

1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We find in this chapter the secret council, of Balaam to Balak, coming to fruition. We know that is what it was because of the scripture where God tells Moses to avenge the Lord and destroy the Midianites, who were in league with the Moabites. ***Nu 31:16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.***

Remember that Israel is now beside the Jordan River and can see the Promised Land. This is the 2nd time they have come to a point of entry to the Promised Land, and showed their rebellious nature against God.

2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We see Israel has forgotten the commandment given in: ***Ex 20:5; 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.***

It seems that the commandments of God written on the 2 stone tablets are laid up in the tabernacle and forgotten. This is a reminder to us; don't have a bible and forget to use it. Exercise reading in the Word of God every day lest we forget. Learn and Memorize scripture and commit it to heart and keep it in action in your life.

It also seems that the warning of God to them given in Exodus is forgotten. ***Ex 34:15-16; 15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; 16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.*** This is a reminder to us:

- Do not lay aside our faith and trust in Christ;
- Do not use worldly and ungodly ways and means in the church
- Do not live like and become friends with the world of sin to your spiritual ruin, as seen in: ***1Co 10:20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.***

3 And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: Apparently, the plague is henceforth begun immediately when the anger of the Lord was stirred up. Consider: ***Ps 106:28-29; 28 They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. 29 Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.***

4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We see that God mandates expedient judicial wrath and punishment. Again we see that it seems the leaders of the tribes are heavily involved in the sin.

If we wish to have the favor of God, and not experience his displeasure, we should be faithful to him. These different references are given as a reminder to the people of their former sins and a reason to not fall out by the wayside.

De 4:3-4; 3 Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. 4 But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day. A prophetic picture of the security of the born again in this age of grace we are living in today.

De 13:16-18; 16 And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever; it shall not be built again. 17 And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers; 18 When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD thy God. An example to us today; we can't hold God in one hand and our fleshly lust in the other. We must leave off the fleshly lust and hold onto God and godliness only.

Jos 22:17 Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

Joshua is here reminding the people that the sin committed here in this chapter is still following them and they are still under the effects from it. This is a reminder to us that the consequences of our sins will not soon go away. Sometimes they may follow us all the days of our lives as they did in the life of King David in his sin with Bathsheba seen in: **2Sa 12:10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. 11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.**

5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We remember that Moses set up judges back in Exodus.

Ex 18:21-22 21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: 22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

Notice that the qualifications were: "**able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness;**" This is a reminder to us today, to choose leaders that are qualified as defined by God.

6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: With the plague raging and people dying, we see this man brought the sin of adultery and idolatry right to, in sight of, the tabernacle. This is a reminder to us that when our eyes are blinded to what is sin, we have no compunction to hide our sins.

A reminder that in the church today, blatant sinners, who do not repent and change their wicked ways, are to be put out of the church body. Seen In:

1Co 10:20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

2Co 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; 8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We see the zeal for God that Phinehas has, in taking immediate action to remove the blatant defiance of God. We shall see later the blessing he received for being zealous for God.

9 And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: The idolatry spread quickly as we see that the number slain by the plague was 24,000.

Continued in: **Numbers 25 Bible Study Notes Part 2 of 2**