

## “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

**March 19, 2016**

- ✓ Numbers 22:1-41 – Balak and Balaam .
- ✓ 1 Corinthians 5:1-6:11 – Sexual immorality among Christians.
- ✓ Psalm 19:1-14 – Natural revelation and special revelation.

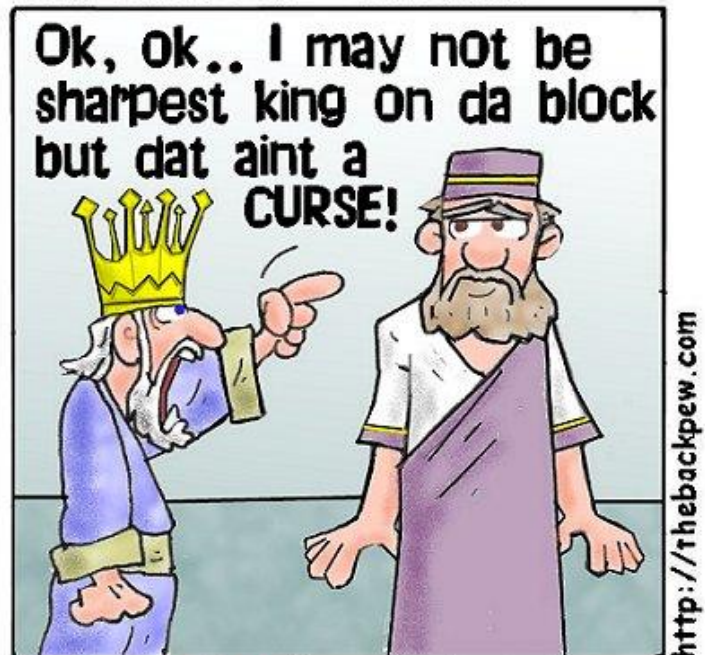
### REFLECTIONS:

**Numbers 22:1-41.** Balak knew that Israel was far too powerful to defeat militarily so he decided to hire a famous diviner, Balaam, to invoke curses on Israel. The problem here is that they had nothing to fear because the Moabites

were related to Israel and so were exempted from the attacks of Israel (cf., Gen. 19:19:37; Deut. 2:9). How many times do people worry needlessly because they do not know the Word of God? As far as the curse, these diviners would always invoke their curses in such qualified language that the results would always be accounted for. In His grace, the Lord appeared to Balaam and told him not to listen to Balak. It is not unusual for God to appear to people outside of Israel, some of whom were not saved, in the Old Testament. I believe that the Lord may have appeared to people all over the world as they responded positively to natural revelation. There is strong empirical evidence all over the world of belief in one God who is very similar to Yahweh and whose moral and laws show a striking similarity to the moral codes of Israel. Darwin’s theory that man evolved from animism to totemism, to

polytheism, to monotheism is no longer accepted by the greatest anthropologists. It is now conceded that what moderns once thought were savages were highly intelligent and had high morals that they received from God. Again, this is the testimony of secular anthropologists. Moreover, it is now conceded that all languages have a common origin. In other words, if there were no Tower of Babel in the Bible, man would have to create one.

