

Chapter 23 of Numbers outlines the events surrounding the incident of Balak's request for Balaam to curse the Israelites. 3 sets of altars with corresponding offerings of bullocks and rams, seven of each per time were done. 7 is the figurative number denoting perfection. 3 sevens indicate an attested representation of said perfection. Compare three sixes 666 is the epitome of sin hence the man of sin, ergo the pope. Three eights 888 typify the perfect man, Jesus Christ, he who has triumphed over sin. Each set of altars were built at three different places which viewed the camp of the Israelites. An indication that such a different place could change the outcome of the request to curse the Israelites. This area of supposition is typical of the mind of the flesh. The response of Balak to each scenario was different yet the same. The same in that the nation of Israel ended up being blessed not cursed. Different in the reasons why. God's character is contrasted with that of mankind. Verse 19 states God does not lie, further God always does what he says he will do, he does not need to repent, his word shall be accomplished. This last assertion is exemplified by the quote *my word shall not return unto me void but shall accomplish that which I please*.

The whole tenor of this chapter's events illustrate man proposes, God disposes or brings about. Balaam was a crowd reader more than a God pleaser. When he saw or perceived then he acted and such sight governed his deeds. This trait is one which can be done by anyone so we must be careful how we react. Do we do God's will or our own? Do we pander to mankind the flesh or God and the spirit mindset as referenced in Romans 8? We should always give God the glory and not take it ourselves.

Parables are language which are generally helpful but can also be a means of special enlightenment. Unfortunately I personally have witnessed individuals to whom I had been grateful for giving me essential learning and understanding totally change the scripturally

defined meaning of a parable to the point where what the scripture clearly stated was changed. This occurred when I was younger and as such I was being tested. Hence we all need to take care.

It is declared in the tenth verse *Who can count the dust of Jacob and the number of the fourth part of Israel?* This bears special attention as the fourth tribe of Israel is Judah from whom Jesus arises. Therefore any numbering thereof includes the called out gentiles whose identity is linked by manifested faith in Jesus. So in this way the blessings stated in this chapter attributed to Israel spill over to us if we prove ourselves worthy /justified.

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