

RUSSELL SANDERS

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JESUS' PRE-INCARNATION MANIFESTATIONS

PART 12 – Balaam

Numbers chapters 22-25 tell the story of Balaam and Balak. Israel, with Moses, had encamped in the plains of Moab where Balak, the king, lived. He knew how Israel had conquered many other kings. He was fearful as he looked upon the large host (army) of Israelites.

He knew the reputation of Balaam as an anointed prophet. He sent for him to come and curse Israel. Initially, Balaam declined the request. In Numbers 22:18b he said, ***“I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD (Jehovah) my God, to do less or more.”*** (KJV)

Yes, the non-Israelite Balaam knew the same God as Moses did, a proof that Jehovah would at times reveal himself to certain people who lived among the pagans. Young's literal Translation most accurately renders verse 18b as ***“I am not able to pass over the command of JEHOVAH my God, to do a little or a great thing.”*** Balaam knew Jehovah.

Nevertheless, Balaam was told by God to go with the men but told not to curse Israel, ***“for they are blessed.”*** (vs. 12b)

As Balaam traveled to Balak riding upon his ass (donkey), ***“the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way”*** with a drawn sword (vs. 23). The donkey refused to go further despite Balaam whipping him. The LORD (vs. 28) opened the mouth of the ass to speak to Balaam. Then in vs. 31, ***“The LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way...”*** Yes, Jesus appeared in physical form to Balaam and an extensive conversation took place.

As a result, Balaam's encounter with Balak brought an important prophecy from Balaam of Israel's blessing from Jehovah and their prosperity ***“among the nations.”*** (Numbers 23:9b)

Numbers 23:16 again says, ***“And the LORD (Jehovah) met Balaam (in person), and put a word in his mouth...”***

Jehovah gave his word personally to Balaam to let the whole pagan world know that Israel was his own blessed people. Israel is still God's people to this very day. We, as Christ followers, are grafted in as his people also.

Jesus (the manifestation of Jehovah) is the vine, and we are the branches grafted into the vine.