

ORACLES OF BLESSING FROM A PAGAN SEER

I. Numbers 23:1-30 Numbers 24:1-24

A. Last Sunday we read about a pagan seer Balaam who got verbally rebuked by his donkey. Balaam was a renowned sorcerer, soothsayer, diviner, fortuneteller, and shaman of foreign deities. Both the OT & NT condemn Balaam. Fearing Israel would soon crush them like the Amorites, King Balak of Moab hired Balaam to put a curse on God's very own children. But God flipped the script...

B. Despite allowing the soothsayer to travel to Moab, God's anger burned against him. On the way, an angel of the Lord stood in the way, visible to the donkey but not the seer. Three times the donkey contrarily moved out of the angel's path and was struck three times by her angry rider. It's then the donkey speaks up as God uses the jenny to rebuke the shaman. Then the angel appeared to Balaam who fell on his face terrified. While permitted to proceed, he's enforced to proclaim only what God wants him to say. (Ever see the movie, Liar Liar with Jim Carrey?)

C. Unlike the prophecies from God's holy prophets, these today are called *oracles*. While the blessings are valid and promises true, they're uniquely compiled. Personally I'm curious how Moses obtained the contents of these to publish for us in Scripture? Besides the Holy Spirit's dictation, I'm a bit mystified. Nevertheless what we're about to hear are some stunning blessings from an unlikely source...

D. Numbers 23:1-30 (ESV) God uses a pagan shaman to proclaim blessings:

1) **V1: 1** And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." (Though he's been hired by King Balak, Balaam's calling the shots and Balak obeys.)

2) **V2-4: 2** Balak did as Balaam had said. And Balak and Balaam offered on each altar a bull and a ram. **3** And Balaam said to Balak, "Stand beside your burnt offering, and I will go. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet me, and whatever He shows me I will tell you." And he went to a bare height, **4** and God met Balaam. And Balaam said to Him, "I have arranged the seven altars and I have offered on each altar a bull and a ram." (I doubt God was impressed!)

3) **V5-6: 5** And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." **6** And he returned to him, and behold, he and all the princes of Moab were standing beside his burnt offering.

4) **V7-10: (Here's Oracle One)** **7** And Balaam took up his discourse and said, "From Aram Balak has brought me, the king of Moab from the eastern mountains: 'Come, curse Jacob for me, and come, denounce Israel!' **8** How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce whom the LORD has not denounced? **9** For from the top of the crags I see him, from the hills I behold him; (He seeing God's people) behold, a people dwelling alone, and not counting itself among the nations! (A people set apart; a people who belong to God. A desert nation of survivors.) **10** Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!" (In other words, 'Let me die as blessed as what these people are!')

5) V11-13: 11 And Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you **(hired you!)** to curse my enemies, and behold, you have done nothing but bless them." **12** And he answered and said, "Must I not take care to speak what the LORD puts in my mouth?" **13** And Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place, from which you may see them. You shall see only a fraction of them and shall not see them all. Then curse them for me from there." **(Balak thinks Balaam's not grasping the magnitude of Israel's threat. Hopeful still for a diabolical curse, he takes Balaam to a higher vantage point!)**

6) V14-17: 14 And he took him to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar. **15** Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here beside your burnt offering, while I meet the LORD over there." **16** And the LORD met Balaam and put a word in his mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus shall you speak." **17** And he came to him, and behold, he was standing beside his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the LORD spoken?"

7) V18-19: (Here comes Oracle Two) 18 And Balaam took up his discourse and said, "Rise, Balak, and hear; give ear to me, O son of Zippor: **19** God is not man, that He should lie, or a son of man, that He should change His mind. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not fulfill it? **(A pagan seer has just declared the immutability of Yahweh Elohim, God Almighty, likewise the authority & integrity of His Word. Stunning!)**

8) V20: 20 Behold, I received a command to bless: He has blessed, and I cannot revoke it. **(That blessing began all the way back with Abram who became Abraham. Listen to Genesis 12:1-3 (ESV): 1** Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**(Balaam's informing Balak that God's blessing is better than done! It's no ancient myth. Not a fairy tale! It's totally real!)**

9) V21-23: (But it gets even better...) 21 He **(God)** has not beheld misfortune in Jacob, nor has He seen trouble in Israel. The LORD their God is with them, and the shout of a King is among them. **(King with a capital K! Who might this be?!)** **22** God brings them out of Egypt and is for them like the horns of the wild ox. **(Israel's the wild ox and God is the horns!)** **23** For there is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel; now it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, 'What has God wrought!' **(NIV: "See what God has done!" NLT: "What wonders God has done for Israel!" PSBV: "This is totally a God Thing!")**

