

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF NUMBERS, Book 4, Week 23

The Vision of the All-sufficient One— the Divine View of God's People

MC Hymns: 977, 1226

Scripture Reading: Num. 23:7-12, 19-26; 24:3-9; Rev. 21:9-10; Acts 26:19

- Numbers 23: 7 - And he took up his parable and said, From Aram **Balak** brought me, The king of Moab from the mountains of the East. Come, curse Jacob for me; And come, denounce Israel!
- Numbers 23: 8 - How shall I curse whom God has not cursed? And how can I denounce whom Jehovah has not denounced?
- Numbers 23: 9 - For from the top of the rocks I see him, And from the hills I behold him. **Here is a people who live alone And do not reckon themselves among the nations.**
- Numbers 23:10 - **Who can count the dust of Jacob**, Or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the upright, And let my latter end be like theirs!
- Numbers 23:11 - And Balak said to Balaam, What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, but now you have altogether blessed them.
- Numbers 23:12 - And he answered and said, Shall I not take care to speak what **Jehovah puts in my mouth**?
- Numbers 23:19 - God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not establish it?
- Numbers 23:20 - Now I have received a word to bless; Since He has blessed, then I cannot reverse it.
- Numbers 23:21 - **He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen trouble in Israel**; Jehovah their God is with them, And the shout of a king is among them.
- Numbers 23:22 - God is the One who brought them forth out of Egypt; He has as it were the horns of the wild ox.
- Numbers 23:23 - Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, Nor is there any divination against Israel. Now it shall be said of Jacob And of Israel, What has God wrought!
- Numbers 23:24 - See, a people rises up like a lioness, And like a lion they lift themselves up. They shall not lie down until they eat the prey And drink the blood of the slain.
- Numbers 23:25 - And Balak said to Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.
- Numbers 23:26 - But Balaam answered and said to Balak, Did I not tell you, saying, All that Jehovah speaks, that I must do?
- Numbers 24: 3 - And he took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of Beor declares, And the man whose eye is opened declares;
- Numbers 24: 4 - He declares, he who **hears** the words of God, Who **sees** the **vision** of the **All-sufficient One**, Falling down, but having his eyes uncovered:
- Numbers 24: 5 - **How fair are your tents, O Jacob**, Your tabernacles, O Israel!
- Numbers 24: 6 - Like **valleys** they are spread forth, Like **gardens** beside a **river**, Like **aloes** which Jehovah has **planted**, Like **cedars** beside **water**.
- Numbers 24: 7 - Water shall flow from his buckets, And his seed shall be in many waters, And his king shall be higher than Agag, And his kingdom shall be exalted.
- Numbers 24: 8 - God is the One who brought him forth out of Egypt; He has as it were the horns of the wild ox. He shall eat up the nations, his adversaries, And shall break their bones in pieces, And shatter them with his arrows.
- Numbers 24: 9 - He couches; he lies down like a lion And like a lioness; who will rouse him up? **Blessed is everyone who blesses you**, And cursed is everyone who curses you.
- Revelation 21:9 - And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Revelation 21:10 - And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Acts 26:19 - Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly **vision**,

THE FOUR VISIONS IN REVELATION

IN SPIRIT

The **first time** he was **in spirit** on the Lord's Day and saw seven golden lampstands: *"I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet...And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands"* (1:10, 12).

THE LOCAL CHURCHES

In the first vision the apostle John saw the seven golden lampstands, and these golden **lampstands** are the seven local churches. Therefore, the first vision was **the vision of the local churches**.

The **second time** he was **in spirit**, he saw a throne: “*After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, **Come up here**, and I will show you the things that must take place after these things. Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting*” (4:1-2).

