

# Numbers 22:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.

## Analysis

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Balak's message to Midian's elders uses the metaphor 'this company shall lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field.' This agricultural imagery portrays Israel as consuming everything in their path. The Hebrew lachak (lick up) suggests complete consumption. Ironically, Balak describes Israel exactly as God intended—a nation so blessed they would possess the land fully. What Balak feared, God had promised. This shows how God's promises to His people are threats to His enemies. Christ's kingdom similarly advances unstoppably (Daniel 2:44).

## Historical Context

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The alliance between Moab and Midian was unusual as these peoples were not typically united. Israel's presence created a coalition of enemies. The Midianites were descended from Abraham through Keturah (Genesis 25:1-2). The coalition shows how threats to the world system can temporarily unite otherwise diverse opponents, as seen in the alliance of Herod and Pilate against Jesus (Luke 23:12).

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## 1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

### Study Questions

1. How do God's promises to bless His people necessarily threaten opposing forces?
2. What does the formation of enemy coalitions teach about spiritual warfare?
3. How does Christ's advancing kingdom unite diverse opponents today?

### Interlinear Text

סֹבֶבֶל	וְ	לְמֹאָב	בְּ	וְ	אָמָר	כָּלֵחַ	וְ	עַטָּה	הַ	מִדְיָן	וְ	לְמֹאָב	
said	And Moab	H413	unto the elders	of Midian	H6258	lick up							
H559	H4124		H2205	H4080		H3897							
Now shall this company		H853	אֶת	כָּל	סֹבֶבֶל	וְ	כָּלֵחַ	וְ	הַשׁ	וְ	כָּלֵחַ	וְ	
		H3605			יבַּתְ יִנּוּ		lick up		ושׁ		lick up		us as the ox
					H5439		H3897						H7794
the grass	of the field	H7704	בְּשָׂדֶק	וְ	בְּ	רְקֵם	וְ	בְּ	זִירָה	וְ	לְמֹאָב	בְּ	
H853	H3418		And Balak			the son			of Zippor		was king		And Moab
			H1111			H1121			H6834		H4428		H4124
at that time		H1931											
		H6256											
בְּ	הַוָּאָן												

### Additional Cross-References

**Numbers 31:8** (Kingdom): And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.