

Why Did Balaam Bless Israel? - The Universalism In The Narrative Of Balaam And The Spirit Of God

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ABSTRACT

It is difficult to find a person in the Old Testament who is regarded as extreme as Balaam. Despite the conclusion in Numbers says he went back to his hometown after blessing Israel in chapters 22-24, most other passages of the Old Testament view him in highly unfavorable light. Although Balaam's name is not mentioned in the crime of fornication with Moabite women in Shittim, Numbers 31 records that the Israelites' sin in Shittim was attributable to the "counsel of Balaam," which resulted in the death of Balaam. Studies on Balaam and the Balaam narrative have advanced significantly, although they have mainly focused on positive or negative evaluations of Balaam and historical studies based on the name contained in the Deir 'Alla Inscription. This study intends to start from the point that Balaam was the first Gentile to receive the 'Spirit of God' in the Old Testament. The Spirit of God is a symbol of the unseen presence that replaces the temple in the Old Testament, and the anointing of the Spirit is a typical post-exilic style used as a method of selecting people to accomplish God's work in lieu of the anointing. The fact that Gentile was used as God's prophet reflects the idea of universalism that appeared in the latter days of the Post-Exilic Period.

Keywords: Balaam, Universalism, Moabite, Balak, Post-Exilic Period, Deir 'Alla Inscription.

1. INTRODUCTION

Near the end of the Exodus journey, the Old Testament introduces us to Balaam, a prophetic figure hired by a Moabite king named Balak. The narrative of Balaam the Gentile in Numbers 22-24 contains a story of blessing. Balak, king of Moab, summoned Balaam to curse the Israelites, but Balaam instead poured forth blessing on them. Moreover, Numbers 25 contains the case where 24,000 people died because Israel, who was staying in Shittim, committed fornication with Moabite women and committed

idolatry. The problem is that, while Balaam does not appear in Numbers 25, he is mentioned in Numbers 31: "Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against Yahweh in the matter of Peor, and so the plague was among the congregation of Yahweh." (Numbers 31:16) As a result, Balaam was put to death for his sins (Numbers 31:8).

Scholars' opinions on Balaam narrative are generally extreme. According to Jinmyung Kim's classification (Kim, 2012, pp.14-16), Gray, Budd, and Olsen are representative scholars who positively evaluate Balaam. Gray evaluated Balaam highly since his avarice was not clearly apparent in the text (Gray, 1976, pp.307-321), while Budd regarded the negative evaluation of Balaam as arising in subsequent narratives (Budd, 1984, pp.256-273). Olson saw the oracle of Balaam as a reaffirmation of the promise recorded in Genesis 12:1-3, focusing on hope for the future (Olson, 1996, pp.140-151). Clines also saw the blessings of Balaam the Gentiles for the children of Israel as a reaffirmation of the promise recorded in Genesis 12 (Clines, 1982, pp.60-61), Joongho Jung as well gave a positive evaluation that Balaam was a prophet because he heard and preached the word of God, although he recognized himself as a fortune-teller (Jung, 2008, pp.190-192).

On the other hand, Wenham and Douglas have a negative evaluation of Balaam. Wenham saw Balaam appearing as a foolish prophet through the donkey, so we cannot see Balaam positively although he proclaimed God's will (Wenham, 1981, pp.164-169). Douglas saw Balaam as the one who had accepted Balak's invitation for money from the beginning and appeared as a comedic figure whose life was saved by a donkey (Douglas, 1993, pp.216-221).

However, there are aspects that have been overlooked by previous studies. Balaam, who performed the prophetic task of blessing Israel, was a gentile, and that the Spirit of God came upon him (Numbers 24:2). In the Old Testament, especially in the Pentateuch, the only people who received the Spirit of God were Joseph, Bezalel, Oholiab, Moses, the seventy elders, and Joshua. Only those who were chosen for a special purpose were the Spirit of God upon them, and all of them were Israelites. All of those texts are acknowledged to be later compilations that were influenced by the post-exilic idea of universalism. The universalism is one of the main streams of post-exilic thoughts that God is not only the God of Israel, but the God of all nations, and it clearly shows the universalist idea that all people can be saved.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 The Inscription of Deir 'Alla and the Gentile Balaam

Although the narrative of Balaam was set in the Book of Numbers, the thoughts in it were set in the Post-Exilic Period. In line with this, in this study, diachronic(historical criticism) and synchronic(canonical criticism) methodologies will be used together. When the Israelites arrived in Moab, they battled and subdued Sihon the Amorite king and Og Bashani king in turn before setting up camp in the plains of Moab at Jericho, across the Jordan. The location 'beyond the Jordan at Jericho' indicates that Israel was preparing to cross the Jordan into Moab. Although Moab was allied with the nomadic tribe of the Midianites, they feared the Israelites and fell into trouble. The expression "Moab was sore afraid of the people because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel." reminds us of the situation in Exodus 1, where the Israelites were many and strong, and the Egyptians were saddened by the presence of the Israelites. Although Israel had not invaded Moab, the Moabites felt threatened. At this time, Balak, king of Moab, sent messengers to Balaam, a sorcerer who lived on the banks of the Euphrates, to curse the people of Israel. The words of the king of Moab, "I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."(Numbers 22:6), similar to the promise given to Abraham "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you. In you will all of the families of the earth be blessed."(Genesis12:3) Balaam was brought from his hometown upstream of the Euphrates as far as Moab.

Since Balaam was a Pethorite(Numbers 22:5), it is presumed to be an Aramaean from northern Mesopotamia. However, Peor, who is presumed to be Balaam's father, is introduced in Genesis as a native of Edom(Genesis 36:32). Also, the Hebrew words for Balaam's 'hometown' in Numbers 22:5 are *eretz bene ammo*('land of the descendants of his people'), but some manuscripts and versions(Samaritan Pentateuch, Peshita, Vulgate) uses *eretz-bene-ammon*('land of descendants of the Ammonites'), indicating that Balaam's hometown is Ammon(So, 2014, p.211).

The inscriptions excavated from Deir 'Alla on the banks of the Jabbok River in Ammon are important archaeological materials that must be passed through to discuss the identity of Balaam. In 1967, Franken's expedition excavated 11 tablets there. For the broken text of this inscription, where the name Balaam is mentioned, scholars have thus far offered a number of potential combinations(Lee, 2014, pp.131-149). The title YHWH is not found in this inscription, but the name of a woman named Shaddayin which is similar to El Shaddai('Almighty God') mentioned in the Bible. The distribution of various deities can be evidence that the

story of Balaam is based on various sources. The distribution of deities appearing in the narrative of Balaam is as follows(Yoon, 2013, p.206).

Table 1. The distribution of deities appearing in the Balaam narrative

Text	YHWH	Elohim	El	Shadai	Eliyon
22:2-21,36-41	4	6	0	0	0
22:22-35	12	1	0	0	0
23:1-30	8	3	4	0	0
24:1-25	5	1	4	2	1
Total	29	11	8	2	1

Most scholars date this inscription from 800-750 BC based on its orthography. As the internal evidence of the Bible, Micah 6:5 says, “My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteous acts of Yahweh.” Considering that Micah was active in the late 8th century BC, it is confirmed that Balaam was a historically prominent figure in Moab who had a reputation in Moab before the latter half of the 8th century BC, and was a prophet who worshiped El and Shaddayin the goddess at the same time(Lee, 2014, pp.131-132).

The fact that the Moabite elders and the Midianite elders brought a blessing to Balaam did not show an intention to underestimate Balaam, but rather showed his reputation and expertise as an oracle expert(Yoon, 2013, pp.219-220). Balak wanted to hire a reputable expert. Balaam sought to receive the oracle from God that evening, but instead of giving it to the people Balak had sent immediately, he made them stay in the home for a day. In the ancient Near East, ‘incubation’ to seek the will of a God while sleeping in a temple was used as a form of oracle(Kim, 2011, p.210). Interestingly, when the men sent by Balak arrived at Balaam's house and stayed, God also visited Balaam. God commanded Balaam not to go with those whom Balak had sent and not to curse the people of Israel. Balaam followed the word of God and sent back those whom Balak had sent.

