

WHEN THE LORD STANDS IN THE PATH WITH HIS SWORD DRAWN ...

(Numbers 22:22–35 ESV) ... God's anger was kindled because he [Balaam] went, **and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as his adversary.** Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him.

23 And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey, to turn her into the road.

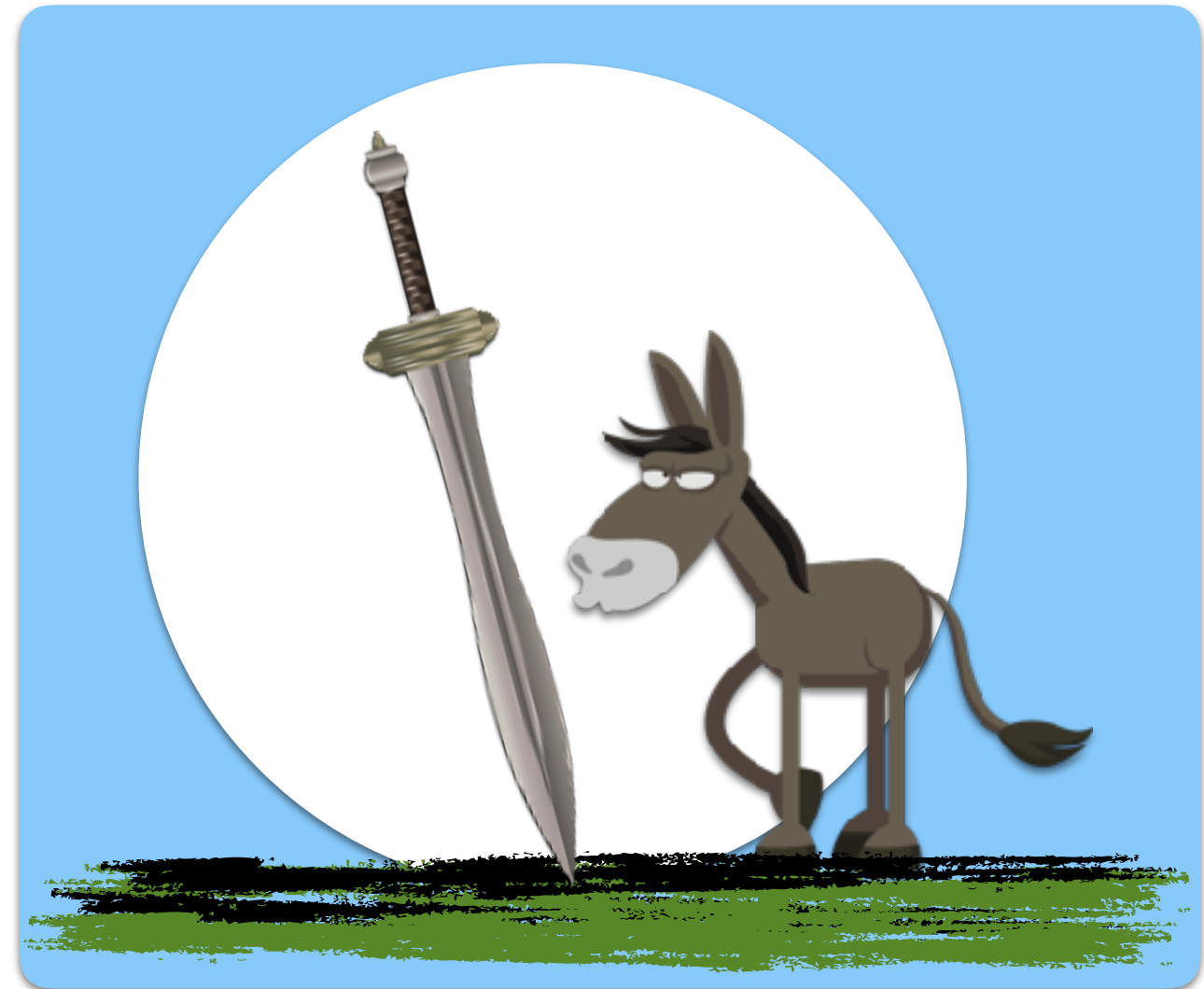
24 Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. 25 And when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again.

26 Then the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. 27 When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff.

28 Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, **"What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"**

29 And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you." 30 And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No."

31 Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. 32 And the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? **Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me.** 33 The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live." 34 Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, **"I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me.** Now therefore, if it is evil in your sight, I will turn back." 35 And the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you." So Balaam went on with the princes of Balak.



"Stupid Donkey!"