

Remnant Life Church  
February 10, 2021  
*Balaam*  
Numbers 22:1-20

There has been an ongoing work for a number of years within the scientific community regarding the joining of RNA and DNA from different sources

- Called many things but it is known as alternative splicing
- Done extensively with insects often with less than stellar results
- Grafted a butterfly and spider together early in their development
  - Neither could dominate or overcome the other
  - So, there was an equal pull to both light and darkness to satisfy both
  - Part of it was seeking out the fragrant flower and the other was hungry for the bodies of dead flies
- This almost reminds us of a famous character in literature introduced in 1886 by the author Robert Louis Stevenson
  - Two separate and opposing personalities, named Henry and Edward contained within one human body
  - You know the title by their surnames - Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

This evening we want to take a few moments to examine the life of a man who's actions in the Bible could have been the inspiration for Stevenson's horror story –

#### Balaam

- Could we also describe Balaam as being a man of duplicity?
- He was a man who prayed he might "...die the death of the righteous" but also was described by Peter as one who "...loved the wages of unrighteousness"
- Lived in the same time that the Israelites were finishing their 40 years of wondering in the desert following their rejection of God and believing that He could not take them into the promised land
- He was a poet-preacher and at the time of his story in Numbers, the people are close to returning to where they started 4 decades earlier at the banks of the Jordan River

Balaam is the son of Beor of Pethor and lives in Mesopotamia along the Euphrates River

- He is not a part of the nation of Israel but was a well-known priest-diviner
- He may have at one time been a follower of the one, true God
- At some point he departed from the faith and became a diviner which is forbidden by God in [Lev 19:26](#)

His story in the book of Numbers the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter has two very interesting components that I want us to examine together

- The first tonight and the second next Wednesday

#### **READ** – [Numbers 22:1-20](#)

- In [Numbers 21](#) the Israelites have wiped out the Canaanites in the Negev
  - They have continued on and come against the Amorites

- Victory over them as well
- Up next were the Moabites
- Balak, the king of the Moabites receives the report and is terrified
  - So, he summons this “world famous” diviner to ask for his help to put a curse on the Israelites
- Now at first, Balaam is in his Dr. Jekyll character, the gentle man and good doctor, and listens to God
  - *22:12 - But God said to Balaam, “Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed.”*
    - Balaam is obedient to God and refuses to go back with the men sent to get him
  - The Moabite king is undaunted and sends a second contingency to try and convince Balaam to come to Moab
    - At this point we see Balaam beginning his transformation into Mr. Hyde
    - Because he goes to God again, knowing that He was already told no once
    - He was concerned about disobeying God (Dr. Jekyll was still there in some form) but still was hopeful God would tell him something different
    - What was his motivation? Money
      - However, God does give him permission to go
      - But there is a condition – only say what I tell you to say
  - Notice - even though God gave Him permission He was angry (*22:22*)
  - When Balaam arrives at Moab he speaks 5 oracles
    - Balaam tells the king the condition of God’s rules
    - The king still thinks it is going to be the curses against the Israelites
    - Instead, Balaam speaks three blessings over the people
    - And the king sends him home
  - But the transformation from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde is still progressing and this time Mr. Hyde comes out
    - Before he left, Balaam apparently told the king how to entrap the Israelites into moral sin (*31:16*)
  - The Hebrew men were invited to come and feast with the Moabites in the worship of Baal
    - A significant portion of their worship revolved around excessive consumption of rich, exotic foods, drinking, and activities involving the 1000’s of shrine prostitutes which led the Israelite men into sexual sin in the eyes of God
      - Not only was it against his law for living in moral righteousness
      - But it joined them to the demonic acts of idol worship
      - As a result of their sin, they were punished with a plague and 24,000 Israelites died
      - This was done at Balaam’s suggestion to the Balak the king of the Moabites

What do we see in this first part of the story?

1. God will utilize anything of His creation that He desires to accomplish His will

- a. Do not be quick to dismiss something when you are praying and asking for God to work in your life
  - b. Your idea of what and how He will do it is never right!
  - c. How many times did God work in the Bible that, to our way of thinking, made no sense?
  - d. The same is true with Balaam
    - i. A man that utilized demonic power to tell the future
    - ii. But spoke blessings over God's people
  - e. Nebuchadnezzar was a Babylonian king that God used to test as well as strengthen His people
  - f. Artaxerxes and Cyrus were 2 pagan kings of Persia who God used to get the people back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and the temple following their time of exile
2. Do not allow the lure of sin and the ways of the world to divide you
- a. You cannot serve both God and the world
  - b. **Rev 3:16** (to the church in Laodicea) - *So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.*
  - c. Stand against the things of the world and serve God alone with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind