

BSF Reading; Revelation #5

FIRST DAY:

Read the lesson notes

SECOND DAY:

Read Revelation 2:12-17

To the Church in Pergamum

[12] “To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. [13] I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.

[14] Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. [15] Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. [16] Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

[17] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

Question 4a

Numbers 31:16, 25:1-9; [16] “They were the ones who followed Balaam's advice and were the means of turning the Israelites away from the LORD in what happened at Peor, so that a plague struck the LORD's people.

[25:1] While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, [2] who invited them to the sacrifices to

their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. [3] So Israel joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor. And the LORD's anger burned against them.

[4] The LORD said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of these people, kill them and expose them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the LORD's fierce anger may turn away from Israel.”

[5] So Moses said to Israel's judges, “Each of you must put to death those of your men who have joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor.”

[6] Then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

[7] When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand [8] and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear through both of them—through the Israelite and into the woman's body. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped; [9] but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000.

Numbers 22-25;

See end for these chapters

Question 4b

Ephesians 6:17; [17] Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12; [12] For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Question 5

Exodus 16:34, 28:21; [34] As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna in front of the Testimony, that it might be kept.

[21] There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes.

John 6:35; [35] Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

1 Peter 2:5; [5] you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

THIRD DAY

Read Revelation 2:18-29

To the Church in Thyatira

[18] “To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. [19] I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.

[20] Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. [21] I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. [22] So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. [23] I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. [24] Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you): [25] Only hold on to what you have until I come.

[26] To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations —

[27] ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’ —

just as I have received authority from my Father.

[28] I will also give him the morning star. [29] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Question 7b

1 Kings 16:29-33, 19:1-2, 21:1-

28; [29] In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years.

[30] Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. [31] He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. [32] He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. [33] Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.

[19:1] Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. [2] So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.”

Naboth's Vineyard

[21:1] Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. [2] Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.”

[3] But Naboth replied, “The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.”

[4] So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.

[5] His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?”

[6] He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I

will give you another vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

[7] Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

[8] So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him. [9] In those letters she wrote: "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people."

[10] But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

[11] So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. [12] They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people. [13] Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, "Naboth has cursed both God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. [14] Then they sent word to Jezebel: "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

[15] As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead." [16] When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

[17] Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: [18] "Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it."

[19] Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!'"

[20] Ahab said to Elijah, "So you have found me, my enemy!" "I have found you," he answered, "because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD."

[21] 'I am going to bring disaster on you. I will consume your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free. [22] I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat

and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin.'

[23] "And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

[24] "Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country."

[25] (There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife. [26] He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the LORD drove out before Israel.)

[27] When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.

[28] Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: [29] "Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son."

2 Kings 9:30-37; [30] Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard about it, she painted her eyes, arranged her hair and looked out of a window. [31] As Jehu entered the gate, she asked, "Have you come in peace, Zimri, you murderer of your master?"

[32] He looked up at the window and called out, "Who is on my side? Who?" Two or three eunuchs looked down at him. [33] "Throw her down!" Jehu said. So they threw her down, and some of her blood splattered the wall and the horses as they trampled her underfoot.

[34] Jehu went in and ate and drank. "Take care of that cursed woman," he said, "and bury her, for she was a king's daughter." [35] But when they went out to bury her, they found nothing except her skull, her feet and her hands. [36] They went back and told Jehu, who said, "This is the word of the LORD that he spoke through his servant Elijah the Tishbite: On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs will devour Jezebel's flesh. [37] Jezebel's body will be like refuse on the ground in the plot at Jezreel, so that no one will be able to say, 'This is Jezebel.'"

FOURTH DAY:

Read Revelation 2:18-29

To the Church in Thyatira

[18] “To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. [19] I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.

[20] Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. [21] I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. [22] So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. [23] I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. [24] Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you): [25] Only hold on to what you have until I come.

[26] To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations —

[27] ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’ —

just as I have received authority from my Father.

[28] I will also give him the morning star. [29] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Question 10

Matthew 28:18-20; [18] Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything I

have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

John 14:23; [23] Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

1 Corinthians 6:2-3; [2] Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? [3] Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!

FIFTH DAY:

Read Revelation 3:1-6

To the Church in Sardis

[3:1] “To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. [2] Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. [3] Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

[4] Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. [5] He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. [6] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Question 12

Daniel 12:3; [3] Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Matthew 13:43; [43] Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Romans 13:14; [14] Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Jude 23; save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Revelation 19:8; [8] Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”
(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

SIXTH DAY:

Review Revelation 2:12-3:6

To the Church in Pergamum

[12] “To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. [13] I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.

[14] Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. [15] Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. [16] Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

[17] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

To the Church in Thyatira

[18] “To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

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[20] Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. [21] I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. [22] So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. [23] I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. [24] Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you): [25] Only hold on to what you have until I come.