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



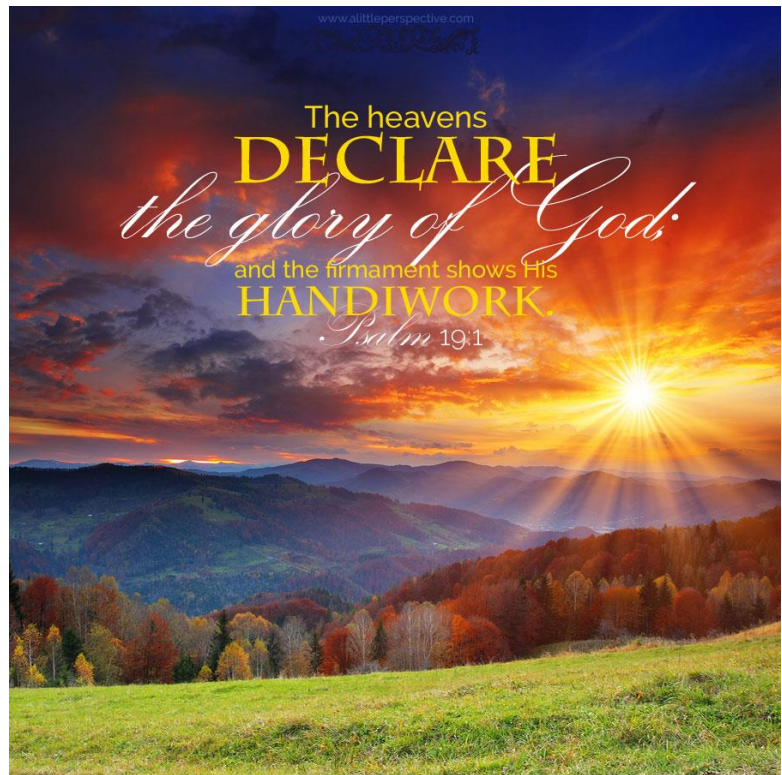
**Numbers 23, 24 – Balak hires Balaam to curse the Jews, but instead three times he blesses them.**

**1 Corinthians 5:1-6:11.** Paul tells us of an incestuous relationship among the Corinthian believers that was actually countenanced by the church. He also informs us that this sin was not one found among the unbelievers. It was forbidden in the Old Testament as well as Roman law. How could a believer be more immoral than those in a pagan culture? This shameful situation did not faze the Corinthians in the least. Apparently a significant number of people in the church considered this man's affair a commendable expression of Christian freedom. I wonder if some prided themselves on having a grace-attitude. For Paul, this attitude in the church was worse than the incest itself. The fact that the woman in the affair is not mentioned implies that maybe she is an unbeliever. The sin-unto-death would be a powerful illustration of the importance of the church to be holy. As far as the Corinthians pathetic behavior, Paul reminded them that a little yeast soon permeates the whole batch of dough. Just as a little sickness can kill a body, a little sin that is not dealt with can destroy the spiritual life. Moreover, all it takes is a little lethargy to destroy one's passion for the Lord and the things of the Lord. Let us renew our efforts in our 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship with God *by knowledge and by love.*

## 1 Corinthians 5:1

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles--that a man has his father's wife!

**Psalm 19:1-14.** This section of Scripture speaks of natural revelation and special revelation. It is important to make a distinction between the two especially when speaking with unbelievers about God's witness in creation. Natural revelation is the revelation of God to all people through creation. Psalm 19 and Romans 1:20 indicates that the world of nature is a source of knowledge of God. His glory, His eternal power and His divine nature can be discerned from God's creation. Moreover, the Romans passage takes the further step of asserting that, consequently, human beings are without excuse if they do not acknowledge this revelation of God. Of course, natural revelation does not give enough information on God's divine nature for salvation. One cannot get the Gospel from natural revelation, although some have tried by looking to the stars. There is testimony that this natural revelation was understood by all of the tribes of the Earth from the beginning of human history. This revelation included not only that one God exists, but that He is the author



of moral precepts. There are five universal moral values found among all of the earliest tribes of the Earth: (1) peacefulness (weapons were primarily for us against animals as indicated by lack of shields), (2) altruism in that people were expected to put their own interests after those of others, (3) property ownership as people recognized that it was wrong to deprive others of what was theirs, (4) honesty as people were expected to speak the truth, and (5) sexual morality in that there were clear standards of what is acceptable with focus on marital fidelity, even if there is some license before marriage. These are not the kind of morals one gets from animism, totemism, or polytheism. It is what would expect to be found among those who saw the basic nature of God in nature and His code written in them as image bearers. As far as God Himself, the God of original monotheism around the world had the same basic attributes as found in the Old Testament. This is all due to natural revelation expressed through creation in all parts of the world—just as our passage declares.

In, by, with, through, and for *Esse*,

Pastor Don