

Interview with the Donkeys of Genesis

CHARACTERS: VONTRICE, JACK 1, JACK 2, JENNY 2

PROPS: Microphone

COSTUMES: Rain hat, flowered straw hat

SETTING: TV studio

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 1, 2, 6-8, 22

RUN TIME: 8 minutes

VONTRICE: Welcome to Animal World. I'm Vontrice Veterinarian the host of this show. On every show we examine the wonders of God creation in the animal world. Today we'll be interviewing some donkeys from the book of Genesis.

VONTRICE: Welcome to the show, Jack.

JACK 1: Pleased to be here. Did you know Adam named me?

VONTRICE: Did he?

JACK 1: Yes, that was one of the first jobs God gave Adam. God formed all the animals out of the ground birds of the air. He brought us to the man to see what Adam would name us and whatever he called each living creature, that was our name.

VONTRICE: I understand you were the first donkey created out of the dust of the earth. Tell us about that.

JACK 1: On the sixth day, after God had gotten the world ready for us by creating land, the sun and vegetation, that's plants, of all kinds, he created the animals. We donkeys are some of his finest creations.

VONTRICE: Why do you say that?

JACK 1: We have much longer ears than most creatures. That means we are good at listening.

VONTRICE: Yes, listening is a good quality for all creatures. We all know faith comes by hearing...

JACK 1: And hearing by the word of God. Donkeys, and our African cousins the zebras, have long ears and other adaptations that became important after Adam and Eve got kicked out of the garden.

VONTRICE: Like what? And why was that important after the fall?

JACK 1: Everything was perfect in the Garden of Eden before Satan came and deceived Eve. However afterwards, life was much harder for Adam. He had to work hard to get food from the ground. I was there when God spoke to Adam about the consequences of disobedience.

VONTRICE: What happened? What did God say to Adam?

JACK 1: God said: 'Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it
all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food.

VONTRICE: I remember that.

JACK 1: Unlike horses, donkeys have a very tough digestive system that can break down almost inedible vegetation – that means plants that are hard to eat - and at the same time extract and save as much moisture as possible.

VONTRICE: Explain to our audience what extract moisture means.

JACK 1: It means getting water out of plants. You really need to be able to do that to live in the desert.

VONTRICE: So would you say God created you to be adapted to marginal desert lands and, therefore, easier to keep than a horse?

JACK: Yes. Horses are fast but donkeys were created to survive in more places. We get by on less food than a horse of similar size, and need a lower protein content in their feed. Good grass hay and pasture is usually all a donkey needs.

VONTRICE: Thanks for joining us, Jack.

JACK 1: My pleasure! (*exits*)

OPTION: Before Jack leaves he teaches the audience the following song:

Day 1, day 1, God made night where there was none.

Day 2, day 2, God made skies and seas so blue

Day 3, day 3 God made grass, flowers and trees

Day 4, day 4, God made sun, moon and stars galore

Day 5, day 5, God made birds and fish alive

Sixth day, sixth day, God formed animals and man his way

Day 7, day 7, God rested in his heaven.

VONTRICE: Our next guest will be Jack from Noah's ark. While we wait for him to arrive, who can tell me on what day donkeys were created? (*sixth*).

JACK 2: (*wears a rain hat*) Hee- Haw Hello!

VONTRICE: Welcome to our show – animal world. Your name is Jack also. Is that a coincidence?

JACK 2: No, all male donkeys are called Jack.

VONTRICE: You deliver mail?

JACK 2: No, male M-A-L-E as in boy donkeys.

VONTRICE: Thanks for clarifying. So how did you come to be on the ark?

JACK 2: I was one of the chosen ones. Only two of all the donkeys were chosen. God told us to show up on Noah's doorstep and we did. But it was a little frightening.

VONTRICE: How so?

JACK 2: God also called two of every creature. Now I didn't mind being in close quarters with horses, zebras, even the cows and deer. They are all herbivores. It was the carnivores that scared me.

VONTRICE: Explain to our audience what an herbivore is and what a carnivore is.

JACK 2: God created herbivores to eat plants. Donkeys are herbivores. So are horses, zebras, cows, sheep, deer, goats... you get the idea. But carnivores eat meat. Like lions and tigers.

