

Text in your attendance to # 208.904.3222 Message: Here

Women's Activities Text "1" to #208.203.1777

Text to give to Real Life, simply text your amount to # 208.515.7441

Men's Activities Text "1" to #208.203.1822

If you are new with us, text your attendance to # 208.904.3222 Message: New

"Balaam's Donkey" - Numbers 22

- King Balak's request

Numbers 22:4-6 (NIV) The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the Euphrates River, in his native land. Balak said: "A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land. For I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed."

- Who is Balaam?

Balaam was not an Israelite nor one of God's prophets. He came from Pethor (Northern Syria), some 400mi away from Moab.

Numbers 22:7-8 (NIV) The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination. When they came to Balaam, they told him what Balak had said. "Spend the night here," Balaam said to them, "and I will report back to you with the answer the LORD gives me." So the Moabite officials stayed with him.

- God's instruction to Balaam

Numbers 22:12 (NIV) But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed."

- Balaam tells Balak's delegation, no I can't go with you, because God said 'no.'

- Round 2 - Notice Balak's tenacity. He says, whatever the cost, it's yours if you curse the Israelites.

Numbers 22:16-19 (NIV) They came to Balaam and said: "This is what Balak son of Zippor says: Do not let anything keep you from coming to me, because I will reward you handsomely and do whatever you say. Come and put a curse on these people for me." But Balaam answered them, "Even if Balak gave me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not do anything great or small to go beyond the command of the LORD my God. Now spend the night here so that I can find out what else the LORD will tell me."

- Balaam's response reveals his heart and motivation
- You can't hear God clearly if your mind is already made up on something else.
- Balaam refused to put away the temptation the first time it came to him. Now the temptation came back to him stronger than it was before. This is how Satan works.

Numbers 22:20-21 (NIV) That night God came to Balaam and said, "Since these men have come to summon you, go with them, but do only what I tell you." Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the Moabite officials.

Notice - 1st - God didn't change His mind. 2nd God lets you use your free will to disobey. 3rd God does not like our disobedience. 4th God will go to great lengths so that you can hear Him.

Numbers 22:22-35 But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat it to get it back on the road. Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path through the vineyards, with walls on both sides. When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat the donkey again. Then the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat it with his staff. Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?" Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If only I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now." The donkey said to

Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" "No," he said.³¹ Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown. ³² The angel of the LORD asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. ³³ The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it." ³⁴ Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned. I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now if you are displeased, I will go back." ³⁵ The angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but speak only what I tell you." So Balaam went with Balak's officials.

- God can speak any way He wants. Through a donkey, a burning bush in Exodus 3 and a gentle whisper in 1 Kings 19, even a rooster in Luke 22. God goes to great lengths for us to hear Him.

Reminder, these are not the normal way God speaks. Let's not demand the supernatural or throw out fleeces like God is a 'genie in the bottle'. Don't test God.

How can hearing "no" from God actually be good in our lives?

It's "good" when we grow our faith by trusting the wisdom of God and not our own agenda.

Proverbs 2:1-7 (NIV) My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, ² turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— ³ indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, ⁴ and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, ⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. ⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. ⁷ He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,

It's "good" when God produces humility in us and dependence on Him.

1 Peter 5:6 (NIV) Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

It's "good" when we are aligned with the will of God.

Romans 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

It's "good" when we receive discipline from God.

Hebrews 12:10-11 (NIV) They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

- Balaam finally heard God and ultimately did what God wanted, to bless Israel.
- The normative - God speaks through His word, His people and His Spirit. Remember that God does not contradict Himself! Test what you hear through His word.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

- Are you not hearing the voice of God?
- Could He be speaking but you don't like the answer?
- Are you willing to obey what he asks?



Sample Small Group Questions
<https://bit.ly/GroupDiscussionQuestions>



The Overtime Podcast
bit.ly/RL/Overtime



Series Resources
bit.ly/RL/currentseries