

Int. Balaam was headed for Moab to curse Israel if possible. It angered God who had told him not to go. Three times along the way this donkey saw “the angel of the LORD” in the way with drawn sword and tried to avoid him. Balaam beat his beast for this misbehavior. For God who made everything out of nothing it was child’s play to make this donkey talk so as to tell Balaam why it acted as it did. Then God opened Balaam’s eyes to see the menacing angel and he understood his own misbehavior.

A big lesson is that, if God can use a little nameless donkey, he can use YOU! But there are other important truths to learn from this event as it developed.

WHEN TEMPTATION COMES, RESIST!

Balaam would never have faced the threatening angel had he closed the door on temptation when the second mission from king Balak arrived. God had already spoken “Do not go.” That should have settled the matter. But Balaam opted for a second night of prayer, hoping God would change his mind and let him go.

It is no sin to be tempted but it is wrong to flirt with temptation as Balaam did. Toy with temptation and it can take you down! Do not welcome it! Resist it!

When temptation comes, resist!

WHEN GOD TALKS, LISTEN!

God spoke to Balaam through this donkey. He let the man know he had been in mortal danger but the beast had saved his life. Then he allowed Balaam to go on with the king’s party but warned him to speak only the words God gave him.

God speaks in scripture. He speaks in conscience. He speaks through other believers. Sometimes he speaks audibly (Mt 3:17; Jn 12:29).

Nothing is more fulfilling than hearing God speak. Nothing is more foolish than ignoring it.

When God talks, listen!

WHEN GOD COMMANDS, OBEY!

God gave Balaam a clear order. “Do not go with these men (Num 22:12). You must not curse Israel because I mean to bless her.” Balaam got into trouble not because God failed to give good instructions but because he did not do what God said! Eventually he obeyed. But *partial* obedience is *complete* disobedience and *delayed* obedience is *instant* disobedience!

What a difference it would make if a believer read the Bible until he found a command, then stopped reading until he went and obeyed it.

God does not care about how a person feels. He cares whether the person obeys. Many are hearers of the word; few are doers. Jesus still asks, “Why do you call me Lord if you do not do the things I say” (Lu 6:46).

Con. God put this donkey tale in the Bible for a reason. “Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction” (Rom 15:4). Remember the lessons from this tale and live by them!