

LESSON 16
"I Cannot Go Beyond the Word of the Lord"
Numbers 22-24 & 31:1-16

Overview:

Balak, king of Moab, sees the power of Israel and asks Balaam to curse Israel. Says that he can't, but because of money, he considers it. His donkey talks to him. An angel appears. Israel destroys the Midianites including Balaam.

Scriptures:

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
NUMBERS
CHAPTER 22

Balak offers money and cattle and great honors to Balaam to curse Israel—The Lord forbids Balaam so to do—An angel opposes Balaam on the way.

1 AND the children of Israel set forward, and ^apitched (or encamped) in the plains of Moab ^bon^c this side (ie across the Jordan from Jericho) Jordan by Jericho.

2 ¶ And ^aBalak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.

3 And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they *were* many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.

4 And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all *that are* round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor *was* king of the Moabites at that time. (Balak, king of Moab, sees how powerful Israel is and is afraid.)

5 He sent messengers therefore unto ^aBalaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which *is* by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me:

6 Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they *are* too mighty for me(;) peradventure I shall prevail, *that* we may smite them, and *that* I may drive them out of the land(;) for I ~~awot~~ (know) that he whom thou blessest *is* blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. (Balak decides to send messengers to Balaam to see if he will curse Israel.)

7 And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the ^arewards of ^bdivination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.

8 And he said unto them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the LORD shall speak unto me: and the ^aprinces (Heb leaders, rulers) of Moab abode with Balaam. **(Who was Balaam? Was he a prophet and did he hold the Priesthood?)** It is difficult to determine from the record whether or not Balaam was a true prophet of God holding the powers of the priesthood authority. He lived in an area known as Aram, probably named after the son of Kemuel and grandson of Nahor, a cousin of Abraham. Haran, the place of Abraham's first settlement after he left Ur, was a seat for the worship of Jehovah and was also in Aram. Therefore, Balaam could have been one of the few scattered people such as Jethro, who held the priesthood and exercised its power. (Old Testament Student Manual, p. 209) W.W. Phelps said: "Noah's and his son's names are chronicled as among the Son's of God, and so we have the priesthood safely landed this side of the flood. Now as Abraham was born about 292 years after the flood, and Noah lived 350 years, and his sons more, there is no marvel how Melchizedek, or Abraham became priests of the Most High God. They had it from the lineage or hands of Noah. Paul calls Abraham a patriarch, and according to Peter's definition of patriarch, given in Acts 2:29-30, he was a prophet and so God says of him. Moses got his ordination from his father in law Jethro, who was a priest of Midian. The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his son Midian, born of

Keturah, and brought up under the covenant of circumcision. No wonder Balaam was a prophet. No wonder he could not curse Israel: they should have been brethren.” (W.W. Phelps, “Despise Not Prophesyings,” Times and Seasons, 2 (1 February 1841): 299.) Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “Here is a prophet of God who is firmly committed to declare only what the Lord of heaven directs.” (New Era, Apr. 1972, p. 7))

9 And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men *are* these with thee?

10 And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, *saying*,

11 Behold, *there is* a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out.

12 And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they *are* blessed. **(What does God tell Balaam? Don't go with them and don't curse Israel.)**

13 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the LORD refuseth to give me leave to go with you. **(What is Balaam's response? Get out, I'm not coming with you.)**

14 And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said, Balaam refuseth to come with us.

15 ¶ And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they.

16 And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me:

17 For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people. **(What does Balak do? He sends more important messengers and offers Balaam wealth.)**

18 And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.

19 Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the LORD will say unto me more. **(How does Balaam respond? No matter what I will not do it. But I will ask one more time.)**

20 And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, ~~and~~ (if thou wilt) go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou ~~do~~ (speak). **(What was God's answer this time? It sounds like God is giving His permission for Balaam to go, but the JST says: “If the men come to call thee, rise up, if thou wilt go with them, but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, shalt thou speak.”)**

21 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. **(Did Balaam go? Why? To get wealth. See 2 Peter 2:15 - ... who loved the wages of unrighteousness.)**

22 ¶ And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants *were* with him. **(Was God happy about Balaam going? God was angry. What did God do? Sent an angel.)**

23 And the ass ^asaw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

24 But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall *being* on this side, and a wall on that side.

25 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again.

