

Numbers 22:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again.

Analysis

The ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall—The donkey's second evasion brought pain to Balaam—his foot (רֶגֶל, regel) crushed between animal and stone. God's warnings intensified: first inconvenience (v. 23), now pain. Yet **he smote her again**, responding to God's escalating discipline with escalating stubbornness.

Balaam's hardness despite mounting evidence and pain mirrors Pharaoh's response to the plagues—each plague hardened rather than softened his heart. When financial motive is strong enough, people interpret even painful providential warnings as obstacles to overcome rather than signs to obey. The crushed foot was mercy—far better than the drawn sword awaiting him.

Historical Context

Ancient travelers rode donkeys for long journeys because they were sure-footed on rough terrain and required less water than horses. A crushed foot would be extremely painful and could permanently injure a traveler, making the donkey's action costly but still merciful compared to the alternative.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When obeying God would cost you financially, how many painful "crushed foot" warnings will you ignore before recognizing His protective discipline?
2. How does responding to God's escalating warnings with escalating stubbornness reveal that your heart is hardening like Pharaoh's?
3. What pain is God allowing in your life to prevent the far greater destruction your current path leads toward?

Interlinear Text

אָל וַתַּלְמֵז יְהוָה הַאֲתָא אֶת מֶלֶךְ נָא
H413 and crushed H3068 of the LORD H4397 the angel H853 saw
H7200 H860 H7272 H3905 H413

פְּקַד יְהוָה אֶל בְּלָעֵם כִּנְלָא אֶת וַתַּלְמֵז בְּקַד יְה
H7023 H3905 H413 H1109 H7023 against the wall and crushed foot Balaam's
against the wall

לְבִכְתָּהָה וְסַר
H5221 H3254 her again and he smote

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 47:12 (Parallel theme): Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

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