

Balaam and Balak

Numbers 22 - 25

CHAPTER 22

1 And the children of Israel journeyed, and encamped in the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan from Jericho. **2** And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. **3** And Moab was much afraid of the people, because they were many; and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. **4** And Moab said to the elders of Midian, Now will this company lick up all that is round about us, as an ox licks up the green herb of the field. Now Balak the son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time. **5** And he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is on the river in the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, a people is come out from Egypt; behold, they cover the face of the land, and they abide over against me. **6** And now come, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are mightier than I: perhaps I may be able to smite them, and drive them out of the land; for I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. **7** And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed, having the rewards of divination in their hand. And they came to Balaam, and spoke to him the words of Balak. **8** And he said to them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, according as Jehovah shall speak unto me. And the princes of Moab abode with Balaam. **9** And God came to Balaam, and said, Who are these men with thee? **10** And Balaam said to God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, **11** Behold, a people is come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the land. Now come, curse me them: perhaps I may be able to fight against them, and drive them out. **12** And God said to Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed. **13** And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said to the princes of Balak, Go into your land; for Jehovah refuses to give me leave to go with you. **14** And the princes of Moab rose up; and they went to Balak, and said, Balaam has refused to come with us. **15** Then sent Balak yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they. **16** And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: Suffer not thyself, I pray thee, to be restrained from coming to me; **17** for very highly will I honour thee, and whatever thou shalt say to me will I do; come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people. **18** And Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, If Balak give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the commandment of Jehovah my God, to do less or more. **19** And now, I pray you, abide ye also here this night, and I shall know what Jehovah will say

to me further. **20** Then God came to Balaam at night, and said to him, If the men have come to call thee, rise up, *and* go with them; but only what I shall say unto thee shalt thou do. **21** And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. **22** And God's anger was kindled because he went; and the Angel of Jehovah set himself in the way to withstand him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two young men were with him. **23** And the ass saw the Angel of Jehovah standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand; and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field, and Balaam smote the ass to turn her into the way. **24** And the Angel of Jehovah stood in a hollow of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. **25** And the ass saw the Angel of Jehovah, and she pressed herself against the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; and he smote her again. **26** Then the Angel of Jehovah went still further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. **27** And the ass saw the Angel of Jehovah, and lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with his staff. **28** And Jehovah opened the mouth of the ass, and she said to Balaam, What have I done to thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? **29** And Balaam said to the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in my hand, for now would I kill thee! **30** And the ass said to Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine to this day? was I ever wont to do so to thee? And he said, No. **31** Then Jehovah opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of Jehovah standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand; and he bowed and prostrated himself on his face. **32** And the Angel of Jehovah said to him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, it was I who came forth to withstand thee, for the way *thou walkest in* is for ruin before me. **33** And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times; had she not turned from me, I had now certainly slain thee, and saved her alive. **34** And Balaam said to the Angel of Jehovah, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me; and now, if it be evil in thine eyes, I will get me back again. **35** And the Angel of Jehovah said to Balaam, Go with the men, but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that shalt thou speak. And Balaam went with the princes of Balak. **36** And when Balak heard that Balaam came, he went out to meet him, to the city of Moab, which is on the border of the Arnon, which is at the extremity of the border. **37** And Balak said to Balaam, Did I not earnestly send to thee to call thee? why didst thou not come to me? am I not surely able to honour thee? **38** And Balaam said to Balak, Lo, I am come to thee; but shall I now be able at all to say anything? the word that God puts in my mouth, that shall I speak. **39** And Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kirjath-huzoth. **40** And Balak offered oxen and small cattle, and sent to Balaam and to the princes that were with him. **41** And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up to the high places of Baal, and he saw from thence the extremity of the people.

CHAPTER 23

1 And Balaam said to Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams. **2** And Balak did as Balaam had said; and Balak and Balaam offered up a bullock and a ram on *each* altar. **3** And Balaam said to Balak, Stand by thy burnt-offering, and I will go; perhaps Jehovah will come to meet me; and whatever he shews me I will tell thee. And he went to a hill. **4** And God met Balaam; and *Balaam* said to him, I have disposed seven altars, and have offered up a bullock and a ram upon *each* altar. **5** And Jehovah put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return to Balak, and thus shalt thou speak. **6** And he returned to him, and behold, he was standing by his burnt-offering, he, and all the princes of Moab. **7** And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, from the mountains of the east: Come, curse me Jacob, and come, denounce Israel! **8** How shall I curse whom GOD hath not cursed? or how shall I denounce whom Jehovah doth not denounce? **9** For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: Lo, *it is* a people that shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations. **10** Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let my soul die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his! **11** And Balak said to Balaam, What hast thou done to me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether. **12** And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which Jehovah puts in my mouth? **13** And Balak said to him, Come, I pray thee, with me to another place, from whence thou wilt see them; thou shalt see only the extremity of them and shalt not see them all, and curse me them from thence. **14** And he took him to the watchmen's field, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered up a bullock and a ram on *each* altar. **15** And *Balaam* said to Balak, Stand here by thy burnt-offering, and I will go to meet yonder. **16** And Jehovah met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Return to Balak, and thus shalt thou speak. **17** And he came to him, and behold, he was standing by his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him; and Balak said to him, What has Jehovah spoken? **18** Then he took up his parable and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear! hearken unto me, son of Zippor! **19** GOD is not a man, that he should lie; neither a son of man, that he should repent. Shall he say and not do? and shall he speak and not make it good? **20** Behold, I have received *mission* to bless; and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. **21** He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen wrong in Israel; Jehovah his God is with him, and the shout of a king is in his midst. **22** GOD brought him out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of a buffalo. **23** For there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel. At this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath GOD wrought! **24** Lo, the people will rise up as a lioness, and lift himself up as a lion. He shall not lie down until he have eaten the prey and drunk the blood of the slain. **25** And Balak said to Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at

