



Date: _____
Series: God is Our Rescuer
Summer Year 2, Lesson 13

One Rescuer— One Truth

Take Home Point: *God has the one truth. Let's tell it. *Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Numbers 22: 21-41. Balaam's donkey talks.

Key Verse: 2 Timothy 3:16, "Every Scripture passage is inspired by God. All of them are useful for teaching, pointing out errors, correcting people, and training them for a life that has God's approval."

We will help kids know:

- The Bible event of King Balak trying to hire a prophet, Balaam, to curse Israel.
- Though many people today claim to speak for God, not all really do. We can recognize the lies of the world if we stay close to God.
- It's important to tell God's truth.




We will help kids feel:

- Caution when they hear false messages about God and new age spirituality.
- Security in knowing God and following him who give us our Rescuer, Jesus.

We will help kids do:

- Make up messages that might be examples of false teachings as they also discover the truth that comes from God's Word.
- Make donkey puppets from paper bags to carry some of their Bible truths home. These can be conversation starters at home or used with family devotions.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	Kids play a game called “Bag of Truth.” They try to determine which of three kids is telling the truth about an event they did.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large paper bag per group • set of subject cards for each group (page 15)
Large Group 	4 8 10 13	<p>Overview</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: “Bag the Truth.”—Gordy comes out with his “bag of tricks” containing a horoscope and crystal. The presenter warns him about false teaching.</p> <p>Interactive Bible Event: “Look Who’s Talking.”—The Bible event about Balaam and his talking donkey.</p> <p>Puppet Conclusion: “Bag the Truth” –we can know the truth of God from his words in the Bible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordy with a crystal or charm around his neck, a horoscope taped to one hand, and a paper bag in the other hand • simple crown and robe • dark, hooded robe • some type of donkey head made from a paper sack or whatever is available. See template, on page 18
Small Group Application 	5	Kids make a donkey puppet and use it to tell the truth. If even a donkey can speak the truth, we who have God’s word can do so more effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small paper bag for each child • markers, glue sticks, staplers to make and decorate the puppets • “One Truth” sheet for each group (pages 15-16) • donkey’s head pattern- for each child (page 17) • scissors

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction! Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.*

Supplies:

- large paper bag per group
- set of subject cards for each group (page 15)

Begin with:

Today we are going to play a game called “Bag of Truth.” The object of the game is to get others to believe you did something you really didn’t do. This is how it works.

You will be divided into groups of three to have a secret meeting.

If you cannot divide the children evenly, you can have one group of four.

At this meeting, you will receive a card with a subject to tell about. Decide which person in your group will a true story about this subject. The other two people will make up a story, pretending they did the same thing. You will all get to tell your stories to the entire group, and we will try to decide who is telling the truth and who is making up his story.

For example, let’s say my group of three people drew this card. “This summer we went on vacation to this special place.” Let’s say I went to Disney World but the others didn’t. We would all say we went to Disney World and talk about it. But two of the people in my group would make up their story.

When everyone is in a small group, pass out a slip of paper to each group with the subject matter they are to tell a story about. If children are having a hard time deciding who will be the truth teller, pick one to be it. The person chosen will tell his story to the other two. They, in return, will make up a story to tell that is similar to the truth teller’s story.

The subject cards are as follows:

“I once had a very scary accident in which this happened...”

“One summer we went on vacation to this special place...”

“My grandparents live in _____ and when I visit them, this is what I like to do...”

“The goofiest kind of costume or kind of clothes I ever wore was...”

“Once I met a famous person. This person was _____. Here’s what happened.”

After a set of three have told their stories to the rest of the group, have someone guess who they think told the truth. Say:

The person who wants to take a guess at who is telling the truth will indicate his choice by putting this bag over the person’s head he thinks is telling the truth. They just “bagged the truth.” Then we’ll find out if he was right.

After the game, discuss the following.

Just like some of the kids in our game were trying to convince the rest of us something that was untrue, sometimes people try to trick others into believing something that is wrong. Sometimes this untruth may sound good but it won’t be from God. We must know our Bibles and be close to God so we will be able to tell when someone is not telling us God’s truth.

Today we will hear how a prophet named Balaam was hired to speak things for God that God didn’t want said. God made a donkey talk to get Balaam straightened out. It’s a cool event that really happened in the Bible. Let’s go find out more about how **God has one truth. Let’s tell it!*

Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Puppet Presentation: “Bag the Truth.”—Gordy comes out with his “bag of tricks” containing a horoscope and crystal. The presenter warns him about false teaching.

Interactive Bible Event: “Look Who’s Talking”—the Bible event about Balaam and his talking donkey.

