all of this paganistic polytheistic worshipping of multitude of gods so Balaam was one who was out for hire he is referenced a couple of times even in the New Testament it speaks of the way of Balaam or the fault of Balaam or the curse of Balaam and entering into the error of Balaam we see it mentioned that way in the New Testament but what we see here is Balaam was a prominent man who had a reputation that Balak knew about and Balak said here's a man that is the most powerful soothsayer or the most powerful fortune teller or the most powerful sorcerer in all the world and he seems to have power that no one else has and in my position of power I'm going to offer him a sum of money so that he could click into the heavenlies and he can fight in the heavenlies while I fight in the worldlies see Balak is trying to fight a battle on two fronts I'm going to fight on the world but I'm going to let

Balaam curse them in the heavens now let's put this together because this makes me scratch my head because I don't know if you caught it or not and you should I know I'm giving you a lot of information you said pastor you've been gone a week you come in here and you throw all this deep stuff on us on a Wednesday night and it's hot in here and I'm sweating and that's okay you know it's okay to sweat every now and then but anyway so what we see here because Balaam uses the

covenant name of God he uses capital L capital O capital R capital D at one point he even refers to him as the Lord my God so we want to know how does Balaam call on the covenant name of God if Balaam is a false prophet sousane magician a sorcerer so let's understand the practice Balaam was a magician for hire or a sorcerer for hire and he was a person who was called in to either pronounce curses or blessings upon individuals or nations and the way Balaam did this is that Balaam thought much like many of that day and even some of today think Naaman thinks this way when Naaman goes to the Jordan River and he dips seven times and you remember Naaman takes sackfuls of some of the dirt back with him you remember that and I kind of told you why Naaman took sackfuls of the dirt with him after he was cleansed in the Jordan River and they'll kind of tie it all together here the people thought every people group or nation had their own God and that if you wanted to defeat that people or that nation you had to first battle their God your God had to be bigger than their God and in order to pronounce a curse or a blessing upon an individual Balaam sought to contact that nation or that person's God and strike a deal if he could ever overcome that

[ 27 : 56 ] God then he could overcome the purposes that God had for his people now this is important because in scripture to know a name to know a name is to be granted access to power to know a name is to be granted access to intimacy or fellowship or communion and the reason Balaam uses the covenant name of God is he's trying to access that covenant God to get inside the relationship between God and his people and to overcome God's favor upon his people and to take the place of God over his people he's trying to assume God's position he doesn't genuinely believe that he is the only God he believes he is a God and he thinks that if he can get in favor with this God then he could have sway over that people overcome

Israel's God you get the ability to overcome Israel's future Naaman when he was cleansed from his leprosy the reason he took sackfuls of the dirt back with him is that he thought the Lord God was confined to that land and what he was going to do when he got back home was spread that dirt out on the ground and he would kneel down on that dirt so that he would have access to pray to that God who had healed him because he thought God was confined to the dirt of that region because see the idea that there is a God above all gods and a God who uses the world as his footstool was beyond all people's imagination this is the very unique difference of the nation of Israel they don't have a God he is the God this is what Paul references when he is speaking on Mars Hill about all the little gods of Athens but there is one great God who's in control of all people of all the world and even appoints where they will live and when they will live God appointed where you would live and when you would live and that's what was blowing the people of

Mars Hill way that here's a God who's greater than all so what Balaam is seeking to do is to control Israel's future by gaining control of Israel's God he's trying to fight the battle on the spiritual front now I know that's deep but just stay with me God doesn't play games with principalities because it was God who went to Balaam and said you will never curse them because these people are blessed and then the second time when they came back God says if they come the wording there is if they come back to you in the morning and ask you to go then you can go Balaam didn't wait for them to come back Balaam rose up in the morning even though God had already told him not to go Balaam got up saddled his donkey and left before they came back because the question is if God said he could go why was God mad that he went well two reasons number one Balaam didn't wait for them to come back number two Balaam was going with the thought of gaining riches not with the thought of humble submission

