



If You Can't Beat Them, Join

Them

Numbers 25:1-5, Numbers 31:8-18, Revelation 2:12-17

# Israel's Sin and God's Wrath

- Unknown to the Israelites, a spiritual attack had been waged against them by the Moabites and the Midianites.
- Balaam learned that God would use him to bless Israel and curse those who opposed Israel.
- Balaam found that it was impossible to induce God to curse those whom He had blessed.
- Balaam devised a devious plan for his own personal gain.

# God's Blessings Are Conditional

- Israel would be blessed only if they obeyed God's commandments.
- Specific laws were given which regulated the sexual conduct of God's chosen people.
- Balaam realized that while God cannot be changed, the Israelites could easily be turned from God.
- The Israelites were seduced to follow other gods, which brought a curse upon them.

# **Israel's Waywardness**

- Following Balaam's counsel, the Moabite women invited the Israelites to dinner.
- The Moabites were indicted by God for not offering "bread and water" to the Israelites when they fled from Egypt.
- The Israelites did not realize that to share a meal with the Moabites was to join them in the worship of their gods.
- By participating in the pagan sacrificial meals, the Israelites engaged in spiritual harlotry.
- Satan took what God condemned and made it a vital part of religious worship.

# God's Response

- God's instructions were cast aside by the "worship" the Israelites engaged in with the Moabites and Midianites.
- It was not that God's words were unclear, but rather that they were difficult to accept.
- God instructed Moses to publicly execute *all* the Israelite leaders.
- Leaders have a higher level of responsibility, so they serve as examples to those who follow them.
- The Israelite leaders did little or nothing to deal with the idolatry and immorality of the people.

# Conclusion

- Leaders are responsible for the sins they tolerate, especially those within their own family.
- Moses called for action that was less severe than what God commanded.
- Most Christians today fail to carry out Jesus' commands.
- Moses did not take the dramatic action God commanded because he knew that God would be gracious.