

Numbers 23:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Balak's plea 'Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them' reveals his assumption that changing location might change the oracle's content. This exposes pagan magical thinking: manipulate circumstances to alter spiritual realities. Balak believed geography, viewpoint, or technique could force the desired outcome. This fundamentally misunderstands God's sovereignty—His will does not depend on location or perspective. The prophet's message comes from divine character and purpose, not situational factors. God 'cannot lie' (Titus 1:2) regardless of circumstances.

Historical Context

The multiple locations for Balaam's oracles—Bamoth-baal (22:41), Pisgah (23:14), and Peor (23:28)—show Balak's persistent attempts to find the 'right' place for cursing. This mirrors pagan high place worship where different locations supposedly accessed different divine powers. Balak did not understand that Yahweh's presence was not localized but universal, His will unchangeable by geographical manipulation.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do we sometimes try to manipulate circumstances hoping to change God's will?
2. What does Balak's failed attempts teach about God's unchanging character?
3. How should we respond when circumstances don't produce our desired outcomes?

Interlinear Text

מִקְרָם אֶל יְהוָה בְּלִקְרָב אֶל יְהוָה
place said And Balak

place H413 H559 **And Balak** H1111 H1980 H4994 H854 H413 **place** H4725

מִשְׁמָךְ תְּرִא הָאָשָׁר אֶחָר
see from whence thou mayest I pray thee with me unto another

see H8033 H7200 **from whence thou mayest** H834 **I pray thee with me unto another** H312

לֹא יָכֹל הָאָשָׁר תְּרִא הָאָשָׁר
see from whence thou mayest but the utmost

see H3808 H3605 **from whence thou mayest** H7200 **but the utmost** H657

מִשְׁמָךְ: לְכַבֵּן תְּרִא הָאָשָׁר
see from whence thou mayest them all and curse

see H8033 H6895 **them all and curse** H0 **from whence thou mayest** H7200