Balak did not give up. He again sent higher officials to bring Balaam, but Balaam refused, saying that even if Balak gave him silver and gold, he could not break God's word. This time, God, who came to Balaam, allowed him to follow them, unlike the first. However, He added a condition to ‘do only what I tell

you'(Numbers 22:20).

The narrative of Balaam is similar to the story of Moses leaving for Egypt in that it has the structure of a trip after receiving a command to pass on God's name to a Gentile king. Moses traveled to Egypt to deliver God's command to the king of Egypt, and Balaam traveled from Peor to Moab to deliver God's command to Balak, king of Moab. The structural analysis of these two stories is as follows(Lee, 2022, p.133).

Table 2. The structural analysis of Moses' and Balaam's mission

Moses' Mission	Balaam's Mission
A. Death Threat a. Meeting God and Moses b. God wants to kill Moses B. Salvation by the Mediator a. Mediator: Zipporah b. Take a stone knife c. Take off the foreskin d. Apply to Moses' feet e. Conversation (Zipporah) C. Avoid death a. Moses' Enlightenment? b. Letting go D. Continue to carry out Missions	A. Death threat a. God's Wrath b. angel against Balaam B. salvation by the mediator a. Mediator: donkey b. Avoid c. Press feet against the wall d. Sit down e. Conversation (donkey) C. Avoid death a. Balaam's Enlightenment b. Reconfirmation of Mission D. Continue to carry out Missions

The fact that the shared elements in the story of Moses and Balaam also play the same role means that, just as Moses was used as the liberator of Israel, it is likely that Balaam was also used as a prophet in the same role.

2.2. Blind Prophet vs. Bright-Eyed Donkey

Oddly, Balaam accompanied Balak's warriors, and God became enraged. However we do not know what made God upset and who commanded them to travel with them. Perhaps it was because he accepted Balak's request that he should curse the people of Israel, or it could be that he should not forget to preach only the word of God. Hence, the messenger of the Lord blocked Balaam's way. The angel with the sword drawn in his hand was visible to the donkey's eyes, but not to Balaam's. The struggle of the donkey to escape death and the wrath of Balaam grew stronger and stronger.

Table 3. Balaam's Anger & Conversation with the donkey

Balaam's Anger	First Whipping	Second Whipping	Hitting With A Stick
		press feet	sitting down

		against the wall		
	(getting stronger →)			
conversation	donkey	Balaam	donkey	Balaam
	Question 1	Answer 1	Question 2	answer 2

The donkey veered off the road to avoid the messenger, and Balaam whipped the donkey first. When the donkey approached the little passageway between the vines, she passed her body up against a wall and crushed Balaam's feet before receiving another whipping from the prophet. When the donkey reached the narrow place where there was no more shelter, she sat down, and Balaam struck the donkey with his staff. At this time, God opened the donkey's mouth, and the conversation between the donkey and Balaam continued: <donkey> "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" - <Balaam> "Because you have mocked me, I would there were a sword in my hand, for now I had killed you." - <donkey> "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" - <Balaam> "No."

Then, Balaam saw an angel standing on the road with a sword in his hand. The conversation between Balaam and the angel now followed.

Table 4. Conversation between Balaam and the angel

Angel	Balaam	Angel
reproach	penitence	Reconfirmation of mission

<Angel> "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? behold, I am come forth for an adversary, because your way is perverse before me, and the donkey saw me, and turned aside before me these three times. Unless she had turned aside from me, surely now I had even slain you, and saved her alive." - <Balaam> "I have sinned for I did not know that you stood in the way against me. Now therefore, if it displeases you, I will get me back again." - <Angel> "Go with the men, but only the word that I shall speak to you, that you shall speak."

