



Kids Club

Leader Guide

June
Week 1

June 2, 2024

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

Donkey Coloring page (1/kid), markers/pens
Pin the Tail on the Donkey game

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE:

5 minutes - Pick up kids/kids arrive - bathroom, wash hands, water break
20 minutes - Snack, Games, Prayer/Devotion, Quality Time, Clean-up
30-40 minutes - RBKids Lesson & Prayer
10-15 minutes - Free time, Clean-up and Dismissal

TODAY'S FOCUS:

God wants us to obey Him.

WEEKLY VERSE:

"He will fill your mouth with laughter. Shouts of joy will come from your lips."
Job 8:21 (NIRV)

KEY PASSAGE:

Numbers 22:21-39, Balaam's Talking Donkey

ROCK BRIDGE MISSION:

As an expression of our love for God, we strive to obey Him because He knows what's best for us and what is in our future.

PRAYER:

Dear God, give us obedient hearts so we may please you. In Jesus' name, Amen

INTRODUCTION:

ASK THIS AS KIDS ARRIVE: Who has a funny joke they can tell? Be prepared with your own silly dad jokes and see who can make someone else laugh! (My favorite - "What do you call cheese that doesn't belong to you?" Nacho cheese (nacho → not your))

SAY THIS: Have you ever noticed how many talking animals there are? Well, not in real life! But people love to pretend that animals can talk. What are some talking animals that you've noticed? Daniel Tiger is an example of an entire neighborhood of talking animals! In today's true story from the Bible, God used a talking donkey to save the life of Balaam and teach him an unforgettable lesson: God demands our obedience. Balaam was on his way to curse God's people. God sent an angel to stop him, and he allowed only the donkey to see the angel. The donkey saved Balaam's life, and when Balaam realized what that talking donkey had done for him, he realized how very seriously God wants us to take obedience.

God may not use angels with swords and talking donkeys to demand our obedience, but He recorded this story so we would understand how important it is to obey Him. Let's listen to God carefully so he never has a reason to make animals talk to us – as funny as that would be.

LG LESSON ABBREVIATED INTRO - SAY THIS: The Bible is the Word of God. It is a serious book with a very important, very serious message. God gave us the Bible to tell us we were made by Him. He gave us the Bible to teach us about the very serious subject of sin. God wanted us to know that sin has separated us from God. He also wanted us to know that He loved us so much, He sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins so we could be forgiven. It's a serious message, one we need to take very seriously. But does that mean the Bible is all serious all the time?

The God who gave us the Bible also invented the platypus, a weird looking creature with the body of a beaver and the bill of a duck. This is the same God who gave us a digestive system that, out of necessity, requires us to burp. Yes, God gave us burps, and given that God made burps sound as crazy as they do, I think He expects us to get a good laugh out of them.

God also gave us the ability to laugh, so I think it's safe to say He wants us to laugh. Over the next four weeks, we're going to visit just four of the many Bible stories that make people laugh. And we're going to start with one of the silliest of these stories: the tale of a talking donkey. Yes, long before the movie Shrek, the Bible had a story about a talking donkey.

On the surface, this is a pretty funny story. A man named Balaam is hired to curse the Israelites, God's chosen people. Balaam saddles up his donkey to go and curse Israel, but along the way, the donkey starts turning off the path, causing Balaam to get madder and madder. Balaam is screaming and beating the poor donkey when all of a sudden – the donkey speaks up! Let's read it together in our Bible!

READ: Numbers 22:21-39

MAIN POINT - TALK ABOUT THIS: It's so funny to think about this man getting his feet crushed, getting madder and madder at his donkey as the donkey refuses to move forward. But as the donkey tells Balaam, he had a good reason for turning aside and stopping. He was saving Balaam's life!

God was very angry with Balaam. Balaam knew Israel was God's chosen people, and God was not about to let Balaam pass without agreeing to obey Him. When Balaam realized what was really going on, he was terrified, and he promised he would only speak the words God gave him to say. Balaam learned through a talking donkey that God demands our obedience, and Balaam wisely chose to obey.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

DO THIS: Let the kids play **Pin the Tail on the Donkey** and use the questions below to help them review the Bible story. (They can answer a question for a chance to pin the tail, or if the tail lands anywhere on the donkey they get to answer a question).

ASK THIS:

1. What did the donkey see that made him stop?
2. Why did Balaam's donkey keep going astray?

3. Why did God make Balaam's donkey talk?
4. What was the real message God wanted Balaam to hear?
5. Why is it important that we obey God?
6. How can we get better at obeying God ourselves?

DRIVE IT HOME - SAY THIS: As funny as this story is, there's a very serious side to Balaam's tale. God was very serious about wanting Balaam to obey. Not only did He make Balaam's donkey speak up, He sent an angel with a flaming sword to prove His point. God means business when He says we must obey Him, and He wants us to choose obedience as well.

Obeying God is the right decision for many reasons. First, obeying God keeps us from sin. When we sin, we are hurting ourselves, God, other people, or a combination of the three. Sin offends God, damages our reputation, gets us in trouble, and brings harm to others. When we say no to sin, God leads us away from these situations so we will do no harm.

Second, obeying God leads us to do good. Jesus said his two greatest commands were to love God and love others. Obeying God usually means we are doing one or both of these things. Instead of harming others we will bless others, as Balaam did when he reached the Israelites.

Third, obedience helps us share the love of Jesus with others. When we obey God, we set an example by saying no to sin, and we share the love of God by the way we love others.

I love that God gave us this funny story to be reminded of how serious obedience is. Let's choose God's way. Let's love God and love others while we turn away from sin. Let's obey God so we never give him the excuse to make a donkey – or any animal – speak out.

ACTIVITY:

SG/ACTIVITY - DO THIS: Go around the group and have everyone do their best donkey voice. How does everyone think the donkey sounded when he spoke?

SAY THIS: It is easy to laugh at all the ways God has gotten the attention of His people. We'll never know what that donkey sounded like, but we do know that his message came through loud and clear! We're going to have a little time to sit and think right now. Is there anything in your life that God has been trying to tell you and you haven't stopped to obey?

DO THIS: Give each child a "**Donkey Coloring Page**" and ask them to write on the back anything that God is asking them to do, but they haven't listened yet. Invite them to share what has made it hard to *want* to obey or to actually obey. Have your own age-appropriate response ready to share! Allow them time to color, as desired.

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

"Job 8:21"

LARGE GROUP MV - DO THIS: Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

WHY WE MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE - SAY THIS: "It's time for us to add another weapon of attack to our arsenal! Sometimes, the enemy just wants to steal our joy, to make us sad and have us focus on the things in our lives that aren't going the way we want them to go. In those moments, it is helpful to say Job 8:21 aloud and ask God to bring moments to your life that will literally make you laugh aloud! Let's say it together, "He will fill your mouth with laughter. Shouts of joy will come from your lips."

OPTIONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS:

DO THIS:

1. The nation of _____ was God's chosen people. ISRAEL
2. _____ was hired to curse the nation of Israel. BALAAM
3. God blocked Balaam's path by sending an _____ with a sword. ANGEL
4. When Balaam became angry, God made his _____ talk. DONKEY
5. The donkey reminded Balaam that he needed to _____ God. OBEY