VONTRICE: And bears. Oh my!

JACK 2: Technically speaking bears are omnivores because they eat plants and animals but yes, the bears scared me too.

VONTRICE: And you were squished all together on the ark.

JACK 2: I wouldn't say squished. The ark was pretty big. It was as long as one and a half football fields, as wide as two basketball courts and as tall as a five story building.

VONTRICE: That is big.

JACK 2: God gave Noah the perfect plans too. There were three floors and the proportions of the boat were perfect for not tipping over.

VONTRICE: What was it like on the ark when the rain came?

JACK 2: It was like being rocked to sleep in a baby's cradle. I love the sound of rain tap-tap-tapping on the roof. Put me right to sleep.

VONTRICE: Did you all hibernate?

JACK 2: Not exactly and I can't give you all the details but you know God created many animals with the ability to hibernate – sleep through the winter or estivate – sleep through tough conditions. God thinks of everything when he creates!

VONTRICE: What happened when the rain stopped after 40 days?

JACK 2: It was months before the water dropped low enough to see the mountain tops. The ark came to rest on the top of Mt. Ararat but we had to wait even longer for the land to dry enough to get out. You should invite the dove and raven to the show because they were very important players in that part.

VONTRICE: So when you finally got to leave, what happened?

JACK 2: It was gloriously beautiful. God put a rainbow in the sky. It was a perfect purple, beautiful blue, gorgeous green, yummy yellow, awesome orange and radically red, absolutely astounding! It was his promise to us He would never flood the earth again.

VONTRICE: Thanks for dropping by our show – animal world.

JACK 2: You're welcome and God bless.

Option: Before JACK 2 leaves he teaches/leads a song about Noah's ark. One suggestion is "Old Man Noah"

Old Man Noah built an ark, e-i-e-i-o

And on his ark he took don-keys e-i-e-i-o

With a hee-haw here and a hee haw there, etc with whatever animals you choose to use.

VONTRICE: Our next guest donkey is on her way. Who can tell me how many days of rain came with Noah and the ark? (40) (may insert other review questions) (Donkey arrives wearing a flowered straw hat) Welcome, Jenny.

JENNY 1: Hee haw hello and glad to be here.

VONTRICE: How did you get the name Jenny?

JENNY 1: All female donkeys are called jennies.

VONTRICE: Where do you appear in the Bible?

JENNY 2: Genesis 22. That's how I got the nickname Genesis Jenny.

VONTRICE: Tell us about what happened.

JENNY 2: God told Abraham to take his son, his only son, Isaac, whom he loved, and go to Mt. Moriah where he would sacrifice as an offering.

VONTRICE: This was the Isaac, the promised child, born to Abraham when he was 100 years old?

JENNY 2: The very same. His mother Sarah was 90 when she had Isaac. He was their cherished promised child.

VONTRICE: Go on.

JENNY 2: Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled me. He loaded me up with some wood. After three days of travel we arrived. He left me and the two servants and went further with the wood and Isaac.

VONTRICE: So you didn't actually see what happened next?

JENNY 2: But I heard about it all the way home from Abraham and Isaac. Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. As Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, an angel of the LORD stopped him.

VONTRICE: A last minute rescue. And didn't God bless Abraham because of his faith?

JENNY 2: Yes, without faith it is impossible to please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

VONTRICE: Faith comes by hearing and

JENNY 2: hearing by the word of God. Did Jack tell you we donkeys have excellent hearing because of our big ears?

VONTRICE: He did. Perhaps some of our audience remembers other ways God created donkeys that make them able to survive. *(Call on audience to review previous material, adjusting the questions to the audience's level of understanding. JENNY 2 leaves*

Thanks for tuning in. Stay tuned for other shows about animals in the Bible!

Interviews with Donkeys – Joseph

CHARACTERS: 3

PROPS: Microphone optional

COSTUMES: Egyptian headpiece, camera or small suitcase or hat that indicates travel.

SETTING: TV or radio show

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 43 - 45

RUN TIME: 5 minutes, or more depending on audience interaction

VONTRICE: Welcome to Animal World. I'm Vontrice Veterinarian the host of this show. On every show we examine the wonders of God creation in the animal world. Today we'll be interviewing some donkeys from the book of Genesis.

