

## **REBUKED BY AN ASS**

### **Numbers 22:5-35; 23:8-10**

**Introduction:** It's one thing to be "corrected" by those who are superior in knowledge and more experienced, but to be "corrected" by one of God's animals seems a bit extreme, yet that is what happened to a man who was determined to go against God's will.

Two million Hebrews that had been wandering for 40 years in the wilderness were now about to get to enter the land promised them and along the way and through the years had not lost a single battle. The land of Moab was the next country they had to cross and the king of Moab (Balak) was very afraid, so he looked and looked until he found the prophet Balaam and offered him a financial deal to bring harm and hurt to the Hebrews and divert them from crossing his kingdom of Moab. Thus the scene is set.

### **I. BALAAM, THE PROPHET, WAS DOUBLE MINDED**

1. Balaam knew the Hebrews/Jews were special to God, yet observe how he behaved/ his actions.
2. Outwardly he wanted to be obedient to God, but inwardly he wanted the financial deal so he would hurry to take the deal.
3. He did answer the king in a worthy manner at the second invitation (v18), yet he still wanted God to let him alone (v19).
4. While on the road, riding his ass, God spoke to Balaam through the ass. (vv21-35).
5. Even with such a dramatic event, Balaam still wanted to work some kind of deal out somehow so he could still obtain some wealth.

### **II. BALAAM GIVES PROPHECIES**

1. Three times Balaam tries to bring a curse upon the Hebrews but instead he blesses them three times.
2. The blessings instead of the cursings made king Balak very angry.
3. Giving it some thought, before leaving, Balaam tells Balak how to get God mad at the Hebrews and do them harm since he couldn't bring a curse upon them.

### **III. LESSONS TO BE LEARNED**

1. It is dangerously easy to use a God-given position for selfish, worldly use.
  - Satan tries to get at pastors and church leaders from every angle.
  - Through "theology," pride, money, sex, self advancement
  - Anything, anyway to violate their true motives.

2. It is a form of hypocrisy.
  - Many Christians talk big theological talk, yet stoop to unethical methods, tricks, etc.
  - There is an outward profession with inward breakdown of prayer and fellowship with Christ.
  - It may be hard at first but it becomes easier and one does not mean to be what he/she is but it happens.
3. Knowing God's will, yet putting self on a cloud.
  - In marriages, Christians also fail and today are among the average in divorces.
  - In careers, inside are unhappy.
4. Amid great privileges, it is possible to miss God's best.
  - Many Christians walk and talk with God and are given great opportunities to serve Him, yet refuse to accept/do the will of God.
5. The foolishness of trusting self desires instead of what God offers.
  - Christians want a righteous death and reward afterward, but don't want to live the life to get it.
6. Christians sink to great depth by numbing their conscience to God.

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. Everyone is quick to condemn Balaam and his behavior, yet every Christian has had the same battle in one form or other - to do what God says or to do what someone of the world asks.
2. Anytime the Christian yields to the call of the world, the will of God is put aside.
3. Sometimes God has to use "extreme" measures to get our attention.
4. Christians forget that every second of their lives are accountable to God and they will one day stand before Him and give an account of those seconds.
5. The Holy Spirit is always there to support, enlighten and guide every Christian, all he/she has to do is LISTEN and then DO.