

Numbers 22:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying,

Analysis

Balaam's response to God identifies Balak and his request: 'Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt' and they 'cover the face of the earth.' This description views Israel from Moab's terrified perspective—a vast, unstoppable multitude. Balaam's phrase 'come out from Egypt' unwittingly acknowledges God's redemptive work in the Exodus. His recitation of Balak's request for cursing reveals that he understands he's being hired to spiritually assault God's chosen people. This knowledge makes his initial willingness to go all the more culpable.

Historical Context

Balaam accurately represents Balak's perspective: Israel appeared as an overwhelming force covering the land. The number 600,000 fighting men plus families (Exodus 12:37) made Israel one of the largest population groups in the region. Egypt, the ancient Near East's superpower, had spectacularly failed to retain them. Balak's fear was rational given the military defeats Israel had already inflicted on neighboring kingdoms.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does viewing God's people from the world's perspective reveal their fear of His purposes?
2. What does Balaam's knowledge of whom he was cursing reveal about degrees of culpability?
3. How should we understand our identity as those whom the world cannot stop or contain?

Interlinear Text

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|----------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| וְלֹא | צָפַר | מִן | בְּלֹעַמְךָ | אֶל | בְּלֹעַמְךָ | וְיִאָמֶר |
| said | And Balaam | H413 | unto God | Balak | the son | of Zippor |
| H559 | H1109 | | H430 | H1111 | H1121 | H6834 |
| וְיִמְשַׁל | עַל | מִזְמָרָת | אֶלְיָהוּ | | | |
| of Moab | hath sent | H413 | | | | |
| H4124 | H7971 | | | | | |

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