THE JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD

In the second vision John saw a throne, and the One who sat on the **throne** had a sealed scroll in His right hand. Out of this scroll there were seven seals, and out of the seven seals were seven trumpets, and included in the seven trumpets were seven bowls. The seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls are the different judgments of God upon the world... **the vision of the divine judgment of God upon this sinful and evil world.**

The **third time**, John was carried away **in spirit** to the wilderness and saw the **great Babylon**: “*He carried me away in spirit into a **wilderness**; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns...And on her forehead there was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*” (17:3, 5)

THE GREAT BABYLON

John was carried away into the **wilderness** and had a clear view. There he saw a sinful **woman** sitting upon a **beast**. This is the third vision. If we read this book carefully with references from other books of the Bible, we will realize that the **woman** **signifies religion**, and the **beast** the **political government**. Strictly speaking, the beast here is the **Roman Empire**, while the woman signifies the **Roman Catholic Church**. A woman joins herself with a beast (i.e., religion joins itself with politics). On her forehead there was a name written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT. This **vision of the great Babylon** is covered in chapters 17 and 18.

The Lord tells us clearly that this woman, the **great Babylon, is a harlot**. She is also called the mother of the harlots. Who are all her daughters? I do not like to say, but I believe we all know. Every Bible student recognizes that the great Babylon signifies the Roman Catholic Church, and the Roman Catholic Church as the great harlot is the mother of many harlots.

What is this great Babylon? It is the mixture of Christianity. The great Babylon is a harlot mother with many harlot daughters. The Roman Catholic Church is the mother, and the **denominations** are the daughters.

The **fourth time**, John was carried away **in spirit** to a high **mountain** and saw **the New Jerusalem**: “*He carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God*” (21:10).

THE NEW JERUSALEM

The fourth vision is that of **the New Jerusalem**, which is covered from chapter 19 through chapter 22. These four visions compose the entire content of the book of Revelation. So we see that this book simply speaks about these four things: the local **churches**, the **world** under God’s judgment, the **great Babylon** as a harlot mother with many harlot daughters, and the **New Jerusalem**.

Day 1

I. We should never underestimate the value of having a proper view of a certain matter; the view **changes us; it affects our entire being —Rev. 21:9-10; Acts 26:19.**

II. In the Bible **vision denotes an extraordinary scene; it refers to a special kind of seeing—a glorious, **inward seeing**—and to the spiritual scenery we see from God—Ezek. 1:1, 4-28; Dan. 7:1, 9-10, 13-14:**

- A. In order to have a **vision**, we need **revelation**, **light**, and **sight**—Eph. 1:17-18a.
- B. The heavenly vision **governs** us, **restricts** us, **controls** us, **directs** us, **preserves** us, **revolutionizes** us, **keeps** us in the genuine **oneness**, and **gives** us the **boldness** to go on—Prov. 29:18a.

- C. Under the heavenly vision we are **directed** toward God's destination, and our life is **controlled** according to God's economy—Phil. 3:13-14; 1 Tim. 1:4.

III. Like Balaam, a Gentile prophet who was brought into a vision, we need to see the vision of the All-sufficient One and have a divine view of God's people—Num. 23:7-12, 19-26; 24:3-9:

- A. The prophet Balaam **heard** the words of God and **saw** the **vision** of the **All-sufficient One**—v. 4; Gen. 17:1, footnote 2.
- B. *"From the top of the rocks I see him, / And from the hills I behold him. / Here is a people who live alone / And do not reckon themselves among the nations"*—Num. 23:9:
1. This word indicates that the children of **Israel were a holy people, a sanctified people** set apart from the nations.
 2. The same is true of the church—1 Cor. 3:17; Eph. 1:4; 5:27; 1 Pet. 2:9.
- C. *"Who can count the dust of Jacob, / Or number the fourth part of Israel? / Let me die the death of the upright, / And let my latter end be like theirs!"*—Num. 23:10:
1. Balaam's word in verse 10a was a blessing of **abundant increase**.
 2. His word in verse 10b was a word of great blessing and appreciation.
- D. *"He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, / Nor has He seen trouble in Israel; / Jehovah their God is with them, / And the shout of a king is among them"*—v. 21:
1. This word was spoken not according to the human view but according to the divine view.
 2. In the sight of God, Israel is **without fault**:
 - a. In themselves God's people have many defects.
 - b. In God's redemption and in Christ they have no defects.
 3. When **God looks at His people**, He does not see them according to what they are in themselves but **according to what they are in Christ**—cf. 2 Cor. 5:16-17.