If the donkey had not moved, Balaam would have been killed. When man was blinded and headed for ruin, an innocent beast stopped it. Conversations between animals and humans are not common in the Bible. As can be seen from the dialogue between a woman and the serpent in the pre-history of Genesis or Jotham's fable in the Book of Judges, the appearance of a non-

human creature to speak appears as a significant event or dramatic teaching event. The conflict between the blind Balaam and the seeing donkey has come to an end, and just as Balaam was upset with the donkey for not listening to him, so too is God demonstrating through an analogy that God is upset with Balaam (Park, 2009, p.344). Likewise, if Balaam had followed Balak's instructions to the end, Moab would have been unable to escape God's judgment. In other words, the author of Numbers was warning about what could happen between God and Moab through this dialogue.

2.3 Balak's Attempt to Curse and Balaam's Blessing

Balak met Balaam and led him to the high place of Baal. It was a place where the entire camp of Israel could be seen at a glance. Balak appears to have believed that the effect would be powerful if he cursed him while looking at the Israelites who were to receive the curse. However, Balaam built new altars there and prepared to receive revelation. Balaam, who heard the word of God, rather blessed the people of Israel: "How shall I curse, whom God has not cursed? How shall I defy, whom Yahweh has not defied?" (Numbers 23:8). Rather than cursing Israel, Balak was perplexed at the blessing. The reason Balaam was compelled to bless Israel was because of words from the Lord: "Must I not take heed to speak that which Yahweh puts in my mouth?" (Numbers 23:12) In this respect, Balaam is a prophet worthy of a model. Because he not only depended on and responded to the word of God, but also faithfully delivered the word of God (Moberly, 1999, p.4).

There is something God and the messenger are asking Balaam to do again and again. That is, the prophet must preach only what God says (Numbers 22:35). Balaam in Numbers is a prophet, not a fortune-teller. When he gave up his divination and looked into the wilderness, the Spirit of God came upon him (Numbers 24:1-2). He waited for God's instructions (Numbers 22:8; 23:3) and prophesied the word of God (Numbers 23:7, 12; 24:3). Essentially, prophecy is to deliver the entrusted message. Whose words is he delivering? It is the words of God. It was the words of God that Balaam valued more than the silver and gold that could be given to him (Numbers 22:18). A prophet's authority is recognized only when he preaches the words he has received from God. The prophet's own disposition or personality may enhance the authority of the Word, but the supremacy of the prophet is not recognized solely by the character and disposition. Therefore, prophets are treated like ordinary people when they do not stand and speak on God's side (Yoon, 2013, p.219). There was no bribe or power in Balaam's eyes. What was important to him

was whether the curses and blessings he could make were true or false. Beyond who informs you, there is something more significant. It concerns who is communicating through whose words. Here is the figure of a prophet that all ages should not miss.

2.4 From Blessings to Prophecies

Balak's attempts to curse the people of Israel did not stop. He took Balaam to the top of Mount Pisgah, built an altar, and showed only the end of the camp of Israel, demanding that he curse the people of Israel for himself. However, Balaam's prophecy did not change. Balaam's blessing cannot be undone because God toward Israel was not capricious: "God is not a man, that he should lie, Neither the son of man, that he should repent. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has He spoken, and will he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19) Balaam made it clear to Balak that divination and witchcraft to harm Israel would never succeed.

Balak was getting tired of Balaam's prophecy to bless Israel. His words, "Do not curse or bless Israel," evoked the feeling that this should not be the case (Numbers 23:25). But his attempts to curse Israel still did not stop. Finally, he took Balak to the top of Mount Peor. It was at this time that the Spirit of God came upon Balaam: "When Balaam saw that it pleased Yahweh to bless Israel, he didn't go, as at the other times, to meet with enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel dwelling according to their tribes, and the Spirit of God came on him." (Numbers 24:1-2)

