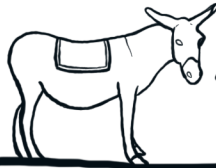


# NUMBERS

CHAPTER

22



## CHARACTERS

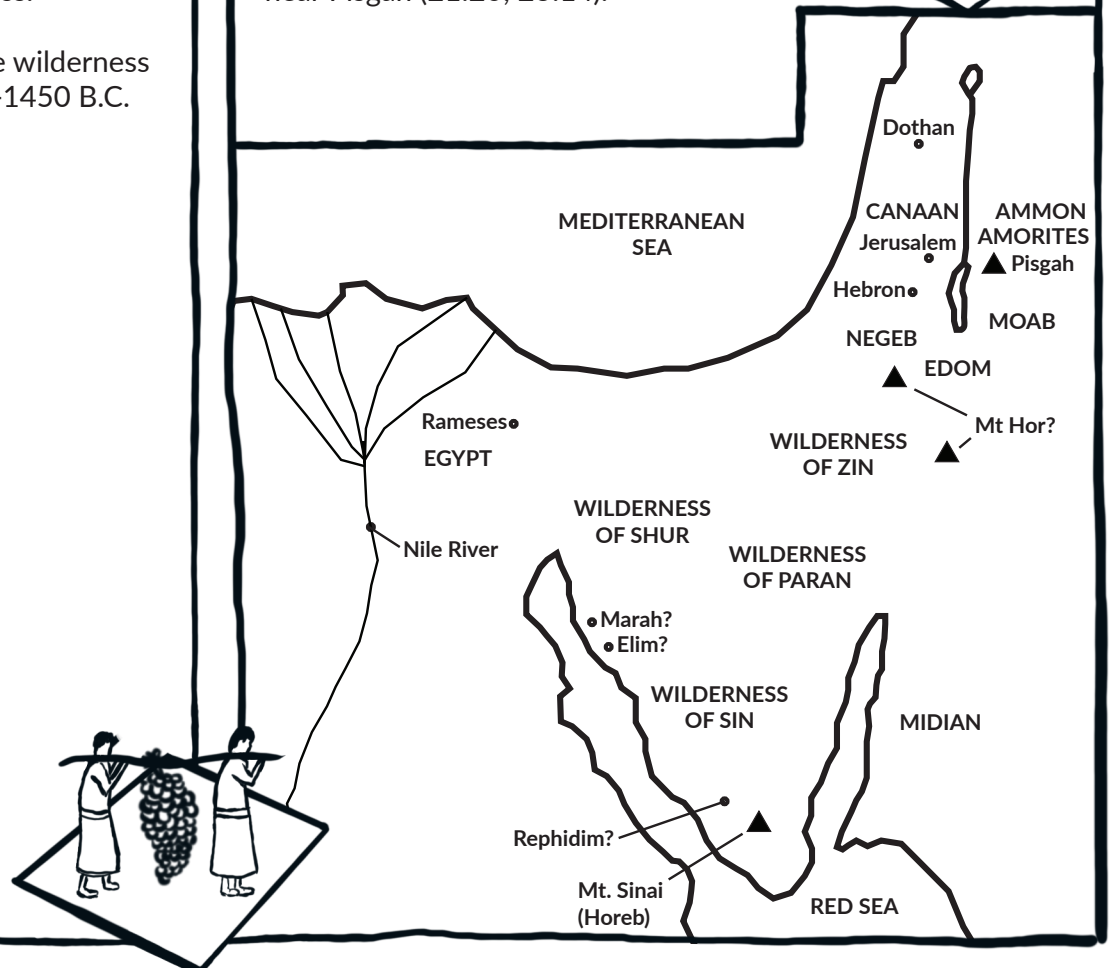
- **Balak** – Son of Zippor, he was the king of Moab.
- **Balaam** – Son of Beor, he was from Pethor of Mesopotamia (Deu 23:4) and a practitioner of divination (Jos 13:22):
- **The Angel of the Lord** – God sent His angel to oppose Balaam as he rode his donkey to meet king Balak.

## WHEN

- These events occurred towards the end of the Israelites' 40 years wandering in the wilderness.
- The Israelites were in the wilderness from approximately 1490-1450 B.C.

## WHERE

- The Israelites were camped on the border of the Amorites and Moabites near Pisgah (21:20; 23:14).





## OUTLINE

### - BALAK SENDS FOR BALAAM (22:1-21):

- + When Balak, the king of Moab, heard what the Israelites did to Sihon, Og, and the Amorites, he was terrified to find out Israel had camped in the plains of Moab.
- + Balak sent messengers to a diviner named Balaam asking him to curse the Israelites to give him an advantage in battle.
- + Balaam inquired with the Lord whether he should go to Balak and fulfill his request.
- + God forbid Balaam to curse the people of Israel because His blessing was on them.
- + Balaam told the messengers he would not return with them to help king Balak.
- + Balak persisted, sending more messengers and promises of rich reward.
- + Upon receiving the second set of messengers, Balaam inquired of the Lord again.
- + God told him he could go with the men, but he was to strictly follow God's instructions.
- + Balaam saddled his donkey and went to visit king Balak.

### - THE TALKING DONKEY AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD (21:22-41):

- + Even though God had given Balaam permission to go to Balak, something in Balaam's heart wasn't right, and God became angry with him.
- + The angel of the Lord stood in Balaam's path with a drawn sword ready to kill him.
- + Balaam's donkey saw the angel, but Balaam didn't.
- + The donkey veered off the road to avoid the angel and Balaam struck her out of anger.
- + Later, the angel stood in a narrow path between vineyards with walls on either side of the road. The donkey pressed against one of the walls to avoid the angel and crushed Balaam's foot. Once again, he struck his donkey, unaware that she was protecting him.
- + This happened a third time when the angel stood in a narrow place where there was no space to avoid him. Balaam's donkey stopped in place and knelt to the ground.
- + In anger, Balaam hit the donkey with his staff.
- + The "Lord opened the mouth of the donkey" and she asked Balaam why he was hitting her.
- + Balaam, seemingly unaware he was conversing with a donkey, told her he wished he had a sword so he could kill her.
- + God opened Balaam's eyes and he saw the angel of God standing in his way.
- + The angel informed him the donkey had saved his life and Balaam immediately repented.
- + The angel gave Balaam permission to go to Balak but warned him not to say or do anything without God's instruction.
- + King Balak met Balaam in Moab and took him to Bamoth-baal to see the multitude of Israelites camped near his land.

## APPLICATION

- You can follow God's commands with the wrong heart.
- Balaam waited for the Lord's permission to go to Balak, but something in his heart wasn't right.
- God is pleased with us when our obedience flows from a pure heart.
- Jesus really emphasized this when He taught in Galilee and Jerusalem. He regularly warned against the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees because, while they strictly adhered to God's laws, the hearts motivating their actions were self-centered and full of pride.
- We need to be doing regular check-ups of our heart and evaluate what motivates our actions, especially our religious actions, because that is where Satan does some of his most deceptive work.