

# Numbers 22:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me:

## Analysis

---

The angel rebuked Balaam: 'Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me.' God's messenger identified Balaam's path as 'perverse' (Hebrew 'yarat', headlong, reckless), indicating his journey opposed God's will despite having divine permission (v.20). This paradox shows that God sometimes permits paths He doesn't prefer, testing whether we'll pursue technical permission or His true pleasure.

## Historical Context

---

Though God told Balaam 'go with them' (v.20), He also added conditions ('only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak'). Balaam pursued the opportunity while ignoring the limitations, showing how we can obey the letter while violating the spirit of God's word.

## Related Passages

---

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

---

1. When have you pursued God's permission while ignoring His clear preference and restrictions?
2. How do you discern between what God permits and what He positively desires for you?

## Interlinear Text

---

מְלָא־בָּהּ יְהוָה־הָעָלָה יְאָמַר

**said** H413 **And the angel** H4397 **of the LORD** H3068 H5921 H4100

H559

שָׁלָל וְשָׁלָל־אֶת־בָּבֶן־תְּשִׁיבָה־אֶת־

**unto him Wherefore hast thou smitten** H5221 **thine ass** H860 H2088 **these three** H7969

H853

H2088

H7969

רְגָלִים־בְּנֵי־הָבָבָלָן־אָנֹכִי־בְּצָאתִי־לְשָׁטָן־בְּפִי־

**times** H2009 **behold I went out** H3318 **to withstand** H7854 **is perverse** H3588 H399

H7272

H3588

H399

לְתַדְּלִין־פְּנֵי־בָּבָלָן

**thee because thy way** H1870 H5048

H1870

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Acts 13:10** (References Lord): And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

**Proverbs 28:18** (Parallel theme): Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

**Numbers 22:22** (References Lord): And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.

**Proverbs 14:2** (References Lord): He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.

**Proverbs 28:6** (Parallel theme): Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)