

Numbers 22:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.

Analysis

Balak tells Balaam: 'he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.' Balak overestimated Balaam's power - only God's blessing or curse matters ultimately. Yet Balaam's reputation suggested his words carried weight. The irony: Balaam could only speak what God put in his mouth (v.38, 23:12), so his power derived entirely from divine source, not inherent ability. This teaches that all spiritual power comes from God; human agents are merely conduits. Modern parallels exist - some attribute power to religious leaders or rituals rather than recognizing God as sole source. Only God's blessing matters; He alone determines outcomes (Prov 16:33).

Historical Context

Balaam lived in Pethor, Mesopotamia (v.5), known for divination and sorcery. His reputation reached Moab, suggesting his oracles had proven accurate or influential previously. Whether Balaam had genuine prophetic gift corrupted by greed or was merely clever diviner, God used him to pronounce irrevocable blessings on Israel. Balak's hiring Balaam shows pagan understanding that spiritual power could affect battles. Ancient Near Eastern texts confirm widespread belief in cursing enemies before battle. However, Balak learned what

believers know: 'if God be for us, who can be against us?' (Rom 8:31). No curse affects those under divine blessing.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Do you attribute spiritual outcomes to human agents rather than recognizing God as ultimate source?
2. How does understanding that only God's blessing matters free you from fear of curses, hexes, or others' ill wishes?

Interlinear Text

בְּ אֶלְכָה וְעַתָּה יְאָרֶב אֶת לִי
H6258 H1980 H4994 and he whom thou cursest H779 H0 H853 me this people H5971

אָלָּי מְמֻמָּלִי הָוָא עַצְּוּם בְּנֵי הָעָם
H2088 H3588 for they are too mighty H6099 H1931 H4480 H194

אַיְכֵל בְּנֵה בְּנֵי בְּנֵי
for me peradventure I shall prevail that we may smite H0 H3201 H5221

אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה יְמַלֵּא רָצֶן מִן
them and that I may drive them out H1644 H4480 of the land H776 H3588 for I wot H3045 H853 H834

יְאָרֶב מְבָכֶל מְבָכֶל יְאָרֶב
is blessed is blessed H834 and he whom thou cursest H779 and he whom thou cursest H779

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 24:9 (Blessing): He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.