JENNY 1 arrives wearing a touristy hat or a camera around her neck or small suitcase or other item to indicate traveling.

VONTRICE: Welcome to our show. What is your name?

JENNY 1: You can call me Jenny.

VONTRICE: I guess that means you're a female or girl donkey?

JENNY 1: That's right.

VONTRICE: Why do you have a suitcase and camera?

JENNY 1: I took a few trips. Donkeys are excellent travelers. We can find food in desert places and God created us to be able to get water from plants when water is scarce. That meant there was more water for Jacob's sons when they made all their trips to Egypt.

VONTRICE: Were they on vacation?

JENNY 1: No, a terrible famine had come across the world. Food was scarce. But in Egypt there was food because God had sent Joseph there to prepare for the seven year famine.

VONTRICE: Was this the Joseph that had a richly decorated robe with many colors?

JENNY 1: The very same. I was the donkey that his full brother Benjamin rode. We traveled between 100 and 150 miles, depending on which route we took. It was long and dry but I was a great choice because it was dangerous.

VONTRICE: What do you mean?

JENNY 1: Horses are flight animals, in times of panic or danger they will run away. Donkeys, however, will simply freeze when frightened. We were plenty afraid when Benjamin was arrested. All those Egyptian soldiers milling around, hauling us back to Egypt. Good thing Ben was riding on a donkey.

VONTRICE: What did Benjamin do to get arrested?

JENNY 1: He didn't do anything wrong. It was a set up. He was framed to teach his brothers a lesson. His brothers had sold him as a slave and it haunted them their whole lives. In fact, when they were invited to a banquet, they thought they were going to be attacked and seized as slaves and us donkeys taken from them.

VONTRICE: What was Joseph like?

JENNY 1: He was a good man. He not only fed his mean brothers, he provided fodder, that's food, for us donkeys. To make a long story short, Joseph had his special silver cup hidden in the bag of grain on Benjamin's donkey.

VONTRICE: So the Egyptians acted like Benjamin was a thief and arrested him. Wasn't he sentenced to become a slave?

JENNY 1: Yes. Judah, one of the brothers, offered to stay in his place. Joseph was so touched by that, he broke down crying and told his brothers who he really was.

VONTRICE: I bet they panicked, thinking he was going to get revenge on them for being mean and selling him as a slave.

JENNY 1: They did. But Joseph told them not be distressed and do not be angry with themselves for selling him. I'll never forget his next words: It was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. God sent me ahead of you to save your lives.

VONTRICE: I guess it is very important to get along with your brothers and sisters.

JENNY 1: Absolutely. Even if they have picked on you. I'd like to hear from the audience how they get along with their brothers and sisters. *(Ask audience to share experiences of kindness in their family or examples they know from the Bible.)*

VONTRICE: So what happened next?

JENNY 1: I'll let another donkey who got involved tell you. (*Jenny 2 enters wearing an Egyptian headdress*)

JENNY 2: Joseph gave his brothers some carts, and provisions for their journey. Joseph knew what great travelers donkeys were, what great pack animals we'd be so he picked 20 of us to go pick up Joseph's father and all the nieces and nephews.

JENNY 1: God created donkeys to need less food than horses or cattle so in times of famine, donkeys were very handy.

JENNY: Plus we're good with kids. If they lose their balance and fall off, they don't have as far to fall.

VONTRICE: What kind of provisions did Joseph send?

JENNY 2: The 10 male donkeys were loaded with the best things of Egypt. Clothes, and even 300 coins in case they had expenses.

JENNY 1: The ten female donkeys were loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey.

JENNY 2: It was quite a journey. Jacob was stunned and didn't believe at first but when he saw everything we donkeys were carrying, he praised God for it all and moved to Egypt where Joseph took care of his entire family.

VONTRICE: What do you want our listening audience to remember the most?

JENNY 1: Don't get discouraged when times seem rough – God may be getting ready to use you for great things.

JENNY: And by all means, try to get along with your brothers and sisters. Be willing to forgive them if they are mean to you.

VONTRICE: It was great having such world travelers on our show today. Stay tuned for further adventures from God's great animal world!