Puppet Conclusion: “Bag the Truth”—we can know the truth of God from his words in the Bible.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

To understand this story it is helpful to know that Balaam was a pagan prophet. He was known and hired for his ability to make predictions and place curses on people. Though he encounters the true God, he is not known as a prophet of the true God. In this case, however, he must speak the truth of God or answer to him.

Have kids refer to Numbers 22 in their Bibles.

Balak was king of the nation of Moab. Who was he afraid of and why? *(Numbers 22:2-3. The Israelites, because there were so many and they destroyed the Amorites.)*

Balaam was known for his spiritual powers, even if he did not follow the true God. What did King Balak want Balaam to do for him? *(Numbers 22:6. Put a curse on the Israelites so King Balak could defeat them in battle.)*

When King Balak's messengers came to Balaam at first and asked him to curse the Israelites, what did God tell Balaam? *(Numbers 22:12. "Don't go with them! Don't curse these people, because they are blessed.")*

King Balak sent other messengers to again ask Balaam to curse the Israelites. This time God said Balaam could go just as long as he only did what God told him. When Balaam was on the way, his donkey turned off the road. Why did his donkey go into a field? *(Numbers 22:23. The donkey saw an angel with a drawn sword in the middle of the road.)*

The donkey then came to a narrow path between two stone walls. There the donkey pressed Balaam tightly against the wall. Why did the donkey do this? *(Numbers 22:25. The donkey saw the angel of the Lord.)*

The third time the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it laid down on the road. When Balaam beat the donkey, what did the donkey say? *(Numbers 22:28. "What have I done to make you hit me three times?")*

Then Balaam saw the angel of the Lord. What did the angel tell him? *(Numbers 22:35. "Go with the men (to King Balak), but say only what I tell you.")*

King Balak wanted Balaam to speak words of a curse on the people of Israel. What did he say? *(Numbers 23:8. He blessed the Israelites instead of cursing them.)*

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Why was it so important for Balaam to speak God's truth? *(Because there is power in speaking curses or blessings. God wants us to obey him.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

The donkey directed Balaam's attention to the Lord. Who are some "donkeys" in your life? Who are some people who direct you to the Lord?

How does God speak to you today? *(Through the Bible, through other Christians, pastors, Sunday school teachers, etc.)*

Our key verse today, 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "Every Scripture passage is inspired by God. All of them are useful for teaching, pointing out errors, correcting people, and training them for a life that has God's approval."

Application Activity:

The application activity helps the kids learn to see that God today speaks to us very clearly in the Bible. Kids need to use their Bible and read it for themselves. Kids need to also know that there are many false messages in their culture that tell them that which is not true. We want to encourage them to go to God's Word to find the truth that will speak to the lies we might hear today.

Supplies:

- small paper bag for each child
- markers, glue sticks, staplers to make and decorate the puppets
- "One Truth" sheet for each group (pages 15-16)
- donkey's head pattern- for each child (page 17)
- scissors

Have the children use small paper bags to make miniature donkey puppets with the donkey head pattern.

Go through the sheet titled, “One Truth.” Let the kids read the truth from the Bible and use their puppets to put it in their own words as they answer the lie of the world. You can help this conversation happen by asking the questions, “**The lie that might be heard today is...**” and “**What would God’s truth say?**”

The children use their puppets to refute this lie by going back to scripture. Even a donkey can speak the truth if it’s from God!

Conclude with:

Jesus, God’s Son, came into the world and said he was the truth. Because he gave his life for us, we can be friends with God and know that he will show us the truth if we follow him. *God has one truth. Let’s tell it!

Closing Prayer:

Close with prayer against the lies that try to take away from God’s truth. Pray for spiritual protection and courage to speak God’s truth. Thank God for sending Jesus the Rescuer.

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Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

Bag the Truth Puppet Presentation

Supplies:

- Gordy with a crystal or charm around his neck, a horoscope taped to one hand, and a paper bag in the other hand
- simple crown and robe
- dark, hooded robe
- some type of donkey head made from a paper sack or whatever is available

Gordy will appear with some type of crystal or charm around his neck. Taped to one of his hands is a horoscope cut out of the newspaper and to the other is a paper bag.

Presenter : Kids, let's invite Gordy out to join us.

Kids chant: Gor-dy! Gor-dy! Gor-dy!

Gordy: Oh, hi, kids.

Presenter : Hi, Gordy.

Gordy: I didn't say hi" to you, _____ (insert presenter's name). I only said "hi" to the kids.

Presenter : Why is that? I thought I was your friend.

Gordy: Well, it's just that my horoscope says I shouldn't talk to you.