26 And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where *was* no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left.

27 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. **(Did Balaam see the angel? No. How many times did the donkey see the angel? 3 times. What happened after the third time? Balaam starts beating the**

donkey.)

28 And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? **(Then what happened? The donkey spoke to Balaam.)**

29 And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I ^akill thee.

30 And the ^aass said unto Balaam, *Am* not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since *I was* thine unto this day? was I ever ^bwont **(or accustomed)** to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. **(How did Balaam respond? He wasn't even surprised to hear the donkey speak. He was so blinded by the wealth he was going to get.)**

31 Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. **(What does Balaam then see? The angel.)**

32 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because *thy* way is ^aperverse before me:

33 And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive.

34 And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.

35 And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak. **(What does the angel say? The donkey saved your life. Go with the men, but only say what the Lord tells you.)**

36 ¶ And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto a city of Moab, which *is* in the border of Arnon, which *is* in the utmost ^acoast. **(or boundary)**

37 And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?

38 And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.

39 And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjath-huzoth.

40 And Balak offered oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that *were* with him.

41 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost *part* of the people.

CHAPTER 23

The Lord commands Balaam to bless Israel—He does so, saying: Who can count the dust of Jacob? and, What hath God wrought!

1 AND Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here ^aseven oxen and seven rams.

2 And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on *every* altar a bullock and a ram.

3 And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go: peradventure the LORD will come to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he went to ^aan high place **(Heb a bare hill)**. **(What does Balaam do after meeting Balak? 23:1-3, 23:13-16, 23:27-30. Offered sacrifices to the Lord three times. Why did Balaam offer sacrifices? 23:3. So the Lord will find favor in him.**

Was this a bribe to God? Was it wrong for Balaam to offer the sacrifices? **Do you know of any other times when someone asked the Lord for something, was told no, but kept on asking until the Lord said, go ahead, which proved disastrous?** Joseph Smith and the lost manuscript.)

4 And God met Balaam: and he said unto him, I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered upon

every altar a bullock and a ram.

5 And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.

6 And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.

7 And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, *saying*, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, ^adefy (Heb denounce) Israel.

8 How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, *whom* the LORD hath not defied?

9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. (Did Balaam curse Israel? 23:8-10, 20-24, 24:5-9, 17-19. No, he blessed Israel and prophesied about Israel.)

10 Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth *part* of Israel? Let me die the ^adeath of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

11 And Balak said unto ^aBalaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to ^bcurse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed *them* altogether.

12 And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?

13 And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence.

14 ¶ And he brought him into ^athe field of Zophim (Heb a lookout point), to ^bthe top (Heb the summit) of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on *every* altar.

15 And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I meet *the LORD* yonder.

16 And the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

17 And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the LORD spoken?

18 And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:

19 God *is* not a man, that he should ^alie; neither the son of man, that he should ^brepent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he ^cspoken, and shall he not make it good?

20 Behold, I have received *commandment* to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.

21 He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God *is* with him, and the shout of a king *is* among them.

22 God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of ^aan unicorn. (Heb a wild ox)

23 Surely *there is* no enchantment against Jacob, neither *is there* any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!

24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat *of* the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

25 ¶ And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.

26 But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the LORD speaketh, that I must do?

27 ¶ And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.

28 And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that ^alooketh toward Jeshimon. (Heb overlooks the desert)

29 And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.

30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram on *every* altar.

CHAPTER 24

Balaam sees in vision and prophesies of the destiny of Israel—He prophesies of the Messiah: There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.

1 AND when Balaam saw that it ^apleased the LORD to bless Israel, he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding *in his tents* according to their ^atribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.