PRODUCTION NOTES:

If you have internet access, the following battleship style game is entitled Biblical donkeys.
<http://www.quia.com/ba/194987.html>

Interview with Balaam's Donkey

CHARACTERS: 2

PROPS: None specified

SETTING: TV or radio show

RUN TIME: Approximately 6 minutes

Based on Numbers 22 – 24, 2 Peter 2:15, Jude 1:11, Rev. 2:14

VONTRICE: Welcome to Animal World. I'm Vontrice Veterinarian the host of this show. On every show we examine the wonders of God creation in the animal world. As you know, on my show, animals are able to speak with human voices. But how many of you knew about a donkey who spoke with a human voice in the Bible? We will be interviewing that donkey from Numbers 22-24 today.

VONTRICE: Welcome to the show. What's your name?

JENNY: Jenny. In fact, all female donkeys are called Jennies.

VONTRICE: Where were you and Balaam living?

JENNY: In the desert area around Moab. It was a tough area, but we donkeys were fashioned by God to do quite well in a land with little water or grass.

VONTRICE: That is quite different than ... say, horses.

JENNY: Very different. We are smaller than horses, have a tail that looks more like a cow's tail and our voices carry almost 2 miles.

VONTRICE: Two miles! Why?

JENNY: In the wild, donkeys do not live in close herds as horses and ponies because food is generally scarce. That means there isn't a lot of food. Our HEE-Haw has to carry over great distances so we can keep in contact with one another.

VONTRICE: I guess that's why God created you with such big ears.

JENNY: Precisely. God knew we'd need larger ears also allow us to hear the distant calls of our friends and neighbors. We can communicate in sign language using our ears.

VONTRICE: That is fascinating.

JENNY: Our long ears also help keep us cool in the hot desert heat. We donkeys are some of God's finest creations.

VONTRICE: Tell us about what happened before you spoke like a human the first time.

JENNY: King Balak had seen how God was with Israel. They had heard how he had helped them leave Egypt.

VONTRICE: Yes, Egypt was one of the world powers at that time. Go on.

JENNY: Balak and all the Moabites and Midianites were very afraid. King Balak tried to hire Balaam to come curse them. The first time, my master Balaam, wisely refused because God told him not to go.

VONTRICE: What happened the second time?

JENNY: God told Balaam he could go, but God was angry about it.

VONTRICE: Was that because He loved the Israelites and didn't want anything bad to happen to them?

JENNY: Yes. Balaam was riding on me. Suddenly an angel of the LORD was standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, so I turned off the road into a field. Balaam didn't see the angel and started beating me.

VONTRICE: How awful.

JENNY: Yes. I got back on the road once the angel had moved. Then the angel appeared a second time. He looked like he might use his sharp sword on Balaam so I pressed close to the wall. Unfortunately that crushed Balaam's foot against it.

VONTRICE: Did he see the angel?

JENNY: No. He was too busy hitting me again.

VONTRICE: How mean. People shouldn't hit their animals.

JENNY: I agree. Especially when I was just trying to protect Balaam. We donkeys are very protective, you know.

VONTRICE: I didn't know that.

JENNY: We are. We are often put with sheep or goats because if a fox or dog or coyote comes to hurt one, we'll protect the animals like they are one of our own. If we hear any strange noises with our big ears we will voice a warning to the herd and chase off the predator.

VONTRICE: A predator like a fox or coyote that might try to eat a sheep or goat or calf?

JENNY: Right. Donkeys are slower and less powerful than horses but we are extremely intelligent animals. We have a strong sense of survival.

VONTRICE: Then what happened?

JENNY: We were back on the road to King Balak's when the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place between two vineyards with walls on both sides. There was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left.

VONTRICE: What did you do?

JENNY: What any intelligent creature would. I lay down. If a donkey deems something as dangerous we simply won't do it. In times of panic or danger horses will run away but donkeys will simply freeze.

VONTRICE: Did Balaam finally see the danger?

JENNY: No, he started hitting me again. God then gave me the ability to speak like a person. I said "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?" Balaam was so angry he didn't even notice a donkey was talking to him. He says "You have made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now."

VONTRICE: He was going to kill you?!?!

JENNY: Yes, for saving his life. I said "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? Then the angel of the Lord spoke to him and asked "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."

