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Discovery

Scripture & Science for Kids



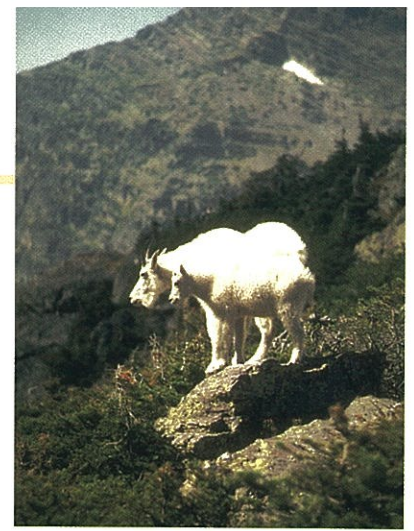
GOATS OF THE WORLD

DALLAS REESE



Have you ever seen a goat? If you have, it was probably a dairy goat, which produces milk for people to use. Some goats still roam the wild, like the mountain goat that lives in the Rocky Mountains, Alaska's Yukon, and other places.

In the Bible, goats were used for different things. Proverbs 27:27 says, "You shall have enough goats' milk for your food and for your household." The curtains in the tabernacle were made of goats' hair (read Exodus 26:7). Goats were also used for sacrifices and offerings. Today, goats are still used around the world. For example, in Jamaica, goat meat is considered a delicacy. God created the greatest animals. It is a great thought to know that God created everything. I'm glad that God is my designer, aren't you?



Even though many goats are domesticated, some mountain goats like these roam free.

Mary had a little lamb

DAVE MILLER

Sheep were a very important part of life in Bible lands. Their hide and wool were used for clothing. Their meat and milk were used for food and drink. They were used for religious sacrifice. Their hide was even used as coverings in building construction. A person was considered rich if he owned many sheep. The king of Moab regularly paid tax to the king of Israel: 100,000 lambs and the wool from 100,000 rams (2 Kings 3:4). When

King Solomon finished building the magnificent temple, he sacrificed 120,000 sheep. In fact, 100 sheep a day were needed just to feed everyone in Solomon's household (1 Kings 4:23)!

Every year, flock owners would have a big celebration. They would bring their sheepshearers together to shave the wool off the sheep. This occasion was a time of great fun and feasting. Flocks were cared for everyday by shepherds who knew their sheep, often by name. The shepherds were aided by sheep dogs that helped to protect the sheep from hungry wolves.

The Bible uses sheep to symbolize important spiritual truths. The righteous person is like a sheep (Matthew 25:32). Sinning makes us lost sheep (Luke 15:4-7). Like sheep, we need guidance from God our Shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd Who gave His life for the sheep (John 10:11). Mary was blessed when she gave birth to Jesus. No wonder John declared, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).



THE HUMP-BACKED MILK MACHINE

BERT THOMPSON

Most of the time, we picture camels carrying people and cargo through the desert, but did you know that the camel is often used for many other things besides desert travel? There are two kinds of camels. The first, the Arabian (or dromedary) camel has a single hump on its back. The other, the Bactrian camel, has two humps. Both types are useful in a variety of ways as “farm animals.”

For example, camels can be milked, like cows (Genesis 32:15). On average, a female camel can produce about 11 pounds of milk a day. Camels have one advantage in milk production that many other animals do not have, because they can produce quite a bit of milk even when they don't drink for long periods of time. When other animals aren't able to drink enough, they often stop producing milk altogether.

The meat of camels also is edible. Jews of the past did not eat the meat of a camel because it was considered unclean (read Leviticus 11:4). Jews today feel the same way. But other people of the past ate camel meat. And people today still do (they say it tastes a little like beef).

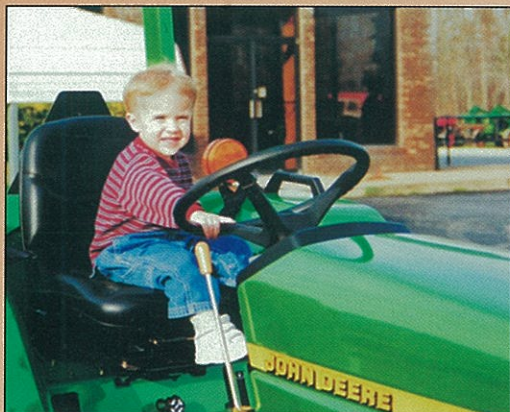
The hide of a Bactrian camel can be tanned and turned into wearable items like sandals, shoes, belts, and headbands. The hide of the dromedary camel, however, is not very good quality, and generally is used to make things like whips and saddles. Even camel hair is used by humans. Again, the Bactrian camel has hair of a higher quality. Camel hair can be used for making mattresses, ropes, a coarse cloth used for tents, or outer garments (we know, for example, that John the Baptizer wore a coat of camel hair—Matthew 3:4). Camels do indeed make amazing farm animals. Who would have thought?