10) V24-30: 24 Behold, a people! As a lioness it rises up and as a lion it lifts itself; it does not lie down until it has devoured the prey and drunk the blood of the slain." **25** And Balak said to Balaam, "Do not curse them at all, and do not bless them at all." **26** But Balaam answered Balak, "Did I not tell you, 'All that the LORD says, that I must do'?" **27** And Balak said to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there." **28** So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, which overlooks the desert. **29** And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." **30** And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

E. Balak's running around with his hair on fire! Balaam's between a rock and hard place. His hands, not to mention his tongue, are tied. Balak would pay anything for a good curse. Balaam can't get that angel's sword out of his mind, not to mention his donkey's voice. He's been had! His skirt's above his head! There's no cards up his sleeve! No rabbits in his hat! His diviner reputation is at stake! The Sovereign God of the Universe is calling all the shots! He's our God by the way because we are Israel too! He has us and holds us--even forevermore!

F. Numbers 24:1-24 (ESV) the blessings continue to be voiced...

1) V1: 1 *When Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go, as at other times, to look for omens, but set his face toward the wilderness. (Oracle Three is awesome. Israel will not only be blessed with victories over enemies, but with great prosperity. Her enemies will fall; her crops & cattle will bear; and her children will thrive!)*

2) V2-9: 2 *And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. And the Spirit of God came upon him, 3 and he took up his discourse and said, "The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, 4 the oracle of him who hears the words of God, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down with his eyes uncovered: 5 How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! 6 Like palm groves that stretch afar, like gardens beside a river, like aloes that the LORD has planted, like cedar trees beside the waters. 7 Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters; his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. 8 God brings him out of Egypt and is for him like the horns of the wild ox; he shall eat up the nations, his adversaries, and shall break their bones in pieces and pierce them through with his arrows. 9 He crouched, he lay down like a lion and like a lioness; who will rouse him up? Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you." (Abraham's Blessing!)*

3) V10-11: 10 *And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he struck his hands together. (He's furious!) And Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, and behold, you have blessed them these three times. 11 Therefore now flee to your own place. I said, 'I will certainly honor you,' but the LORD has held you back from honor." (Translation: 'You and your talking jenny get-on-up-outta-here and you ain't getting paid either!')*

4) V12-14: 12 *And Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not tell your messengers whom you sent to me, 13 'If Balak should give me his house full of silver and gold, I would not be able to go beyond the word of the LORD, to do either good or bad of my own will. What the LORD speaks, that will I speak'? 14 And now, behold, I am going to my people. Come, I will let you know what this people will do to your people in the latter days."*

5) V15-19: (Bonus Oracles) 15 *And he took up his discourse and said, "The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, 16 the oracle of him who hears the words of God, and knows the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down with his eyes uncovered: 17 I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near: a Star shall come out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. (Uh-Oh!) 18 Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. 19 And One from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!" (Incredible! In the short run this points to David; in the long run it points to Jesus our Messiah!)*

6) **V20-25: 20** Then he looked on Amalek and took up his discourse and said, "Amalek was the first among the nations, but its end is utter destruction." **21** And he looked on the Kenite, and took up his discourse and said, "Enduring is your dwelling place, and your nest is set in the rock. **22** Nevertheless, Kain shall be burned when Asshur takes you away captive." **23** And he took up his discourse and said, "Alas, who shall live when God does this? **24** But ships shall come from Kittim and shall afflict Asshur and Eber; and he too shall come to utter destruction." **25** Then Balaam rose and went back to his place. And Balak also went his way.

G. Some surmise the Magi from the East who came following the Star to find the newborn King in Bethlehem were keenly aware of the words I just read. A King; A Star; A Scepter; One from Jacob--all point to Jesus Christ our Lord! While the Idumean/Edomite king of the Jews, *Herod the Great*, sought to kill the Christ Child, the wisemen came to honor Him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. One sought to curse the Child with death while the others came to bless Him in humility. But our Lord came to become a curse in order that we might be blessed. Galatians 3:13-14 (VOICE) says it so powerfully and beautifully: **13 the Anointed One, the Liberating King, has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. (The Law-Keeper bore the sins of we the lawbreakers!) It was stated in the Scriptures, "Everyone who hangs on a tree is cursed by God." (*Deut. 21:23*) **14** This is what God had in mind all along: the blessing He gave to Abraham might extend to all nations through the Anointed One, Jesus; and we are the beneficiaries of this promise of the Spirit that comes only through faith. ("What hath God wrought?!" We, by faith like Abraham's, are now named among Abe's children, i.e. the Children of God! By extension, the blessings Balaam declared on Israel have been conferred to us. This means we too can count on God's watchful eye and fierce defense. This story belongs to us!)**

H. So where is Christ in your heart? Have you placed your faith in Him? Jesus is that Him, that King, that Star, that Scepter, that One from Jacob! He is also the Lamb of God who takes away your sin! He's the Sacrifice upon the cross! He's the Victor over the grave! The Conquerer of death! He's the King of kings and Lord of lords who reigns now and forevermore! Listen to these affirming Scriptures...

