

NUM. 23:15-24 -- BALAAM'S PRAYER AND SECOND PROPHECY!

12/9/2017 Sat Morn Prayer – Phil Twente, 714 425-9221; ptwente@gmail.com

THE BENEDICTION/THE LORD BLESS AND KEEP THEE – Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face to shine upon Thee, And be gracious unto thee And be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance, upon thee, And give thee peace. (Amen)



The Biblical Setting: Num 22:1-6 Then the children of Israel moved, and camped in the plains of Moab on the side of the Jordan across from Jericho. [2] Now Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. [3] And Moab was exceedingly afraid of the people because they were many, and Moab was sick with dread because of the children of Israel. [4] So Moab said to the elders of Midian, "Now this company will lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time. [5] Then he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River in the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying: "Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! [6] Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

NUMBERS 23:15-24 And he said to Balak, "Stand here by your burnt offering while I meet the LORD over there." [16] **Then the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth,**

and said, "Go back to Balak, and thus you shall speak." [17] So he came to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab were with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the LORD spoken?" [18] Then he took up his oracle and said: "Rise up, Balak, and hear! Listen to me, son of Zippor! [19] **"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"** [20] Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it. [21] **"He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The LORD his God is with him, And the shout of a King is among them."** [22] God brings them out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox. [23] "For there is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!' [24] Look, a people rises like a lioness, And lifts itself up like a lion; It shall not lie down until it devours the prey, And drinks the blood of the slain."

- **Preparation for the cursing of Israel is made the second time**, as before.. The place is changed. Balak, not having Israel cursed, brings Balaam to another place, from which he might see only some part of them, which would appear more despicable, and that part at least which would lie in view he hoped he might obtain leave to curse, and so by degrees he should get ground against them.
- **See how restless and unwearied the church's enemies are in their malicious attempts to ruin it; they leave no stone unturned, no project untried, to compass it.** O that we were as full of contrivance and resolution in prosecuting good designs for the glory of God!
- The sacrifices are repeated, new altars are built, a bullock and a ram offered on every altar, and Balak attends his sacrifice as closely as ever, Num 23:14, Num 23:15. Were we thus earnest to obtain the blessing as Balak was to procure a curse!
- Balaam renews his pursuit of God. God meets him the second time, and puts another word in his mouth, **not to reverse the former, but to ratify it, Num 23:16, Num 23:17.**

- A **second conversion of the curse into a blessing by the overruling power of God**. This blessing is both larger and stronger than the former, and quite cuts off all hopes of altering it.
- Balak having been most aggressive to ask what the Lord had spoken (Num 23:17), Balaam now addresses himself particularly to him (Num 23:18): **Rise up, Balak, and hear!** It was a message from God that he had to deliver, and it is required of Balak, though a king, that he attend (hear and hearken, with a close application of mind, let not a word slip), and also that he attend with reverence: **Rise up, and hear**. His successor Eglon, when he was to receive a message from God, rose out of his seat, Jdg 3:20.
- In this discourse Balaam informs Balak of, sorely to his grief and disappointment: - That he had no reason to hope that he should ruin Israel. It would be to no purpose to attempt to ruin them, and he would deceive himself if he expected it, for three reasons: -
- **First, Because God is unchangeable: God is not a man that he should lie, Num 23:19.** Men change their minds, and therefore break their words; they lie, because they repent. But God does neither. He never changes his mind, and therefore never recalls his promise. Balaam had owned (Num 23:8) that he could not alter God's counsel, and thence he infers here that God himself would not alter it; such is the imperfection of man, and such the perfection of God. It is impossible for God to lie, Heb 6:18. And, when in scripture he is said to repent, it is not meant of any change of his mind (for he is in one mind, and who can turn him?) but only of the change of his way. This is a great truth, that with God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning.
- **Secondly, Because Israel are at present unblameable: He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel, Num 23:21.** Not but that there was iniquity in Jacob, and God saw it; but,
 - 1. **There was not such a degree of iniquity as might provoke God to abandon them and give them up to ruin.** As bad as they were, they were not so bad as this.
 - 2. **There was no idolatry among them, which is in a particular manner called iniquity and perverseness; we have found nothing of that kind in Israel since the golden calf, and therefore, though they were in other instances very provoking, yet God would not cast them off.**
 - 3. Balaam knew that **nothing would separate between them and God but sin**. While God saw no reigning sin among them, he would send no destroying curse among them; and therefore, as long as they kept in with God, he despaired of ever doing them any mischief.
 - Please note that, **while we keep from sin we keep from harm**.
- **Thirdly, Because the power of both was irresistible.** He shows Balak that there was no contending with them, it was to no purpose to attempt it; for,
 - 1. **They had the presence of God with them:** "The Lord his God is with him in a particular manner, and not provoked to withdraw from him."
 - 2. **They had the joy of that presence, and were always made to triumph in it:** The shout or alarm of a king is among them. They shout against their enemies, as sure of victory and success, glorying continually in God as their King and conqueror for them.
 - 3. **They had had the experience of the benefit of God's presence with them, and his power engaged for them; for God brought them out of Egypt, Num 23:22. The power which had done that could never be restrained, never resisted; and, having begun so gloriously, he would no doubt finish gloriously.**
 - 4. **While they had God's presence with them** they had the *strength of a wild ox*, able to make head against all that opposed them. See Num 24:8. Such is the strength which the God of Israel gives unto His people.

SUMMARY:

- **Oh, that we were as earnest to obtain the blessing as Balak was to procure a curse!**
- **Observe how He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel, Num. 23:21. How much more for blood bought believers under the New Covenant!**
- **Notice when Israel had God's presence with them, it was impossible to curse them**
- **Also notice the folly in mans' attempts to curse God's people when He is bent on blessing them!**

Pray Today For: Our Church, Nationally/locally; Our Nation: Our leaders; Police officers/military. Supreme Ct. Justices: John Roberts, Jr., Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas, Ruth Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Neil Gorsuch; President & V.P.: Donald & Melania Trump; Mike & Karen Pence. General James Kelly. The Cabinet and all advisors. Christopher Wray, F.B.I.

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