It is unexpected that Balaam, who received the Spirit of God, influences the course of Israel's history as it moves forward. Without relying on his divination abilities, he presented a future for Israel and neighboring countries with the words of God. The prophecy of a future king of Israel who is higher than Agag, the king of Amalek, and that his kingdom will prosper (Numbers 24:7) reminds us of Saul and the incident where Saul won the war against Amalek and captured Agag (1 Samuel 15:32-33). Furthermore, Moab (= children of Seth) and Edom (= Seir) will be annihilated by the sovereign of Israel (Numbers 24:17-19) reminds us of David's victory (2 Samuel 8:2, 13-14). Above all, the fact that he prophesied a star coming out of Jacob is surprising. This is because the star from Jacob is traditionally interpreted to symbolize the Messiah, that is, Jesus Christ (Matthew 2:2; Revelation 22:16).

It can be said that the testimony of the New Testament plays a large role in the negative evaluation of Balaam. It says that those who are blinded by greed and love unrighteous wages follow the way of Balaam (2 Peter 2:15), and woe to those who go astray by Balaam (Jude 1:11).

The debate over whether to take a positive or negative stance on the Balaam narrative has dominated research to this point. If we look at the narrative of Balaam as Numbers 22-24, Balaam is evaluated as a prophet of God and is mainly interpreted in a positive way. On the other hand, if the narrative is extended to chapter 25, it can be seen that Balaam became an evil shaman and tended to interpret it in a negative way. Then, John rebuked the church members of Pergamum who followed the way of Balaam (Revelation 2:14). The positive and negative interpretations of the Balaam narrative can be summarized as follows (Kim, 2012, p.29).

Table 5. Paragraph Scope & Aspects of Interpretation of Balaam

	Paragraph Scope of Balaam's Story and Aspects of Interpretation of Balaam			
Paragraph Scope	Numbers 22-24		Numbers 22-25	
Old Testament			Num. 31:16	negative
	Deut. 23:3-6	negative		
	Mic. 6:5	positive/negative (possibility)		
New Testament	2Pet. 2:15-16	negative		
			Rev. 2:14	negative

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Interpretations of the Balaam Narrative: The Cursed Fortune Teller vs. Blessed Prophet

The figure of Balaam, as testified in Numbers, appears as a man of God as great as any prophet in Israel, but in other parts of the Old Testament, he appears mainly as a negative Gentile fortune-teller. Deuteronomy lists the case of Balaam as one of the reasons why the Moabites and Ammonites are permanently barred from entering the assembly of the Lord. Here Balaam appears to have actually cursed Israel: "An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of Yahweh; even to the tenth generation shall none belonging to them enter into the assembly of Yahweh forever. because they didn't meet you with bread and with water in the way, when you came forth out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. Nevertheless Yahweh your God wouldn't listen to Balaam; but Yahweh your God turned the curse into a blessing to you, because Yahweh your God loved

you.”(Deuteronomy 23:3-5)

Here, ‘the assembly Yahweh’ means ceremonial worship. In the Post-Exilic Period time, Nehemiah's first reform was to forbid the worship of Gentiles living in Jerusalem after captivity. However, not all Gentiles were banned. In the days of Nehemiah, the descendants of Edom and Egypt were allowed to join in the assembly of Yahweh since they were Israel's brothers and Israelites were sojourners in Egypt(So, 2014, p.210). However, there were severe rules about the descendants of Moabites and Ammonites. They could not enter into the assembly even ‘to the tenth generation forever’. The ‘tenth generation’(dor asri) here is a symbolic number, meaning that the Ammonites and Moabites are excluded forever(So, 2009, p.426). This was due to two reasons. They failed to provide bread and water to Israel while they travel through the wilderness, and they also paid Balaam to curse Israel. The curse lasted until the time of Nehemiah because of Balak, who inspired Balaam, was a Moabite.

