

Numbers 23

King James Version (KJV)

(Moab is very frightened at the presence of over 2.5 million Israelites in the area. They have just defeated the Amorites <a Canaanitish tribe> in self defense. All Israel is asking to do is peacefully pass through Moab's land on their way to the Promised Land. Balak doesn't trust Israel, so he wants Balaam to curse them so he can defeat them in battle. God intervened and threatened to kill Balaam if he tries to curse Israel)

(Balaam can't curse anything because he's a con man; but if he pretends to do so, that would give Balak the confidence he needs to go to war against Israel. God does not approve of Adamic people warring against each other. Moabites are descended from Lot <Abraham's nephew>, and Israel is descended from Jacob <Abraham's grandson>)

23 And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams. (Balak was the king of Moab)(Balaam was a greedy fake priest <and soothsayer> from Mesopotamia. He was pretending to be a prophet of God. He offered his services for money)

²And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram. (Balak still thinks that Balaam plans to curse Israel)

³And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go: peradventure the LORD will come to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he went to an high place. **Chapter 24:1** (Balaam says he went to seek "enchantments" in his visit with the LORD. Enchantments are fortune telling idols <tea leaves, arrows read like pickup sticks, cloud reading>. This guy was no true man of God)

⁴And God met Balaam: and he said unto him, I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram. (met = Ka-rah <Hebrew> – to meet someone in a hostile or adversarial manner) (Balaam was ready to curse Israel and take Balak's money; until God threatened to kill him for it) (Now, Balaam is trying to play god; pretending to be a good servant)

⁵And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak. (God's not fooled for one minute by this con man. HE will, however, tell him what he will tell Balak)

⁶And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.

⁷And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. (Prophets never used parables in the Old Testament to convey God's Word. They repeated exactly <word for word> what God commanded them to say to the people)

(Balaam is no prophet since he is using parables. In the New Testament, Christ <God in the flesh> taught in parables, so that only the Elect would understand. HE did that to protect the innocence of the masses)

⁸How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied? (Balam is using a parable to slide out from having to curse Israel and put it back on God. This is a typical move for a con man; who is covering his own butt)

⁹For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. (They are separated from the heathen nations, in the eyes of God) (Balak has noting to fear from Israel, unless he starts a war with them)

¹⁰Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! (God had promised Abraham that his seed would be greater in number, than the stars of heaven and the dust of the earth) see Genesis-13:16

¹¹And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether. (Balak is angry because Balaam is backing out. Balaam didn't bless Israel; God blessed them)

¹²And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth? (Balaam puts it all back on God. The truth is – he never should have offered his services for money. So now, he is back peddling to save his own neck from the king)

¹³And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the

utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence. (Balak is determined to change Balaam's mind. He is taking Balaam up into the mountains where he can see all of Israel. Then he wants him to curse them from there)

¹⁴ And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.

¹⁵ And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I meet the LORD yonder. (As if these offerings will change God's mind)

¹⁶ And the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

¹⁷ And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the LORD spoken? (Even the heathen kings of the period knew of the power of Yahoveh)

¹⁸ And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: (Balaam is squirming; trying to get out of his commitment to Balak)

¹⁹ God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

²⁰ Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. (Balaam is pretending to be a loyal servant to God. He is saying – this isn't my fault. Blame God)

²¹ He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them. (The LORD is their King)

²² God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. (unicorn = wild ox – bad translation)

²³ Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought! (God protects Israel. No curse or magic will work against them)

²⁴ Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain. See Genesis-49:9 (The blessing upon the tribe of Judah) (If you fight Israel, you will lose. God will give them the victory)

²⁵ And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.

²⁶ But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the LORD speaketh, that I must do?

²⁷ And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence. (A third attempt by Balak)

²⁸ And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward Jeshimon. (They are now very close to the Promised Land. They are looking down on a portion of land that will later become the property of the tribe of Reuben)

²⁹ And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams. (Balaam is afraid to refuse the king, so he is going along with him on one last try)

³⁰ And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar. (As if offerings to God by a heathen king will turn God against Israel. It won't)