* Colossians 2:13-15 (NCV) declares our King's victory: **13** When you were spiritually dead because of your sins and because you were not free from the power of your sinful self, God made you alive with Christ, and He forgave all our sins. **14** He canceled the debt, which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took away that record with its rules and nailed it to the cross. **15** God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority. With the cross, He won the victory and showed the world that they were powerless.

* 1 Corinthians 15:25-26 (ESV) declares the last enemy's defeat: **25** For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. **26** The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

* Revelation 20:14-15 (ESV) declares that final defeat: **14** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

* Revelation 21:4 (ESV) declares the end of bereavement: **4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Numbers 23:1-30 (ESV)

1 And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." **2** Balak did as Balaam had said. And Balak and Balaam offered on each altar a bull and a ram. **3** And Balaam said to Balak, "Stand beside your burnt offering, and I will go. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet me, and whatever He shows me I will tell you." And he went to a bare height, **4** and God met Balaam. And Balaam said to Him, "I have arranged the seven altars and I have offered on each altar a bull and a ram." **5** And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." **6** And he returned to him, and behold, he and all the princes of Moab were standing beside his burnt offering. **7** And Balaam took up his discourse and said, "*From Aram Balak has brought me, the king of Moab from the eastern mountains: 'Come, curse Jacob for me, and come, denounce Israel!'* **8** *How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce whom the LORD has not denounced?* **9** *For from the top of the crags I see him, from the hills I behold him; behold, a people dwelling alone, and not counting itself among the nations!* **10** *Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!"* **11** And Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and behold, you have done nothing but bless them." **12** And he answered and said, "Must I not take care to speak what the LORD puts in my mouth?" **13** And Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place, from which you may see them. You shall see only a fraction of them and shall not see them all. Then curse them for me from there." **14** And he took him to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar. **15** Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here beside your burnt offering, while I meet the LORD over there." **16** And the LORD met Balaam and put a word in his mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus shall you speak." **17** And he came to him, and behold, he was standing beside his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the LORD spoken?" **18** And Balaam took up his discourse and said, "*Rise, Balak, and hear; give ear to me, O son of Zippor: **19** God is not man, that He should lie, or a son of man, that He should change His mind. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not fulfill it?* **20** *Behold, I received a command to bless: He has blessed, and I cannot revoke it. **21** He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob, nor has He seen trouble in Israel. The LORD their God is with them, and the shout of a King is among them. **22** God brings them out of Egypt and is for them like the horns of the wild ox. **23** For there is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel; now it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, 'What has God wrought!'* **24** *Behold, a people! As a lioness it rises up and as a lion it lifts itself; it does not lie down until it has devoured the prey and drunk the blood of the slain."* **25** And Balak said to Balaam, "Do not curse them at all, and do not bless them at all." **26** But Balaam answered Balak, "Did I not tell you, 'All that the LORD says, that I must do'?" **27** And Balak said to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there." **28** So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, which overlooks the desert. **29** And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for

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Genesis 12:1-3 (ESV)

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation,

and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Galatians 3:13-14 (VOICE)

13 the Anointed One, the Liberating King, has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. It was stated in the Scriptures, “Everyone who hangs on a tree is cursed by God.” **14** This is what God had in mind all along: the blessing He gave to Abraham might extend to all nations through the Anointed One, Jesus; and we are the beneficiaries of this promise of the Spirit that comes only through faith.

Colossians 2:13-15 (NCV)

13 When you were spiritually dead because of your sins and because you were not free from the power of your sinful self, God made you alive with Christ, and He forgave all our sins. **14** He canceled the debt, which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took away that record with its rules and nailed it to the cross. **15** God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority. With the cross, He won the victory and showed the world that they were powerless.

