

Numbers 23:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

Analysis

The record 'Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram' shows Balak's compliance and participation in the ritual. Both king and prophet engaged in the sacrificial ritual, uniting political and spiritual power in common purpose against Israel. Yet their joint effort would prove futile against God's will. This teaches that human alliances, no matter how powerful or religiously elaborate, cannot thwart divine purposes. 'There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD' (Proverbs 21:30).

Historical Context

The joint offering by king and prophet created a covenant alliance sealed in sacrifice. In ancient Near Eastern thought, shared sacrifice created binding relationship. Balak sought to bind Balaam through this ritual to ensure he would curse Israel effectively. However, God would not be bound by their pagan treaty. His sovereign will would override their covenanted intentions.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do human alliances and covenants fail when they oppose God's purposes?
2. What does the futility of Balak's ritual teach about religious activity apart from God's will?
3. How should we respond when powerful forces unite against God's people?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעַשׂ	בָּלָק ק	כָּאָשׁ ר	דָּבָר	וּבִלְעָם	וַיַּעַל	בָּלָק ק
did	And Balak	H834	had spoken	and Balaam	offered	And Balak
H6213	H1111		H1696	H1109	H5927	H1111
וּבִלְעָם	פָּר	וְאֵל	בְּמִזְבְּחֵם:			
and Balaam	a bullock	and a ram	on every altar			
H1109	H6499	H352	H4196			

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 23:14 (Sacrifice): And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.

Numbers 23:30 (Sacrifice): And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.