

When Donkeys Speak

Context:

- The Israelites are moving towards the Promised Land.
- Several people groups had attacked them and God had granted victory over each of them.
- **Balak, the Moabite King** sees them and is afraid. There were conservatively 2 million Israelites at this time - 600,000 of them fighting men.
- Balak sends for a man who lived over 400 miles away named Balaam.
- Balaam was **internationally known** for being a pagan prophet, a professional prophet for hire, and a seer. There is no indication that Balaam is actually a follower of God. Though God tells him not to go, Balaam eventually sets out—driven by selfish and greedy motives.

Numbers 22:7-35

God speak clear when we choose to hear.

1. You can't hear God clearly if your mind is already made up.

Numbers 22:12 (NLT) – *But God told Balaam, “Do not go with them. You are not to curse these people, for they have been blessed!”*

Numbers 22:19 (NLT) – *But stay here one more night, and I will see if the LORD has anything else to say to me.”*

Numbers 22:21-22 (NLT) – ²¹*So the next morning Balaam got up, saddled his donkey, and started off with the Moabite officials. ²²But God was angry that Balaam was going, so he sent the angel of the LORD to stand in the road to block his way.*

- Are you really asking God for direction—or hoping He agrees with your plan?
- What decision in your life are you pretending to pray about—but you've already made up your mind?
- Is there an area where you're asking for God's blessing—but not really His direction? Are you seeking to hear his voice daily?

2. God Will Use the Unlikely to Get Your Attention

Numbers 22:23-27 – ²³*Balaam's donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The donkey bolted off the road into a field, but Balaam beat it and turned it back onto the road. ²⁴Then the angel of the LORD stood at a place where the road narrows between two vineyard walls. ²⁵When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it tried to squeeze by and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam beat the donkey again. ²⁶Then the angel of the LORD moved farther down the road and stood in a place too narrow for the donkey to get by at all. ²⁷This time when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down under Balaam. In a fit of rage Balaam beat the animal again with his staff.*

- The one everyone expects to be stubborn is actually the most spiritually aware.
- Sometimes the real “donkey” isn't the one who won't move—it's the one too stubborn to listen to God. It's us! You and me

Numbers 22:28-30 – ²⁸Then the LORD gave the donkey the ability to speak. “What have I done to you that deserves you beating me three times?” it asked Balaam. ²⁹“You have made me look like a fool!” Balaam shouted, “If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!” ³⁰“But I am the same donkey you have ridden all your life,” the donkey answered. “Have I ever done anything like this before?” “No,” Balaam admitted.

- God still speaks— through His word, His Spirit, His people and through life circumstances, but remember His voice might come through the unexpected.
- Are you open to hearing God—even when it sounds strange, inconvenient, or embarrassing?
- Who or what might be your “donkey”—something unexpected that God is using to speak to you?
- Have you been dismissing someone’s voice simply because it doesn’t come in the package you prefer?

3. God doesn’t just want your attention—He wants your surrender.

Numbers 22:31-35 (NLT) – ³¹The LORD opened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the roadway with a drawn sword in hand. Balaam bowed his head and fell face down on the ground before him. ³²“Why did you beat your donkey three times?” the angel of the LORD demanded. “Look, I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me. ³³Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey.” ³⁴Then Balaam confessed to the angel of the LORD, “I have sinned. I didn’t realize you were standing in the road to block my way. I will return home if you are against my going.” ³⁵But the angel of the LORD told Balaam, “Go with these men, but say only what I tell you to say.” So Balaam went on with Balak’s officials.

God’s goal isn’t to shame you—it’s to realign you with His will.

- Will you lay down your own plans to follow God’s voice—even if it costs you?
- What might God be trying to open your eyes to right now?
- Is your pride or stubbornness keeping you from seeing the angel in the road?
- What plan, goal, or desire might God be asking you to lay down today?

What if the “weird thing” in your life isn’t random... but God trying to speak to you?
Are you willing to stop, listen, and surrender—even if God speaks in a way you didn’t expect?

- If your heart is set on your own way, you will miss His voice.
- But if you’ll humble yourself and truly listen, He will guide you.



Sermon Resources



Group Questions



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