

CHAPTER 5

THE MONKEYS

-THE TEACHERS

Psalm 32:8 – The Lord says, “I will teach you the way you should go; I will instruct you and advise you.” (Good News Bible)

It was 12 o'clock. The sun was high in the sky and everyone was getting hungry. After all, they had been up since 6 a.m.

“Can we eat now?” asked Samson?

“It’s just 15 minutes to the hippo pools,” said Dad. “When we get there we’ll pull in under the shade of the trees and watch the hippos and monkeys while we eat.”

They arrived at the hippo pools and pulled into the shady area. “You can put your windows down just a bit,” instructed Dad. “That will let a bit of air in, and we can listen to the sounds.”

Immediately they heard a loud chattering of a large troop of monkeys. They were a hive of activity, leaping, jumping and swinging from tree to tree.

“Look, I can see babies clinging to their mothers,” said Serena. “They are so cute!”

“Yes,” agreed Dad, “The mother monkey carries its baby around with her for the first few months of its life. Then for next seven to ten years the young monkey spends their time at their mother’s side learning how to do many things. The mother teaches the baby how to find food, make nests in trees, how to get rid of fleas and ticks, and even how to use tools. The mother teaches the young one which fruits are ripe and which foods are safe to eat. They eat whatever food they can find - fruit, leaves and insects. If they find a termites nest they might get a rock to knock it down, or they might get a stick to dig up a nest.”

“Young monkeys have a lot to learn!” said Samson thoughtfully.

“Yes, and their parents are very good teachers,” added Mum. “In fact all animal parents are good teachers. It is very important for all the baby animals in Africa to be taught well by their parents and equally important for the young ones to watch and learn. Their survival depends on it. Lions are also very good teachers. They play games with their cubs, like hide and seek and tug of war. They encourage the cubs to play creeping and pouncing games, all in preparation for the days when they will have to catch their own food. We can learn from the animals about teaching and learning. A good teacher knows the most important information to teach. They look for interesting ways to teach it, so that the learner will remember. The learner must be attentive, and practice what they have learned. See the baby monkeys copying what the adults are doing! That’s their way of practicing.”

Then Dad asked the children a question. “Who do you think is the greatest teacher that has ever lived?”

The children thought for a moment, but soon came up with the right answer.

“I think it was Jesus,” answered Serena.

“He taught Mums, Dads and kids like us,” added Samson.

“That’s right,” said Dad. “Jesus wants to teach us today – not just the people who lived when He was on earth. We can learn about Him by reading the Bible. Then we practice what we learn by trying to do what Jesus did.”

“And remember that if we want to learn, we have to ask God to open our eyes and ears to understand what He is saying,” added Mum.

“Now we have been so busy looking at the monkeys we have forgotten about the hippos, Dad reminded them. “I can see two hippo eyes and ears above the water.”

They all looked at the muddy water and saw another smaller pair of eyes and ears. Yes it was a baby hippo.

“I’m glad we’re safe in the Land Rover,” said Mum, shuddering at the thought of crocodiles. “There are probably crocodiles lurking around

these muddy banks. And I know that hippos can be very dangerous animals too, even though they eat only plants.”

“What do you think mother hippos would teach their babies?” Mum continued.

“I think they would have to know how to swim underwater and get water weeds from the bottom of the lake,” replied Samson.

Then suddenly the mother hippos and her baby decided to come out on the river bank.

“And the baby hippo must learn to stay close to its mother when it come up on the bank, just in case there are lions or crocodiles about!” added Serena.

With everyone satisfied, they packed up the lunch things and set off again, knowing that they had to make the camping area by sundown.

MONKEY FACTS

- Monkeys are mammals and the young drink milk from their mothers for the first two years.
- Monkeys communicate using special noises.
- Young monkeys play games together such as chasy.
- Monkeys use their faces to show different expressions.
- Monkeys have strong fingers and toes for gripping tree branches.
- Monkeys live in troops of up to 60 members. They warn each other of danger by screaming.
- Monkeys are omnivores, meaning they eat both plants and animals. They feed on fruit, leaves, seeds, buds, bark, stems, insects, and occasionally the meat of small mammals.
- On the ground, monkeys can walk on all fours.
- Grooming is an important behavior for monkeys. They do this not only to remove biting insects from the hair, but also because it shows their affection for one another.
- Monkeys spend about six to eight hours a day looking for and eating
- food.



http://www.sa-venues.com/wildlife/wildlife_vmonkey.htm

HIPPOPOTAMUS FACTS

- Hippos belong to the same family as pigs.
- Hippos spend two thirds of their life under water. They feel more comfortable in the water because it takes the weight off their feet.
- A hippo can weigh a ton.
- It is between 4 and 5 metres long.
- A hippo has small feet compared to his huge body.
- A hippo can stay under water for up to six minutes.
- The baby hippo often rides on its mother's back while she is swimming or floating.
- The hippo's nostrils, ears, and eyes are on the top of its head, and they stay above the water while the rest of its head and its body are underneath the water. This means that the hippo can breathe, see, and hear even while its body is submerged.
- When a hippo sinks completely underwater, its nose and ears automatically close so that no water gets in.
- Hippos are excellent swimmers and can hold their breath for about five minutes.
- Hippos can walk along the bottoms of rivers and lakes.
- At dusk, hippos leave the water, and walk on land as far as 8 kilometers from the water to spend the night grazing on grass, their main food.
- A hippo may eat up to 68 kilograms of grass a night.
- Hippos' toes are webbed, which helps them paddle through the water.

- A hippo's tail is about 56 cm long.
- Female hippos are able to have babies at about seven years old.
- Baby hippos are born underwater. They can swim almost from the moment they're born.
- Baby hippos are called calves. They drink milk from their mothers, often underwater.
- Hippos can live to be more than 40 years old.
- Hippos are aggressive, do not fear humans, and are considered one of Africa's more dangerous animals.
- Lions, crocodiles, leopards, hyenas, and wild dogs often kill baby hippos, but adult hippos are rarely attacked.
- The only land animals larger than hippos are elephants and rhinoceroses.

