

Balaam & The Donkeys Message

Numbers 22:21-35 NIV

Balaam's Donkey

²¹ Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the Moabite officials. ²² 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. ²³ 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.

²⁴ Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path through the vineyards, with walls on both sides. ²⁵ 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.

²⁶ 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. ²⁷ When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat it with his staff. ²⁸ 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?"

²⁹ 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."

³⁰ 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.^[a] 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.

Balaam & The Donkey's Message

Numbers 22, a chapter that unfolds a fascinating tale of a prophet named Balaam and his unexpected encounter with a talking donkey. As we explore this narrative, we'll discover profound lessons about God's sovereignty, our obedience, and the surprising ways God works in our lives.

A. Balaam's Divination and God's Intervention (Numbers 22:1-13)

The story begins with Balak, the king of Moab, seeking to curse the Israelites. He sends for Balaam, a renowned diviner, offering him rewards to curse God's people. Despite God's clear instructions not to go, Balaam seems eager, revealing his inner struggle between personal gain and God's will. Sometimes, we, too, grapple with conflicting desires, torn between worldly pursuits and God's calling.

B. The Talking Donkey (Numbers 22:21-35)

As Balaam persists in his journey, God intervenes in a remarkable way. He uses a donkey to speak to Balaam, preventing him from proceeding. This supernatural event serves as a powerful reminder that God can use even the most unexpected means to get our attention. Are we attuned to God's voice, even when it comes from unexpected sources?

C. Balaam's Obedience (Numbers 22:36-40)

After the divine encounter, Balaam is redirected to speak only what God commands. Despite his initial reluctance, Balaam obeys God's instructions, blessing the Israelites instead of cursing them. This teaches us the importance of aligning our actions with God's will, even when it contradicts our initial intentions.

D. IV. Lessons for Us Today:

- **Discerning God's Will:**

Balaam's story prompts us to seek God's will earnestly, discerning His plans for our lives. Are we open to His guidance, or do our desires cloud our judgment?

- **God's Sovereignty**

The narrative underscores God's sovereignty over all situations. Even when we face obstacles, God can use them for His glory. How can we trust in God's sovereignty during our challenges?

- **Obedience Over Personal Gain**

Balaam's journey reflects the struggle between personal gain and obedience. In our pursuit of success, wealth, or recognition, are we willing to surrender to God's higher purpose?

Conclusion

As we reflect on Balaam's encounter with the talking donkey, let us be challenged to seek God's will, recognize His sovereignty, and prioritize obedience over personal gain. May we be open to the unexpected ways God speaks to us and trust that His plan far exceeds our own. May our hearts echo the words of Balaam, proclaiming blessings rather than curses, and may we walk in obedience to our God who leads us on the path of righteousness. May God's grace and wisdom guide us as we navigate our own journeys, continually seeking His face.