

14.17 Twelfth Judge, Abdon (Judges 12:13–15)

(Lesson 14:17a is a composite lesson of the last three briefly-noted judges—Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon.)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- (none for this lesson)

Scripture: (ESV)

Judges 12:13 After him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. 14 He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys, and he judged Israel eight years. 15 Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

Introduction/Review:

Judge Ibzan, who ruled near Bethlehem [locate], and Judge Elon, who ruled near Aijalon in Zebulun [locate], judged Israel for a total of seventeen years.

Story:

The twelfth judge in Israel was named Abdon. We learn his father’s name was Hillel, who was a Pirathonite—a citizen of the town Pirathon [locate]. The Bible states this was a place in Ephraim that was in the hill country of the Amalekites.

Remember the Amalekites? Who were they? They were the people who fought the feeble Israelites soon after their exodus from Egypt. God said at that time that the Amalekites would be destroyed one day for this wickedness. We will hear of them again.

Bible scholars are not sure why this place is called the country of the Amalekites. Perhaps it was ✓“either from the name of the person to whom it belonged, or because the Amalekites formerly dwelt in it; or rather because of some remarkable advantage got over them at this place”

(<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/judges-12-15.html>).

Abdon was another man who had a huge family—forty sons and thirty grandsons. Each of these men had a donkey’s colt to ride. So that is our family tidbit.

Abdon judged Israel eight years, died, and was buried at his hometown of Pirathon of Ephraim. Josephus, the famous historian of Israel, says Abdon ✓“had a magnificent funeral”

(<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/judges-12-15.html>).

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

A donkey is the only animal the Bible records that Jesus ever rode. He rode a donkey into Jerusalem the week He was crucified.

- Even though we may never have heard of these three judges, they were important men in their time for a period of about twenty-five years. Although we many not live long nor be remembered in ages to come, God has a place for us and a job for us to do. Let us be faithful to do His will from the heart.

Activities:

- Play dough: donkeys; men
- Snack: For treats that are good for donkeys and kids, serve carrots, apples, bananas, or pears.
- Do a puppet skit about a donkey found below or on the “Extras” page at teachingthebibleto kids.org.
- Review questions: (Game: Let’s do the same old thing for this little-known judge—print the letters of his name on cardstock and place them in a pocket chart as students answer questions correctly.)
 1. What was the name of the twelfth judge? [Abdon.]
 2. Locate the place where Abdon lived, Pirathon, on the map. [Near Shechem.]
 3. How many sons did Abdon have? [Forty.]
 4. What did Abdon’s forty sons and thirty grandson ride? [Donkeys.]
 5. Who were the Amalekites? [The people who fought against the feeble Israelites when they came out of Egypt.]

Memory Verse[s]:

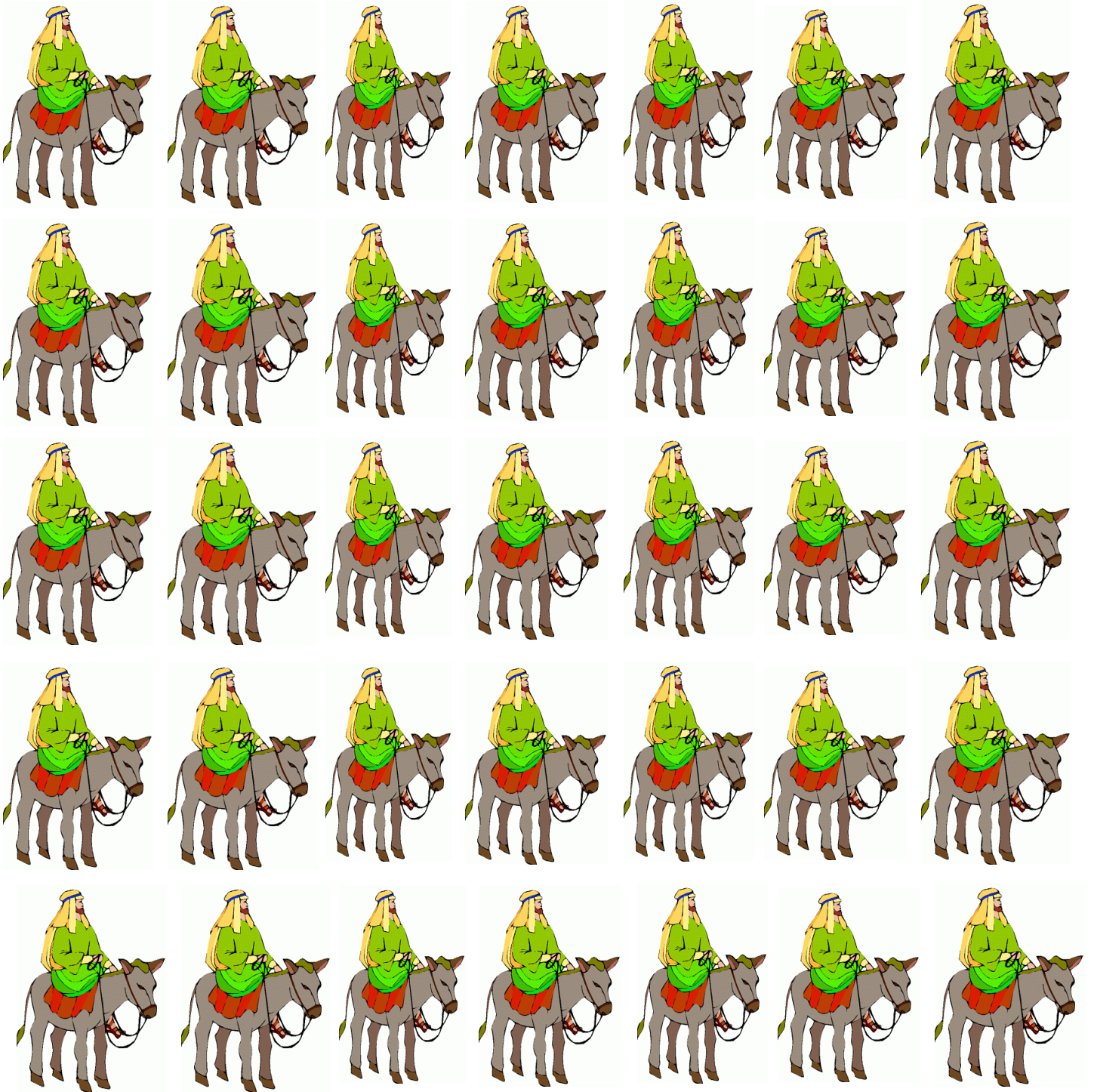
- John 12:15—“Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!”