VONTRICE: Did that finally get his attention?

JENNY: Yes. The angel told him that I had turned away these three times and had saved his life. He did add "I would certainly have killed you" meaning Balaam, "by now, but I would have spared her."

VONTRICE: What a close call for Balaam.

JENNY: Unfortunately, my master did not learn his lesson permanently. He did bless the Israelites instead of cursing them after this incident. However, later on, he really messed up.

VONTRICE: I think I remember something in the New Testament about that.

JENNY: The New Testament writers talk not one, not twice, but three times about Balaam. And it isn't good.

VONTRICE: Can you give us an example?

JENNY: Sure. Both Peter and Jude talk about Balaam rushing off to do evil to make a profit. Peter says “wages of wickedness”

VONTRICE: That is too bad.

JENNY: Very much so. How quickly you humans forget God’s graciousness.

VONTRICE: I wish God had given humans ears as big as you donkeys have. We need to listen to him better.

JENNY: And big ears sure do help you be quick to listen.

VONTRICE: So what lesson do you think our listeners should take away with them after hearing your story?

JENNY: Besides how important it is to listen to God, they should remember it is always important to protect other by warning them when they are headed for danger. I mean, if God can speak through a donkey, he can speak through human beings made in his image.

VONTRICE: Jenny, thank you so much for being on Animal World today. Stay tuned for further adventures in God’s wonderful world of animals.

PRODUCTION NOTES:

If you have internet access, the following battleship style game is entitled Biblical donkeys.

<http://www.quia.com/ba/194987.html>

Balaam and the Donkey

Reader’s theater version

CHARACTERS: 21, doubling possible

COSTUMES: Biblical if desired

PROPS: None specified

SETTING: Desert

RUN TIME: Approximately 15-17 minutes

Based on Numbers 22 – 24

A: The Israelites traveled to the plains of Moab and camped along the Jordan River across from Jericho.

B: King Balak of Moab saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.

A: The Moabites were terrified because there were so many Israelites.

B: The Moabites had a meeting with the elders of Midian.

BALAK: (*with dread*) This huge horde of people is going to lick up everything around us.

MIDIANITE ELDER 2: Just like an ox licks up the grass of the field.

A: The other elders were so scared they didn't even notice the clever metaphor the prince of Midian had made.

B: Indeed, Moab was filled with dread because of the Israelites.

MIDIANITE ELDER 1: (*fearfully*) King Balak, what shall we do?

BALAK: I will send messengers to summon Balaam.

MIDIANITE ELDER 2: What will you tell him?

BALAK: A people have come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me.

MIDIANITE PRINCE 1: Then what?

BALAK: I'll pay him to come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me.

MIDIANITE ELDER 1: Perhaps then we will be able to defeat them

MIDIANITE ELDER 2: And drive them out of the country.

BALAK: Yes, because those Balaam blesses are blessed, and those he curses are cursed.

MIDIANITE PRINCE 1: I volunteer to take Balaam the message and the fee for divination.

MIDIANITE ELDER 2: I'll go along too.

A: When they came to Balaam, they told him what Balak had said.

BALAAM: Spend the night here and I will bring you back the answer the LORD gives me.

VOICE OF GOD: Who are these men with you?

BALAAM: Balak, king of Moab, sent me this message that person that has come out of Egypt covers the face of the land. He wants me to put a curse on them so he can fight them and drive them away.

VOICE OF GOD: Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed.

B: The next morning Balaam got up and said to Balak's messengers

BALAAM: Go back to your own country, for the LORD has refused to let me go with you.

B: So the Moabite princes returned to Balak

MOABITE PRINCE 1: Balaam refused to come with us.

BALAK: I'll just have to send other princes, more numerous and more distinguished than the first.

MOABITE PRINCE 2: Balaam, I have a message from King Balak. Do not let anything keep you from coming to him.

MOABITE PRINCE 3: He will reward you handsomely and do whatever you say.

MOABITE PRINCE 2: Come and put a curse on the Israelites for us.

BALAAM: Even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold, I could not do anything great or small to go beyond the command of the LORD my God.

MOABITE PRINCE 3: Why not sleep on it before you decide for sure?

