

# Numbers 23:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.

## Analysis

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Balaam states 'I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.' The phrase 'I cannot reverse it' emphasizes absolute impossibility—no power can undo God's blessing once pronounced. God's blessing on Israel wasn't conditional on perfect obedience but flowed from His sovereign choice and covenant faithfulness. This anticipates the New Testament teaching that nothing can separate believers from God's love (Romans 8:38-39).

## Historical Context

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Despite Israel's repeated rebellions chronicled in Numbers, God's blessing remained secure because it rested on His covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not Israel's performance. This grace-based security prefigures salvation by grace through faith.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the irreversibility of God's blessing provide assurance of your security in Christ?
2. What attempts to curse or condemn you are futile because of God's blessing in Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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הֵן ה	וַיְבָרֶךְ	לִקְחֵי חַיִּי	וַיְבָרֶךְ	אֵל א
H2009	and he hath blessed	Behold I have received	and he hath blessed	H3808
	H1288	H3947	H1288	
אֲשִׁיבָנָה:				
and I cannot reverse				
H7725				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 22:12** (Blessing): And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.

**Genesis 22:17** (Blessing): That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

**Genesis 12:2** (Blessing): And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

**Isaiah 43:13** (Parallel theme): Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

**Numbers 22:18** (Word): And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.

**1 Peter 1:5** (Parallel theme): Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**Numbers 22:38** (Word): And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.

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