

Strange Things
Balaam & His Talking Donkey
Numbers 22:21-35
Pastor Brian

Numbers 22 ²¹ So the next morning Balaam got up, saddled his donkey, and started off with the Moabite officials. ²² But God was angry that Balaam was going, so he sent the angel of the Lord to stand in the road to block his way. As Balaam and two servants were riding along, ²³ Balaam's donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The donkey bolted off the road into a field, but Balaam beat it and turned it back onto the road. ²⁴ Then the angel of the Lord stood at a place where the road narrowed between two vineyard walls. ²⁵ When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it tried to squeeze by and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam beat the donkey again. ²⁶ Then the angel of the Lord moved farther down the road and stood in a place too narrow for the donkey to get by at all. ²⁷ This time when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down under Balaam. In a fit of rage Balaam beat the animal again with his staff. ²⁸ Then the Lord gave the donkey the ability to speak. "What have I done to you that deserves your beating me three times?" it asked Balaam. ²⁹ "You have made me look like a fool!" Balaam shouted. "If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!" ³⁰ "But I am the same donkey you have ridden all your life," the donkey answered. "Have I ever done anything like this before?" "No," Balaam admitted. ³¹ Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the roadway with a drawn sword in his hand. Balaam bowed his head and fell face down on the ground before him. ³² "Why did you beat your donkey those three times?" the angel of the Lord demanded. "Look, I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me. ³³ Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey." ³⁴ Then Balaam confessed to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned. I didn't realize you were standing in the road to block my way. I will return home if you are against my going." ³⁵ But the angel of the Lord told Balaam, "Go with these men, but say only what I tell you to say." So Balaam went on with Balak's officials. (NLT)

God is always speaking & guiding us.

Psalm 32 ⁸ I will instruct you (says the Lord) and guide you along the best pathway for your life; I will advise you and watch your progress. (TLB)

How does God guide us?

1. God speaks through circumstances.

Numbers 22 ²⁸ Then the Lord gave the donkey the ability to speak. (NLT)

Jonah 1 ¹⁷ The Lord sent a big fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights. (CEV)

2. God speaks through people.

Proverbs 12 ²⁶ The godly give good advice to their friends. (NLT)

3. God speaks through pain and suffering.

Proverbs 20 ³⁰ Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways. (NLT)

4. God speaks through the Bible.

***Hebrews 1** ¹ Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. ² And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. (NLT)*

***Psalms 119** ¹²⁵ Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. (NLT)*