

Title: "Who sees the vision of the Almighty"

Text: Numbers 23:27-30, 24:1-14

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF TODAY'S TEXT

¹ 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. ² And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Numbers 24:1-2

1. Balaam was hired by Balak to curse Israel
2. But twice now, he failed to do so
 - a. Balaam tried to use sorcery
 - b. But God had not allowed him to succeed
3. God turned it into a blessing instead
4. Balak and Balaam now sought another way to curse Israel
 - a. To not see something of Israel (an omen)
 - b. But by looking at the "wasteland"
 - c. Perhaps he might be able to curse Israel to become like a barren wilderness
5. Balaam instead saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe
And he gave a third prophecy of blessing

A COMPARISON OF THE THREE PROPHECIES (ORACLES)

1. The first prophecy

*"How shall I curse whom God has not cursed?
And how shall I denounce whom the LORD has not denounced?"*

Numbers 23:8

- a. God has chosen to bless Israel
- b. There was nothing that anyone could do

- c. Balaam had no choice but to be a mouthpiece to speak what God had put in his mouth Numbers 23:12

2. The second prophecy

*¹⁹ "God is not a man, that He should lie,
Nor a son of man, that He should repent.
Has He said, and will He not do?
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"*

*²⁰ Behold, I have received a command to bless;
He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.*

Numbers 23:19-20

- a. Man is fickle, but not God
- b. God will surely be faithful to fulfil His word/ promise
- c. He will not be manipulated in any way to change what He has decreed regarding Israel
 - i. His Presence
 - ii. His Leading
 - iii. His Strength
- d. Balaam needed to be corrected on this matter Numbers 23:20

3. The third prophecy

³ 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,*

*⁴ The utterance of him who hears the words of God,
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
Who falls down, with eyes wide open:*

Numbers 24:3-4

- a. Note the significant shift
Balaam is no longer speaking as a mere mouthpiece
- b. He speaks as one

- i. Whose eyes are opened
 - ii. Who hears the words of God
 - iii. Who sees the vision of the Almighty
- c. There is a depth of understanding not realised before
 - i. Balaam is able to further describe the extent of God's blessings on Israel Numbers 24:5-7
 - ii. He is able to trace Israel's history from Egypt, to their present level of immense strength Numbers 24:8-9
 - iii. He is even able to prophesy the future; how the Messiah would one day come out of Israel (4th Prophecy) Numbers 24:17

LESSONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE STORY OF BALAAM'S PROPHECIES

1. God's Word must be **Complied** with
 - a. If God has given us a word to hear
 - b. Or a word to speak
 - c. Then we have no choice but to speak or hear that word as God had intended
2. There may be **Correction** along the way
 - a. Especially as we try to impose our own thoughts and ways upon God
 - b. Balaam was duly corrected
 - c. He had to learn that God is not like man

He will not be manipulated for our selfish purposes!
3. What we ought to seek: **Comprehension and Change**
 - a. To truly "see"
 - b. Nothing less than a vision of (from) the Almighty
 - c. Standing in awe of God

As one “who falls down, with eyes wide open”

THE CHALLENGE TO “SEE”

1. God is powerfully carrying out His profound plans
2. Our part is to “see” as God has revealed; to gain insight into what God is seeking to do
3. Then in living accordingly, we find success and blessing
 - a. For the present
 - b. And for the future