BALAAM: Stay here tonight as the others did, and I will find out what else the LORD will tell me.

E: That night God came to Balaam and said,

VOICE OF GOD: Since these men have come to summon you, go with them, but do only what I tell you.

E: Balaam got up in the morning,

F: Saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.

E: But God was very angry when he went,

F: The angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him.

E: Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him.

F: When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she turned off the road into a field.

E: Balaam beat her to get her back on the road.

DONKEY: Ow, Ow, OW!

G: Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between two vineyards,

H: With walls on both sides.

G: When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD,

H: She pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it.

G: So he beat her again.

DONKEY: Ow, OW, OW!

I: Then the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place

J: There was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left.

I: When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam

J: He was angry and beat her with his staff.

I: Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and she talked to Balaam,

DONKEY: What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?

BALAAM: (*angry*) You have made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now.

DONKEY: 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?

BALAAM: (*starting to be reasonable*) No. (*Startled as he suddenly sees the angel*) Whoa.... An angel... (*frightened and worried*) with a drawn sword!

ANGEL: 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.

BALAAM: (*Meekly*) Sorry. I had no idea.

ANGEL: Your donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If she had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared her.

BALAAM: 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.

ANGEL: Go with the men, but speak only what I tell you.

MIDIANITE ELDER 1: Look, here comes Balaam.

MIDIANITE ELDER 2: King Balaam, here comes Balak.

BALAK: Let us go out and meet him.

BALAAM: King Balak, I have answered your summons.

BALAK: (*grouchy*) Did I not send you an urgent summons? Why didn't you come to me? Am I really not able to reward you?

BALAAM: Well, I have come to you now but I must speak only what God puts in my mouth.

BALAK: Fine. Here are cattle and sheep for you to sacrifice. Now let's go up to Bamoth Baal, where you can see part of the people.

BALAAM: Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me. (*to Balak*) Stay here beside your offering while I go aside. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet with me. Whatever he reveals to me I will tell you.

VOICE OF GOD: Go back to Balak and give him this message.

A: Balak brought me from Aram,
the king of Moab from the eastern mountains.

B: 'Come,' he said, 'curse Jacob for me;
come, denounce Israel.'

C: How can I curse
those whom God has not cursed?

D: How can I denounce
those whom the LORD has not denounced?

E: From the rocky peaks I see them;
from the heights I view them.

F: I see a people who live apart
and do not consider themselves one of the nations.

G: Who can count the dust of Jacob
or number the fourth part of Israel?

H: Let me die the death of the righteous,
and may my end be like theirs!

BALAK: (*shocked and upset*) What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies,
but you have done nothing but bless them!

BALAAM: Must I not speak what the LORD puts in my mouth?

BALAK: Come with me to another place where you can see them; you will see only a part but
not all of them. And from there, curse them for me.

C: So he took him to the field and there he built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on
each altar.

BALAAM: Stay here beside your offering while I meet with God over there.

C: The LORD met with Balaam and put a message in his mouth and said

VOICE OF GOD: Go back to Balak and give him this message.

I: Arise, Balak, and listen;
hear me, son of Zippor.

J: God is not a man, that he should lie,
nor a son of man, that he should change his mind.

C: Does he speak and then not act?
Does he promise and not fulfill?

D: I have received a command to bless;
he has blessed, and I cannot change it.

I: No misfortune is seen in Jacob,
no misery observed in Israel.

J: The LORD their God is with them;
the shout of the King is among them.

C: God brought them out of Egypt;
they have the strength of a wild ox.

D: There is no sorcery against Jacob,
no divination against Israel.

I: It will now be said of Jacob
and of Israel, 'See what God has done!'

J: (*fiercely*) The people rise like a lioness;
they rouse themselves like a lion

C: (*fiercely*) A lion that does not rest till he devours his prey
and drinks the blood of his victims.

BALAK: (*frustrated*) Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all!

BALAAM: (*shrugging helplessly*) Did I not tell you I must do whatever the LORD says?

BALAK: Alright. Alright. Let me take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God to let you curse them for me from there.

G: Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, overlooking the wasteland.

BALAAM: Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me.

H: Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

G: Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not resort to sorcery as at other times, but turned his face toward the desert.