Day 2

- E. *"How fair are your tents, O Jacob, / Your tabernacles, O Israel!"*—Num. 24:5:
1. Balaam's first parable reveals that **Israel is holy** (23:9); the second, that **Israel is perfect** (v. 21); and the third, that **Israel is beautiful**, as indicated by the word **fair** (24:5).
 2. This will be the actual condition of Israel in the millennium:
 - a. God promised that the descendants of Abraham would **be a blessing to all the nations**—Gen. 12:2-3.
 - b. Eventually, the Jews will be fully blessed by God, and they will be a blessing to the entire human race—Isa. 2:2-3; Zech. 8:20-23.
 3. Balaam's parables also indicate that in its standing the church is holy, **in the sight of God the church is perfect**, and **in appearance the church is beautiful, fair**—cf. Eph. 5:27:
 - a. The church is **sanctified, perfect**, and **beautiful** when it is full of Christ—3:15-21; 4:13, 15.
 - b. Christ is the content, the constituent, and every part of the church as the new man—Col. 3:10-11.
- F. *"Like valleys they are spread forth, / Like gardens beside a river, / Like aloes which Jehovah has planted, / Like cedars beside water. / Water shall flow from his buckets, / And his seed shall be in many waters"*—Num. 24:6-7a:
1. The word concerning **valleys** and **gardens** in verse 6 and concerning water flowing from buckets in verse 7 reveals figuratively that the **church has valleys** (Rev. 2:9-10), that the **church is like a garden** (1 Cor. 3:9b), and that in the church there is an abundance of water (12:13; cf. John 7:38-39).
 2. These are some of the riches concerning the church.
- G. Balaam's word in Numbers 24:7b about Jacob's king being **higher** than Agag and about Jacob's kingdom being **exalted** is a prophecy that eventually has its fulfillment in Christ.

Day 3

- H. *"Blessed is everyone who blesses you, / And cursed is everyone who curses you"*—v. 9b:
1. Instead of **cursing** God's people, Balaam, speaking on behalf of God, altogether **blessed** them.
 2. To bless a person is to speak well of him, to speak positively concerning him—Eph. 1:3.
 3. The more we **praise** the Lord for His people and **speak well** of them in faith, the more we put ourselves under God's **blessing**:
 - a. Those who speak positively concerning the church receive the blessing.
 - b. Those who speak negatively put themselves under a curse.

Balaam spoke four parables to Israel in which there are many prophecies concerning the house of Israel, the nations, and the Messiah.

The **first parable** speaks of the children of Israel **being a people who live alone** and who do not reckon themselves among the nations. They are a **holy people**, a people separated from among the nations unto God. Because they are **blessed**, they received abundant increase. They are as **numberless as dust**. No one will be able to count even the fourth part of Israel.

In the **second parable** Balaam said that God **did not behold iniquity in Jacob**, nor did He see trouble in Israel. It is obvious that the children of Israel had many iniquities, but God does not look at what His redeemed people are in themselves. In God's eyes His people have been redeemed and forgiven; therefore, God can say that they are without iniquity. God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them. They are full of fighting power, having the horns of the wild ox, and nothing is against them. They rise up like a lioness and lift themselves up like a lion.

