

Numbers 22:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.

Analysis

Moab's fear—'Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many'—reveals how God's blessing on Israel terrified surrounding nations. The Hebrew *gur* (dread/afraid) indicates existential terror. Moab saw Israel's numbers and concluded they faced unstoppable force. This fulfills God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would be numerous (Genesis 15:5) and that nations would fear them (Exodus 23:27). When God blesses His people, even their enemies recognize His hand, pointing to the day when every knee will bow to Christ (Philippians 2:10).

Historical Context

Moab descended from Lot through incest with his daughters (Genesis 19:36-37). Though related to Israel, Moab remained hostile. The Moabites had watched Israel defeat the Amorite kings Sihon and Og (Numbers 21:21-35), recognizing that conventional military might could not stop them. This drove Balak to seek spiritual weapons through Balaam's curses.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God's blessing on His people affect how the world perceives them?
2. What does it mean that our spiritual victories often create fear in opposing forces?
3. How should we respond when the world recognizes God's hand on His church?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּגֵּר	מוֹאָב ב	מִפְּנֵי י	הָעָם	מָאֵד	כִּי	רַב
afraid	And Moab	because of	the people	was sore	H3588	because they were many
H1481	H4124	H6440	H5971	H3966		H7227
הָוָא	וַיִּקְרַח	מוֹאָב ב	מִפְּנֵי י	בְּנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל:	
H1931	was distressed	And Moab	because of	the children	of Israel	
	H6973	H4124	H6440	H1121	H3478	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 15:15 (Parallel theme): Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

Isaiah 23:5 (Parallel theme): As at the report concerning Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.