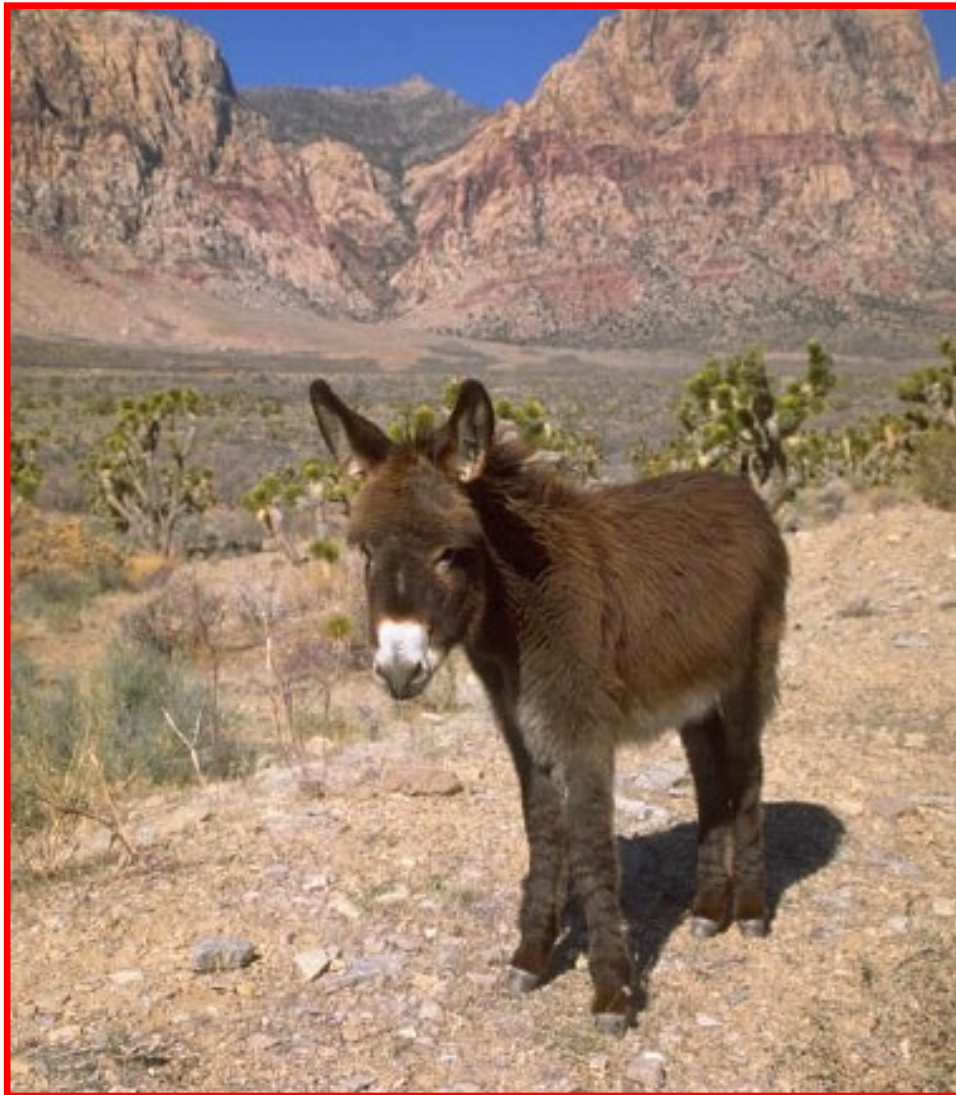


Lesson 36

God's Animal Kingdom Classroom

*Donkey*



The donkey is a wonderful animal and one chosen by God for great things. The donkey is able to walk safely in places where the horse might fall. The donkey is able to carry heavy loads for

long distances. The donkey can work in areas that would be too harsh for horses. Donkeys can be stubborn and can cause great injury with a kick from their hind legs.

The donkey was chosen over all animals to carry Jesus into Jerusalem where He would sacrifice His life to save all of our lives. Many donkeys have an unusual marking on their back. It is a cross made up of two dark lines of fur. Perhaps this marking was a gift from God to remind us of the donkey's special place in the story of our salvation.

What can we learn from the donkey?

The donkey teaches us the meaning of hard work. Donkeys carry heavy loads over steep hillsides. There is even an expression that we use to describe hard work - to work like a mule. Jesus teaches us that, just like the donkey who is heavily burdened, we who are burdened with sins and troubles and can come to Him for comfort. Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:28, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart and you*

*will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

The donkey has a bad habit of being stubborn. Sometimes the donkey is right to be stubborn, especially if it senses danger and refuses to walk into trouble. Often the donkey is just being stubborn for no good reason. We can learn much from this habit. If we stand up for what the Bible teaches us it is good to be stubborn. The Bible will never lead us astray. If we are trying to resist Satan’s efforts to make us sin or deny Jesus, we are also right to be stubborn in refusing to give in to temptation. This is what Jesus did when He was being tempted by Satan, Jesus was stubborn. We read about this in Matthew chapter four.

If we are wrong in our thinking and will not change, we make God angry. This kind of stubbornness is not good. The Bible shows us how God becomes angry at the kind of stubbornness which is sinful in Leviticus 26:18, *“If after all this you will not listen to me, I will punish you for your sins seven times over. I will break down your stubborn pride.”* We also see how this sinful kind of stubbornness even makes Jesus angry and

hurts His feelings in Mark 3:5, *“He (Jesus) looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand’.”* Jesus had been teaching about God the Father and salvation. Jesus had done miracles to prove what He said was true yet many would not accept His teaching. This was not because they did not understand but rather because they were stubborn. Jesus healed a man with a crippled hand in the Bible passage above yet the people still were stubborn and would not believe the truth.



Just as many donkeys carry the sign of the cross on their backs, we should learn to carry the cross of Jesus in our hearts and souls. We should never forget the terrible price Jesus had to pay to earn our salvation and we should always be thankful for so great a gift. We should never be ashamed to be seen as Christians and to let our faith be known to everyone.