

The Beauty of Sin

Today we are going to look at the beauty of sin. This might be a little bit strange, but it speaks of a great problem when it comes to sin. Moses was confronted with this concept and the book of Hebrews puts it this way:

Heb 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Moses chose the harder track because living for God requires sustained effort. It doesn't seem possible, but there is an ever decreasing ability for people to go beyond the quick fix for pleasure. Satanic deception is easier because sin is made to look so attractive. People are not tempted by the ravages that sin wreaks on people, only by the false promise of pleasure for a season.

We are going to look at one particular situation of temptation that Israel experienced when they were headed to the Promised Land. They had spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness and next they were approaching the borders of Canaan, the Promised Land. As they went, they passed by the borders of their cousins, the Moabites. They were prohibited by God to go through that land, but King Balak was nervous. He took note of the defeat of the neighboring Amorites and wanted to act before any possible attack from Israel could take place. It is in this context that we see how *Satan* was going to work to attack Israel.

1. Satan's insidious attack

King Balak called on Balaam, a popular pagan prophet, to curse the Israelites.

Num 22:5-6 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:

6Come 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.

Balaam kept resisting King Balak for a while because even he could not resist God's direct intervention. God spoke to Balaam and warned him should he get to speak at all, he was to only say what God directed him to say.

Num 22:37-41 And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?

38And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.

39And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjathhuzoth.

40And Balak offered oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that *were* with him.

41And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost *part* of the people.

Balaam was compelled by God to only bless Israel. He kept doing this, each time King Balak moved him further away from the Israelites, as if that would weaken God's influence on him. But each time, the only option Balaam had was to do as God had said.

Num 24:10 And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed *them* these three times.

Balaam was held back from cursing Israel at that time, but he knew that if he put a temptation in front of them, they would end up cursing themselves. Balaam counseled Balak the king of the Moabites to invite the children of Israel to a party.

Num 25:1-3 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

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

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

The way we know this was done by the counsel of Balaam was because a battle ensued over this and Moses identified Balaam as the evil genius behind it all.

Num 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.

What Satan couldn't do directly, he got the Israelites to do to themselves. There are times when we certainly are

attacked by Satan, but more often, Satan gets us to do his work to ourselves. We might be able to withstand an obvious direct attack from Satan, but he often puts out something...not *so* bad, and we take the bait and are hooked. In this case, you can imagine the Israelite men saying, "It's just a party. It's not *so* bad. We'll have a little fun with the neighbors and make some new friends."

2. It's just...

Spiritual ruin doesn't come in by careful planning. No one wakes up one day and says to themselves, "I think I will become a drug addict today," or "I think I will destroy my family," or "I think I will become a wasted alcoholic," or "I think I will put up a billboard and ruin my reputation." Sin creeps into our lives little by little.

Prov 24:30-34 I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

31And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

32Then I saw, *and* considered *it* well: I looked upon *it*, *and* received instruction.

33*Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

34So shall thy poverty come *as* one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.

I think one of the most damning words in English has got to be *just*.

- The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would not kill Eve, it would *just* make her wise.
- An alcoholic starts off with *just* a little drink.
- Addictions of all kinds start off with *just* a little.
- It's *just* a little innocent flirting.

- Halloween is *just* a little fun with the things of Satan.
- You *just* read the horoscopes or play with the ouija board for fun.
- Marriage is *just* about people who love each other.
- It's *just* catchy music.

At random I googled one of the top 100 all time songs, *Blank Space* sung by Taylor Swift.

Nice to meet
you, where you
been?

I could show
you incredible
things

Magic, madness,
heaven, sin

Saw you there
and I thought

Oh my God,
look at that face

You look like
my next mistake

Love's a game,
want to play?

New money,
suit and tie

I can read you
like a magazine

Ain't it funny,
rumors fly

And I know you
heard about me

So hey, let's be
friends

I'm dying to see
how this one

ends

Grab your
passport and my

hand

I can make the
bad guys good
for a weekend

The next thing you know you'll see someone posting their kid doing this with karaoke.

Pokemon Go was a popular game that turned dangerous because of people lurking to attack, but there is a different kind of danger when people think it, like so many other things like it, is *just* a game. You heard a lot about Pokemon when it first came out in 2016, but it is still wildly popular. Other headlines have been dominated by other issues, but Pokemon is working more insidiously as something that doesn't raise an eyebrow. Pokemon is only an example of ways that Satan draws and tempts.

Is Pokemon dangerous?
Potentially, yes it is. It
conditions the child who plays
the game into accepting occult
and evolutionary principles.
Different characters can

hypnotize, eat a person's dreams, and drain their energy, reads minds, emit negative energy that harms others, laughs at peoples' fright, and use poison. Many more evolve...children are taught to use these creatures to do their will by invoking colored energy cards, fights, and commands. Much of it is reminiscent of occult and eastern mysticism.