Revelation 20:14-15 (ESV)

14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:4 (ESV)

4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

Bonus Goodies

Who Are the Moabites? - Gary Kent (The Incredible Journey)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmYmE27oS4A>

Who Was Balak in the Bible? - See The Bible

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9POKyoui7PA>

The Pentateuch (Jesus Christ Therein) - Keith Mathison (Ligonier Ministries)

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/introduction-orthodox-christology-pentateuch>

The Kinsmen Redeemer - John MacArthur (Grace to You)

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/80-238/the-kinsman-redeemer>

More Verses, Quotes, Excerpts, & Extras

Exodus 22:18 (ESV)

18 You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

2 Chronicles 33:1-6 (ESV)

1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. **2** And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. **3** For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had broken down, and he erected altars to the Baals, and made Asheroth, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. **4** And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever." **5** And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. **6** And he burned his sons as an offering in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and used fortune-telling and omens and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with necromancers. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger.

2 Samuel 8:1-14 (NLT)

1 After this, David defeated and subdued the Philistines by conquering Gath, their largest town. **2** David also conquered the land of Moab. He made the people lie down on the ground in a row, and he measured them off in groups with a length of rope. He measured off two groups to be executed for every one group to be spared. The Moabites who were spared became David's subjects and paid him tribute money. **3** David also destroyed the forces of Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, when Hadadezer marched out to strengthen his control along the Euphrates River. **4** David captured 1,000 chariots, 7,000 charioteers, and 20,000 foot soldiers. He crippled all the chariot horses except enough for 100 chariots. **5** When Arameans from Damascus arrived to help King Hadadezer, David killed 22,000 of them. **6** Then he placed several army garrisons in Damascus, the Aramean capital, and the Arameans became David's subjects and paid him tribute money. So the LORD made David victorious wherever he went. **7** David brought the gold shields of Hadadezer's officers to Jerusalem, **8** along with a large amount of bronze from Hadadezer's towns of Tebah and Berothai. **9** When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had destroyed the entire army of Hadadezer, **10** he sent his son Joram to congratulate King David for his successful campaign. Hadadezer and Toi had been enemies and were often at war. Joram presented David with many gifts of silver, gold, and bronze. **11** King David dedicated all these gifts to the LORD, as he did with the silver and gold from the other nations he had defeated-- **12** from Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia, and Amalek—and from Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah. **13** So David became even more famous when he returned from destroying 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. **14** He placed army garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites became David's subjects. In fact, the LORD made David victorious wherever he went.

Psalms 2:1-11 (NASB)

1 Why are the nations restless and the peoples plotting in vain? **2** The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers conspire together against the LORD and against His

Anointed, saying, **3** “Let’s tear their shackles apart and throw their ropes away from us!” **4** He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. **5** Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, **6** “But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.” **7** “I will announce the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have fathered You. **8** Ask it of Me, and I will certainly give the nations as Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as Your possession. **9** You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.” **10** Now then, you kings, use insight; let yourselves be instructed, you judges of the earth. **11** Serve the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. **12** Kiss the Son, that He not be angry and you perish on the way, for His wrath may be kindled quickly. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Psalm 110:1-7 (NASB)

1 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” **2** The LORD will stretch out Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.” **3** Your people will volunteer freely on the day of Your power; in holy splendor, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew. **4** The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” **5** The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. **6** He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country. **7** He will drink from the brook by the wayside; therefore He will lift up His head.

Revelation 19:11-21 (NASB)

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. **12** His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many crowns; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. **13** He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. **14** And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. **15** From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. **16** And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written: “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” **17** Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great feast of God, **18** so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, both free and slaves, and small and great.” **19** And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army. **20** And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone. **21** And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Colossians 2:13-15 (NLT)

13 You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. **14** He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. **15** In this way, He disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by His victory over them on the cross.

Colossians 2:13-15 (VOICE)

13 And when your flesh was still uncircumcised--dead in transgression and swathed in its sinful nature--it was God who brought us to life with Him, forgave all our sins, and **14** eliminated the massive debt we incurred by the law that stood against us. He took it all away; He nailed it to the cross. But that's not all. **15** He disarmed those who once ruled over us--those who had overpowered us. Like captives of war, He put them on display to the world to show His victory over them by means of the cross.

Colossians 2:13-15 (AMP)

13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh (worldliness, manner of life), God made you alive together with Christ, having [freely] forgiven us all our sins, **14** having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of legal demands [which were in force] against us and which were hostile to us. And this certificate He has set aside and completely removed by nailing it to the cross. **15** When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities [those supernatural forces of evil operating against us], He made a public example of them [exhibiting them as captives in His triumphal procession], having triumphed over them through the cross.

