MESSIANIC PROPHECY

"Balaam's Messianic Prophecy"
Numbers 23, 24

Introduction

1. The story of Balaam's ass is so well known it hardly needs to be repeated. That Balaam actually contended with Balak, a foreign king, over the future of Israel is not very common knowledge.

2. In four marvelous oracles, Balaam presents the Word of God concerning Israel and the purpose of the Lord for that nation. One of these is specifically Messianic, albeit, the New Testament does not declare this directly.

3. Mark these oracles and the truths which each presents:

1. FIRST ORACLE - The multiplicity of the nation.
   Numbers 23:7-10
   Here is a marvelous revelation. The tenth verse is a summary of the section. It notes that Israel's posterity is like dry dust. The LXX uses the term "seed" for dust, hence pointing up the huge population of the nation. All that Balaam can utter is: let my last end be like unto that of Israel! That is, full of flourishing posterity.

2. SECOND ORACLE - The perfectability of the nation.
   Numbers 23:18-24
   Despite all the waywardness of Israel and that which God knew would yet be of rebellion against Him, He avers their righteousness in His sight (v. 21). The sum of things is given in v. 23 in that tremendous
phrase, "What hath God wrought!"
It is not what He hath taught, but
what He has done! This is how God
viewed His people and it is a
sight different than people viewed
them.

3. THIRD ORACLE - The productability of the nation.
   Numbers 24:3-9

   How glorious is this! Everywhere
   it is recorded that the nation over-
   flows with fruitage. So goodly is
   Israel that Balaam can only conclude
   with the blessing God gave to Abra-
   ham back in Gen. 12:1-3 (v.9).

NOTE: Any cursory reading of these three oracles will
give reason for Balak to complain as he did (24:10).
By way of application, all of this material may be indi-
cative of how the Lord views the church, bought with
the blood of His Son.

4. FOURTH ORACLE - The responsibility of the nation.
   Numbers 24:15-25

   The whole burden of Balaam's word
   is that God cannot destroy the
   nation. He has too great and glori-
   ous a future for her. In outline
   form, this is revealed here. Con-
   sider these important features:

   a. The STAR of Jacob. v. 17.
   This suggests the deity of our
   blessed Lord. He is the One from
   above. See Matt. 2:2, II Peter
   1:19; Rev. 22:16, 17.

   b. The SCEPTRE of Jacob. v. 17.
   This suggests the humanity of our
   Lord, and speaks of His royalty.
   Compare Psa. 45:6, 7; 110:2,

   c. The SWAY of Jacob. v. 17.
   This speaks of the ultimate con-
   trol of our Lord over nations. In-
   cluded in this overview of His
   reign are: Moab, Edom, Amalek,
   and the Kenites. The day is
   coming when His rule will be
   world-wide (Psa. 72:8). It is
   possible to see in these nations
   representations of the life of
   man under sin which will fall at
   His presence: Moab speaks of the
   pride of man (Isa. 16; Jer. 48);
   Edom of the wisdom of man (Jer.
   49:7; Obad. 8); Amalek of oppo-
   sition to God (Ex. 17:16); and the
   Kenites of earth attachment by
   men (Num. 24:21).

Conclusion:

Balaam has given clear and definite revelation concern-
ing the place of Israel and the coming Messiah. In
thinking of our Lord and what He has done for us, let
us give attention to the fact that He designs to be
our personal Star, exercise His Sceptre, and lay claim
to Sway in our lives. May these divine objectives be
realized in our lives today.

NOTES