

Balaam's Donkey Talks

Numbers 22:1-38

Young children have a growing interest in nature. They love animals, snow, rain, and flowers. Use this lesson to help children understand that God made everything and he'll help them know the best way to live.



► **Bible Point**
Pay attention to God.

Key Verse
“For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will remember to pay attention to God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>1</p> <p>Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i></p>	<p>Welcome and Celebrate Welcome each other, and praise God through music.</p>	<p>CD player Teacher Pack: CD</p>	
<p>2</p> <p>Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>Stick Together Track their footprints, and remember God is with them.</p>	<p>Bible, colored tablecloth, shallow tray, baby powder</p>	<p>Spread the tablecloth on the floor. Pour some baby powder into a shallow tray and set it on the edge of the tablecloth.</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i></p>	<p>Puppy Pointers Hear how Theo pays attention to God.</p>	<p>CD player, Theo puppet, empty paper towel tube, tape Teacher Pack: CD</p>	<p>Tape the paper towel tube to Theo's paw.</p>
	<p>Bible Time: The Talking Donkey Watch finger puppets “perform” the talking donkey, and learn a rhyme.</p>	<p>Bible, tape, scissors Teacher Pack: “Balaam, Donkey, Angel” finger puppets, “Balaam’s Donkey Talks” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)</p> 	<p>Cut out the finger puppets. Tape them closed so they'll stay on your fingers.</p>

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i></p>	<p>Center 1: Eyes and Ears Make eyes and ears for Balaam and his donkey to pay attention with.</p>	<p>My Bible Hugs, glue sticks, cotton balls Teacher Pack: stamp pad</p>	<p>Remove the Lesson 9 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.</p>
	<p>Center 2: Happy-Face Snack Make a snack to reinforce that God is happy when we pay attention to him.</p>	<p>paper plates, large craft sticks, small bagels (½ per child), cream cheese, raisin halves, antibacterial gel (optional)</p>	
	<p>Center 3: Donkey Drama Play a game to learn about paying close attention.</p>	<p>"Balaam, Donkey, Angel" finger puppets from the Bible Time activity</p>	
	<p>Center 4: Donkey Talk Make puppets to help them remember what happened to Balaam.</p>	<p>scissors, tape, markers, brown lunch bags, "Donkey Ears" page (at the end of the lesson)</p>	<p>Copy and cut out 2 donkey ears per child.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	<p>My Bible Hugs</p>	
	<p>Action Prayer Sing a prayer asking God to help them hear and obey him.</p>		
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



Welcome and Celebrate Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Welcome to Our Class" (track 16), "Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6) (track 10)

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcome and Celebrate

Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each one with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to gather the children together in a circle on the floor.

Lead children in singing "Welcome to Our Class" (track 16 on the CD) to the tune of "The Ants Go Marching." Encourage children to march around the room and follow the motions in parentheses.

 **We're so glad you're here today.**
Hooray! Hooray! (*clap to the beat*)
We're so glad you're here today.
Hooray! Hooray! (*clap to the beat*)
We're here to worship God today
To dance and shout and sing and play.
So let's all shake hands and say "Hooray!"
Hooray! Hooray! Hooray! (*clap to the beat*)
 (*Repeat 2x.*)

Say: I'm glad you're here today because we get to hear about something really special God did. And we'll learn to ► **PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.** Let's sing one more song to God before we hear the amazing thing God did.

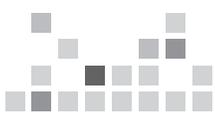
Lead children in singing "Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6) (track 10 on the CD). Lead kids in singing and clapping their hands or stomping their feet.

 **Let everything that moves,**
And everything that breathes,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

From the rising of the sun
'Til the time that it goes down,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

Everybody, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord!
Come on, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord.
Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

Let everything that walks,
And everything that runs,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.



No matter where you are,
No matter where you've been,
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

Everybody, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord!
Come on, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord.
Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

Everybody, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord!
Come on, let's prai-ai-aise the Lord.
Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

Let everything that lives
Sing praises to the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

"Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **God does really amazing things. Today we get to hear how God made a donkey talk! He did it to remind us to pay attention to him. Let's learn more about how God is with us and why we want to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.**

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Stick Together

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Joshua 1:9, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible says, "For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). This means that God is always with us no matter what. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the second part of the Key Verse with you: **"God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).**

Have the children take off their shoes and socks. Say: **Let's do something fun to help us remember that God is with us wherever we go, like our Key Verse says.**

Invite children to take turns standing in the tray of baby powder and then walking around on the tablecloth. Once everyone has a chance to track his or her footprints on the tablecloth, have the children sit around the edge of it.

Say: **Look at all your footprints and how they followed you wherever you went.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.



