



The Chronicle

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The Doctrine of Balaam

Philip C. Bennett

Balaam was recognised by some to be a prophet of God, but he wanted to do things his way. People went to him for spiritual advice and encouragement because he was evidently well respected as a man of God. The first time his name is mentioned in history was where Balak, king of the Moabites, called on him to curse Israel:

“And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time. He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou

blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.” (Numbers 22:3-7)

It is evident from the Bible that he did have some sort of relationship with God but it was a flawed relationship. He also practiced divination (fortune telling) which was a form of witchcraft. When he was eventually slain by Israel, the record shows that he was called a soothsayer: *“Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.”* (Joshua 13:22)

One of the dangers of Balaam’s doctrine is that it resembles the truth and one has to look closely to spot the deception. It claims to be Christian but those who follow it claim that they are not under any bondage and have the liberty to do what they want to do. It is thought that Balaam’s doctrine was so **attractive** and **fascinating** that its influence was almost, if not wholly, irresistible.

Webster defines the word '*fascinate*' thus: *'To influence the mind or will as if by enchantment; bewitch; captivate; to exercise a bewitching or captivating power.'*

"And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. 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. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor. 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. 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; 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. And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand."

(Numbers 25:1-9)

Balaam's doctrine teaches to commit fornication:

Through the counsel of Balaam, Israel joined herself unto Baal-peor (a god of the Moabites) and committed fornication with the Midianitish women. Zimri himself a leader was so brazen that he brought Cozbi - a Midianitish woman right into the camp. This was in the sight of Moses and the congregation whilst they were weeping for sorrow over this matter. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel for this, and twenty four thousand of them died of the plague that God sent upon them.

God said that Balaam was the cause: *"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."*

(Numbers 31:16)

Balaam's doctrine despises government:

Those under its influence do not want anyone to reprove them or tell them what to do. In the Bible, Jude and Peter, both mention the doctrine of Balaam in connection with those who despise government: *"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."* (2 Peter 2:9-10)

This doctrine carries with it a self-willed disposition. They refuse to recognise God's government. *"I'm going to do what the Lord shows me, regardless of what anyone else thinks."*

The Apostle Peter in his Epistle, and the Apostle John in Revelation 2:14 shows that this doctrine comes right into the Church. It takes hold of those who may be very spiritual but not on the lookout: *"Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness."* (2 Peter 2:15)

We can see that Balaam had a particular doctrine by the Lord's message to the pastor and church at Pergamos: *"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."*

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Revelation 2:12-17)

The Nicolaitans were a group of professed Christians who believed in a community of wives. When "Thou shalt not commit adultery" was quoted from Exodus 20:14, their favourite reply was "We are not under law, but under grace."

They claimed they were free from the law and that the Ten Commandments are not binding on Christians.

They felt that the Gospel frees Christians from required obedience to any law, whether scriptural, civil or moral. They also believe salvation is attained solely through faith and the gift of divine grace. **That means there is no need for SANCTIFICATION.**

The pastor of this church was a good man and kept the faith under trying circumstances, but yet the Lord had a few things against him. One thing was the fact that he tolerated those that held to the doctrine of Balaam. Jesus said "...who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel (and caused them) to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." (Revelation 2:14) Jesus's instruction was to repent or else! 📖

Poetry Corner

*Marching along with a smiling face
Singing sweet melody in your heart
Embracing the gift of amazing grace
From God's love, you'll never depart.*

*Journeying home to heaven where
there's joy, peace and love
Let nothing hinder you here below
The Father who's looking down from
above
All His blessings on you will bestow.*

*Cheer up my child, it won't be long
Soon you will enter the pearly gate
There you'll join the blood washed
throng
With the angels there who await.*

**By Sister Wilhelmina Brown -
Long Lane Church**

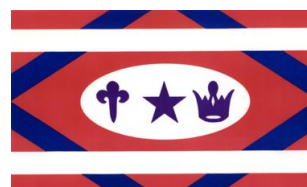


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From the Overseer's Desk

With the theme of our National Ministers' Convention still ringing in our ears: *"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion"* (Amos 6:1) we are reminded that we have work to do and must not allow ourselves to become complacent.

