

Numbers 24:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour.

Analysis

Balak's dismissal 'Therefore now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour' ironically blames God for preventing Balaam's reward. The Hebrew kavod (honour/wealth) indicates Balak had promised great payment. Balak correctly identifies that 'the LORD hath kept thee back,' acknowledging divine intervention but resenting it. This reveals the unregenerate heart's response to God's sovereignty—acknowledging His power while opposing His will. Balak recognized God's hand yet remained hostile.

Historical Context

Balaam had been promised rewards (22:17, 37) and 'rewards of divination' (22:7). The cancelled payment represented substantial wealth—enough to make a 400-mile journey worthwhile. Balak's accusation that God prevented Balaam's honor is ironically true: God indeed controlled the prophet's words to protect Israel. The payment's withdrawal demonstrates that God's purposes override financial incentives.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do unbelievers acknowledge God's sovereignty while resenting it?
2. What does Balak's reaction teach about financial incentives versus divine commands?
3. How should believers respond when obedience costs them worldly rewards?

Interlinear Text

וְעַתָּה ה	בָּרַח	לְךָ	אֵל	מִקוֹמְךָ	אֲמַרְתִּי
H6258	Therefore now flee	H0	H413	thou to thy place	I thought
	H1272			H4725	H559
אֲכַבֶּדְךָ	אֲכַבֶּדְךָ	וְהִנֵּה ה	מִנְעָךָ	וְהִנֵּה ה	מִכְבוֹדִי
honour	honour	H2009	hath kept thee back	but lo the LORD	from honour
H3513	H3513		H4513	H3068	H3519

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 22:17 (Parallel theme): For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.

Numbers 22:37 (Parallel theme): And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?