Handwork:

- Print one copy for each student of the donkey found below. Students will color the picture.







Print this page of 35 men twice to show the 70 total sons and grandsons of Abdon.

Donkey
by Marilyn Alexander

Donkey: Hee haw! Hee haw!

Interviewer: My, aren't you noisy!

Donkey: Yes, I am. It's my nature to say, "Hee haw." I'm a male donkey. I am called a jack.

Interviewer: Does that mean female donkeys say, "Her haw"?

Donkey: Hee naw. The ladies are called jennies. A jenny says "hee haw" just like the jacks.

Interviewer: You kind of look like a horse.

Donkey: Hee flaw! You think so? Well, I think I'm better than a horse in some ways. For example, I'm calmer. I can carry more weight than a horse my size, and I am much more of an all-terrain animal.

Interviewer: We have learned about God's great design for camels. How do you compare to them?

Donkey: Hee ahhh! We compare very favorably. We are excellent at carrying heavy loads for long distances. In fact, in the Bible when Joseph's brothers went to Egypt, their donkeys carried home about six bushels of wheat that weighed about 350 pounds. See how strong I am?

Interviewer: Yes, sir, Jack. How do your feet help you?

Donkey: Hee paw! Oh, I don't have paws; I have hooves. But I am very sure-footed on all kinds of ground—hilly, mountainous, level—you name it. I can use my hooves for stomping on or kicking wild dogs or coyotes, who are my enemies. I can even be a guard animal. Say, how do you like my ears?

Interviewer: Well, I hate to insult you, but your ears are very long and kind of floppy!

Donkey: Hee call! My ears are big for a reason: In the desert I can hear another donkey call from miles away. My ears also help me keep cool.

Interviewer: I have heard that you have a pretty good digestive system.

Donkey: Hee straw! You're right. I love to eat grass, but I can eat even inedible plants and get nourishment and moisture from them. In fact, my body uses 95 percent of what I eat. That's pretty good compared to humans, who average about 40 to 60 percent. Christ, my Creator, prepared my body to conserve food efficiently.

Interviewer: May I ask you a personal question?

Donkey: Hee yah! Go ahead.

Interviewer: Why are you stubborn?

Donkey: Hee stall! Well, it's not exactly that I am stubborn. It's that I don't like to do anything that seems unsafe or is not in my best interest. I am rather intelligent, after all.

Interviewer: Is that so? Prove to me that you are intelligent.

Donkey: Hee crawl! I have an incredible memory: I can recognize places and other donkeys I was with up to 25 years ago. I am very curious. People who work with me say I am pretty smart.

Interviewer: Okay. You have proved your point.

