



2016: Week 7

Sunday, February 14th 2016

*"Lessons from Balaam, Part 2:
Believer, Be Encouraged!"*

Genesis 12:1,3

"¹Now the LORD said to Abram, '... ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'" (NASB)

On Sunday, John preached from Numbers 23–24. In this passage we observe Balaam's attempts to placate King Balak and prophesy against Israel. Instead of bringing curses upon Israel, God spoke through Balaam so that Balaam prophesied blessings over Israel. No matter how many times Balak tried to frustrate God's plans, God blessed His people through the mouth of the prophet, Balaam.

1. **READ Numbers 23:16–26**

- How would you *summarize* Balaam's prophecies concerning the people of Israel?
- When Balak ordered Balaam to speak curses upon Israel, God permitted Balaam to speak only blessings. Why was God so intent on blessing Israel?

2. **READ** the following verse:

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

-1 Peter 2:9

- This verse, taken from 1 Peter 2, is written to the Church, not Israel. God gave a similar blessing to Israel in the Old Testament, but here He gives this blessing to His Church. God watches over His people. Just like He was *with* Israel (Numbers 23:21), God promises to be *with* the believer. Can you think of instances in Scripture where God promises to be *with* the believer?
- How does knowing that God is with you (assuming that you are believer) impact the way you respond to adversity? How does this truth impact the way you respond to success?
- God's promised Abram that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him. This promise is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham is the Messiah of Israel, but He is also the Savior of the world, offering salvation to all who trust in Him. God blessed Israel in Numbers 23 because they were *His own people*. God blesses believers because we are also *His own people*.

FAMILY PRAYER: Thank the Lord God for His provision in Jesus. Thank the Lord for His promise to be with you. Ask the Lord to help you live well for Him, especially knowing that you are one of *His own people*.