Nehemiah's assessment is no different from Deuteronomy: “On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that an Ammonite and a Moabite should not enter into the assembly of God forever, because they didn't meet the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, to curse them: however our God turned the curse into a blessing. It came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.”(Nehemiah 13:1-3) The core of Nehemiah's message is that Balak, a Moabite, tried to curse the people of Israel by bribing Balaam, but God loved Israel and did not listen to Balaam and changed the curse into a blessing. Nehemiah, who led religious and social reform together with Ezra, had to restore the broken religious order and social discipline. To him, the sin of the Israelites at Shittim by Balaam, a Gentile, would have served as an exclusive model for reform. In fact, verse 3 tells us that the people expelled the Ammonites and Moabites from the assembly of Yahweh according to the book of Moses. However, this should not be taken as extreme exclusivism. Because Israel accepted gentiles into the Jewish community if they were converted(Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 10:28)(So, 2014, p211).

The testimony of Joshua is also negative for Balaam. The author of the book of Joshua believes the claim made in Numbers 25 that Balaam, the son of Beor, was murdered by Moses when he slaughtered the five kings of Midian(Joshua 13:22). Balak had bribed Balaam to curse Israel, but God overcame his treachery. He clearly states that he did not desire it and that he saved the Israelites: “Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and

fought against Israel: and he sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you; ^{24:10}but I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.”(Joshua 24:9-10) Yoonkyung Lee argues that the reason why the Deuteronomistic Historian gave a negative evaluation of Balaam is to establish the identity of Israel. She claims that this is a reflection of the post-David-era, specifically the era following Omri-Ahab, when Moab's relationship with Israel was established on an equal footing after overcoming colonial feudalism. And during which the tradition of Balaam's relationship with Moab deteriorated and ultimately ended. Alternatively, it can be seen as a reflection of the current political environment, which poses a threat to Israel's security. The Deuteronomistic historian broke the kinship established in Genesis and establishes clear boundaries. By making Moab a racial and religious other, the Deuteronomistic Historian divided Moab and Israel while at the same time helping to establish Israel's inner identity. Balaam, a fortune-teller who intended to destroy Israel, became known as a figure of wickedness because Moab more than simply a country across the Jordan River; it was also a kingdom controlled by a king with ill intents to curse Israel(Lee, 2014, pp.138-140). This can be said to be in line with the Deuteronomic law stating that Moabites are not allowed to enter the assembly of Yahweh, and the prohibition of intermarriage with gentiles in Ezra-Nehemiah's time(Nehemiah 10:30; 13:23-27).

The Prophet Micah united worship and social ethics and said that true worship is not divisive from ethical life. He said that true worship is possible only when God's justice leads to daily life flowing like water, when we do not give up absolute trust in God, and when we live as a community of love and justice as God does not give up on His people and loves them(Lee, 2017, p.126). He then used the example of Balaam to explain the faithful God: “My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised, And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal, That you may know the righteous acts of Yahweh.”(Micah 6:5)

The appearance of Balak spoken of by the Deuteronomy and the Prophet Micah is twofold and contrasting. In the book of Joshua, Balaam blessed Israel without cursing but was killed with the sword while the Israelites took possession of the land. On the other hand, Micah, referring to God's faithful love for Israel, told him to remember Balak's quarrel and Balaam's answer. Balaam's blessing on Israel to the end can be interpreted as God's unchanging love for the people of Israel.

3.2 Gentile with the Spirit of God

It is not easy to make an evaluation of Balaam, as the biblical evaluation of Balaam differs. It should be noted that Balaam was the first person to receive the Spirit of God as a gentile. In the Old Testament, it is not common for people to have the Spirit of God on them. Before the exile, the Spirit of God was mainly present in the individual. They are all Israelis. In addition to the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream, Joseph offered a solution. Pharaoh was moved by this and introduced Joseph to his servants as 'a man moved by the Spirit of God' and made him his representative (Genesis 41:38). Bezalel and Oholiab were also full of wisdom and understanding (Exodus 31:2). The Spirit of God allowed them to use their wisdom in building the tabernacle and guided their artistic talents. The tabernacle they built-in charge was not only a place of worship where God was present, but it was also the best work of art in the Old Testament. The Spirit of God who made Joseph into a man of dreams gave birth to Bezalel and Oholiab as great artists. Moses, the Exodus's leader, and the seventy elders received the Spirit of God, which gave them the capacity to carry out their leadership responsibilities. To receive the Spirit of God and become a leader was to bear a burden. When Moses appointed seventy elders according to the word of God, the Spirit of God came upon them as well (Numbers 11:25). After that, the Spirit of God that allowed him to take on his role as a leader also came upon Joshua (Numbers 27:18).

