

that he might pronounce a blessing upon His people, instead of a curse. Morally, as regarded himself, Balaam's was the most wicked act in going; and yet God brings out all His purposes through it. He is nothing more than a rod in God's hand. He goes, and the Lord by an angel meets him. He rebukes man's ways and man's wisdom, by putting more sense into the mouth of the brute beast than man has; for though he has a *mind*, he uses it against God, which a brute beast cannot do. Man, in one sense, is more blind than Satan, because Satan believes and trembles. God could reveal Himself to a beast's eye as well as to a man's, when He pleased. The effect of this on Balaam was that, in his passion, he would have killed the ass (ver. 29), if he could. When the Lord opens his eyes to see his madness and blindness all the way he has been going, he feels he has sinned, and that God has stopped him (ver. 34); but it was from mere terror that he thus speaks, and he goes on without seeing that instead of cursing the people, he was to bless them, etc. (ver. 29.) Balaam goes to the idols of Balak to sacrifice. He liked the name of religion; but his heart was not with God at all, it was set on money and honour in this world. What a picture of the impotency of sin!

Mark from this history the way God takes to deal with His people. Man thinks to thwart God's people of the blessing He has for them and Satan tries to defeat God in His purposes of love. But