

Day 171 - TUESDAY: June 6th

Numbers 24

Numbers 24:1-25 NKJV

Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his face toward the wilderness. And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him. Then he took up his oracle and said: "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened, The utterance of him who hears the words of God, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: "How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel! Like valleys that stretch out, Like gardens by the riverside, Like aloes planted by the LORD, Like cedars beside the waters. He shall pour water from his buckets, And his seed shall be in many waters. "His king shall be higher than Agag, And his kingdom shall be exalted. "God brings him out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox; He shall consume the nations, his enemies; He shall break their bones And pierce them with his arrows. 'He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?' "Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you." Then Balak's anger was aroused against Balaam, and he struck his hands together; and Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, and look, you have bountifully blessed them these three times! Now therefore, flee to your place. I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the LORD has kept you back from honor." So Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, 'If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of

the LORD, to do good or bad of my own will. What the LORD says, that I must speak'? And now, indeed, I am going to my people. Come, I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the latter days." So he took up his oracle and said: "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, And the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened; The utterance of him who hears the words of God, And has the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult. "And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly. Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, And destroy the remains of the city." Then he looked on Amalek, and he took up his oracle and said: "Amalek was first among the nations, But shall be last until he perishes." Then he looked on the Kenites, and he took up his oracle and said: "Firm is your dwelling place, And your nest is set in the rock; Nevertheless Kain shall be burned. How long until Asshur carries you away captive?" Then he took up his oracle and said: "Alas! Who shall live when God does this? But ships shall come from the coasts of Cyprus, And they shall afflict Asshur and afflict Eber, And so shall Amalek, until he perishes." So Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG Reading plan for this chapter states: "Balak is determined to have Israel cursed. He brings Balaam to a third mountaintop, Peor, to go through the seven-altar, seven-bull, seven-ram ritual again. And from Mount Peor,

Balaam, intending curses, again issues beautiful blessings on the children of Israel (verses 1–9). It was, of course, God who turned the curses to blessings (Deuteronomy 23:5). Finally, Balak becomes outraged at Balaam and tells him to just go home (Numbers 24:11). Yet Balaam has more to say. Notice the prophecy in which he states: "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult. And Edom shall be a possession" (verses 17–18). As *The Nelson Study Bible* notes: "This poetic language clearly refers to the Messiah. The pagan Balaam had a vision of the coming of the Hebrew Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ! He was visible from afar. He was like a Star, radiant and beautiful. He was like a Scepter, majestic and powerful. And He is the victor over His enemies, including Moab—the nation that hired Balaam to curse Israel! All nations who resisted Israel and God's work would come under the curse they unwittingly embraced. Among them was Edom, which rejected the request of Moses for safe passage (Numbers 20:14–21). The One out of Jacob, the Messiah, will be victor over all His foes (see Ps. 2; 110; Rev. 19:11–21)" (note on Numbers 24:15–19).

The legitimacy of Balaam's prophecy may be found in the fact that it is confirmed elsewhere in the Bible. Jesus Christ is represented as a "Star" (2 Peter 1:19; Revelation 22:16). The scepter, the symbol of kingship, which would abide in Judah (Genesis 49:10), was to go to the Messiah, Himself of the tribe of Judah, at His coming in power. Then there's the prophecy about battering the brow of Moab and destroying the sons of tumult. The original King James leaves the word "tumult" untranslated as "Sheth." Though some have seen here a reference to Adam's son Seth, this would mean the Messiah would destroy all people living at His return (as everyone alive since Noah's Flood is descended from Seth), and the Bible clearly explains that He will not do this. The word "tumult," then, is correct—and a similar prophecy may be found in Jeremiah 48:45–46, "But a fire shall come out of Heshbon, a flame from the midst of Sihon, and shall devour the brow of Moab, the crown of the head of the sons of tumult. Woe to you, O Moab!". Indeed, numerous passages warn of destruction to befall Moab and Edom at the time of Christ's return.

After proclaiming three more brief prophecies—dealing with the Amalekites, the Kenites (a Midianite tribe), the Assyrians, ships from the west, and the Hebrews—Balaam

finally does head out for home. But, though not clear from this chapter alone, he does so only after explaining to Balak an effective way to hurt the Israelites. We will see the results of Balaam's instructions in our next reading.” [END]

Verse 7 – Regarding the reference to Agag, I’ll include a couple of commentaries that allow you to see a couple of different thoughts on the verse. John Gill’s commentary states: “who might be the then present king of Amalek, reckoned one of the greatest kings on earth; and this name, some think, was common to all the kings of Amalek, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt; and according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, this is a prophecy of the first king of Israel, Saul, and of his conquering Agag king of Amalek, for there was one of this name in his time, 1Sa_15:7”.

Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “This name is supposed to have been as common to all the Amalekitish kings as Pharaoh was to those of Egypt. But several critics, with the Septuagint, suppose that a small change has taken place meagag, מגג here in the original word, and that instead of miggog, than Gog. As Gog מגג than Agag, we should read in Scripture seems to mean the enemies of God’s people, then the promise here may imply that the true worshippers

of the Most High shall ultimately have dominion over all
".their enemies