



Balaam's Donkey Speaks

(Numbers 22:21–31)



Balaam had been asked by the king of Moab to falsely prophesy a curse against the Israelites who were journeying through the desert near the land of Moab. But God told Balaam to not curse the Israelites because they were blessed.

However, Balaam rose up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and chose to travel with the princes of Moab to curse the Israelites.

God was angry that Balaam went with them. An angel of the Lord stood in the way to stop Balaam. When the donkey saw the angel with his sword drawn, she turned aside to the field. Balaam did not see the angel, so he beat the donkey to turn her back onto the path.

Then the angel stood in a path where a stone wall was on both sides. When the donkey saw the angel, she brushed hard against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot against it, and again Balaam beat her.

Then the angel went further, and stood in a narrow place where there was not enough room to pass. When the donkey saw the angel, she lay down. Balaam beat the donkey again.

God opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you beat me three times?"

Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel standing in the way, with his sword drawn. Balaam then bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.

In the end, Balaam obeys God by blessing the Israelites. (See Numbers 23.)

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