

To the Servants of the Most High God at Topeka, Kansas, Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024

Balaam and the Blessed People, a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood – Part 2



“Human beings are more alike than unlike and what is true anywhere is true everywhere...” Maya Angelou, *American Poet, 1928 – 2014*. This is the wisdom of diversity. She was the darling of the far left, preferred to be called Dr., but according to her biographer never earned a university degree; winner of the Presidential Medal of Freedom; pusher of the Sodomite agenda extraordinaire; former madam for lesbian prostitutes (per her second autobiography). Thankfully, God

doesn't see it that way.

*Isaiah 5:18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: 19 That say, Let Him (God) make speed, and hasten His work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it! (mocking God) 20 **Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!... 23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!***

*Mat. 25: 31 **When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 **Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in... 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 **Then shall he say also*******

unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: ... 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

2 Pet. 2:15 *Which have forsaken the right way (false prophets, fallen angels, antediluvian world and the inhabitants of Sodom), and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.*

1 Pet. 2:9 *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

Beloved, we see our own iniquity crystal clear. We know and understand there is no good thing in us. Isaiah 1: 6 *From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.* You can't treat what we have – it is a death sentence. Our depravity has no bounds. We understand we are worthy and deserving of hell 2 Sam. 22:5 *When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; 6 The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.* Rev. 3:17 *...thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* We are “little in our own sight” (1 Sam. 15:17). We know that in the end we are nothing but unprofitable worms. Isaiah 6:5 *Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.* Prov 30:2 *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. 3 I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* Paul says he is the chiefest of sinners (1 Tim 1:15). 15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Fear not, thou worm Jacob...* Isaiah 41:14

We understand we are unworthy. Rev. 4:10 *The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Gill. **And cast their crowns before the throne;** signifying, that they received them, from Him that sits upon

it, being by the grace of God what they are; and that they are unworthy to wear them in His presence, being but unprofitable servants in all they do; and hereby also acknowledging their subjection to him as their King and lawgiver. They see themselves as undeserving of the crowns! They openly acknowledge that whatever they have, is due to Christ the King of All.

We see all of our unrighteousness and sin; but God sees something else. 1 John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.* God has bestowed unmerited love, affection, grace and mercy on His people for no other reason than that he chose to.

1st Blessing from Balaam

Numbers 23:9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone (Israel will be separate from the other nations – they are not going to marry their women or take up with the idols and gods of the land), ***and shall not be reckoned among the nations. 10 Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!***

Barnes: ***Dwell alone*** i.e., *apart from others, undisturbed by their (Canaanites) tumults, and therefore in safety and just security. ... This tranquility was realized by the Israelites so long as they clave to God as their shelter and protection. But the inward “dwelling alone” was the indispensable condition of the outward “dwelling alone,” and so soon as the influence of the pagan world affected Israel internally, the external power of paganism prevailed also. Gill: they dwelt a separate people from all others, distinguished by their language, religion, laws, customs, and manner of living, being different both in their clothing, and in their food, from other people; nor had they dealings, nor did they company with those of other nations. Some will proclaim, why can’t we just be like everyone else – this is why.*

Gill: ***and shall not be reckoned among the nations;*** *as belonging to them, shall not be made of any account by them, but be despised and reproached for their religion chiefly;... and though they are now scattered among the people and nations of the world, yet they are not mixed with them, nor reckoned to be a part of them; nor do they reckon themselves to be of them, but are a separate distinct people from them. Thus Israel, or the people of God in a spiritual sense, dwell alone; not solitarily, or without company, in every sense, for they have the company of Father, Son, and Spirit, of angels and saints; but they dwell in God, in Christ, in the house of God, and with one another, separately and distinctly from the world: they are a separate people in the love of God; in the choice of them in Christ; in the covenant of grace made with them in him; in redemption by him; in his intercession for them; in effectual calling;*

as they will be in the resurrection morn, and in heaven to all eternity: and they shall dwell safely, God being around them; Christ the rock and fortress of them; the Spirit in them being greater than he that is in the world; angels their guardians, and they in a strong city, whose walls and bulwarks are salvation: nor are they reckoned among the nations; they are chosen, redeemed, and called out of them, and are not accounted of by them any other than the refuse and offscouring of all things; nor do they reckon themselves to be of the world, but as pilgrims and strangers in it.

Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? - Matthew Henry - *Happy in their numbers, not so few and despicable as they were represented to him, but an innumerable company, which made them both honourable and formidable (#Nu 23:10): Who can count the dust of Jacob? The number of the people was the thing that Balak was vexed at (#Nu 22:3): Moab was afraid of them, because they were many; and God does here by Balaam promote that fear and vexation, foretelling their further increase. Balak would have him see the utmost part of the people (#Nu 22:41), hoping the more he saw of them the more he would be exasperated against them, and throw about his curses with the more keenness and rage; but it proved quite contrary: instead of being angry at their numbers, he admired them. The better acquainted we are with God's people the better opinion we have of them. He takes notice of the number, First, Of the dust of Jacob; that is, the people of Jacob, concerning whom it was foretold that they should be as the dust for number, #Ge 28:14. Thus he owns the fulfilling of the promise made to the fathers, and expects that it should be yet further accomplished.... Of the fourth part of Israel, alluding to the form of their camp, which was cast into four squadrons, under four standards. Note, God's Israel are a very great body, his spiritual Israel are so, and they will appear to be so when they shall all be gathered together unto him in the great day, #Re 7:9.*

*2 Kings 6:15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, **Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.** 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, **LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.***

*Matthew Henry: **Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his!** [The Israelites] are in covenant with God, and let my last end, or future state, be like theirs, or my recompence, namely, in the other world. We see our own sinful state, but God shows Balaam*

their end will be in heaven. *Here, first, it is taken for granted that death is the end of all men; the righteous themselves must die: and it is good for us to think of this with application, as Balaam himself does here, speaking of his own death. Secondly, he goes upon the supposition of the soul's immortality, and a different state on the other side death, to which this is a noble testimony, and an evidence of its being anciently known and believed. For how could the death of the righteous be more desirable than the death of the wicked upon any other account than as it involved happiness in another world, since in the manner and circumstances of dying we see all things come alike to all? Thirdly, He pronounces the righteous truly blessed, not only while they live, but when they die, which makes their death not only more desirable than the death of others, but even more desirable than life itself; for in that sense his wish may be taken. [Next], He shows his opinion of religion to be better than his resolution; there are many who desire to die the death of the righteous, but do not endeavour to live the life of the righteous. Gladly would they have their end like theirs, but not their way. They would be saints in heaven, but not saints on earth. This is the desire of the slothful, which kills him, because his hands refuse to labour. This of Balaam's is only a wish, not a prayer, and it is a vain wish, being only a wish for the end, without any care for the means. Thus far this blessing goes, even to death, and beyond it, as far as the last end.*

2nd Blessing from Balaam

Numbers 23:21 He (God) hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them. 22 God brought them out of Egypt; He hath as it were the strength of an unicorn (God personally dwelt with them to bring them up out of Egypt – the very strength of God is with them). 23 Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought! 24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

Gill: He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel Not that there was no sin in them, nor any observed by the Lord; yet not so as to mark it in strict justice, and punish for it; but he forgave it, hid his face from it, and did not impute it to them; all the three Targums restrain it to idolatry, that there were none among them that worshipped idols, which was the reason why the Lord could not be prevailed upon to curse them: and Aben Ezra observes, that from hence Balak learnt to send women to the Israelites,

to entice them to lewdness, and so to idolatry, that he might be able to carry his point: this is true of the spiritual Israel of God; for though there is sin in them, and which is continually done by them, yet their sins are removed from them, and have been laid on Christ, and he has bore them, and made reconciliation for them, and made an end of them, and has redeemed and saved them from them; and God, by imputing his righteousness to them, has justified them from all their sins, has forgiven all their iniquities, and blotted out all their transgressions, and has cast them behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, and has removed them as far from them as the east is from the west: and when God is said not to see or behold iniquity in his people, it is to be understood, not of his eye of Omniscience, with which he sees not only the sins of all men, but those of his own people also, and takes notice of them in a providential way, and chastises them for them; but of his eye of avenging justice, and purity regards the article of justification, which is a full discharge from all sin, and a perfect covering of it from the justice of God, see #Jer 50:20,

The Lord his God is with him – Gill: and which is his protection and defense, and in vain it is for any to be against him, or seek to hurt him; nothing is a greater happiness, or can be a greater safety, than to have the presence of God; it is this that makes ordinances pleasant and delightful; by this saints are assisted in duty, and supported under trials; it is an instance of distinguishing and amazing goodness, and is what will make heaven be the happy place and state it is: all the three Targums interpret it of the Word of the Lord that is with them, and for their help; who is the Angel of God's presence, Immanuel, God with us; and who has promised to be with his churches and ministers to the end of the world, and will be with them through life, at death, and to all eternity: Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

and the shout of a king is among them; of God their King, the Shechinah of their King, as the Targum of Onkelos; his glorious Majesty, to whom they make their joyful acclamations, upon his appearing among them, and on the account of the victories he gives them over their enemies: or of the King Messiah, as the Targum of Jonathan, the King of kings, the Lord of lords; and so, in an ancient writing of the Jews {k}, this passage is referred to the days of the Messiah: and this shout may respect the joyful sound of the Gospel, one part of which is, that Zion's King reigns, and which proclaims him to be King, and speaks of the things concerning his kingdom, both the kingdom of grace, and the kingdom of glory; some respect may be had to the sounding of the silver trumpets by the priests on various occasions in Israel; see #Nu 10:1-11.

God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.

