

Numbers 23:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.

Analysis

Balaam returning to Balak 'and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab' shows Balak's expectation of favorable results. The Hebrew hineh (lo/ behold) emphasizes Balak's readiness to receive the curse. All Moab's leadership gathered expecting Balaam to spiritually destroy Israel. Their unified expectation would be dramatically disappointed. This illustrates how human plans confidently made can be utterly reversed by divine sovereignty. 'The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will' (Proverbs 21:1).

Historical Context

The princes of Moab (Hebrew sarei Moav) represented the nation's power structure. Their presence made this a state ceremony, not merely private divination. The public nature of Balaam's oracles meant Balak could not suppress them. When Balaam blessed instead of cursed, all Moab's leadership witnessed God's sovereignty. This public testimony to God's protection of Israel spread throughout the region.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God's reversal of confident human plans demonstrate His sovereignty?
2. What purpose do public demonstrations of God's power serve?
3. How should we respond when elaborate schemes against us fail because of God's intervention?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּשָׁב	אֵל יוֹ	וְהִנֵּה ה	נִצָּב	עַל
And he returned	H413	H2009	unto him and lo he stood	H5921
H7725			H5324	
עֲלֹתוֹ	וְהָיָה	וְכָל	שָׂרֵי	מוֹאָב:
by his burnt sacrifice	H1931	H3605	he and all the princes	of Moab
H5930			H8269	H4124

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