Donkey: Hee law! I want to tell you that we donkeys are one of the earliest- mentioned animals in the Bible, and we're mentioned there over 400 times! One of us was honored to be the only animal the Bible records that Jesus ever rode. He rode a donkey into Jerusalem the week He was crucified.

Interviewer: That is interesting. I never would have guessed that you are such a remarkable animal. You really are wonderful.

Donkey: Hee haw! Thank you for your compliment, but I had nothing to do with being remarkable. My Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the wonderful Maker of all that is good. Praise Him. Hee haw!

Resources:

<http://bibleonkeys.com/?id=131>

<http://www.equest4truth.com/equus-in-the-bible/123-donkeys-in-the-bible>

<http://www.mikesdonkeys.co.uk/facts.html>

<https://www.livescience.com/54258-donkeys.html>

Note: Students thought the donkey to be a braggart.

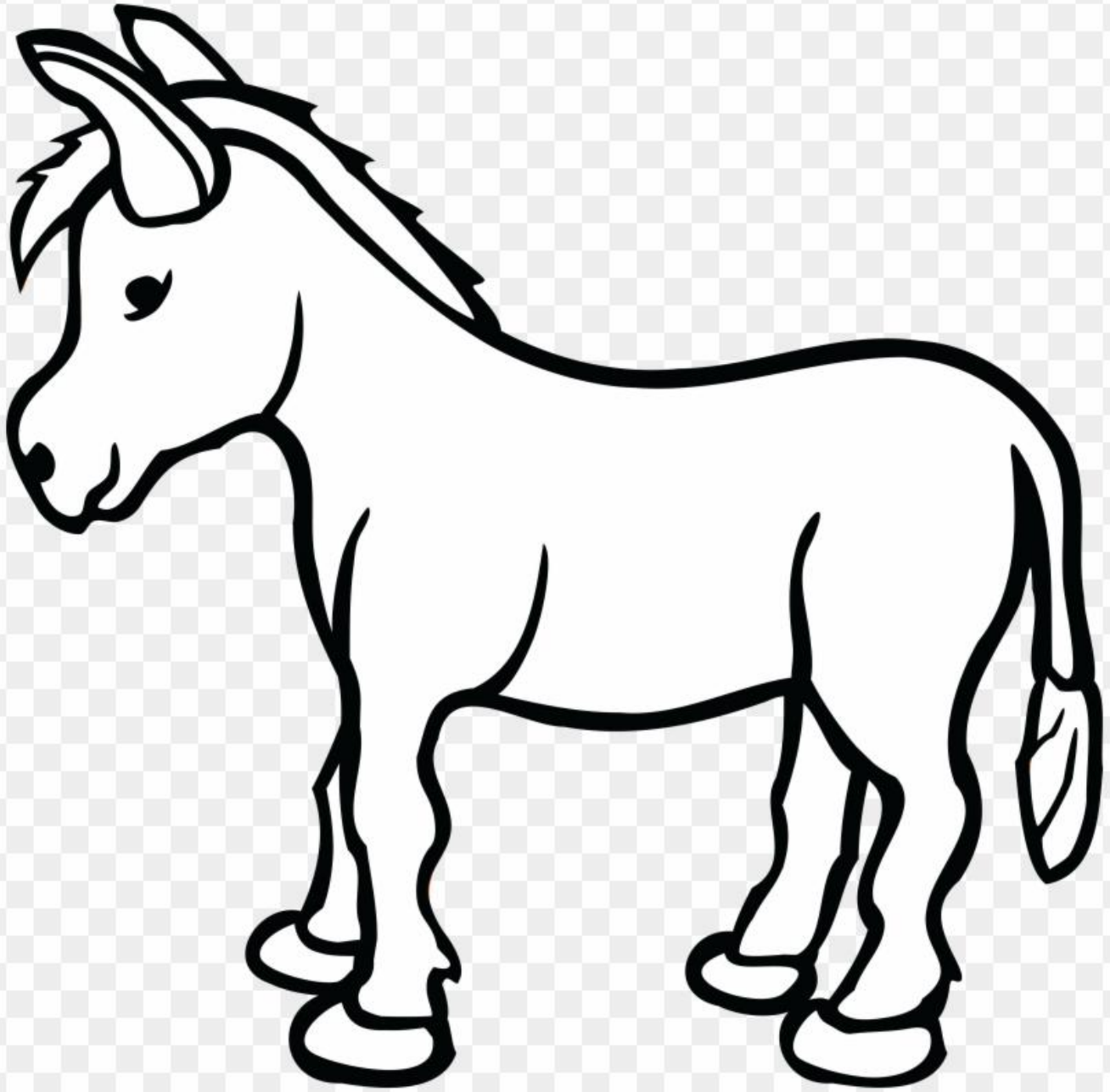
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John 12:15—“Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!”