Presenter : Your horoscope?

Gordy: Yeah, I've got it right here in my hand. It says that today I will talk to someone strange who will bring me bad luck.

Presenter : And you think that's me?

Gordy: Well, it says someone strange. And you're the strangest person I know. Just teasing...

Presenter : Do you believe in horoscopes?

Gordy: It couldn't hurt. Just like this crystal I have around my neck. I'm getting in tune with the forces of mother earth. This has great power, you know.

Presenter: I do know that God says those things have no power and we shouldn't use them.

Gordy: What?! But the guy on TV uses them. And if he's on TV, he's gotta be telling the truth, right?

Presenter : **I don't think so.**

Gordy: But he even sent me this good luck bag when I ordered.

Presenter : **It looks to me like an ordinary paper bag.**

Gordy: Oh, no. He said if you just squeezed your crystal tight, waited until the moon was full, then threw it in the bag; whatever you wished for would come true.

Presenter : **Boys and girls, do you think that is something God would say? (No.) Gordy, God said these things are wrong to use. There is only one truth and that comes from God. This is a bag of lies.**

The presenter removes the charms and horoscopes and puts them in the bag.

Gordy: But what can it hurt?

Presenter: **Gordy, it can hurt if you disobey God. Does God want you to put your trust in those good luck charms or in him?**

Gordy: In him, of course. But the guy on TV said he was speaking for God.

Presenter : **I don't think he was, Gordy. What he said would have to agree with the Bible. It would have to point to Jesus as our rescuer, not some dumb horoscope or good luck charm to be true.**

Gordy: Who would God use then to tell his truth?

Presenter : **He could use you or me.**

Gordy: Wow! That seems kinda strange.

Presenter : **Not as strange as what happened in today's Bible event. God used a donkey to show a man named Balaam the truth.**

Gordy: A donkey?!

Presenter : **Yes.**

Gordy: That I've gotta see.

Presenter : **Watch this. I'll read the Bible event to you.**

Gordy: Okay!

Look Who's Talking...The Story of Balaam and His Donkey

Numbers 22-25

Interactive Bible Event

Beforehand, select three participants to briefly rehearse the pantomime actions for this event. The characters are:

- *King Balak* wearing a simple crown and robe. This actor needs to practice a worried look. He looks worried during the script when the narrator says, "Can you see how worried King Balak was?"
- *Balaam* wearing a dark, hooded robe.
- *The donkey* wearing some type of donkey head made from a paper sack or whatever is available. The donkey will repeat the line, "Hey, cut that out!"

The king begins on one side of the stage; Balaam begins on the other side. The donkey is offstage.

While the Israelites were waiting to cross the Jordan River and go into the promised land, they were near the plains of Moab. Moab was a nation of people who were afraid of the Israelites because they knew how God had blessed them and helped them defeat their enemies.

Here is King Balak, king of Moab. Can you see how worried King Balak was? Here's his worried look. He's afraid the Israelite army would destroy him and the rest of the Moabites. So he decided to send for someone who could work with the supernatural powers and bring a curse on Israel. A curse means saying you wish bad things would happen to someone so it will come true.

King Balak knew a man who was like a prophet for hire. This man's name was Balaam. If given the right amount of money, Balaam would speak curses or blessings that would often come true. But Balaam practiced the magic arts and was not a true follower of God.

"Surely," King Balak thought to himself, "Balaam would be the one to help us defeat the Israelites."

King Balak sent some of his princes to give money to Balaam and to bring him back to curse the Israelites. Balaam did not know what to do. He told the princes to spend the night and in the morning he would know.

During the night, God told Balaam not to go to speak against the Israelites because God had blessed them. In the morning, the princes were sent back to Balak.

King Balak would not give up. He thought Balaam just wanted more money so he sent greater princes with more money. He promised great honor to Balaam if he would come to curse the Israelites.

Balaam told the princes, “Even if King Balak gave me a house full of gold or silver, I could not change the word of the Lord. If you wait until morning, I will talk again to the Lord.”

That night God told Balaam to go but he must be sure to speak only what God tells him. In the morning, Balaam saddled up his donkey and off he went.

But did Balaam really have in his heart a desire to hurt the Israelites? Something strange happened that would convince Balaam that he must bless the Israelites and not curse them.

While Balaam was traveling along the road, an angel appeared. Balaam, who was supposed to be a great spiritual seer, could not see the angel. His donkey could see the angel and the donkey ran off the road into the field. Balaam hit the animal to get it back on the road.