The four judges described in the book of Judges - Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson - were all given the Spirit of God. Moreover, the coming of the Spirit of God upon the judges acting as God's vicarious saviors (Judges 3:10 Othniel; 6:34 Gideon; 11:29 Jephthah; 14:19 Samson) was obviously very different from the traditional anointing. It can be said that the presence of the Spirit in the judges was a sign of choosing a person to represent God's work by borrowing the former anointing pattern (Lee, 2010, p.289). It is noteworthy that Othniel, like Balaam, was also of Gentile origin. He was the son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother. Othniel is the first judge in the Book of Judges. Although he was not of pure Israeli descent, he came to belong to the tribe of Judah, and was introduced as a judge in the spirit of God: "When the children of Israel cried to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a savior to the children of Israel, who saved them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of Yahweh came on him, and he judged Israel; and he went out to war, and Yahweh delivered Cushan Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand: and his hand prevailed against Cushan Rishathaim." (Judges 3:9-10) Othniel appears in the scene where he was chosen as Caleb's son-in-law because of his contribution to occupying Kirjath-zebel in Judges 1,

and he appeared again as a judge to save Israel. The story of Othniel begins with the record of being oppressed by Cushan Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, for 80 years because of the sins of Israel. In the Hebrew text, Mesopotamia is Aram Naharaim. Many scholars read the Aram as Edom (Soggin, 1987, p.46). When the Israelites cried out to YHWH, YHWH answered their cry by raising a savior named Othniel the son of Kenaz (Judges 3:9), who came to the fore as Israel's judge at the same time as YHWH's spirit presence. The role of YHWH's Spirit in Othniel's presence was entirely military, and Othniel's victory over Kusanrisadai was due to YHWH's help. As a result of this power and empowerment, the king of Syria was victorious and peace continued for 40 years in Israel. The power of the spirit that came upon Othniel in this way was mainly realized in military power (Hildebrandt, 2005, p.53).

Traditionally, the leaders of the Old Testament proclaimed that he was chosen by God through anointing. Samuel was anointed with oil when he chose Saul or David (1 Samuel 10:1-13; 16:12-13; 2 Samuel 23:1-7). However, many post-exilic texts reveal God's election through the coming of God's Spirit instead of the traditional anointing.

Table 6. From Anointing to God's Spirit

Pre-Exilic Period	Exilic & Post-Exilic Period
Oil anointing	Presence of God's Spirit

The biggest difference between the traditional anointing and the presence of God's Spirit in the latter days was that it expands from individuals to groups. With the expectation of God's direct reign, the Spirit of God is poured out on all men and nations (Joel 2:28-29) (Lee, 2016, p.53). In the midst of this theological paradigm shift, the presence of God's Spirit required an inner, personal, and holistic change for Israel living in the post-exilic period. This is due to the cessation of public ceremonies practiced in the temple, which further emphasizes the development of one's inner life. All of God's people in the presence of God's Spirit were not only created with a 'new heart' and a 'new spirit' but also change into a 'person filled with God's Spirit' was the image of the new people of the new age that they hoped for after the exile. In particular, the second Isaiah hoped for ethical change through the close connection between the image of a servant and God's spirit and justice. The theological paradigm shift after the exile, related to the Spirit of God, emphasized the religious responsibility of the individual who already had the Old Testament before revealing only the unilateral continuity of the old and new promises and

fulfillment(Lee, 2016, p.63). In this situation, it is significant that the Spirit of God came upon gentiles like Othniel and Balaam. The text of Balaam in Numbers may be the latest written part of the Old Testament. Balaam was a gentile, which cannot be viewed as unrelated to the entrance of the Spirit of God upon various peoples and nations after the exile, which is why the Spirit of God came upon him.

