
Day 42 – February 11

Establishment of a Nation (1525 – 1400 BCE)
Blessings and Prophecy of Balaam

Readings: *Numbers 22:1-41; 23:1-30; 24:1-25*

Reflections:

- This whole story of Balaam is one of those hard to believe passages in the Bible. Here are a few key points to consider:
 - This story shows again how God knows people who are not within Israel. Balaam is a Gentile diviner and not the type of person you would expect God to know. Here we see that God is Lord of everyone and everything.
 - This also shows that God's purposes will be done. It doesn't matter how hard you try, God's purposes will prevail.
 - Now with this said, there is one point to remember. It looks like God gets angry for no reason whatsoever. It is probably safe to assume that something is going on in Balaam's heart that makes God angry although we don't know what it is. The whole part about the donkey talking is bazaar because it is portrayed as if Balaam thinks it is normal. Now having said his, it may have been a "spiritual dialogue" in his head. Many pagan diviners believe they could talk to animals so this may actually be God speaking to Balaam in a way that Balaam would understand (similar to him using stars for the eastern astrologers to get them to go see Jesus after his birth.)
- In Balaam's pronouncements, there are number of key things to note:
 - “God is not a man that he should lie, nor a man that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?” This is a good word for those who are waiting for God to fulfill his promises.
 - We should also notice that it is clear that Balaam uses sorcery and yet, in this case the Spirit of the Lord comes on him. This should remind us that in the story of Israel the Spirit coming on a person does not mean they are a flawless, righteous person. It simply means God wants to use them in that moment for a specific task. The book of Judges is full of this.

- His prophecy of the coming king, the Christ, is that he will be a military conqueror. In the end it proves that the Christ will destroy all spiritual enemies but show mercy on all those viewed as enemies by the Israelites.