Stick Together Supplies

Bible
colored tablecloth
shallow tray
baby powder

Stick Together Easy Prep

Spread the tablecloth on the floor. Pour some baby powder into a shallow tray and set it on the edge of the tablecloth.



Puppy Pointers Supplies

CD player
Theo puppet
empty paper towel tube
tape

Teacher Pack

CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Puppy Pointers Easy Prep

Tape the paper towel
tube to Theo's paw.

Ask:

- What did you like about watching your footprints follow you?
- What do you like about knowing God's always with you just like that?
- If God is always with you, why do you want to pay attention to him?

Say: **Our footprints went wherever we went, just like God is with us wherever we go. God loves us and always wants what's best for us. That's why we want to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD. He'll always protect us and show us what to do when we pay attention to him.**

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Puppy Pointers

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Listen, everyone, Theo's coming! He has something to show us. Let's find out what it is.** Play "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! It's so good to see you at church with us today. What do you have there?

Theo: I brought a tube.

Teacher: What are you going to do with that, Theo?

Theo: I'm going to use it to look at birds.

Teacher: What fun! Does the tube help you see?

Theo: No, I look at just one bird through the tube. The tube helps me pay attention to the bird.

Teacher: Oh, that's kind of like the way we can ► **PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.**

Today we're learning our Bible Point about how God wants us to pay attention to him. Friends, can you tell Theo what you learned about God?

(Pause for children to help Theo.)

Teacher: Let's tell Theo our Bible Point for today. *(Lead children in saying the Bible Point for Theo: ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.)* And today in the Bible we'll hear about a man who learned to pay attention to God.

Theo: So when we pay attention to God, we'll see that he's always with us?

Teacher: That's right!

Theo: That sounds great. I'm going to go put my tube back in my house.

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What things do you like to pay attention to, like Theo watches the birds?
- Why would you want to pay attention to God like that?

Say: **When we ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD, we make him happy. He’s always with us, and he wants us to see all the great things he’s doing, and he wants to lead us to really great places. Let’s hear how God wanted to lead a man in the Bible named Balaam.**

Bible Time: The Talking Donkey

What You’ll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Numbers 22, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God’s special book.

Say: **Today as we read about a talking donkey, we’ll learn to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.**

Show the “Balaam’s Donkey Talks” poster, and place it in the middle of your circle.

Say: **When we listen and watch carefully, we’re paying attention. Let’s hear how the talking donkey helped a man in the Bible to pay attention to God.**

Invite the three children sitting to the right of you in the circle to put on the finger puppets, and help them understand which puppet is which person or animal in the Bible. Ask them to wiggle their fingers as you tell what happened.

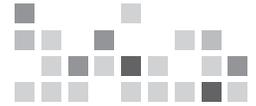
Say: **Balaam was a man who didn’t pay attention to God.** Encourage the child with the Balaam puppet to wiggle his or her finger. **A bad king wanted Balaam to come see him and pray that bad things would happen to the Israelites.**

Have the child with the Balaam puppet pass it to the fourth child in your circle, and have him or her put it on. Then say: **God told Balaam not to pray for bad things. But Balaam didn’t listen.** Have Balaam shake his or her finger.

Invite the children to tell about times they didn’t want to listen. Then have the child with Balaam pass it to the next person.

Say: **Balaam got on his donkey and rode to see the king.** Encourage the children with the Balaam and donkey puppets to wiggle their fingers.

Have the children with Balaam and the donkey pass the puppets on in the circle. Say: **God was angry with Balaam, and he sent an angel to talk to him.** Have the children with Balaam and the angel wiggle their fingers.



Bible Time: The Talking Donkey Supplies

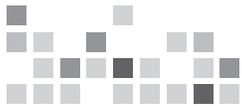
Bible
tape
scissors

Teacher Pack

“Balaam, Donkey, Angel” finger puppets
“Balaam’s Donkey Talks” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

Bible Time: The Talking Donkey Easy Prep

Cut out the finger puppets. Tape them closed so they’ll stay on your fingers.



Continue having children pass the puppets around the circle after they each get a chance to use the finger puppets as the Bible passage continues.

Say: **Balaam didn't hear the angel, but his donkey did. The donkey walked into a field to lie down.** Wiggle and switch.

Balaam was angry, and he hit the donkey with a stick. Wiggle and switch.

Then God let the donkey talk. The donkey said, "Why are you beating me? Have I ever treated you this way?" Wiggle and switch.

Balaam said, "I'm angry at you because you are making me look like a fool." Wiggle and switch.

Then Balaam saw the angel and fell to the ground. The angel said, "Don't beat your donkey and make it a fool. ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD, and obey God's rule." Wiggle and switch.

Teach your children the words to this rhyme, and have them repeat it with you several times:

**"Don't beat your donkey
And make it a fool.
► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD,
And obey God's rule."**

Let children take turns using the puppets as they say the rhyme together.