I am also reminded of the words of an old song by Charlotte Elliott which are very pertinent:

*"Christian, seek not yet repose;
Cast thy dreams of ease away,
Thou art in the midst of foes;
Watch and pray.*

*Principalities and powers,
Must'ring their unseen array,
Wait for thy unguarded hours;
Watch and pray."*

This world is not our home and we cannot get too comfortable down here. We may not know it but our adversary, the devil is observing us closely. If we fail to put on the *whole armour* of God at all times he will attack and ultimately defeat us. Let us stay close to our Saviour and Guide as chickens stay close to a mother hen. We can run to Him for protection in our times of trouble.

In St. Luke 13:34, Jesus wept over Jerusalem and declared:

"...how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"

They felt confident but their confidence was ill placed. Destruction came in the form of the Roman army and Jerusalem was subsequently destroyed. As Jesus had prophesied, not one stone was left upon another. *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* (1 Corinthians 10:12)

In closing, I would like to wish you all a blessed new year.

Upcoming Events:

District Meeting: Wednesday 13th February 2013 at Handsworth Church. This will commence at 7:30 pm.

National Youth Convention: Saturday 30th March 2013 at Long Lane Church. This will commence at 10.00 am.



ABM BOOST

Wilhelmina Brown - National Assembly Band Movement Co-ordinator

The new general Assembly Band Movement theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

‘Stablished, Strengthened, Settled’

(1 Peter 5:10)

Greetings to all the holy saints in the powerful name of Jesus. I give God thanks and praise for His mercy and compassion in my life. I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and I am hoping that great things will happen for us in The Church of God in 2013.

I would like to boost the ABM department and remind us of the theme for the Assembly year 2012-2013. It is a powerful and encouraging theme. God has ‘stablished’ us (His Church). His work through us must be done here on earth. Whenever we find ourselves becoming weak, He will strengthen us so we will have power for service. Let us work for the Lord as He is the One who will reward us. Let us be settled in mind, body and soul so that we can lead and encourage others. We can win them into the Fold.

1 Peter 5:10, our general theme scripture states:

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”

Let us then be true and faithful in the Master's service.



CPMA/BTI BOOST

Stuart Brown - National CPMA/BTI Co-ordinator

The general Church of Prophecy Marker Association theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

'Unity of Purpose - Having the Same Mind'

(1 Corinthians 1:10)

The new general Bible Training Institute theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

'Shew me, Lead me, and Teach me O LORD'

(cited from Psalm 25:4 and 5)

Greetings in the mighty name of Jesus, from the CPMA and BTI departments. God has been good and has seen us through thus far. We are sure He is able to lead us all the way to our heavenly home where we will spend eternity with Him. 2013 has arrived. We face another year of tests, trials and temptations but let us remember that we are "living markers" and "...**ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light**" (1 Peter 2:9). In all we do, we are followers of Jesus and members of The Church of God.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a couple of things that we are hoping to achieve this year in the departments:

BTI (Easter 2013)

After feedback from members, I am looking to plan a time around Easter to conduct the first term of BTI. There is a real buzz about this and I am excited!! The first day will be an introduction to the course where we will hand out resources and make a start on the study material. The date and duration of the event will be confirmed later as I do my national visits. For further information please contact me at: stuabrown@hotmail.co.uk

CPMA Offerings

I would like us to make a real push in CPMA offerings. Remembering that the funds raised go to a great work in the Church globally! Remember, people do not have to be a member of the Church to join and support the CPMA so let us involve family and friends to promote this great auxiliary! (Membership is **ONLY** £6.25 for the year!)

I would like to take this last space to encourage you with a thought that is helping me. St. Luke 9:23 says "**And he (Jesus) said unto them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny, himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.**" This year is going to be intense! The only way we are going to get deeper into the will of God and follow His programme is if we deny self! To follow Christ is not a walk in the park, neither a part time job! It is serious work! "Self" wants to be lazy, wants "me" time, wants to pursue its own agenda and fulfil its own goals. All of these things stand in the way of our following after Christ to the fullest. It can hinder personal and family devotional time, closet prayers, personal study of the Word and fasting. Let us put self denial into practice and see its effects in our pursuing of more in the Lord.



EVANGELISM BOOST

Jason Prince - National Evangelism Co-ordinator

The new general Evangelism theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

'Rushing Mighty Wind'

(Acts 2:2)



"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting". (Acts 2:2)

With the ferocious winds that drive the waves at sea, we are able to see the effect that the wind has. If we are close enough, we can also hear the wind whistling and roaring.

When 100 mph winds hit a town or city, we are able to tell the work the wind has done through the destruction of buildings, and the uprooting of trees.