In the **third parable** Balaam said that **the tents of Jacob are fair**, and the tabernacles of Israel are beautiful. In the sight of God **Israel is holy, sinless, and beautiful**. God has chosen, redeemed, saved, separated, uplifted, perfected, and beautified His people. Israel will be like valleys that spread forth, like gardens beside a river, like aloes planted by Jehovah, and like cedars beside water. The king of Israel will be higher than Agag, and his kingdom will be exalted. **Everyone who blesses Israel will be blessed**, and everyone who curses Israel will be cursed.

The **fourth parable** speaks of a **Star** coming forth out of Jacob and a **Scepter** rising out of Israel. Both the Star and the Scepter refer to Christ. He is the almighty One with all-inclusive power and authority. He will crush the corners of Moab, Balak's country, and break down all the sons of Sheth. Then **the nations will be destroyed, and Jacob will have dominion**. This proves that God is over all; all the nations are under His control and His reign for the fulfillment of His purpose. He rules over the nations so that His economy may be accomplished among the nations through Israel. (Truth Lessons, Level 4, Vol. 2)

Day 4 & Day 5

IV. We need to have a vision concerning the church and see that the church is "Christly," "resurrectionly," and heavenly; these adjectives describe the facts conveyed in the Bible—vv. 17-23; 2:5-6:

- A. The **church** is a matter **in** Christ, **in** resurrection, and **in** ascension in the heavenlies—vv. 5-6:
 1. After Christ terminated the entire old creation through His all-inclusive death, **the church was produced in His resurrection**; the church is absolutely in resurrection, **a new creation** created in Christ's resurrection and by the resurrected Christ—1 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 2:6.
 2. The church has been resurrected **with** Christ, and now the church is **in** ascension, in the heavenlies, **with** Christ—v. 6.
 3. The church is **of** Christ, the church is **of** resurrection, and the church is **of** the heavens.
- B. Such a vision will govern us to the uttermost and rule out everything that is not Christly (of Christ), resurrectionly (of resurrection), or heavenly (of the heavens)—Acts 26:19.

"Christly," "Resurrectionly," and Heavenly

After Christ **terminated** the entire old creation through His all-inclusive death, **the church was produced** in His resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 2:6). The church is an **entity** absolutely in resurrection; it is not natural, nor is it of the old creation. **The church is a new creation created in Christ's resurrection and by the resurrected Christ**. We must see this vision. In addition to seeing that the church was produced in Christ's resurrection, we must also see where the church is. **The church today is in Christ in ascension**. Ephesians 2:6 tells us that the church has been resurrected with Christ, and now the church is seated in the heavenlies with Christ. Therefore, the church is absolutely and purely of the element of Christ, absolutely in resurrection, and absolutely remaining in the heavenlies with Christ. The English language does not give us adequate adjective forms for the nouns Christ and resurrection. We must, therefore, invent some new vocabulary words to communicate such a vision of the church. **We may say that today the church is "Christly," "resurrectionly," and heavenly**. These three adjectives describe the fact conveyed in the Bible. **The church is of Christ; the church is of resurrection; the church is of the heavens**. The church is Christly, resurrectionly, and heavenly. With the church there is no element other than Christ. Such a vision will govern you to the uttermost and will rule out everything that is not Christly (of Christ), resurrectionly (of resurrection), or heavenly (of the heavens). With the believers there is still the flesh of sin, but with the church there is no flesh of sin because **the church was born in resurrection** (1 Pet. 1:3). **The church is a matter in Christ, in resurrection, and in Christ's ascension in the heavenlies**. (Elders' Training, Book 02: The Vision of the Lord's Recovery, Chapter 3, Section 2)

V. We need to learn that the way we look at God's people is a **serious** matter:

- A. Joseph's **two dreams**, both from God, unveiled to him God's divine view concerning the **nature**, **position**, **function**, and **goal** of God's people on earth—Gen. 37:5-9:
1. In his first dream Joseph saw **sheaves in the field** (vv. 7-8); if we see this heavenly dream, then we see that in God's view all His people are sheaves **full of life** to produce food for the meal offering to satisfy God and man (Lev. 2:4-5).
 2. In his second dream Joseph saw **the sun, the moon, and eleven stars** bowing down to him; in God's eternal view, His people are heavenly bodies **full of light**—Gen. 37:9; cf. Rev. 12:1.
 3. If we praise the Lord for His saints being **full of life and light**, we will be the first to participate in life—Gen. 12:2-3; Num. 24:9.