H: When Balaam looked out and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the Spirit of God came upon him and he uttered his oracle:

A: The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,
the oracle of one whose eye sees clearly

B: The oracle of one who hears the words of God,
who sees a vision from the Almighty,

E: Who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened

F: How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob,
your dwelling places, O Israel!

A: Like valleys they spread out,
like gardens beside a river,

B: Like aloes planted by the LORD,
like cedars beside the waters.

E: Water will flow from their buckets;
their seed will have abundant water.

F: Their king will be greater than Agag;
their kingdom will be exalted.

A: God brought them out of Egypt;
they have the strength of a wild ox.

B: They devour hostile nations
and break their bones in pieces;

E: With their arrows they pierce them.

F: Like a lion they crouch and lie down,
like a lioness—who dares to rouse them?

E: May those who bless you be blessed
and those who curse you be cursed!

C: Then Balak's anger burned against Balaam. (BALAK strikes his hands together)

BALAK: I summoned you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them these three times. Now leave at once and go home! I said I would reward you handsomely, but the LORD has kept you from being rewarded.

BALAAM: Did I not tell the messengers you sent me, 'Even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold, I could not do anything of my own accord, good or bad, to go beyond the command of the LORD -and I must say only what the LORD says'?

BALAK: And I had plenty of money I could have given you.

BALAAM: I am going back to my people, but come, let me warn you of what this people will do to your people in days to come.

B: The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,
the oracle of one whose eye sees clearly,

A: The oracle of one who hears the words of God,
who has knowledge from the Most High,

C: Who sees a vision from the Almighty,
who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened:

D: I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near.

E: A star will come out of Jacob;
a scepter will rise out of Israel.

F: He will crush the foreheads of Moab,
the skulls of all the sons of Sheth

G: Edom will be conquered;
Seir, his enemy, will be conquered,

H: But Israel will grow strong.

I: A ruler will come out of Jacob
and destroy the survivors of the city.

BALAAM: Ah, who can live when God does this?

J: Balaam got up and returned home and Balak went his own way.

PRODUCTION NOTES:

If you have internet access, the following battleship style game is entitled Biblical donkeys.

<http://www.quia.com/ba/194987.html>

Interview with New Testament Donkeys

CHARACTERS: 4; JACK is rather furtive, speaks like he's in danger, glancing around nervously, speaking in hushed tones, etc.

PROPS: JACK/007 has a fedora and sunglasses or a ski mask on as a disguise. 008 wears a hat with flowers and 009 another appropriate hat.

SETTING: TV or radio show

RUN TIME: Approximately 7 minutes

Based on Zech 9:9 and Matthew 2 and 21:1 - 16

VONTRICE: Welcome to Animal World. I'm Vontrice Veterinarian the host of this show. On every show we examine the wonders of God creation in the animal world. Today we're going to talk to a couple of donkeys from the New Testament. Today, our first guest is..... hmmm... there is no name. Just the number 007.

JACK: That's right. No name. I'm 007 - a secret agent donkey.

VONTRICE: Since all male donkeys are called Jacks, would it be OK to call you Jack instead of 007?

JACK: Sure. Jack will do. Good undercover name.

VONTRICE: What's all the secrecy about anyway? You appear to be wearing a disguise.

JACK: Can't tell ya too many details, ya know. I was part of the getaway plan. That much I can tell ya. Herod was out to kill the baby.

VONTRICE: Are you talking about when Mary, Joseph and Jesus had to flee ...

JACK: Shhhhh. Keep it down. Very dangerous situation. Let me start at the beginning. I was taking them to Bethlehem. As you might know, donkeys are excellent mounts for fragile cargo. We are sure footed, require less food than a horse or ox and we are particularly patient and persistent animals and as a result make excellent pack animals.

VONTRICE: So what valuable cargo were you carrying?

JACK: A pregnant woman who was carrying the Messiah. Let's refer to her as Mary.... Mary Smith.

VONTRICE: Where were you headed?

JACK: Bethlehem, for the census. It was a busy place, big crowds. We blended in. Once we arrived we holed up in an out of the way stable until the baby was born. I thought it would be the ideal hiding place, me blending in with all the other donkeys and sheep. But we were found out.