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just as I have received authority from my Father.

[28] I will also give him the morning star. [29] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3

To the Church in Sardis

[3:1] “To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. [2] Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. [3] Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come

like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

[4] Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. [5] He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. [6] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Numbers 22

Balak Summons Balaam

[22:1] Then the Israelites traveled to the plains of Moab and camped along the Jordan across from Jericho.

[2] Now Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, [3] and Moab was terrified because there were so many people. Indeed, Moab was filled with dread because of the Israelites.

[4] The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, “This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field.”

So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, [5] sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the River, in his native land. Balak said:

“A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. [6] Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed.”

[7] The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination. When they came to Balaam, they told him what Balak had said.

[8] “Spend the night here,” Balaam said to them, “and I will bring you back the answer the LORD gives me.” So the Moabite princes stayed with him.

[9] God came to Balaam and asked, “Who are these men with you?”

[10] Balaam said to God, “Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, sent me this message: [11] ‘A people that has come out of Egypt covers the face of the land. Now come and put a curse on them for me. Perhaps then I will be able to fight them and drive them away.’”

[12] But God said to Balaam, “Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed.”

[13] The next morning Balaam got up and said to Balak's princes, “Go back to your own country, for the LORD has refused to let me go with you.”

[14] So the Moabite princes returned to Balak and said, “Balaam refused to come with us.”

[15] Then Balak sent other princes, more numerous and more distinguished than the first. [16] They came to Balaam and said:

“This is what Balak son of Zippor says: Do not let anything keep you from coming to me, [17] because I will reward you handsomely and do whatever you say. Come and put a curse on these people for me.”

[18] But Balaam answered them, “Even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold, I could not do anything great or small to go beyond the command of the LORD my God. [19] Now stay here tonight as the others did, and I will find out what else the LORD will tell me.”

[20] That night God came to Balaam and said, “Since these men have come to summon you, go with them, but do only what I tell you.”

Balaam's Donkey

[21] Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. [22] But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. [23] When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat her to get her back on the road.

[24] Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between two vineyards, with walls on both sides. [25] When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat her again.

[26] Then the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. [27] When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat her with his staff. [28] Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, “What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?”

[29] Balaam answered the donkey, “You have made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now.”

[30] The donkey said to Balaam, “Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?” “No,” he said.

[31] Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown.

[32] The angel of the LORD asked him, “Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. [33] The donkey saw me and

turned away from me these three times. If she had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared her.”

[34] Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, “I have sinned. I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now if you are displeased, I will go back.”

[35] The angel of the LORD said to Balaam, “Go with the men, but speak only what I tell you.” So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

[36] When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him at the Moabite town on the Arnon border, at the edge of his territory. [37] Balak said to Balaam, “Did I not send you an urgent summons? Why didn't you come to me? Am I really not able to reward you?”

[38] “Well, I have come to you now,” Balaam replied. “But can I say just anything? I must speak only what God puts in my mouth.”

[39] Then Balaam went with Balak to Kiriath Huzoth. [40] Balak sacrificed cattle and sheep, and gave some to Balaam and the princes who were with him. [41] The next morning Balak took Balaam up to Bamoth Baal, and from there he saw part of the people.

Numbers 23

Balaam's First Oracle

[23:1] Balaam said, “Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me.”

[2] Balak did as Balaam said, and the two of them offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

[3] Then Balaam said to Balak, “Stay here beside your offering while I go aside. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet with me. Whatever he reveals to me I will tell you.” Then he went off to a barren height.

[4] God met with him, and Balaam said, “I have prepared seven altars, and on each altar I have offered a bull and a ram.”

[5] The LORD put a message in Balaam's mouth and said, “Go back to Balak and give him this message.”

[6] So he went back to him and found him standing beside his offering, with all the princes of Moab.

[7] Then Balaam uttered his oracle:
“Balak brought me from Aram,
the king of Moab from the eastern mountains.
'Come,' he said, 'curse Jacob for me;
come, denounce Israel.'

[8] How can I curse
those whom God has not cursed?
How can I denounce
those whom the LORD has not denounced?

[9] From the rocky peaks I see them,
from the heights I view them.
I see a people who live apart

and do not consider themselves one of the nations.

[10] Who can count the dust of Jacob
or number the fourth part of Israel?

Let me die the death of the righteous,
and may my end be like theirs!”

[11] Balak said to Balaam, “What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies, but you have done nothing but bless them!”

[12] He answered, “Must I not speak what the LORD puts in my mouth?”

Balaam's Second Oracle

[13] Then Balak said to him, “Come with me to another place where you can see them; you will see only a part but not all of them. And from there, curse them for me.” [14] So he took him to the field of Zophim on the top of Pisgah, and there he built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

[15] Balaam said to Balak, “Stay here beside your offering while I meet with him over there.”