Theological Note on Numbers 24:15-19

The NKJV Study Bible

15 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; 16 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: 17 "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. 18 And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, while Israel does valiantly. 19 Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, and destroy the remains of the city. - Numbers 24:15-19 (NKJV)

24:15-19: The fourth oracle has the longest introduction, which builds on the introduction to the third oracle (vv. 3, 4). **I see Him, but not now...A Star shall come out of Jacob:** 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**, who

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 Psalm 2; Psalm 110; Revelation 19:11-21).

- Theological Note on Numbers 24:15-19, *The New King James Study Bible*, Thomas Nelson, p. 251.

What is the Significance of Moab in the Bible?

By S. Michael Houdmann

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Moab-in-the-Bible.html>

Question: *What is the significance of Moab in the Bible?*

Answer: Moab, a small kingdom in the central Transjordan, was a familiar setting in the Bible.

[Genesis 19:30–38](#) accounts for the origins of the nation of Moab. After [Lot](#) and his daughters escaped from Sodom, they lived in a cave in the hills near [Zoar](#). When Lot became drunk, his daughters seduced him. Both conceived and bore children. Lot's oldest daughter named her son Moab, from whom the Moabites descended, and Lot's younger daughter called her son Ben-ammi, from whom the Ammonites descended. The Septuagint explains that the name Moab means "he is of my father," a perpetual reminder of Moab's incestuous beginnings.

Moab was located on a high geographical plateau directly east of the [Dead Sea](#), between Edom and Ammon. The territory was skirted by the valleys of the Arnon and the Zered, the scarps of the Dead Sea Rift, and the gorge of the Arnon River. With desert land to the east and the rift-valley to the west, Moab measured only about 60 miles from north to south and 20 miles from east to west.

Moab's northern boundary shifted in times of military strength, but even at its greatest extent, Moab encompassed no more than about 1,400 square miles. The main region north of the Arnon River was assigned to [Reuben](#) in the tribal allotment, but the tribe was not able to hold onto the land. Gradually, the territory was absorbed into Moab.

Moab's terrain consisted mostly of gently rolling tableland separated by numerous ravines. It was known for its rich pastureland for sheep and other livestock ([Numbers 32:1](#); [2 Kings 3:4](#)). Moab's soil and climate were ideal for growing wheat, barley, and other grains. Stretching through the heart of Moab, in its eastern part, was the King's Highway, a major trade route that led to Syria in the north and the Gulf of Aqaba in the south.

After leaving Egypt and camping at Mount Sinai, Israel wandered in the wilderness for 38 years before arriving at the boundary of the Promised Land in the plains of Moab ([Numbers 10:11–22:1](#)). From this point forward, Moab supplied the background for much of the biblical drama until [Joshua 3](#).

God's chosen people were now poised to move swiftly toward their final destination in Canaan. To advance, Israel had to fight against [King Sihon](#) of the Amorites ([Deuteronomy 2:26–37](#); [Numbers 21:21–23](#)) and [King Og](#) of Bashan ([Deuteronomy 3:1–7](#); [Numbers 21:33–35](#)). Both kings were defeated in Moab.

Subsequently, on the order of Balak, king of Moab, the [prophet Balaam](#) attempted to curse the Israelites. Instead, Balaam ended up confirming God's magnificent promise of blessing on His people and, through them, on the whole world ([Numbers 22–24](#)).

[Moses](#) reviewed the law and transferred leadership from himself to Joshua on the plains of Moab ([Deuteronomy 29–33](#)). And in the land of Moab, Moses died and was buried ([Deuteronomy 34:1–6](#)).

Other mentions of Moab and the Moabites occur throughout the Old Testament:

- [Judges 3:12–31](#) gives an account of the 18-year oppression of Israel under King Eglon of Moab until God raised [Ehud](#) to deliver the people.
- [Second Kings 3](#) describes the war between Israel and Moab in the ninth century BC.
- [David](#) entrusted his father and mother to the king of Moab while he dealt with Saul's hostility ([1 Samuel 22:3–4](#)).
- [Solomon](#) took foreign wives, including women from Moab, and pursued idolatrous worship of Chemosh, the god of Moab, which turned his heart away from the Lord and cost him his kingdom ([1 Kings 11:1, 7, 33](#)).
- The first part of [Ruth](#) and Naomi's story took place in Moab, a nation hostile to Israel ([Ruth 1–2](#)). Ruth, a Moabitess, became the great grandmother of King David. Her place in the genealogy of Jesus Christ is a beautiful example of God's impartiality.
- The Psalms and several prophets refer to Moab as the enemy of Israel ([Psalm 60:8](#); [Isaiah 15–16](#); [Jeremiah 48](#)).

For Further Study

[The Popular Handbook of Archaeology and the Bible by Geisler & Holden](#)

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