

Torah Portion #40: Balak (בלק) "destroyer"

Torah ~ Num. 22:2-25:9 | Prophets ~ Micah 5:6-6:8 | New Covenant ~ 2 Pt. 2:1-22; Jude 1:1-25; Rev. 2:14-16

Balaam's Blessing

In this Torah portion, three times Balaam attempts to curse Israel in *Numbers 23 & 24*. Each time the Lord changed the words of Balaam's intended curse into a blessing. This shows us that the enemy can not curse those whom God has blessed. *Romans 8:28a "Now we know that all things work together for good for those who love God" TLV*

Psalms 1:1-6 says the extent of our blessing is based on obedience to the Lord, for there is consequences for our choices.

Even in the New Testament we find this say principle of blessing and cursing based on obedience. In *Matthew 5:3-12* we have the Beatitudes where Yeshua tells us that we will be blessed when we obey the Lord and cursed when we disobey.

Blessings of the Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3 says those who are "poor in Spirit" [humble, non-prideful and grateful] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:4 says those who "mourn" [cry out for repentance from their lawlessness] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:5 says those who are "meek" [loving, caring and kind] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:6 says those who seek "righteousness" [seek to have a Godly standard of living] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:7 says those who are "merciful" [showing forgiveness and grace] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:8 says those who are "pure in heart" [whose conscience has been made clean] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:9 says those who are "peacemakers" [those that turns the other cheek and prays for peace] will be blessed.

Matthew 5:10 says those who are "persecuted" [because we are followers of Yeshua and set apart] will be blessed.

Curses of the Beatitudes

Luke's telling of the Beatitudes not only has the blessings but also the woes (curses) for disobedience in *Luke 6:24-26*.

Luke 6:24 says woe to you who are "rich" [greedy, selfish, and uncaring] in spirit.

Luke 6:25 says woe to you who are "full" [full of oneself, non-humble and prideful] toward others.

Luke 6:25 says Woe to you who are "laughing" [mocking and making fun of] others.

Luke 6:26 says woe to you when people "speak well of you" [follows you as their Lord] instead of God.

Is this Legalism?

Many people view this type of teaching as legalism, but that is because they have a misunderstanding of the definition.

Legalism is a term used to describe a teaching that emphasizing a system of rules and regulations for attaining salvation.

Another term that is mistakenly associated with legalism is "Under the Law". But to be Under the Law means to be under the ultimate "punishment for violating the Law", which is the curse of "spiritual death and separation from God".

Galatians 3:13 says that Yeshua has saved us from the "curse of the Law" [spiritual death and separation from God], but we still have consequences for our actions. Yeshua has given us power, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to be obedient to the Torah. Therefore we can avoid the curses and receive the blessings.

Other examples in the New Testament

Matthew 5:17-19 says that none of God's Word is done away with and that our obedience to the Word will be rewarded.

Mt. 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." ESV

Galatians 6:7 "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." NIV

John 5:14b "Look, you've been healed! Stop sinning, so nothing worse happens to you." TLV

In Conclusion

Ephesians 2:8-10 "(8) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not from yourselves—it is the gift of God. (9) It is not based on deeds, so that no one may boast. (10) For we are His workmanship—created in Messiah Yeshua for good deeds, which God prepared beforehand so we might walk in them." TLV