

**Donkey Texts**  
**Zusia “Mouth of the Donkey”**  
**Rabbi Laura Duhan-Kaplan**

**Balaam and His Donkey (Bamidbar-Numbers 22)**

(20) God came to Balaam at night, saying to him, “If the men come to call for you, get up and go with them and especially whatever words I say to you, do that.”

(21) Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the Moabite dignitaries. (22) God got angry that Balaam was going. An angel [or messenger] of God stood on the path to accuse him.

He [Balaam] was riding on his donkey and his two young servants were with him. (23) The donkey saw the angel of God standing on the path, his drawn sword in his hand. The donkey veered from the path and walked into the field. Balaam hit her to steer her towards the path.

(24) The angel of God stood in vineyard lane with a fence on either side. (25) The donkey saw the angel of God and pressed herself against the wall, pressing Balaam’s foot against the wall. He hit her again.

(26) Again the angel of God moved and stood in a narrow place where there was no path to veer to the right or the left. (27) The donkey saw the angel of God and she lay down under Balaam. Balaam got angry and hit the donkey with the stick.

(28) God opened the donkey’s mouth. She said to Balaam, “What did I do to you that you hit me these three times?” (29) Balaam said to the donkey, “You mocked me! If only I had a sword in my hand now, I would kill you.” (30) The donkey said to Balaam, “Aren’t I your donkey? You’ve been riding on me regularly until this very day! Have I [ever] put you in danger by doing this to you?” He said, “No.”

(31) God uncovered Balaam’s eyes and he saw the angel of God standing in the path, drawn sword in hand. He bowed, face down on the ground. (32) The angel of God said to him, “Why did you hit your donkey these three times? Here, I came out to accuse you, because the path rushed against me. (33) The donkey saw me, and swerved from my presence these three times. If she had not swerved away from me, now I would be killing you, and letting her live.”

(34) Balaam said to the angel of God, “I sinned, because I did not know you were standing in the path to call to me. Now, if it [my path] is bad in your eyes, I will return.” (35) The angel of God said to Balaam, “Go with the men. Say nothing except what I say to you, say that.” Balaam went with Balak’s dignitaries.

Donkey Texts  
Zusia "Mouth of the Donkey"  
Rabbi Laura Duhan-Kaplan

- כ** וַיבֹּא אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בִּלְעָם, לִיְלֶה, וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם-לִקְרָא לְךָ בָּאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים, קוּם לְךָ אִתָּם; וְאָךְ, אֶת-הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-אָדָּבַר אֵלֶיךָ--אֹתוֹ תַעֲשֶׂה.
- כא** וַיִּקָּם בִּלְעָם בַּבֹּקֶר, וַיַּחֲבֹשׂ אֶת-אֶתְנֹנּוֹ; וַיֵּלֶךְ, עִם-שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב.
- כב** וַיַּחֲרֶ-אֹף אֱלֹהִים, כִּי-הוֹלֵךְ הוּא, וַיִּתְּצַב מִלֶּאךְ יְהוָה בַּדֶּרֶךְ, לְשֹׁטֵן לוֹ; וְהוּא רֹכֵב עַל-אֶתְנֹנּוֹ, וּשְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו עִמּוֹ.
- כג** וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת-מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵב בַּדֶּרֶךְ, וְחָרְבוּ שְׁלוֹפָה בְּיָדוֹ, וַתֵּט הָאֵתוֹן מִן-הַדֶּרֶךְ, וַתֵּלֶךְ בְּשָׂדֵה; וַיֵּךְ בִּלְעָם אֶת-הָאֵתוֹן, לְהִטְתָּהּ הַדֶּרֶךְ.
- כד** וַיַּעֲמֵד מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה, בְּמִשְׁעוֹל הַכֹּרְמִים--גֹּדֵר מִזֶּה, וְגֹדֵר מִזֶּה.
- כה** וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת-מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה, וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶל-הַקִּיר, וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶת-רַגְלֵ בִּלְעָם, אֶל-הַקִּיר; וַיִּסֹּף, לְהַכְתָּהּ.
- כו** וַיִּוָּסֵף מִלְאָךְ-יְהוָה, עֲבוּר; וַיַּעֲמֵד בְּמִקּוֹם צָר, אֲשֶׁר אִין-דֶּרֶךְ לְנִטּוֹת יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל.
- כז** וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת-מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה, וַתַּרְבֵּץ פַּחַת בִּלְעָם; וַיַּחֲרֶ-אֹף בִּלְעָם, וַיֵּךְ אֶת-הָאֵתוֹן בְּמִקְל.
- כח** וַיִּפְתַּח יְהוָה, אֶת-פִּי הָאֵתוֹן; וַתֹּאמֶר לְבִלְעָם, מָה-עָשִׂיתִי לְךָ, כִּי הִכִּיתָנִי, זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ רַגְלִים.
- כט** וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם לָאֵתוֹן, כִּי הִתְעַלְלַתְּ בִּי; לוֹ יֵשׁ-חֶרֶב בְּיָדִי, כִּי עָתָה הִרְגַתִּיךְ.
- ל** וַתֹּאמֶר הָאֵתוֹן אֶל-בִּלְעָם, הֲלוֹא אָנֹכִי אֶתְנָךְ אֲשֶׁר-רִכַּבְתָּ עָלַי מֵעוֹדְךָ עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה--הֲהִסְכֵּן הִסְכַּנְתִּי, לַעֲשׂוֹת לְךָ כֹּה; וַיֹּאמֶר, לֹא.
- לא** וַיִּגַּל יְהוָה, אֶת-עֵינָיו בִּלְעָם, וַיֵּרָא אֶת-מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵב בַּדֶּרֶךְ, וְחָרְבוּ שְׁלֹפָה בְּיָדוֹ; וַיִּקַּד וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ, לְאֶפְיוֹ.
- לב** וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו, מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה, עַל-מָה הִכִּיתָ אֶת-אֶתְנָךְ, זֶה שְׁלוֹשׁ רַגְלִים; הֲנָה אָנֹכִי יֹצְאֵתִי לְשֹׁטֵן, כִּי-יָרַט הַדֶּרֶךְ לְנַגְדִי.
- לג** וַתֵּרָאנִי, הָאֵתוֹן, וַתֵּט לְפָנָי, זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ רַגְלִים; אוֹלֵי נָטַתָּה מִפָּנָי, כִּי עָתָה גַם-אֶתְכָּה הִרְגַתִּי וְאוֹתָהּ הַחַיִּיתִי.
- לד** וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם אֶל-מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה, חֲטָאתִי--כִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי, כִּי אַתָּה נֹצֵב לִקְרָאתִי בַדֶּרֶךְ; וְעָתָה אִם-רַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ, אֲשׁוּבָה לִי.
- לה** וַיֹּאמֶר מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל-בִּלְעָם, לֶךְ עִם-הָאֲנָשִׁים, וְאִפְסָ אֶת-הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-אָדָּבַר אֵלֶיךָ, אֹתוֹ תִדְבֹּר; וַיֵּלֶךְ בִּלְעָם, עִם-שָׂרֵי בְלָק.

