

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Bird Barks and Lizard Growls



And the ass said unto Balaam, [Am] not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since [I was] thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. – Numbers 22:30

Have you ever noticed that we can usually sense whether an animal is hostile or friendly, simply by its sound? Did you ever wonder about the universal features that allow for important basic information to be shared between animals and humans?

None of us ever had to be taught that a dog, growling deeply and showing its teeth, was trying to threaten us. We're all familiar with the high-pitched yips that same dog makes to welcome its owner home. Research shows that the motivations expressed by high-pitched and low-pitched sounds are universal among most creatures.

Researchers say that almost all animals bark (the high-pitched sounds) or growl (the low-pitched sounds). Yet they were surprised to learn that animals don't simply make arbitrary noises. Sound has meaning. Even the higher-pitched voice of birds has a barking mode that can be seen on a graph and heard when a slowed-down recording is played. Animals make lower, harsher sounds when they're being aggressive. This is the growl. When friendly, an animal makes higher-pitched sounds. The bark seems to mean that an animal is neither hostile nor friendly, simply curious. Human speech follows the same general pattern.

These universal features of communication reflect the work of our Creator Who intended for many different kinds of creatures to coexist. He gave us all a universal method for understanding important basic messages like fear, aggression and joy.

Prayer: I thank You, Lord, for the joy that animals add to our lives. Amen.

Ref: Bennett, Dawn D. 1985. "Making sense of animal sounds." *Science News*, v. 127, May 18, p. 314. Photo: Courtesy of Dineshraj Goomany. Creative Commons ShareAlike 2.0 Generic License.

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