Gill: being a mighty people, able to push their enemies and subdue them, being numerous and strong, especially as strengthened by the mighty God of Jacob; and therefore their strength is expressed by the strength of this creature; for be it what it will, whether the rhinoceros or the wild ox, or one kind of goats, as Bochart {l} thinks; whatever is meant by the term here must be a strong creature, see #De 33:17 Job 39:10,11 and great is the strength of the spiritual Israel of God, which they have from him to exercise grace, perform duty, withstand and overcome all their spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world.

Barnes - A unicorn A wild bull, the now extinct Aurochs, formidable for its size, strength, speed, and ferocity.

According to this time it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, what hath God wrought! *Gill: As with respect to this time as well as to time past, and with respect to time to come, even with respect to all times; it shall be said with wonder and amazement, what great things has God done for this people! as bringing them out of the land of Egypt, leading them through the Red sea, feeding and supplying them in the wilderness, protecting them from their enemies there, expelling the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and setting them there in their stead; and wonderful things has God done for his spiritual Israel, in the redemption of them by Christ, in the beginning and carrying on the work of grace upon their hearts, by his Spirit; and at last he will bring them all to the heavenly Canaan of rest and happiness, and where this will be a matter of admiration with them to all eternity, what has God done for us!*

Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain. *Gill: as the lion does when it has seized on a creature, tears it to pieces, eats its flesh and drinks its blood: this may refer to the slaughter of the Midianites that would be quickly made, and among the slain of whom Balaam himself was, #Nu 31:7,8, and to the slaughter and conquest of the Canaanites under Joshua, and taking their spoils. This is nothing less than a total victory. The people of God will always prevail through Christ.*

Third Blessing From Balaam

Numbers 24:5 ...How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! 6 As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters. 7 He shall pour the water out

of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. 8 God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows. 9 He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

Calvin - *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob!* *The internal condition of prosperity enjoyed by the people is described by various similitudes akin to each other, and expressive of the same thing. He compares them to valleys and well-watered gardens, and then to trees which were rendered succulent by abundance of moisture, and finally to fields whose seeds imbibe fatness from the waters.*

Matthew Henry - *Their fruitfulness and increase.* *This may be intended by those similitudes (#Nu 24:6) of the valleys, gardens, and trees, as well as by those expressions (#Nu 24:7), He shall pour the water out of his buckets; that is, God shall water them with his blessing like rain from heaven, and then his seed shall be in many waters. Compare #Ho 2:23, I will sow her unto me in the earth. And waters are in scripture put for peoples, and multitudes, and nations. This has been fulfilled in the wonderful increase of that nation and their vast multitude even in their dispersion.*

Matthew Henry - - *Agag* - *Their honour and advancement.* *As the multitude of the people is the honour of the prince, so the magnificence of the prince is the honour of the people; Balaam therefore foretells that their king shall be higher than Agag. Agag, it is probable, was the most potent monarch in those parts; Balaam knew of none more considerable than he was; he rose above the rest of his neighbours. But Balaam foretells that Israel's chief commander, who, after Moses, was Joshua, should be more great and honourable than ever Agag was, and make a far better figure in history.*

he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.

Matthew Henry - *He looks forward to their future conquests: He shall eat up the nations his enemies; that is, "He shall not only destroy and devour them as easily and irresistibly as a*

lion does his prey, but he shall himself be strengthened, and fattened, and enriched, by their spoils."

*Matthew Henry - Their courage and security: **He lay down as a lion, as a great lion**, #Nu 24:9. Now he does so in the plains of Moab, and asks no leave of the king of Moab, nor is he in fear of him; shortly will he do so in Canaan. When he has torn his prey, he will take his repose, quiet from the fear of evil, and bid defiance to all his neighbours; for who shall stir up a sleeping lion? It is observed ... that they do not retire into places of shelter to sleep, but lie down any where, knowing that none dares meddle with them: thus secure were Israel in Canaan, chiefly in the days of David and Solomon; and thus is the righteous bold as a lion (#Pr 28:1), not to assault others, but to repose themselves, because God maketh them to dwell in safety, #Ps 4:8.*

*Matthew Henry - Their interest, and influence upon their neighbours. Their friends, and those in alliance with them, were happy: **Blessed is he that blesseth thee**; those that do them any kindness will certainly fare the better for it. But their enemies, and those in arms against them, were certainly miserable: Cursed is he that curseth thee; those that do them any injury do it at their peril; for God takes what is done to them, whether good or evil, as done to himself. Thus he confirms the blessing of Abraham (#Ge 12:3), and speaks as if therefore he did at this time bless Israel, and not curse them, because he desired to share in the blessing of Israel's friends and dreaded the curse on Israel's enemies.*

Balaam knew better than to teach the children of Israel to sin, but he did it anyway. According to his words, the Lord dealt with him. In Numbers 31, when the Lord sent Moses to avenge the children of Israel on the Midianites (after the Baal-peor folly in Numbers 28) "...*Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*"

I will get to 1 Pet 2:9 in my next sermon. 1 Pet. 2:9 *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

I love you all. Amen.