[16] The LORD met with Balaam and put a message in his mouth and said, “Go back to Balak and give him this message.”

[17] So he went to him and found him standing beside his offering, with the princes of Moab. Balak asked him, “What did the LORD say?”

[18] Then he uttered his oracle:

“Arise, Balak, and listen;
hear me, son of Zippor.

[19] God is not a man, that he should lie,
nor a son of man, that he should change his mind.

Does he speak and then not act?
Does he promise and not fulfill?

[20] I have received a command to bless;
he has blessed, and I cannot change it.

[21] “No misfortune is seen in Jacob,
no misery observed in Israel.

The LORD their God is with them;
the shout of the King is among them.

[22] God brought them out of Egypt;
they have the strength of a wild ox.

[23] There is no sorcery against Jacob,
no divination against Israel.

It will now be said of Jacob
and of Israel, ‘See what God has done!’

[24] The people rise like a lioness;
they rouse themselves like a lion
that does not rest till he devours his prey
and drinks the blood of his victims.”

[25] Then Balak said to Balaam, “Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all!”

[26] Balaam answered, “Did I not tell you I must do whatever the LORD says?”

Balaam's Third Oracle

[27] Then Balak said to Balaam, “Come, let me take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God to

let you curse them for me from there.” [28] And Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, overlooking the wasteland.

[29] Balaam said, “Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me.”

[30] Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

Numbers 24

[24:1] Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not resort to sorcery as at other times, but turned his face toward the desert.

[2] When Balaam looked out and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the Spirit of God came upon him [3] and he uttered his oracle:

“The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of one whose eye sees clearly,

[4] the oracle of one who hears the words of God, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened:

[5] “How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel!

[6] “Like valleys they spread out, like gardens beside a river, like aloes planted by the LORD, like cedars beside the waters.

[7] Water will flow from their buckets; their seed will have abundant water.

“Their king will be greater than Agag; their kingdom will be exalted.

[8] “God brought them out of Egypt; they have the strength of a wild ox.

They devour hostile nations and break their bones in pieces; with their arrows they pierce them.

[9] Like a lion they crouch and lie down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse them?

“May those who bless you be blessed and those who curse you be cursed!”

[10] Then Balak’s anger burned against Balaam. He struck his hands together and said to him, “I summoned you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them these three times. [11] Now leave at once and go home! I said I would reward you handsomely, but the LORD has kept you from being rewarded.”

[12] Balaam answered Balak, “Did I not tell the messengers you sent me, [13] ‘Even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold, I could not do anything of my own accord, good or bad, to go beyond the command of the LORD—and I must say only what the LORD says?’ [14] Now I am going back to my people, but come, let me warn you of what this people will do to your people in days to come.”

Balaam's Fourth Oracle

[15] Then he uttered his oracle:

“The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of one whose eye sees clearly, [16] the oracle of one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened:

[17] “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near.

A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the sons of Sheth.

[18] Edom will be conquered; Seir, his enemy, will be conquered, but Israel will grow strong.

[19] A ruler will come out of Jacob and destroy the survivors of the city.”

Balaam's Final Oracles

[20] Then Balaam saw Amalek and uttered his oracle:

“Amalek was first among the nations, but he will come to ruin at last.”

[21] Then he saw the Kenites and uttered his oracle: “Your dwelling place is secure, your nest is set in a rock;

[22] yet you Kenites will be destroyed when Asshur takes you captive.”

[23] Then he uttered his oracle:

“Ah, who can live when God does this?”

[24] Ships will come from the shores of Kittim; they will subdue Asshur and Eber, but they too will come to ruin.”

[25] Then Balaam got up and returned home and Balak went his own way.

Numbers 25

Moab Seduces Israel

[25:1] While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, [2] who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. [3] So Israel joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor. And the LORD’s anger burned against them.

[4] The LORD said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of these people, kill them and expose them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the LORD’s fierce anger may turn away from Israel.”

[5] So Moses said to Israel’s judges, “Each of you must put to death those of your men who have joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor.”

[6] Then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

[7] When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear

in his hand [8] and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear through both of them—through the Israelite and into the woman's body. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped; [9] but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000.

[10] The LORD said to Moses, [11] “Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites; for he was as zealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. [12] Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. [13] He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites.”

[14] The name of the Israelite who was killed with the Midianite woman was Zimri son of Salu, the leader of a Simeonite family. [15] And the name of the Midianite woman who was put to death was Cozbi daughter of Zur, a tribal chief of a Midianite family.

[16] The LORD said to Moses, [17] “Treat the Midianites as enemies and kill them, [18] because they treated you as enemies when they deceived you in the affair of Peor and their sister Cozbi, the daughter of a Midianite leader, the woman who was killed when the plague came as a result of Peor.”