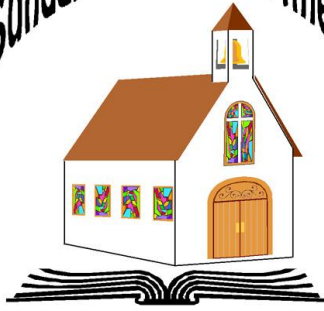
In Acts 2:2, the Scripture says that ***"there came a sound from heaven"***. That sound was described as ***"of a rushing mighty wind"***. That sound was the move of the Holy Ghost. As mentioned already with wind, we are able to see its effect. This is the same spiritually. We should see the effect in our lives and on those that we may witness to, pray for, or give an encouragement to through word or deed. Acts 17:6 says ***"And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also"***. These men the Scripture is talking about were Paul and Silas who were surely filled with the Holy Ghost. Their reputation preceded them, the power of the Holy Ghost.

This awesome power is available and essential for us to do our work and live a perfected, holy life! Don't we want this power? Do we believe that we need this power? Are we quenching the Holy Spirit?

Let us all strive to make sure we have the Holy Ghost. We (and those around us) should be able to see and feel the effects of the Holy Ghost in our lives. St. John 16:13: ***"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come"***.

Let US strive to be at the place so that we may hear that sound from heaven, the one that sounds like a mighty rushing wind, and allow the Holy Ghost to do His work. That Spirit of Truth is here now, but will NOT be here forever.

Sunday School Department



The Church of God

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Ray Prince - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The new general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

‘Going on unto Perfection’

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.” (Hebrews 6:1)

Perfection is a state that we will obtain in The Church of God, and we must use God’s Word to attain this. As stated in the Sunday School boost at the National Ministers’ Convention, I would like our focus this year in line with the General Sunday School theme, to be on teaching God’s Word and winning souls.

Upon attending an event recently where a Scripture was read, I was reminded of the importance of knowing the Word and how Satan wants to undermine God’s Word and plan. The Scripture read was St. John 14:1-2, New International Version UK (NIV):

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?”

Here is the same verse from the Authorised King James version shown below:

St. John 14:1-2, King James Version (KJV)

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you”.

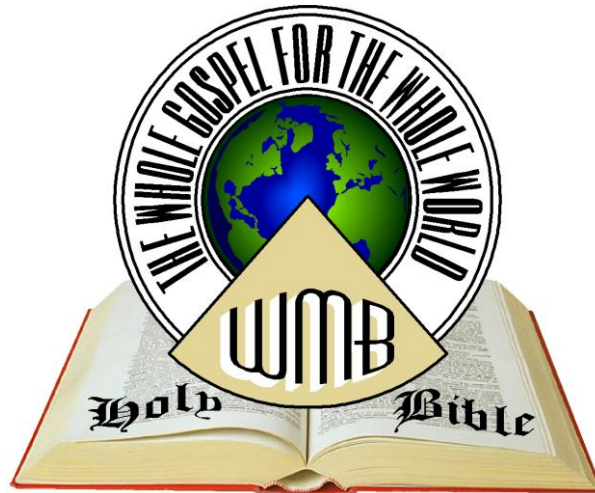
I would like to bring to our attention the words “rooms” and “mansions”. According to an online dictionary, the definitions of these words are:

Rooms: ‘a portion of space within a building or other structure, separated by walls or partitions from other parts’.

Mansions: ‘a very large, impressive, or stately residence’.

When you compare these two definitions, the word “rooms” certainly devalues the meaning of the word “mansions”. One word can diminish what God wants us to know. The Church of God uses the Authorised King James version of the Bible.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”. (2 Timothy 3:16)



WMB BOOST

Beverley Anderson - National Women's Missionary Band Co-ordinator

The new general Women's Missionary Band theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

**'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields;
for they are white already to harvest'**

(St. John 4:35)

In reference to our general theme, we may ask "what should we be looking for?" There is so much to see as missionaries. Let us look at the needs around us and pray, "Lord what can I do to make a difference!" We can look in the local community that we live in. Look in the local congregations that we worship in. There is so much to see. Can we see it? Are we really looking? There are so many hungry - not just for the Word of God, but literal food.

St. John 6 gives the account of Jesus miraculously feeding the five thousand. In verse 2 of this Scripture we are told there was a great multitude (a mass crowd). Verses 5-6 states:

"...Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: (test him) for he himself knew what he would do."

