

## Lesson 1

# God's Animal Kingdom Classroom

## *Meerkat*



We can learn much from the meerkat. God gives us quite a teacher in this cute little animal. We can learn how to live together, work together and look to God.

The meerkat occupies dry, open country with hard soil. It burrows into the soil to make its home. The meerkat's food is mostly insects. It is related to the mongoose.

Meerkats live in groups of up to thirty members. All of the members of the group help raise the young. All of the members of the group take turns watching for predators when they are not in the burrow. The meerkat in the picture shows the typical posture of a guard as it watches for predators on the ground and in the air.

What can we learn from the gentle meerkat?

In the first place, we can learn from the meerkat how to live and work together for the benefit of everyone. We can also apply these lessons to our actions at home, at school and in the church. The Bible says in Romans 14:19, *“Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification (improving religious knowledge).”*

Meerkats work together to find food and to keep everyone safe from harm. Some of the members of the group give up their play time to protect the others. The stronger ones protect the weaker ones. We too can help others when they need help. We can give up some of our playtime to help someone who has too much to do and needs help. It is a good feeling to help someone. Jesus

tells us in Matthew 19:19, *“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

In a meerkat group, everyone helps raise the young. We can do the same thing. How do we act towards people younger than ourselves? Do we set a good example or a bad example? Do we help younger people or ignore them? Do we act kindly toward them or bully them? The Bible tells us in Proverbs 22:6, *“Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it.”*

If you look at a meerkat that is watching over the group, he always seems to be looking up as he watches the sky. We should always be looking up to Jesus as our Savior. Our hearts should always be looking up to our God and thanking Him for all that He has done for us. We should always be watching for the return of Jesus when He will take all who believe in Him to heaven. Jesus tells us in Matthew 24:42, *“Therefore, keep watch because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.”*

God is always watching out for us just like the meerkat to keep us from harm. We are kept safe by God’s love. Jesus died on the cross to save us from our enemy - sin and eternal punishment. We should never forget to be thankful for God’s great love.

Just like the meerkat keeps watch for danger, we too must watch for danger. Satan prowls around like a lion looking to devour anyone not watching. What this means is that Satan will try to get us to sin and turn away from Jesus so that we will not go to heaven. We must be on our guard against Satan and instead of turning away from Jesus; we must turn to Jesus for help. Jesus died for our sins and will always be our Savior and our help when we sin.

Meerkats do what Jesus told us to do when He said, *“Love your neighbor as yourself”* (Matthew 19:19). Meerkats take care of their neighbors just like they were family. We can learn a good lesson here. Everyone is our neighbor and if we treat them as we would want them to treat us, we will be doing what Jesus told us to do.