VONTRICE: How did that happen?

JACK: Big star appeared in the sky. All these shepherds coming and going and spreading the word. Pretty soon it was all over the city. But I knew the jig was up when these three high profile kings showed up with a ton of gifts.

VONTRICE: What kind of gifts?

JACK: Gold, frankincense and Myrrh. Worth loads of cash. Seems like they had tipped off King Herod. Now King Herod was jealous of his power. When he heard from there a new king had been born he wanted to know where so he could, you know.... Off the baby.

VONTRICE: He was planning to kill Jesus?

JACK: Shhhhh. No names, please. God appeared to the kings in a dream so they took a different route home to avoid tipping Herod off concerning our location. But it was no good. Herod rounded up some scholars and discovered the baby was born in Bethlehem. Herod just decided he'd kill all the babies born over a two year period to make sure he got the one the kings had come to worship.

VONTRICE: I remember reading about that in the Bible. It was a terrible slaughter of innocent babies.

JACK: Dreadful. Anyway Joe... we'll call him Joe Smith... got word to flee with Mary and the baby. So he packed us up in the middle of the night and we fled... let's say to an undisclosed hideout in Egypt where Herod had no power.

VONTRICE: That sounds very exciting. What happened next?

JACK: Can't go into the details. Things stayed pretty top secret for the next 30 years. I was assigned to train a new agent – my daughter – for a very important assignment involving the Messiah. (Twitches ears) I'm picking up an incoming message.

VONTRICE: I understand God created donkeys with big ears so they could hear well.

JACK: That's right. God made us donkeys with a number of terrific features. I think he really loved creating us. I gotta go. Bye.

VONTRICE: Folks. That was just part one of our exciting program. Stay tuned when Jack's daughter will tell us about her secret mission. (pause) Welcome back to our show – Animal World – where we interview animals from the Bible and find out their exciting stories. Our next guest is referred to as 008. Let's welcome her.

008: Hi, I'm double O eight and this is Double O Nine.

VONTRICE: Pleased to have you both on the show. I understand you are the daughter of and were trained by Jack, I mean 007?

008: Yes. My father was an important agent. But because God created donkeys to live about 25-30 years he trained me for an important mission about 33 years after his.

VONTRICE I understand this mission had something to do with Zechariah 9 and The Coming of Zion's King.

008: Yes, my son, 009, has it memorized.

009: Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!
Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and having salvation,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

008: That was Messianic prophesy. God was letting people know how to recognize his son – the king and Messiah – when he arrived on earth. Historically, donkeys were a status symbol of their owners' wealth, rather like a Rolls Royce is today.

009: For example Judge Jair...

VONTRICE: Any relation to Judge Judy or Judge Joe Brown?

009: No, this was a judge from the Bible between the time of Joshua and Samson.

008: Judge Jair had thirty sons, who rode thirty donkeys.

009: Leader riding horses symbolized war and conquest.

008: But leaders riding donkeys symbolized peace.

009: Another judge, Abdon had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys. He led Israel eight years.

008: Donkeys were also connected with King Saul.

009: He was out looking for lost donkeys when Samuel told him he would be Israel's king.

VONTRICE: So what exactly was your mission? Or is it secret like your father's?

009: It wasn't a secret.

008: It is recorded in Matthew 21.

009: It was Passover week, just before Jesus died for all the human beings on the earth.

008: Jesus sent two disciples into Jerusalem. He said...

009: Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, (*008 indicates she's that donkey*) with her colt (*009 indicates he's that donkey*) by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.

008: His disciples brought us to Jesus and placed cloaks on us like saddle blankets

009: Then Jesus sat on my mom.

008: A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

009: The crowds were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest!"

VONTRICE: So that was Jesus triumphal entry.

008: Exactly. Just as Zechariah had prophesied, Jesus entered the city riding on the animal that signified peaceful Lordship.

009: I was honored to trot alongside mother as she carried him into the city.

VONTRICE: What lesson do you think our listeners should take away with them after hearing your story?

008: Always be ready to serve the Lord.

009: And take your children along with you so they can be a part of the Lord's work.

VONTRICE: I want to thank both of you for being on Animal World today. Listeners, stay tuned for further adventures in God's wonderful world of animals.

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