**Donkey Texts**  
**Zusia "Mouth of the Donkey"**  
**Rabbi Laura Duhan-Kaplan**

Abraham (Gen. 22:1-5)

**א** וַיְהִי, אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, וְהָאֱלֹהִים, נִסָּה אֶת-אַבְרָהָם; וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו, אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי.

**ב** וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יִחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אַהַבְתָּ, אֶת-יִצְחָק, וְלֶךְ-לְךָ, אֶל-אֶרֶץ מוֹרְיָה; וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם, לְעֹלָה, עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים, אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֵלֶיךָ.

**ג** וַיִּשְׁכַּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֶּקֶר, וַיַּחֲבֹשׂ אֶת-חֲמורוֹ, וַיִּקַּח אֶת-שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ, וְאֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ; וַיִּבְקַע עֵצֵי עֹלָה, וַיִּקֶּם וַיֵּלֶךְ, אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אָמַר-לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים.

**ד** בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת-הַמָּקוֹם--מֵרְחוֹק.

**ה** וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל-נְעָרָיו, שְׁבוּ-לָכֶם פֹּה עִם-הַחֲמור, וְאֲנִי וְהַנֶּעַר, נֵלְכָה עַד-כֹּה; וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, וְנָשׁוּבָה אֵלֵיכֶם.

**יא** וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו מֵלֶאךָ יְהוָה, מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם, וַיֹּאמֶר, אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם; וַיֹּאמֶר, הֲנִנִּי.

**יב** וַיֹּאמֶר, אֶל-תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ אֶל-הַנֶּעַר, וְאֶל-תַּעַשׂ לוֹ, מְאוּמָה: כִּי עֲתָה יָדַעְתִּי, כִּי-יִרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶתָּה, וְלֹא חִשַּׁכְתָּ אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יִחִידְךָ, מִמֶּנִּי.

(1) After these things, God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham." He said, "Here I am." (2) He said, "Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, Isaac, and take yourself to the land of Moriah. Offer him there as an offering, on one of the mountains, as I will tell you." (3) Abraham got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, took his two young servants with him, and Isaac his son; split wood for the offering; got up and went to the place God, which God had told him. (4) On the third day, Abraham raised his eyes and the place from afar. (5) Abraham said to his servants, "Sit here with the donkey. The youth and I, we'll go over there, worship, and return to you."

(11) An angel of God called to him from heaven saying "Abraham, Abraham." He said, "Here I am." (12) He said, "Don't raise your hand against the boy, don't do anything to him. For now I know that you are a God-fearer, and you haven't withheld your son, your only one, from me."