We can clearly see from Philip's response that he had not lifted up his eyes. He was not looking and said in verse 7: ***"...Two hundred penny worth of bread is not sufficient for them..."***

This man was not looking, but someone else was. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother saw the lad amongst the multitude with the five barley loaves and two fishes. Due to Andrew lifting up his eyes and looking, a great miracle was wrought that day.

If we just look that little bit harder a miracle can be performed. So lift up your eyes and look. There is so much to see! Let us pray (one of the mottos of the Women's Missionary Band) and ask God to allow us to see. Let us make this a year of miracles.

God bless you as we utilise this theme to its fullest.



VICTORY LEADERS BAND BOOST

Claudine Brown - National Victory Leaders Band Co-ordinator

The new general Victory Leaders Band theme for the assembly year 2012-2013 is:

'The "But Ye" Generation'

(Jude 19-21)

Greetings to *The Chronicle* readers in the name of our wonderful Saviour and the King of all kings!

The closer we get to the end of time, I can see the purpose of each of The Church of God's auxiliaries becoming more and more prominent. God in His wisdom established each one back in the early 1900s and they are just as relevant, if not more so right now in 2013. They cannot be abandoned as they all work together in the perfection of God's Church.

The VLB department has been blessed with yet another God-inspired theme, the context of which can be found in the book of Jude. Jude wrote unto the sanctified people, encouraging them to contend for the faith and warned them about certain ungodly men that had crept in unawares, denying the Lord God. They were false brethren and he pronounced woe unto them. Verse 15 refers to them as murmurers and complainers, walking after their own lusts. He addressed the sanctified in verse 20, where our theme is taken from:

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life". (Jude:20 - 21)

Our theme is 'The "**But Ye**" Generation'. As 'The "**But Ye**" Generation', there has to be something different about us. We must have an insatiable hunger and desire to obey God despite the evil we see all around us. Outside has become VERY DARK. Even amongst those who consider themselves to be Christians. We cannot allow that darkness to creep into any of us.

Paul refers to us in Scripture as those ***"...upon whom the ends of the world are come"*** in 1 Corinthians 10:11. If you cannot see this to be the case - pray to the Lord for a spiritual awakening. Despite the darkness, the theme is challenging our young people to be the generation that draws nigh to God and surrenders to Him completely. The darker the world gets, the more illuminated the Church will become.

During the VLB programme at the last General Assembly, our General VLB Co-ordinator Brother Dustin T. Hays emphasised that we often preach about perfection as though it will happen at some unknown date in the distant future. Sometimes, we measure perfection by looking at ourselves and what we see with our eyes. We look at ourselves and think: "I'm not perfect yet - so that means that the Church isn't perfect yet". God has an overview of the Church and the hearts of men WORLDWIDE! He knows how far we have reached.

Why can't perfection happen right now? There is no reason why it cannot be attained right here and now in this time. Jesus said in St. Matthew 5:48: **"Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"**. That was a present tense commandment. Jesus did not say 'you will be perfect', He said **"Be ye..."**

There are blessings to be received of the Lord right here on EARTH that we will not receive until we get everything in order.

Would you love to see the glory of the Lord in its fullness right here on earth? Are you content with the mercy drops or do you want to experience the showers of blessing? Moses, a man who had a deep and true relationship with the Lord, entreated God asking for His presence to go with the children of Israel. Moses said: "...If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence". (Exodus 33:15).

"And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou has found grace in my sight and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory". (Exodus 33:17-18)

Moses was not just satisfied that God's presence would be with them - and visibly too. He wanted the fullness! He wanted a deeper experience with the Lord and He granted his request. Moses had found grace in the Lord's sight and He knew Him by name!

Are we willing to be the generation that means it when we say - "...All that god has spoken we will do?" (Exodus 19:8) **Are we willing to avoid the mistakes that the children of Israel made before God wiped them out in the wilderness?**

They forgot about all of the miracles God had performed, lost faith in Him and began murmuring. God pronounced judgement on them and just as He said - their carcasses fell in the wilderness. And it was the NEXT generation that was able to inherit the blessings of Canaan.

'The "But Ye" Generation' will not miss out on the blessings of the Lord. We will not have to reminisce about the good old days with sadness in our hearts because we will be able to relish in the glory of the latter house! If we are willing to be stripped free of our ideas and our way of seeing things, we will become 'The "But Ye" Generation!'

God bless you all as we launch into this marvellous theme for this Assembly year.

Special Note:

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