AS A SHEAVES OF LIFE

Joseph had two dreams (37:5-9). In the **first dream** Joseph saw sheaves in the field. This dream reveals that, at the most, Joseph was just a **sheaf** and that, at the worst, his brothers also were **sheaves**. God gave Joseph this dream, and in it he had God's view of his brothers...

... the Lord has shown us that Joseph's dreams reveal the actual situation of God's people in His eyes. **God's people are all sheaves of life**. A sheaf is a bundle of wheat **full of life and life supply**. The sheaves contain life grains which are good for life supply. Do not say, "*I don't like the Israelites, because they are so evil.*" Remember the case of the Gentile prophet Balaam who was bribed to pronounce a curse upon Israel. At that time, Israel actually was evil. Nevertheless, Balaam, under the control of God, said that God had not beheld iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel (Num. 23:21). On the contrary, **in God's eyes all His chosen people are sheaves of life, full of life supply.**

AS THE SUN, THE MOON, AND THE STARS OF LIGHT

... Joseph had two dreams. In Joseph's **second dream** he saw the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowing down to him (Gen. 37:9). This indicates that **in the eyes of God all the condemned and accused people are full of light**. Be careful not to accuse the brothers and sisters. The reigning aspect of the maturity of life never condemns others. Rather, it shepherds and appreciates them. It says, "*Oh, the church life and all the saints are wonderful! The saints are sheaves full of life. How nourishing and satisfying they are! Furthermore, they are heavenly luminaries full of light.*" If you say that it is a lie to speak this way and that you cannot do it, it means that you have not seen the dream, the vision. You are lacking the heavenly view. (Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 110, Section 8)

Day 6

- B. In Numbers 33, the record of the **forty-two stations** of the journey of the Israelites from the land of slavery to the land of rest, there is **no mention of the failures** of the people:
1. If we had only the record in Numbers 33, we would think that in their journey the children of Israel were altogether aggressive, positive, and successful, going from station to station until they reached their goal—the land of rest:
 - a. After reading Numbers 1 through 32, we may have the opinion that there was nothing good with the children of Israel.
 - b. Numbers 33 shows that **in the eyes of God the record regarding them is positive**.
 - c. This indicates that, **in His view, God always considers His people in a positive way**.
 2. **We need to view the church in a heavenly way and realize that all the local churches are parts of the coming New Jerusalem**—Rev. 1:10-12, 20; 21:2, 9-11.
 3. If we have **God's view** of His people, we will see them as God sees them—**chosen, redeemed, saved** from the bondage of the fall, **enjoying** Christ, being **built up** with the Triune God, **formed** into an army to **fight** for God, and **prepared** by God **to possess the all-inclusive Christ** as the good land—Eph. 1:4-7, 11-12; 2:6, 8, 13-16, 21-22; 3:8, 15-21; 4:12-13, 16, 23-24; 5:27; 6:10-18

The record of these **forty-two stations** **does not mention anything about the failures of the people**. If we had only the record in Numbers 33, we would think that in their **journey** the children of Israel were altogether aggressive, positive, and successful, going from one station to another **until they reached their goal—the land of rest**. As a result of our reading of Numbers 1 through 33, we may have the opinion that there was nothing good with the children of Israel. But chapter thirty-three shows us that **in the eyes of God the record regarding them is positive**. This indicates that, in His view, God always considers His people in a positive way. **God looks at His people not from the angle of the bad but from the angle of the good.**

(Life-Study of Numbers, Chapter 31, Section 4)