Say: **So Balaam went to the king, but he prayed for good things for the Israelites.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think about how God got Balaam to listen?**
- **Tell about a time you were a good listener.**
- **What are some ways you can listen to God?**

Say: **God did great things to help Balaam listen and pay attention to him. And God wants us to listen to him, too. Let's really try to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD this week.**

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Eyes and Ears

What You'll Do

Give each child a Lesson 9 page from My Bible Hugs. Say: **Today we heard how God made a donkey talk so that Balaam would pay attention to him. Let's think about how we ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.**

Ask the children what Balaam needs in this picture in order to pay attention to God. Then tell children that they'll help Balaam pay ► **PAY ATTENTION TO GOD** by making eyes and ears.

Have children take turns pressing their fingers into the stamp pad and then onto the page to make eyes for Balaam. Then show children how to rub glue on the page and stretch apart the cotton balls to create ears for Balaam.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What are some ways you use your eyes to pay attention?**
- **What are some ways you use your ears to pay attention?**
- **What can you do this week to pay attention to God?**

Say: **We can use our ears to listen to God. We can use our eyes to see what God has done. We can remember to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD, just like the donkey did.**



Center 1: Eyes and Ears Supplies

My Bible Hugs
glue sticks
cotton balls
Teacher Pack
stamp pad

Center 1: Eyes and Ears Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 9 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.



Center 2: Happy-Face Snack Supplies

paper plates
large craft sticks
small bagels (½ per child)
cream cheese
raisin halves
antibacterial gel (optional)

! ALLERGY ALERT

Center 3: Donkey Drama Supplies

“Balaam, Donkey, Angel” finger puppets from the Bible Time activity

CENTER 2:

Happy-Face Snack

What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack. Say: **Today we're learning to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD. Let's make some snacks to help us remember to look for God and listen to him.**

Have children use craft sticks to spread their bagel halves with cream cheese, and have them use raisins to make “smiles” on their bagels. Tell children not to put eyes on their bagels yet.

Say: **Balaam didn't use his eyes. He didn't see the angel. Balaam didn't pay attention.** Invite the children to tell ways they can look for God. Then have them add raisins to make eyes on the bagels.

Talk With Kids

Say: **We can pay attention to God by watching with our eyes and listening with our ears. Let's thank God for providing our snack and ask him to help us remember to pay attention to him.** Invite a child to pray for the snack.

CENTER 3:

Donkey Drama

What You'll Do

Say: **Donkeys don't talk, except when God makes them talk. God really wanted Balaam to pay attention to him. Let's play a game to help us remember to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.**

Put the angel finger puppet on one of your hands and the donkey puppet on the other. Say: **Let's pretend we're Balaam and we're learning to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.** Have the children pretend to ride a donkey as they move around in a circle.

Say: **Now, as you ride your donkey around the circle, pay attention. I have the donkey on one of my fingers. If I tap you with the donkey, say “Ow! Why'd you do that, donkey?”** Lead children in practicing this part of the game.

Say: **Now, if I tap you with the angel, say “► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD.”** Lead children in practicing this step.

Then play using both of the puppets, encouraging children to pay close attention to which puppet you tap them with so they can react accordingly.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like paying attention in this game?
- Why is it important for us to pay attention to God?

Say: **When we remember to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD, God will help us and be with us. We'll see him do amazing things all the time when we pay attention to him.**

CENTER 4:

Donkey Talk

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's make donkey puppets you can use to help tell what happened to Balaam.**

Show children how to tape their donkey ears to the top of a paper bag. Let the children add eyes and a nose to the front of the bag to make the donkey. Don't worry if the faces don't look "donkey-like."

Encourage children to use the puppets to tell what happened in the Bible passage. Then have them repeat the angel rhyme:

**"Don't beat your donkey
And make it a fool.
► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD,
And obey God's rule."**

Talk With Kids

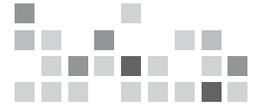
Say: **It's important that we ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD the way Balaam finally did. Let's look for God this week and listen to what he tells us.**

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up their centers, bring everyone back to a circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.



Center 4: Donkey Talk Supplies

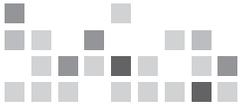
-
- scissors
 - tape
 - markers
 - brown lunch bags
 - "Donkey Ears" page (at the end of the lesson)

Center 4: Donkey Talk Easy Prep

Copy and cut out 2 donkey ears per child.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Hugs



Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned to ► PAY ATTENTION TO GOD. I would like each of you to choose a way to pay attention to God this week.**

Give kids these two challenges to choose from:

- **Wear headphones to block out sounds as you listen to a song about Jesus. Remember to listen and pay attention to God.**
- ■ **Play a game of Simon Says with your mom or dad, and keep in mind that it's important for you to pay attention to God just as you pay attention during the game.**

Say: **If you want to wear headphones, circle the choice with one dot. If you want to play Simon Says, circle the choice with two dots.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Hugs page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

Action Prayer

What You'll Do ■■■■

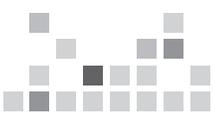
Form a circle, and have the children sit down. Teach children the words to this prayer, "I Hear You," sung to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me."