3 And he took up his ^aparable, (ie figurative discourse) and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said:

4 He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the ^avision of the Almighty, falling *into a trance*, but having his eyes open:

5 How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, *and thy* ^atabernacles, (or dwellings) O Israel!

6 As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the ^atrees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, *and* as cedar trees beside the waters.

7 ^aHe shall pour the water out of his buckets (Heb water shall flow from his branches), and his seed *shall be* in many waters, and his king shall be higher than ^bAgag, (ie the Amalekites) and his kingdom shall be exalted.

8 God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall ^abreak their bones, and ^bpierce *them* through with his arrows.

9 He couched, he lay down as a ^alion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed *is* he that blesseth thee, and cursed *is* he that curseth thee.

10 ¶ And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed *them* these three times.

11 Therefore now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour.

12 And Balaam said unto Balak, Spake I not also to thy messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying, 13 If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do *either* good or bad of mine own ^amind; *but* what the LORD saith, that will I ^bspeak?

14 And now, behold, I go unto my people: come *therefore*, *and* I will ^aadvertise (Heb tell) thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.

15 ¶ And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said:

16 He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, *which* saw the vision of the Almighty, falling *into a trance*, but having his eyes open:

17 I shall see him, but ^anot now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a ^bStar out of Jacob (ie his coming was to be in the future, long after Moses' time), and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of ^cMoab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. (Who is the Star spoken of in 24:17? It is Christ. The heading to Chapter 24 says it is a prophecy of the Messiah. Jewish tradition also believes the Star to be the Messiah.)

18 And ^aEdom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly.

19 Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

20 ¶ And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, ^aAmalek *was* the first of the nations; but his latter end *shall be* that he perish for ever.

21 And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwellingplace, and

thou puttest thy nest in a rock.

22 Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

23 And he took up his parable, and said, Alas, who shall live when God doeth this!

24 And ships *shall come* from the coast of ^aChittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever.

25 And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way.

CHAPTER 31

Moses sends forth 12,000 warriors who destroy Midianites—Prey divided in Israel—None in armies of Israel were lost.

1 AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 ^aAvenge the children of Israel of the ^bMidianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.

3 And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian.

4 Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.

5 So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of *every* tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

6 And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of *every* tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.

7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.

8 And they slew the ^akings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; *namely*, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.

9 And the children of Israel took *all* the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.

10 And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their ^agoodly castles (Heb closed encampments), with fire.

11 And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, *both* of men and of beasts.

12 And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which *are* by Jordan *near* Jericho.

13 ¶ And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the ^aprinces of the congregation (Heb leaders, presidents), went forth to meet them without the camp.

14 And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, *with* the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.

15 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?

16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit ^atrespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

(Since Satan was unsuccessful in cursing Israel, what did he try next? Balaam suggested tempting Israel to sin to lose the Lord's protection. **What sin did Israel do?** Idol worship and sexual sins. **How was this similar to the incident with the golden calf?** Idol worship and the guilty were killed. The older generation who had witnessed the exodus and Sinai had died out. The new generation who were to conquer Canaan had to learn the same lessons over again. **What did Moses command they do to the Midianites?** Kill everyone. **What became of Balaam?** He was killed with everyone else.)

Additional Reading:

2 Peter 2: 15 Which have ^aforsaken the right ^bway, and are gone ^castray, following the way of ^dBalaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the ^ewages of unrighteousness; 16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ^aass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

Jude 1:11 - Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of ^aCain, and ran greedily after the error of ^bBalaam for reward, ^cand perished in the gainsaying of Core.

