**Numbers 24:15-17 So he took up his oracle and said:“The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, And the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened; 16The utterance of him who hears the words of God, And has the knowledge of the Most High, *Who* sees the vision of the Almighty, *Who* falls down, with eyes wide open: 17“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.**

There are so many prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament. When we think of them, our minds turn to Isaiah or Malachi or Micah. Seldom, do our minds turn to the book of Numbers; yet, there we find a powerful, powerful prophecy of Jesus contained in chapter 24. We find it spoken by a man named Balaam. Such a powerful story! Balaam, who Balak tried to get to curse the Children of Israel – Balaam, who’s donkey saved him from the angel of the Lord, because he couldn’t see for himself. (How many of us have had to be saved by someone or something we consider far dumber than ourselves because they have the sense to see? I know I have.) Balaam, who Joshua 13:22 says was a soothsayer – some call a diviner -, The children of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them. Ballam, mentioned in Revelation 2:14 as Christ is speaking of Pergamos, the compromising church. Balaam compromised himself and was seen as a stumbling block, bringing sin to Children of Israel instead of the righteousness of the gift God gave him – hearing the words of God and having the knowledge of the Almighty – Balaam has a great gift that he squandered. Balaam is used here to speak of the coming Messiah, and we are blessed tonight to hear it.

The prophecy falls in verse 17 - **“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near;** Balaam speaks the prophecy of the Messiah to come. He is describing the vision that God is providing him. He sees Jesus in the vision, but Jesus is not there at that present time, but will appear sometime in the future. He’s not in the present generation, but will be in the distant future.

Continuing with Verse 17 - **A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel. T**heologians have long debated if this means David or Jesus. As we study the life of David, some of it can apply to him. But, when we consider the Star, the Scepter, the Prince of the people, the coming King, we know that this refers to Jesus. Revelation 22:16 says - “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” In Jesus own words, He verifies for us that He is the Star to which Balaam refers. He is the Bright and Morning Star rising from the Root of David. We know that the Scepter belongs only to the King. Revelation 17:14 says – “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” Balaam sees a future star, a king coming from the house of Jacob.

In Matthew 2:1-2 we read of the Magi - Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” We have seen His star. The Star of Jacob – beautiful Star of Bethlehem.

I believe an important point here is that – there were men who considered themselves wise in Israel at that time – men who studied the scriptures, but never connected with God. Matthew 2 refers to men called Magi. They were Wise Men from Persia - these men were true believers who knew the Hebrew Scriptures. How did Persians know the Scriptures so well that they believed the revelation of God and followed the star? Yet, the religious leaders missed it.

Let’s consider the book of Daniel – we recall that Daniel was honored by Nebuchadnezzar because he interpreted the dream – Nebuchadnezzar made Daniel the chief of his "Wise Men" (Daniel 2:48). No doubt, faithful Daniel taught of God from this position – no doubt, the man who refused to change even in the face of death taught the prophecies of the coming Messiah. These Magi were scientists, astronomers and they saw this star and, I believe through divine ordination, they related it to the Biblical teaching that God would use the stars as "signs" and seasons – like Genesis 1:14 says and that a "star" would come out of the tribe of Judah – like Numbers 24:17 says. What a powerful, powerful God we serve. That He would use Gentile wise men to proclaim the way for the Messiah who came to save the Gentiles – amazing.

Let’s finish verse 17 - **And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.**  In the King James, this reads - and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. Some early Roman translations translate this to read – and He shall smite the corners of Moab, and He shall rule over all the children of men. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will bring an eventual end to the tumult that Satan strives to stir up. He won’t just be the King of the Jews, but He shall rule over all men. In Revelation 19:16 says of Jesus on His White Horse - And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. There will be no one who does not bow.

Many times, we see things not going so well these days. Why are we surprised? Why do we grumble? Listen to Jesus in Matthew 24:6-14 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come…. Let not your heart be troubled… John 14:1… Let not your heart be troubled. Are you letting your heart be troubled tonight?

Listen to the end – Revelation 19:19-21 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. **Then the beast was captured**, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. --- I’ve read books where they wanted to make the contest between Jesus and Satan a nail biter. They made it sound like the armies would be hand to hand, people sitting on the hillside wouldn’t know which way it would go… nip and tuck… Let me tell you… the Victory of Jesus will not even be close. Satan has lost and it won’t be a nail biter. Jesus will simply speak and Satan will be done. Let not your heart be troubled.

We praise God for that beautiful child beneath Bethlehem’s star all those years ago – the Morning Star, Scepter of all creation. He came then, He lives now, He will conquer soon… and we who endure will live with Him forever, in Jesus name.