How can allowing children to play with games that encourage fighting, reading of minds, use of poison, mimicry, taunting, teleportation, hypnosis, and evolution be a good thing? This is...accepting the occult and secular evolution. Is this what we, as Christians, want our children to meditate on? Of course not.

If children are conditioned to accept these things in youth, then they will be more likely to accept these ideas in adulthood. This leads people away from God's word and truth, not toward it.¹

People end up chasing the world for *just* a little fun.

Gal 5:7-9 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you.

9A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Eph 5:11-12 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

12For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

2Cor 11:13-14 For such *are* false

¹<https://car.m.org/what-is-pokemon>

apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Satan will try to draw people by whatever means; most of the time it is with things they find attractive. How far will the world go? As far as it can. In 2021 Mars Candy has featured a new Twix commercial for Halloween.² In it a transgendered boy is supported by a witch who appears out of nowhere, with no parents around, as his new nanny. This is not surprising because witchcraft is filled with sexual excess. The witch not only encourages his gender experimentation but threatens some and attacks others who are bullies and are supposed to represent the oppressive norms of society. Encouraging mental confusion and distortion of a child is made to look healthy. The witch with the power of Satan is made to look like a loving tolerant hero who, as usual is only tolerant of what is now politically correct. The parents are useless and absent.

Deu 18:10-14 There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.

14For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so *to do*.

2Kings 17:16-18 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, *even* two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

17And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

18Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.

The media has increasingly pushed the limits of decency no matter what pushback they get which gives the appearance of that their views are gaining in popularity. This is how propaganda and indoctrination works. We learn to live around these incursions into the culture which they then use to declare themselves as normal. Propagandists don't care about discovery through debate with a willingness to adjust their views...they just press the agenda they want you to conform to.

Balaam was not able to pursue an agenda to tempt Israel, but he found a way ultimately. His ignominy is referenced in Jude and the Revelation. Peter describes him the best:

2Pet 2:9-15 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

10But 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.

12But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

13And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

14Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

15Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, **following the way of Balaam** *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

3. Our defense.

Fight complacency. Our first obligation is to live in the kingdom of God.

Matt 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matt10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matt 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Luke 17:20-21 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when

the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:
21Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Jesus came preaching the kingdom and that it was at hand. The kingdom of heaven is always under attack. The kingdom is coming, but don't think that it is something we should be looking forward to that will be fulfilled someday. You *are* the kingdom of heaven. You are walking in the kingdom wherever you go. We are not creatures of this world and live separate from the world. Although we reside physically in this world and have things like jobs, food, tools, relationships, etc., that connect us to the world, we have to maintain a certain sense of separateness *from* the world. That is something that makes the church so important. It is such an oasis away from the spiritual desert of the world.

Rom 13:11-14 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

We need to wake up. What is especially baffling is that there are Christians who see all the demonic things that undergird and are pervasive in Halloween and yet they blithely argue, "But I want to get the candy," as if what is being argued about is candy.

Don't make provision for the flesh. Don't create opportunities for the devil to take advantage. Get rid of the things that connect you to sin.

1Thess 5:21-23 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we want to give in to temptation, we tend to minimize the negative and maximize the pleasure in our minds. Take time to prove out in your mind what is really going on. Look into the future, look around and see what you are setting yourself up for. Abstain from something if it even has the *appearance* of evil to it.

We might get stuck in bad situations sometimes, but that should not become our excuse for sin for ourselves. Set yourself up by surrounding yourself with godliness.

Phil 4:8-9 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

9Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

At the very foundation of all this, of course, is making sure that you belong to God...

Satan's work is to distract you from the judgment to come by the allure of all that is in the world and the sinful heart of rebellion. That is quite a loss to take for

all eternity. Make sure that you are a child of God. Our reaction to the demonic things that should be blatantly obvious will speak volumes about whether you are given over to self rather than God. Believers need to check their heart and not be like the poor rich young ruler. He was rich in the world and poor in what matters the most.

Matt 19:21-22 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.

22But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

He clung to his possessions because he had invested himself in what the world had to offer. If you find you have a strong emotional reaction here, you need to ask yourself where your heart really is. A number of years ago several young ladies offered to teach. They realized they would have to lead a holy and sanctified life to be example to children. Rather than pursue holiness, they chose their pet sins instead. Not only have they suffered for it, but so did the cause of Christ as it was short on servants. What we cling to do could mean, for some, eternal damnation. For others, it will sideline you. For others, it will make you numb and cold to the work of the Gospel.

Heb 11:24-26

1. Satan's insidious attack – Num 22-25, 31:16
2. It's just... Prov 24:30-34, Gal 5:7-9, Eph 5:11-12, 2Cor 11:13-14, Deu 18:10-14, 2Kings 17:16-18, 2Pet 2:9-15
3. Our defense – Matt 9:35, Matt 10:7 And, Matt 11:12, Luke 17:20-21, Rom 13:11-14, 1Thess 5:21-23, Phil 4:8-9, Matt 19:21-22