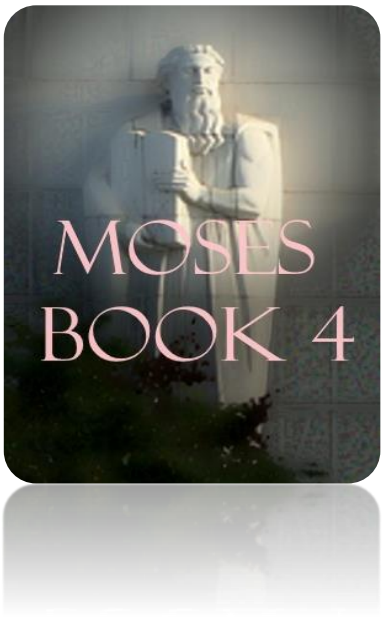
NUMBERS 23 vs 1



In the preface to this Book of Moses we read: The titles of the five books of Moses, which we use in our Bibles, are all borrowed from the Greek translation of the Seventy, the most ancient version of the Old Testament what we know of. But the title of this book we only turn into English; in all the rest we retain the Greek word, for which difference I know no reason, but that the Latin translators have done the same. Otherwise this book might as well have been called: **Arithmoi**. Where we get our word: **arithmetic.** The Greek title = the numbering; as it shows the promise of God to Abraham that his children would be as the stars of heaven. In this book are two numberings: one at Mount Sinai in Arabia – chapter 1; and the other on the plains of Moab 39 years later. -- Matthew Henry.

The prophet Balaam

1 And Balaam said to Balak, Build seven altars for me here, and prepare seven oxen and seven rams for me here.

2 And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on each altar a bull and a ram.

3 And Balaam said to Balak, Stand by your burnt offering, and I will go: perhaps the LORD will come to meet me: and whatever He shows me I will tell you. And he went to a high place.

4 And God met Balaam: and he said to Him, I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered on each altar a bull and a ram.

5 And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return to Balak, and thus you speak.

6 And he returned to him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the leaders of Moab.

7 And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab has brought me from Aram, from the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse Jacob for me, and come, condemn Israel.

8 How will I curse, whom God has not cursed? or how will I condemn whom the LORD has not condemned?

9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, a people who will dwell apart, and will not be accounted among the nations.

10 Who can count the dust of Jacob, or number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!

11 And Balak said to Balaam, What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and, behold, You have totally blessed them.

12 And he answered and said, Must I not be careful to speak what the LORD has put in my mouth?

13 And Balak said to him, please come with me to another place, from where you will see them: although you only see but the furthest part of them, and will not see them all: and curse them for me there.

14 And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

15 And he said to Balak, Stand here by your burnt offering, while I meet the LORD yonder.

16 And the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again to Balak, and say thus.

17 And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt offering, and the leaders of Moab with him. And Balak said to him, What has the LORD spoken?

18 And he took up his parable, and said, arise, Balak, and hear; Listen to Me, you son of Zippor:

19 God is not a man, that he should lie;

nor the son of man, that he should reconsider:

has He said, and will He not do it?

or has he spoken, and will he not make it good?

20 Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and He has blessed; and I cannot reverse it.

21 He has not observed inequality in Jacob, nor has he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.

22 God brings them from Egypt; He has for them as the strength of a unicorn.

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23 Surely there is no omen against Jacob, nor is there any divination against Israel: at the proper time it will be said of Jacob and of Israel, What God has wrought!

24 Behold, the people will arise as a great lion, and as a young lion lifts up itself: it will not lie down until it eats its prey, and drinks the blood of the slain.

25 Then Balak said to Balaam, Do not curse them at all, nor bless them at all.

26 But Balaam answered and said to Balak, Did I not tell you, saying, Whatever the LORD speaks, that I must do?

27 And Balak said to Balaam, I ask you, please come, I will bring you to another place; perhaps it will please God that you curse them for me from there.

28 And Balak brought Balaam to the top of Peor, that looks toward Jeshimon.

29 And Balaam said to Balak, Build seven altars for me here, and offer seven bulls and seven rams for me here.

30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

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