<p>  Help me, God, to hear you, To obey you in all I do. Help me hear all you say To obey you in all I do. Yes, God, I hear you. </p>	<p> Yes, God, I hear you. Yes, God, I hear you, And I will obey you. In Jesus' name, amen. </p>
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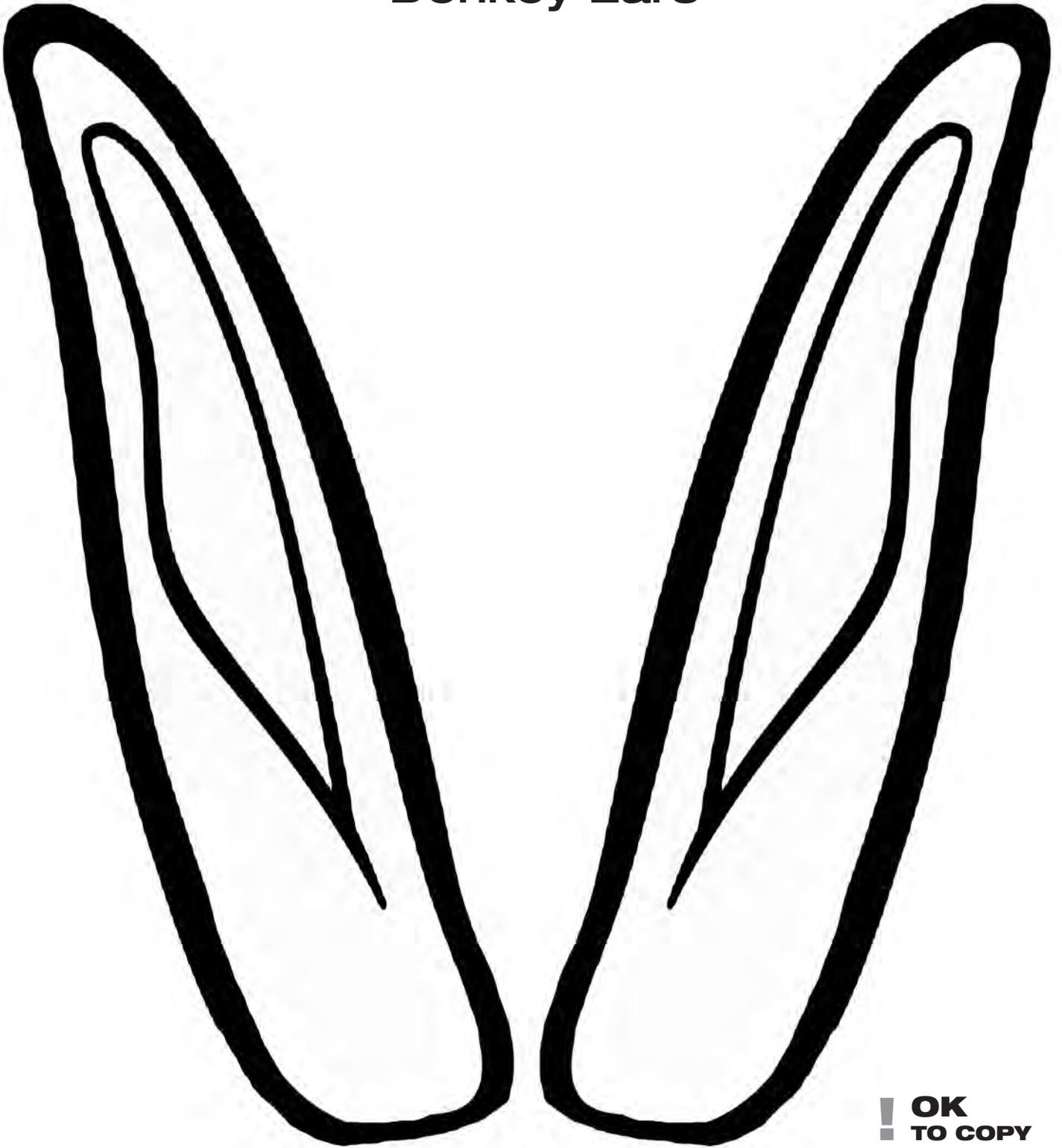
Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Hugs pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the "Daily Challenges" activity. Encourage the parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.



Donkey Ears



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