

Numbers 22:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me:

Analysis

Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me—Balak's plea reveals pagan theology: he assumed obstacles to prophetic service were merely external hindrances (distance, payment, honor) rather than divine prohibition. The verb *য়ন* (māna', "hinder") suggests Balak thought Balaam faced logistical barriers, not moral ones.

This verse exposes the world's fundamental misunderstanding: it assumes God's servants are available for hire if the price is right. Balak never conceived that Balaam might be bound by a Word he cannot break, revealing the gulf between pagan transactional religion and covenant obedience to Yahweh.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern divination was commercial—professional prophets and diviners charged fees, with prices varying by difficulty and client status. Balak operated within this paradigm, assuming every prophet had a price. Israel's prophets, by contrast, spoke as Yahweh's mouthpiece, not for hire.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 15:13 – Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 – God is love

Study Questions

1. When the world assumes you can be bought, how clearly have you demonstrated that you serve a Master who cannot be negotiated with?
2. How does the world's "name your price" mentality conflict with covenantal obedience to God's non-negotiable commands?
3. What "hindrances" do worldly people imagine keep you from sin, when the real barrier is God's absolute prohibition?

Interlinear Text

בְּ	בֶּלְקָ	אָמָר	כְּהַלְוִ	אָמָר	בְּלַעַם	אָל	בְּנֵי אֹנוֹ
And they came	H413	to Balaam	and said	H0	H3541	and said	Balaam
H935		H1109	H559			H559	H1111
of Zippor	H408	H4994	Let nothing I pray thee hinder	H4513	thee from coming	H1980	H413
H6834							

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