all. **26** And Balaam answered and said to Balak, Did I not tell thee, saying, All that Jehovah shall speak, that will I do? **27** And Balak said to Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee to another place; perhaps it will be right in the sight of God that thou curse me them from thence. **28** And Balak brought Balaam to the top of Peor, which looks over the surface of the waste. **29** And Balaam said to Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams. **30** And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered up a bullock and a ram on each altar.

CHAPTER 24

1 And Balaam saw that it was good in the sight of Jehovah to bless Israel, and he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. **2** And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel dwelling *in tents* according to his tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him. **3** And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor saith, and the man of opened eye saith, **4** He saith, who heareth the words of GOD, who seeth the vision of the Almighty, who falleth down, and who hath his eyes open: **5** How goodly are thy tents, Jacob, and thy tabernacles, Israel! **6** Like valleys are they spread forth, like gardens by the river side, Like aloe-trees which Jehovah hath planted, like cedars beside the waters. **7** Water shall flow out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in great waters, And his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. **8** GOD brought him out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of a buffalo. He shall consume the nations his enemies, and break their bones, and with his arrows shall smite *them* in pieces. **9** He stooped, he lay down like a lion, and like a lioness: who will stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee. **10** Then Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together; and Balak said to Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast altogether blessed *them* these three times! **11** And now flee thou to thy place; I said I would very highly honour thee, and behold, Jehovah has kept thee back from honour. **12** And Balaam said to Balak, Did I not also speak to thy messengers whom thou sentest to me, saying, **13** If Balak gave me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the commandment of Jehovah to do good or bad out of my heart: what Jehovah shall say, that will I speak? **14** And now behold, I go to my people: come, I will admonish thee what this people will do to thy people at the end of days. **15** And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor saith, and the man of opened eye saith, **16** He saith, who heareth the words of GOD, who knoweth the knowledge of the Most High, Who seeth the vision of the Almighty, who falleth down, and who hath his eyes open: **17** I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: There cometh a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and he shall cut in pieces the corners of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult. **18** And Edom shall be a possession, and Seir a possession, — they, his enemies; but Israel will do valiantly. **19** And one out of Jacob shall

have dominion, and will destroy out of the city what remaineth. **20** And he saw Amalek, and took up his parable, and said, Amalek is the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be for destruction. **21** And he saw the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Firm is thy dwelling-place, and thy nest fixed in the rock; **22** But the Kenite shall be consumed, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive. **23** And he took up his parable, and said, Alas! Who shall live when GOD doeth this? **24** And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and afflict Asshur, and afflict Eber, and he also shall be for destruction. **25** And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place; and Balak also went his way.

CHAPTER 25

1 And Israel abode in Shittim; and the people began to commit fornication with the daughters of Moab. **2** And they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods; and the people ate, and bowed down to their gods. **3** And Israel joined himself to Baal-Peor; and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel. **4** And Jehovah said to Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up to Jehovah before the sun, that the fierce anger of Jehovah may be turned away from Israel. **5** And Moses said to the judges of Israel, Slay every one his men that have joined themselves to Baal-Peor. **6** And behold, a man of the children of Israel came and brought a Midianitish woman to his brethren, in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of the whole assembly of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the entrance of the tent of meeting. **7** And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, and rose up from among the assembly, and took a javelin in his hand, **8** and he went after the man of Israel into the tent-chamber, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. And the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. **9** And those that died in the plague were twenty-four thousand. **10** And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, **11** Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. **12** Therefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace! **13** And he shall have it, and his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was jealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel. **14** And the name of the man of Israel that was slain, who was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, the prince of a father's house of the Simeonites. **15** And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was tribal head of a father's house in Midian. **16** And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, **17** Harass the Midianites, and smite them, **18** for they have harassed you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, who was slain on the day of the plague because of the matter of Peor.