

Numbers 24:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.

Analysis

Balaam 'lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.' The visual of Israel's orderly encampment, organized by tribes, displayed God's covenant structure. The phrase 'spirit of God came upon him' indicates prophetic enablement for authentic revelation. Even unwilling prophets can be seized by God's Spirit to speak truth (like Saul in 1 Samuel 19:23-24).

Historical Context

Israel's tribal organization around the tabernacle (Numbers 2) presented a powerful visual testimony to God's presence among them. This orderly arrangement under divine leadership contrasted with chaotic pagan nations, displaying God's design for holy community.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does God's Spirit coming upon even resistant prophets teach about His sovereignty over revelation?
2. How does ordered, covenant community display God's presence to watching world?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשָּׂא א	בַּלָּעַם ו	אֶת	עֵינָיו י	וַיֵּרָא	אֶת	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	שָׁכַן
lifted up	And Balaam	H853	his eyes	and he saw	H853	Israel	abiding
H5375	H1109		H5869	H7200		H3478	H7931
לְשִׁבְתּוֹ י				עַל יו	וַתְּהִי י	ר וּם	אֱלֹהִים:
in his tents according to their tribes				H1961	H5921	and the spirit	of God
H7626						H7307	H430

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 19:20 (Spirit): And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

2 Chronicles 15:1 (Spirit): And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

1 Samuel 10:10 (Spirit): And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

1 Samuel 19:23 (Spirit): And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.