

June 28, 2023

Always Blessed

Shalom,

This week's Torah reading includes two portions and is found in **Numbers 19:1-25:9**. The portions names are **Chukat**, meaning “**Decrees**,” and **Balak**, which means “**Destroyer**.” **Chukat** gives instruction for offering the Red Heifer and using its ashes for cleansing the Tabernacle and all that pertains to it and to cleanse that which touches the realm of death. **Balak** is the account of the king of Moab hiring a man named **Balaam** to speak a curse over **God's covenant people**.

We only know what Scripture relates about Balaam, but Numbers 24:1 indicates that he recognized the voice of YHWH, but also used sorceries, or divination, to receive prophetic utterance, which is forbidden by Torah in Leviticus 19:26. **He understood and clearly stated that God's blessing cannot be reversed. No one, man or spirit, can by speaking a curse overturn the blessing of God.** We all need to recognize that we need never fear what the enemy or those doing his bidding speak about those whom God has blessed.

Think about the characters found in this portion. Balak was a king whose tribe came from Moab who was a son of Lot who was born after Lot was delivered from the destruction of Sodom by the grace of YHWH. Balak would certainly have known of the God of Israel, and may have named YHWH among the deities he served, but must have hoped that Balaam could somehow intercede for God to revoke His blessing or use pagan sorceries to bring about calamity to Israel. It is not enough to consider YHWH one of your gods, and a process of moving away from the truth begins when people believe that there is more than one God, or more than one way to God.

Balaam, although outside the bloodline of Israel, seems to have been gifted to hear and speak the words of YHWH, even though he also practiced some form of divination. He knew enough to know that if God had blessed someone, or a nation, that blessing could never change. Despite that knowledge and a direct word from God, he asked the LORD if he should carry out the instructions of Balak to curse Israel to obtain profit. God answered him firmly and clearly.

God said to Balaam, “Do not go with them! Do not curse them, for they are blessed!” (Numbers 22:12 TLV)

Yeshua said, “I AM the Way—and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6 CJB)

In considering the portion called Balak, I saw that, even though Balak and Balaam were real people, there is a **typical lesson** for us to recognize that Balak, whose name means destroyer, is a **type** of Satan whose only power, or authority, on this earth was granted to him by deceiving Adam and Eve to obey his lying arguments. He can only function in the created realm by getting mankind to do his bidding. He has no power other than what people grant to him. In other words, his power was the authority given to mankind to be in dominion on this earth that he had duped them to grant him by their disobedience to God. True to the meaning of his name, destroyer, Balak enlisted a man to speak forth “**cursing**,” or destruction, toward the people of God.

God had spoken His word to Balaam not to go, because He had already blessed Israel, an unchangeable fact, so that when the messengers from Balak returned with a promise of great reward, he should have immediately sent them away. Instead, he considered the Word of God to him to be changeable. He sought a word that would benefit him. We often consider only ones like Isaiah or Jeremiah to be called to the office of Prophet, but, in simple terms, a **prophet is one who speaks forth what God says**, and that is “**blessing**.” All believers, as Balaam could, may receive God’s Word and speak them forth, and that is exactly what we, new creations in Messiah, are directed and equipped by the Holy Spirit to do. Prophesying is saying what God says.

“For you can all prophesy one by one, so all may learn and be encouraged.” (1 Corinthians 14:31 TLV)

HaSatan, the adversary and destroyer, in seeking whom he may devour, uses devious, deceptive words to convince people of the fleshly advantage of speaking and acting on his behalf to curse what God has blessed. Now, people do not intend to side with Satan, but that is where deception to compromise slips in on them.

They have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray. They have followed the way of **Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.**
(2 Peter 2:15 TLV)

A failure to stick to the truth, and only the truth, as is given us in the Word of God is a recipe for disaster. Satan uses rumors that he spreads through people to cause a deviation from the uncompromised, pure truth, and that spawns fear in those that hear them and causes all sorts of mindless behavior.

Jesus, during His time of temptation on the mountain was confronted with strong words meant to deceive, but was quick to counter and hold fast to the confession of the Word, never agreeing with lying words of fear that appeal to the flesh.

It is sad to see that Balaam, a man who could hear from God, even though he only blessed Israel during those first three events with Balak, eventually gave in and helped him gain advantage over God's people by appealing to their fleshly desires.

While Israel was staying in Shittim, the people began to have immoral sexual relations with women from Moab. Then they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, so the people were eating, and bowing down before their gods. When Israel became bound to Baal of Peor, the anger of Adonai grew hot against Israel. (Numbers 25:1-3 TLV)

But I have a few things against you. You have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who was teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before Bnei-Yisrael, to eat food sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality.
(Revelation 2:14 TLV)

To benefit from this typical lesson, we need to see that each of us are given **God's precious Word, and it is committed to us as a treasure to be valued and invested through prophesying or speaking it**, never co-mingling it with contrary ideas, philosophies, or teachings, no matter how credible to the mind. Any willingness to allow deviation from the truth enables the enemy to deceive and pollute purity and faithfulness to a confusing and compromising state-of-mind that will gradually allow attitudes, words, and actions that end in fear and failure.

Praise God! There is a way that will never fail, it is the way of Love, and it is in remaining united with Jesus and His Word.

Then Yeshua said to the Judeans who had trusted Him, "If you abide in My Word, then you are truly My disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!" (John 8:31-32 TLV)

"If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. In this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples." (John 15:7-8 TLV)

Staying in His love,
Terry

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