

Saturday 28th November

Numbers 23: 1-26

Key Verse 23: 8

How can I curse

those whom God has not cursed?

How can I denounce

those whom the Lord has not denounced?

Balak was prepared to pay good money for God to be cursed but Balaam cannot do it! Balak had taken him up a mountain, Bamoth Baal, (22: 41) where he could look down on the Israelites who filled the plains. Balaam refuses to curse Israel and honours what God had said to him in 22: 35.

Balak tries two further times on two more mountains, Pisgah (v14) and Peor (v28). Balaam sticks to what God had said and will only speak the message God has given him (v5, v16)

Praise God that we have been blessed by many preachers who feel the same way, some have even changed their message at the last minute as they had been prompted by the Spirit. Pray that all ministers only speak what God has put into their mouths, that which is confirmed by the revealed Word of God.

Balaam views the people and because of God's words to him, his conscience causes a change in attitude! He envies that the Israelites have a God who honours and blesses his people (v10). Also in this verse Balaam (a pagan remember and most likely not familiar with Israel's history) talks of counting the dust of Jacob. This is a reference to God's promise to Abraham in Gen 13: 16. Balaam cannot curse God. God's mission to bless his people (the dust of Jacob) is unstoppable!

This continues today! We may sin but that doesn't exclude us from God's family. We are still his people in a covenant relationship with him sealed by the blood of Christ.

Balaam's second oracle contains words that are a warning to us if we think we can treat God as if he were our puppet. Someone we can control, manipulate and twist his word to make him say what we want! We should learn and engrave these words in our minds.

'God is not human that he should lie, not a human being that he should change his mind.' (v19)

Yet again in this oracle, Balaam cannot curse but can only bless Israel. He declares in verse 23,

'See what God has done!' He recognises that it was God who brought these people out of Egypt (v22), that he is their King (v21), and that he is with his people (v21)

God is still in the rescue business (Col 1: 13-14 ). Our salvation and our redemption, won by Christ on the cross, is all God's work. We cannot take any credit.

Look at any born again believer and 'See what God has done!' His is our rescuer, our King and forever with us.

'Christ in you, the hope of glory' (Col 1: 27)