3.3 Universal God

Ancient Israel saw a significant shift in their understanding of God as a result of the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC and the destruction of the temple. If YHWH, the God of Israel, lost to the Babylonian god Marduk, then there was a problem with YHWH's omnipotence. Moreover if YHWH forsook Israel, it would break the covenant with the Davidic dynasty that he promised to keep forever. Then the question of YHWH's faithfulness arises. Even if it was YHWH's punishment for Israel's transgression, the issue of fairness had to be raised because the punishment was too great. One of the theological responses to this was universalism. YHWH is not only the God of Israel, but He is the God of all nations, including gentiles, and of the entire universe.

The book of Ruth is a good example of this universalism. The book of Ruth stresses that, despite being a gentile woman, she was welcomed into Israel's YHWH faith category rather than just demonstrating the dedication of a woman above human boundaries. Ruth is frequently referred to as a Moabite woman because it was unusual for her to be accepted into the Jewish congregation as a Gentile woman. The fact that Naomi's two sons took a Moabitess as wives seem to reflect the background of the post-exilic period, when marriages with surrounding pagans were socially natural. This universalistic idea goes beyond the law in that Yahweh, the God of all nations, is the God of all nations and saves all. In this sense, universalism can be said to be the biggest paradigm shift in the post-exilic period(Lee, 2015, pp.24-25).

Universalism is an important thought that runs throughout Dtr. History. The gentiles and their kings were used as instruments of God's punishment. They are all instruments used by God to punish and save Israel. The Deuteronomistic Historian tells us that it is also God who overthrew the Assyrian Empire, which destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel, and the Babylonian Empire, which destroyed the southern kingdom of Judah. In addition, he says that it is God who lifted up Cyrus of the Persian Empire, which destroyed the Babylonian Empire. If the instruments God used in Judges and Kings were Gentile peoples and kings, the author of Numbers says in the Balaam narrative that he used a Gentile

fortune-teller as his prophet. The Balaam narrative shows the universalism that appears in the Pentateuch. Not only the foreign nations but also the fortune-tellers who worship foreign gods are under God's sovereignty. The universal God, not limited to Israel! This is the sovereignty of the invisible God revealed in the Balaam narrative.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Controversy is still ongoing about the narrative of Balaam, which appears suddenly during the exodus from Egypt. There is still debate about the identity of Balaam and the historicity of the Balaam narrative. If the scope of the Balaam narrative is limited to Numbers 22-24, Balaam is the most faithful prophet of God. However, if this narrative is extended to chapter 25, he will inevitably be reduced to an evil figure who manipulated the apostasy that took place in Shittim.

Whatever the evaluation of him, it is significant that the Spirit of God came upon Balaam, a gentile fortune teller, and that he was used as a prophet. The appearance of the presence of the latter-day Spirit in place of the traditional anointing is conclusive evidence that the Balaam narrative is a compilation of the post-exilic period. The catastrophe that struck the kingdom of Judah in 587 BC must have been the greatest religious and social shock. Paradoxically, however, this catastrophic event played a role in raising the religious and ideological level of Jewish society in crisis. One of them is universalism. God is no longer the God of Israel alone, but the God of all nations, the universal God. The Spirit of God is poured on everyone including gentiles, who have the potential to save Israel. He does not merely descend on certain Israelites.

As with many parts of the Pentateuch, it is reasonable to view this story as a later record, not at the time of the Exodus. At least after the discovery of the inscription of Deir Allah, the name of Balaam, the son of Beor, was discovered. The author of Numbers used the name of Balaam to warn that there was a threat that the Israelites, who were fleeing Egypt, were about to confront the country of Canaan and that, without their awareness, sought to cast Israel under a curse, but there was God's intervention that averted it. He was saying that God, working in secret, still does not leave them, but works for them. At the same time, he pronounced the universal God, not limited to Israel in the Balaam narrative.

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