

## Lesson V.

## BALAK AND BALAAM

November 2, 1913

**BETWEEN THE LESSONS**—Chs. 20 : 14-22 : 1 narrate the journey of Israel from Kadesh to the plains of Moab opposite Jericho.

**GOLDEN TEXT**—A doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways.—James 1 : 8 (Rev. Ver.).

Memorize vs. 12, 13. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Numbers 22 : 2-6 ; 24 : 10-19. Study Numbers 22 : 1 to 23 : 10. Read Numbers, chs. 21-24.

2 And Ba'lak the son of Zip'por saw all that Is'rael had done to the Am'orites.

3 And Mo'ab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many ; and Mo'ab was distressed because of the children of Is'rael.

4 And Mo'ab said unto the elders of Mid'ian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the or licketh up the grass of the field. And Ba'lak the son of Zip'por was king of the Mo'abites at that time.

5 He sent messengers therefore unto Ba'lam the son of Be'or to Pe'thor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from E'gypt : behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me :

6 Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people ; for they are too mighty for me : peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land : for I wot that he whom thou bleesest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.

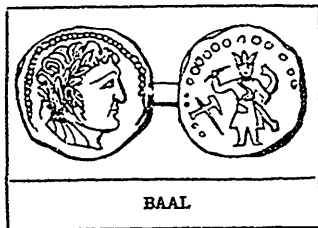
Ch. 24 : 10 And Ba'lak's anger was kindled against Ba'lam, and he amote his hands together : and Ba'lak said unto Ba'lam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times.

11 Therefore now flee thou to thy place : I thought to promote thee unto great honour ; but, lo, the Lord

**Revised Version**—multitude ; <sup>1</sup>is ; <sup>2</sup>Moab ; <sup>3</sup>And he sent messengers unto ; <sup>4</sup>River, to ; <sup>5</sup>know ; <sup>6</sup>word ; <sup>7</sup>Omit but ; <sup>8</sup>speaketh ; <sup>9</sup>Omit therefore ; <sup>10</sup>saith ; <sup>11</sup>eye was closed saith. He saith which heareth ; <sup>12</sup>knoweth ; <sup>13</sup>seeth ; <sup>14</sup>down, and having ; <sup>15</sup>Omit shall ; <sup>16</sup>forth a star ; <sup>17</sup>through ; <sup>18</sup>break down all the sons of tumult ; <sup>19</sup>which were ; <sup>20</sup>While Israel doeth ; <sup>21</sup>And ; <sup>22</sup>one have ; <sup>23</sup>the remnant from.

**Daily Readings**—(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)—M.—Balak and Balaam, Num. 22 : 2-6. T.—Balak and Balaam, Num. 24 : 10-19. W.—Balaam's journey, Num. 22 : 20-35. Th.—Balaam's parable, Num. 23 : 1-10. F.—Balaam's prophecy, Num. 24 : 1-9. S.—Serving two masters, Luke 16 : 13-17. B.—Strength for the unstable, James 1 : 1-8.

## THE LESSON EXPLAINED



I. BALAK'S REQUEST.—2-7. Balak the son of Zippor. Zippor means "a little bird." Zipporah, the name of Moses' wife, is the feminine.

**The Amorites** ; a nation east of the Jordan over whom Israel had won a great victory (see ch. 21 : 21-32). They were akin to the people living north of them ruled by Og king of Bashan, who also suffered defeat from Israel, ch. 21 : 33-35. **Moab** ; that is, Balak the king of Moab, the region east of the Dead Sea and the southernmost section of the Jordan. **Elders of Mid'ian** ; a people whose territory lay across the Gulf of Akabah (the eastern arm of the Red Sea) from Arabia and who roamed as far as Moab's eastern border. These made common cause with Moab in their fear of Israel.

5, 6. **Sent messengers** ; Balak's first deputation. **Balaam** ; "the conqueror of the people ;" a name pointing to a reputation for mighty power. **Beor** ;

bath kept thee back from honour.

12 And Ba'lam said unto Ba'lak, Spake I not also to the messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying,

13 If Ba'lak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind ; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak ?

14 And now, behold, I go unto my people : come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do thy people in the latter days.

15 And he took up his parable, and said, Ba'lam the son of Be'or hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said :

16 He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open :

17 I shall see him, but not now : I shall behold him, but not nigh : there shall come a Star out of Ja'cob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Is'rael, and shall smite the corners of Mo'ab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

18 And E'dom shall be a possession, Se'ir also shall be a possession for his enemies ; and Is'rael shall do valiantly.

19 Out of Ja'cob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

And he sent messengers unto ; <sup>1</sup>River, to ; <sup>2</sup>know ; <sup>3</sup>eye was closed saith. He saith which heareth ; <sup>4</sup>forth a star ; <sup>5</sup>through ; <sup>6</sup>break down all the sons of tumult ; <sup>7</sup>which were ; <sup>8</sup>While Israel doeth ; <sup>9</sup>And ; <sup>10</sup>one have ; <sup>11</sup>the remnant from.

"burning." Pethor . . by the River (Rev. Ver.) ; the Euphrates, 400 miles eastward from Moab. **Land of his people** ; his native land. **Curse me this people**. "Balak wished to have the Israelites placed under a powerful spell, in the hope of thus being able more effectively to crush the dreaded invaders." (Century Bible.) **I know** (Rev. Ver.), etc. Balaam's fame as a powerful seer or prophet was widespread.

Balaam, having consulted the Lord, is forbidden to go with Balak's messengers or to curse the Israelites, since they were blessed of God. (Vs. 7-14.) Balak thereupon sends a second and more honorable deputation, and Balaam receives permission from God to go with Balak's messengers, but not to carry out Balak's purpose. Balaam, however, greedy for Balak's reward, took this for permission to do what the king had asked. (Vs. 15-21.) In vs. 22-34 we have the story of how God used Balaam's ass to turn him back, and vs. 35-41 tell of Balak's meeting Balaam, who, after a sacrificial feast, is conducted to a commanding height from which he could see the Israelitish host. Chs. 23 : 1 to 24 : 9 contain three utterances of Balaam, in which, under divine direction, he does not curse, but blesses, Israel.

**II. BALAK'S ANGER**.—Ch. 24 : 10-14. Balak's anger was kindled ; at Balaam's refusal to curse