

Numbers 22:41

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.

Analysis

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people—Balak's choice of **high places of Baal** (בָּמוֹת בַּעַל Bamot Ba'al, literally 'heights of Baal') for Balaam's prophesying reveals pagan syncretism—assuming Yahweh could be consulted from Baal-worship sites. The phrase **see the utmost part** (רָאָה קֵצֶה הָעָם ra'ah qetzeh ha'am) suggests ancient belief that seeing the target enhanced curses' effectiveness.

The irony is devastating: Balak brought Balaam to Baal's high places to curse Israel, but God turned every attempted curse into blessing (23:11-12). The New Testament reveals that 'he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world' (1 John 4:4)—no weapon formed against God's people can prosper (Isaiah 54:17), regardless of the spiritual power invoked.

Historical Context

The high places (elevated worship sites) were common in Canaanite religion, often dedicated to Baal (storm/fertility god). Moabites, though worshiping Chemosh as national deity, shared Canaanite high-place practices. Balak's choice of location demonstrates pagan assumption that spiritual geography mattered for prophetic power.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Balak's choice of Baal's high places for cursing Israel illustrate pagan confusion about spiritual power?
2. What does God's transformation of curses into blessings (despite the pagan venue) teach about His sovereignty over spiritual warfare?
3. How can believers rest in God's protective power when facing spiritual opposition, regardless of its source or intensity?

Interlinear Text

וַיְהִי י' H1961	בַּבֹּקֶר H1242	וַתֵּחַח H3947	בַּלֶּקֶת H1111	אֶת H853	בַּלְעָם H1109
And it came to pass on the morrow	took	that Balak	Balaam		
וַיַּעַל הו' H5927	בְּמִוֹת H1116	בְּעַל H1120	וַיֵּרָא H7200	מִשָּׁם H8033	
and brought him up	into the high places	of Baal	that thence he might see		
קֵץ ה' H7097	הָעָם: H5971				
the utmost	part of the people				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 23:13 (Parallel theme): And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence.