Soon they came to a path through a vineyard. On the side of the path was a stone wall. Again an angel stood before them. Again Balaam could not see the angel but the donkey could. The donkey was so frightened, it ran into the wall and crushed Balaam’s foot against it. Balaam was so angry he hit the donkey time and time again.

As Balaam continued on his way again, the angel stood in a narrow place on the path. This time the donkey sank to the ground. Balaam grew so angry he hit the animal with all his might.

Just then God gave the donkey a voice. “Hey, cut that out!” (*Actor repeats this line.*) The donkey then said, “What have I done to make you hit me three times?”

Balaam was so angry he must not have thought it strange for the donkey to talk. He said, “If I had a sword I would kill you!”

The donkey reminded Balaam that it had always carried him safely and had never done anything like this. Just then the Lord let Balaam see the angel, and Balaam bowed his head and fell on his face.

The angel said, “The donkey has saved your life and turned away from me and my sword.”

Balaam said to the angel, “I have sinned. Do you want me to go back?”

“No,” said the angel, “just be careful to only speak the words of the Lord.”

The donkey leaves as Balaam and Balak come to center stage together.

When Balaam finally met King Balak, the king took him to the top of a mountain. They looked down on a plain where the Israelites camped. Balaam told the king to build seven altars and to offer to the Lord an ox and a sheep on each altar.

Balaam went further up the mountain to talk to the Lord. He told King Balak he could only say what the Lord told him to say. When he returned, instead of cursing the people, he blessed them. He said, “How can I curse those who God has not cursed?”

The king thought he would try again, so he took Balaam to another place where he could see part of the Israelite camp. Again they built seven altars and offered ox and sheep to the Lord. Again Balaam heard from the Lord and spoke a blessing over the Israelites. He said, “God is not like humans that he should lie. He has promised to bless these people and he will bless them.”

Now the king was frustrated. “If you can’t say anything evil about these people, don’t say anything at all!” But the king thought he might still be able to change Balaam’s mind. He could give Balaam more money.

So the king took Balaam to a third place and again built seven altars and offered sacrifices. Can you guess what Balaam did? Did he bless the Israelites or did he curse them? He blessed them!

Balaam said over the Israelites, “Your land will be rich and beautiful. Your king will be great and your kingdom exalted.”

There is an important point here. **God has one truth. Let’s tell it!* If God could use a donkey to tell his truth, then he could use someone like Balaam.

How did Balaam finally end up? Although he had spoken only the words the Lord wanted him to, he still wanted in his heart to please the king. Because he was clever, he thought of another way to help

Balak. If Balaam could get the Israelites to worship idols, then God would not be with them. And that's what they did.

The Moabites made friends with the Israelites and soon the young men of Israel married the young women from Moab. Since the Moabites worshiped idols, these young women took their husbands to the feast of their gods. As a result many of these young Israelite men bowed down to idols.

Was God pleased? Of course not. All those who sinned in such a way were killed. In a battle, Balaam was also killed because he caused the children of Israel to sin.

Bag the Truth

Puppet Conclusion

Gordy: Wow ! That was cool how God made a donkey talk!

Presenter: Yeah, it's even cooler that God could use you or me much in the same way he used the donkey.

Gordy: Oh yeah, I can do that. Hee-haw! Hee-haw!

Presenter: No, Gordy. We can tell God's truth just like God used that donkey.

Gordy: You mean God would use us?

Presenter: Yes!

Gordy: How does he do it?

Presenter: We want to make sure we stay close to God and we know the truth from his word in the Bible. Then we can tell God's truth to others. We will learn more about how to do that in our small groups.

Gordy: If God can use a donkey, then God can use me, I guess.

Presenter: Right, Gordy! ****God has one truth. Let's tell it! Why don't you close us in prayer.***

Gordy: Dear God, thank you for the truth you give us in the Bible. Thank you for being our Rescuer and sending us Jesus. We want to trust you and not all the other things that people might use, like crystals or horoscopes. Help us to know you are the one truth and to tell that truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

“I once had a very scary accident in which this happened...”

“One summer we went on vacation to this special place...”

“My grandparents live in _____ and when I visit them, this is what I like to do...”

“The goofiest kind of costume or kind of clothes I ever wore was...”

“Once I met a famous person. This person was _____. Here’s what happened.”

One Truth

The truth...

Acts 4:12 says:

Colossians 1:16-17 says:

Acts 12:21-23 says:

Romans 1:22-23 says:

The lie...

There is power in things that we can make up like crystals, fortune telling, palm reading, and reading the stars.

All religions are the same. There are many ways to heaven.

There is one force out there, like on Star Wars, though it is not a personal god. If we just meditate and look within ourselves, we will find the force. We will find power.

We are all gods, each of us.

