

THE STORY OF BALAAM AND BALAK

Project and Dramatization for Young Children

Read the story of Balaam and Balak in Numbers 24:15-19. Preview the story for the children first. Then read the story aloud.

Project: Make stars and scepters to use during dramatization of the story.

Materials:

yellow cover stock or poster board
straws
aluminum foil

Procedure:

- 1) Stars: Have children trace stars, then cut them out of yellow cover stock or poster board.
- 2) Scepters: Use a straw and aluminum foil to make each scepter. Ball up a piece of foil and hold it on one end of straw while you cover both with another piece of foil.
- 3) Let the children lift the stars and scepters into the air as they echo or repeat the words of the recitation:

“And a star shall come out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.”

Dramatize the Story:

Simplify the story as shown below. Preview the story for the children. Then direct them in dramatizing the story as adult reads it aloud. For example, have Balak send messengers to Balaam. Then show Balaam looking up toward heaven as he talks to the Lord. (Children should not add dialogue that is not directly given in the Word, but they can convey the emotions of the people involved in the story.) Use the stars and scepters during the dramatization.

THE STORY OF BALAAM AND BALAK

Balak was the king of the nation of Moab. He was scared because the Children of Israel were camped outside of his country and he thought that they would make war with his people. Balak knew of a prophet named Balaam who lived in a far off country. He asked special messengers to go and find Balaam and ask him to come and curse the Children of Israel. Balak thought that if Balaam cursed the Children of Israel nothing bad could happen to his country. The messengers went and found Balaam and asked him to come and curse the Children of Israel. They would give him lots of money if he would do it. Balaam talked to the Lord and the Lord said "Don't curse the Children of Israel, they are good people." So Balaam told the messengers that he would not curse them and sent the messengers home. When the messengers told Balak what Balaam has said, Balak sent even better messengers and more money. Balak talked to the Lord again and the Lord said "You can go, but you must say only the words that I put into your mouth." Balaam told the messengers this and started on his journey.

Then the Lord got angry that Balaam was going. He sent an angel to get in his way. The angel stood in the road and Balaam's donkey saw him, but Balaam did not. The donkey ran into the field and Balaam beat him with a stick. They started on their way again and when the donkey saw the angel the second time he crushed Balaam's foot against a wall. Once again Balaam beat the donkey. They started on the way again and this time when the donkey saw the angel he had no where to go so he lay down in the road. Balaam was very angry and was going to beat the donkey, but the Lord did a miracle and made the donkey talk! "Why are you going to beat me?" asked the donkey. "Haven't I always done what you said before?" The Lord then opened Balaam's eyes and he saw the angel. He felt very sorry for his mistake.

When Balaam got to Moab, he told Balak that he could only say what the Lord put in his mouth and that he would take none of Balak's gold and silver. Balak took Balaam to a mountain where they could see the children of Israel and he built seven altars and asked Balaam to curse the Children of Israel. But instead the Lord put a blessing in Balaam's mouth. Balak took him to another place and made seven altars. Once again the Lord put a blessing in Balaam's mouth. Then for a third time Balak took Balaam to another place and built seven altars and once again the Lord put a blessing in Balaam's mouth. Three times he had blessed the Children of Israel. Then he opened his mouth a fourth time and he prophesied that someday the Lord would be born to the children of Israel. The promise was like this:

I see Him, but not now;
I behold Him, but not near;
A Star shall come out of Jacob;
A Scepter shall rise out of Israel.