

Numbers 25:1-18 **Harlotry - Baal of Peor at Acacia Grove**

Harlotry with women of Moab

¹ Then Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. ² They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.

Baal of Peor

³ So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel. ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." ⁵ So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor."

Phinehas and his Javelin – 24,000 dead of the plague

⁶ And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷ Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; ⁸ 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 body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel. ⁹ And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand.

Covenant of Peace for Phinehas

¹⁰ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹¹ "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. ¹² Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; ¹³ and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.' "

Zimri the Israelite and Cozbi the Midianite

¹⁴ Now the name of the Israelite who was killed, who was killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house among the Simeonites. ¹⁵ And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi the daughter of Zur; he was head of the people of a father's house in Midian.

Attack the Midianites for their part in the harlotry of Peor

¹⁶ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁷ "Harass the Midianites, and attack them; ¹⁸ for they harassed you with their schemes by which they seduced you in the matter of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister, who was killed in the day of the plague because of Peor." NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- ✧ Israel remained in Shittim (Acacia Grove). (*Apparently God was desiring to allow time for Israel to be tested by the counsel of Balaam*). [Numbers 31:16, 2 Peter 2:15, Jude 1:11, Revelation 2:14]
- ✧ The women of Moab invited the people of Israel to the sacrifices of their gods.
- ✧ The people of Israel ate the things sacrificed to the pagan gods and bowed down to them. (*Balaam's council to Balak worked astonishingly well against Israel*).

- ✧ Thus Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of Yehowah was aroused against Israel. *(When God allows a test to come to His people, He at least expects His people to be victorious over the temptation. That becomes an even more realistic expectation when you consider all the things that God had already done that they were witnesses to, and the multitude of times God had demonstrated that Idolatry is unacceptable in His sight).*
- ✧ All the things that God is leading Israel through become things that establish legal precedent, and for that reason the penalty must by necessity be severe.
- ✧ God's command was that they hang all the offenders out in the sun before Yehowah so that Yehowah may cause His anger to turn away from Israel.
- ✧ Moses then commanded the judges of Israel to kill the offenders who were joined to Baal of Peor.
- ✧ The offence was so blatant that one of the Children of Israel brought his Midianite woman on display in the sight of Moses and the people of Israel who were weeping at the door of the Tabernacle of Meeting.
 - ✧ This was open rebellion and mockery of the commandments of God.
 - ✧ It proved that there were many of Israel who did not join the offenders, but the punishment could touch them also if nothing were done about it.
- ✧ Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest saw it and took a javelin, followed them into the tent where he ran it through both of them.
- ✧ The plague was stopped.
 - ✧ By this statement we see why so many people were weeping at the door of the Tabernacle.
 - ✧ The plague had killed 24,000 people by the time it was stopped.
- ✧ Yehowah made a covenant of Peace with Phinehas for this action of zeal on behalf of God, and the covenant was made as an everlasting covenant of an everlasting priesthood for Phinehas and his descendants after him.
- ✧ The priest's zeal for his God made atonement for the Children of Israel.
- ✧ The man who was killed by the javelin was Zimri, who was the son of Salu, a leader of his father's house among tribe of Simeon of the Children of Israel.
- ✧ The woman who was killed by the Javelin was Cozbi the daughter of Zur the head of his father's house in Midian.
- ✧ Yehowah commanded Moses to attack the Midianites because of their schemes by which they had joined the Moabites in tempting Israel to commit whoredom and worship Baal of Peor, and because of Cozbi the daughter of a leader of Midian who was killed in the day of the plague because of Peor.