Revelation 2:14 - But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of ^aBalaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit ^bfornication. (or idolatry)

What is the doctrine of Balaam? Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught that the doctrine of Balaam is “To divine for hire; to give counsel contrary to the divine will; to pervert the right way of the Lord – all with a view to gaining wealth and the honors of men. In effect, to preach for money, or to gain personal power and influence. In the very nature of things such a course is a perversion of the right way of the Lord. (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary: p.451) “What a story this is! Here is a prophet of God who is firmly committed to declare only what the Lord of heaven directs. There does not seem to be the slightest doubt in his mind about the course he should pursue. He represents the Lord, and neither a house full of gold and silver nor high honors offered by the king can sway him from his determined course, which has been charted for him by that God whom he serves. But greed for wealth and lust for honor beckon him. How marvelous it would be to be rich and powerful – as well as having the prophetic powers that already are his. Perhaps the Lord would let him compromise his standards and have some worldly prosperity and power as well as a testimony of the gospel. Of course he knew the gospel was true, as it were, but why should he be denied the things his political file leader could confer? I wonder how often some of us get our direction from the Church and then, Balaam-like, plead for some worldly rewards and finally receive an answer which says, in effect, if you are determined to be a millionaire or to gain this or that worldly honor, go ahead, with the understanding that you will continue to serve the Lord. Then we wonder why things don't work out for us as well as they would have done if we had put first in our lives the things of God's kingdom. What are the rewards of unrighteousness? Do they not include seeking for worldly things when these run counter to the interests of the Church? And don't we all know people who, though they were once firm and steadfast in testimony, are now opposing the Lord's purposes and interests on earth because money and power have twisted their judgment of what should or should not be. Balaam, the prophet, inspired and mighty as he once was, lost his soul in the end because he set his heart on the things of the world rather than the riches of eternity.” (The Story of a Prophet's Madness, New Era, April 1972 p. 7)

Many are called but few are chosen. Balaam was called but refused to be chosen.

Lessons learned from Balaam.

“As we seek to determine whether we have become true Latter-day Saints – inwardly as well as outwardly – it soon becomes apparent that the critical element is progress, not longevity. The question is not how much time we have logged, but how far we have progressed toward perfection. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell has said, ‘Life is not lineal, but experiential, not chronological, but developmental.’ Ensign, December 1986, p. 23) The issue is not what we have done but what we have become. And what we have become is the result of more than our actions. It is also the result of our attitudes, our motives, and our desires. Each of these is an ingredient of the pure heart.” (Dallin H. Oaks, Pure in Heart, p. 138)

“Our Heavenly Father knows the desires of our hearts and will judge us accordingly. He will punish evil desires and reward righteous ones. We can suppress evil desires and substitute righteous ones. This involves education and practice. President Joseph F. Smith taught that the education of our desires is one of far-reaching importance to our happiness in life. Through our divinely granted willpower we have ultimate control over our desires. But the desires of our heart are so deep-seated that it may take many years of practice for us to be sure that education and practice have perfected our desires to the point where all are entirely righteous.” (Dallin H. Oaks, Pure in Heart, p. 149)

Other things that happened that the lesson does not cover.

Joshua is called and set apart as prophet. 27:18-23

All Israel dies except Caleb and Joshua. 28:65

Of Interest: Balaam’s name has actually surfaced in extra-biblical literature recorded within a few hundred years after the biblical story. In 1967, an archeological expedition in Deir Allah, Jordan, discovered fragments of an inscription written in Aramaic written about 850 B.C. In these texts, Balaam is referred to as a “seer of the gods.” Similar to the biblical account, Balaam received communications from gods at night and then rose in the morning to reveal them. (See “Deir ‘Alla, Tell” in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol. 2, p. 126-130) “Precisely how the narratives relating to Balaam oracles came to be in written form is unknown. It seems difficult to imagine that they could have been recorded by an Israelite scribe, since no Hebrews were present when the incidents took place. It may be that a disciple of the Mesopotamian seer was responsible for the survival of the narratives, although this cannot be regarded as being any more than purely conjectural. What is evident, however, is that the traditions concerning Balaam were well known in oral form by the time of Joshua (Josh 13:22), and if the written narratives were not already extant by then, they could hardly have been delayed much beyond the period of the Judges.” (R.K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 620)

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