Balaam's whole desire was going I'm going to get rich I'm going to have me a house full of silver and I will have a house full of gold and I will manipulate this God and I will do whatever I have to do and I will curse this people God was opposed to his weight and what we see here someone asked I think it was Warren Wearsby who posed the question I read it also in another commentary why wasn't Balaam surprised when his donkey talked to him I never thought about it but when his donkey talked Balaam just continued the conversation he wasn't astounded I mean if I didn't grow up riding donkeys I grew up riding horses but if my horse ever turned around started talking to me I probably wouldn't just continue on the conversation right I probably would have got up and just said okay that's enough of that I don't know what's going on but Balaam wasn't surprised when the donkey started talking to him and Warren Wearsby's thought on that is probably because when Satan first voiced his words he used an animal called the snake the serpent more than likely

Balaam had so tuned in to demonic forces before he had heard animals speak that was his realm that was his world he had lived in that spiritual world long enough that it didn't surprise him when a donkey talked to him but what we see is that God was opposing and fighting the battle even over the principalities of the air all of the demonic and evil forces that Balaam represented had no authority and no power over God's people now that's good to know because there are a number of people who fight battles against us on the spiritual front we have an enemy we have an enemy of our soul there is absolutely those who oppose us that we know nothing about and God fights that battle and all the principalities of the air have no sway over us because no one can ever claim the position of our God and therefore dictate our future what God says is settled and that gets us to the third thing and really the application God fights the battle of purpose Balak's purpose was curse them and then I will go fight them

[ 33 : 52 ] Balaam's purpose is I'm going to get rich and I'm going to go curse them the donkey's purpose was to carry Balaam from one place to the other and each one of those purposes God overruled Balak had an unfounded fear because the people of God were not going to fight the people of Moab anyway they weren't going to go there they weren't going to fight them Balak never fought them that way he fought them with persuasion and he fought them with idolatry and he fought them with all this other stuff which we will see later on but there was no physical battle God didn't want them to fight them so that didn't happen Balak never lifted a sword against his people Balaam never got to pronounce a cursing though he tried three times three times each time he pronounced something it was a greater blessing as a matter of fact it is from the voice of Balaam that we get one of the greatest pronouncement of blessings that the Magi from the east used to follow the star so that they get to Jerusalem numbers 24 17 behold I see him not yet but someday soon coming a scepter shall arise from Judah a star shall arise from Judah and the scepter shall never depart from his hand what was he saying that out of Judah a star would arise and the scepter the place of authority would never depart from his hand he would live forever Balaam said that what was God using God was using a false demonic prophet who was intending on cursing his people and pronouncing some of the greatest blessings that the world had ever heard God overruled purpose the donkey's purpose was to be a beast of burden God overruled that purpose and it became a beast of warning it began to talk do I believe in a God that can make a donkey talk yes because the

Bible says so God created the donkey surely he could open his mouth right I believe in a God who could create a fish big enough to swallow a man that he could live in it three days it doesn't matter of fact is there a fish but do I believe in a God that can create such a fish yes I don't believe that donkeys talk no but I do believe in the God who could make a donkey talk because over and over and over and over again in scripture we see that God has the right to overrule the purpose of his creation God created it therefore he defines it and by by motive of just rank and order he can therefore overrule that purpose and use it for something else he can use what God he can use what man intends for evil and God can use it for awesome good it was Joseph who said you intended evil against me and sold me into slavery but God overruled that purpose and used it to save your life you tried to kill my life God used it to save your life God is a God who overrules purpose why because that which God and this should be the greatest hallelujah of God's people what God has planned for his people will never be overruled no matter what opposes us no matter who comes against us no matter which power or principality or force or effort that's ever put into it it doesn't matter how much money the world has it doesn't matter how popular the individual is it doesn't matter how much effort they put forward into it what God has purpose will come about every single time because God overrules purpose too many times the world has sought to disgrace God's people but in the end it has come to bring him more glory there is one story and I'll stop with this it was the voice of the martyrs who recorded it probably I think it was in the Jesus freaks book the first one that spoke during the Russian opposition of Christianity and I can't remember the time frame I want to think that it was probably in the 1940s probably a little bit after that the Russian forces were going through trying to wipe out Christianity in their region and one of the greatest sufferings that they would do is of course it's very cold there they would take believers in Christ and they would take them out to frozen lakes and they would make them strip down and sit on that frozen lake until they would denounce Christ and men and women and boys and girls would literally sit there and freeze to death and the soldiers would just stand around that lake and if anybody tried to get off they would shoot them and they would just sit