The camel's colorful behavior makes it a wonderful animal to study.



BETTER THAN A JOHN DEERE?

BRAD HARRUB



I've always wanted to drive one of those big John Deere tractors. But have you ever wondered what farming was like before tractors? In Bible times, men had to plow fields using animals such as donkeys. But rich farmers would buy a stronger and more reliable ox. These oxen (plural form of ox) were used for labor in the field, provided meat, and had hides that could be used for clothing. They were even used as a sacrifice at the altar as a gift to God.

For a farmer to lose his ox would be like a farmer today losing an expensive tractor,

except that it would be worse because that animal also could provide food and clothing to the family. Because of this, people took extremely good care of these animals. When Solomon had completed the temple, the Bible says that the Israelites sacrificed about 22,000 oxen (1 Kings 8:63). Why do you think these people would so freely give up that many oxen, considering their great value? Surely God was worth it!

Oxen are still used in many parts of the world to pull carts and plow fields.



PLEASE PASS THE BARBECUE

BRAD HARRUB

Chances are, you've probably eaten some form of pork in the last week. It may have been bacon or sausage for breakfast, a ham sandwich for lunch, or even pork chops or barbecue for dinner. In fact, pork is the most eaten meat in the world. But these squealing farm animals have not always held such an honored place at the dinner table. The Israelites wanted nothing to do with pigs! Their laws didn't allow them to eat meat that came from a pig (see Leviticus 11:7-8). In fact, these animals were looked on so unfavorably, they weren't even used as sacrifices.

Jesus once used a story that included pigs. He told of a young man who took his inheritance early, went to the city, and foolishly spent all of his money (Luke 15:11-32). The only job he could find was taking care of a herd of dirty pigs. As he was feeding them, he was so hungry that he wanted to eat the pig slop. The young man then realized how badly he had sinned. He returned home, and his father welcomed him with open arms—the same way God welcomes us today when we repent and obey Him.



THE CLOCK OF A COCK

ERIC LYONS



Many people in the 21st century wake up in the mornings with the sound of a buzzer going off. Others, who dislike the beeping of an alarm, are awakened by songs playing over the radio, or to the voices of their favorite morning radio talk-show hosts.

When Jesus lived on the Earth, people did not have automatic clocks like we have today to awaken them in the mornings. Instead, they often counted on the internal clocks of chickens. Adult male chickens (called “cocks”) served as the alarm clock in ancient times. Cocks (also known as roosters) crowed with such precision it was like clockwork. So regularly do roosters keep time, that we find cock-crowing mentioned in the Bible as a normal division of time in first-century Palestine. Jesus once spoke of this time when He stated: “Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, **at the crowing of the rooster**, or in the morning” (Mark 13:35). The division of the night known as “the crowing of the rooster” was just before daybreak when cocks began to crow their loudest, and when people were needing to get up to go to work.

Although most people today do not depend upon roosters to get them up in the morning in time for school or work, we still are amazed by the intelligently designed “clock of the cock.”

CHICKENS ARE NO COWARDS!

ERIC LYONS

Unlike the other animals discussed in this issue of *Discovery*, chickens are rarely mentioned in the Bible. In fact, the only time egg-laying chickens (called hens) are talked about in the New Testament is when Jesus spoke of His love for the people of Jerusalem and compared it to the care a hen has for her chicks (read Matthew 23:37). Although the word “chicken” is often used to refer to a coward, mother hens are not “chickens” in that sense. Rather, just as Jesus taught, a hen protects her baby chicks from harm by covering them with her wings. By casting aside care for herself, a mother hen will give up her life in defense of her precious chicks.

This is similar to what Jesus did for us. He willingly shed His blood to save us from the devil’s grasp. Like the hen’s strong affection for her chicks, so is God’s love for us (read Romans 5:6-8).



Just as a mother hen protects her chicks, Jesus wanted to protect the people of Jerusalem. However, most of the people of Jerusalem did not accept Jesus’ help.



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THE COSTLY COW

KYLE BUTT

Can you imagine going into a shopping mall and seeing a beautiful new coat that you wanted to buy? Then, when you checked the price tag, it read “2 cows and 1 bull.” What kind of price is “2 cows and 1 bull”? (When talking about cattle, a cow is a female and a bull is a male.) Did you know that in Bible times, that would have been a very common way to price things? Gold and silver were often used as money, but so were cows, sheep, goats, and oxen. Wouldn't it be funny to haul a cattle trailer around to the mall and swap cows and goats for other things you needed?

What makes cattle so valuable? They can be used for hundreds of things. Their meat was often eaten in Bible times, and we today continue to eat steak, hamburger, and other types of beef (God gave us permission to eat cattle in 1 Timothy 4:3-4). Their hide can be treated and made into leather shoes, purses, belts, and thousands of other items. In Bible times, many animals such as camels, sheep, goats, and cows were milked. But today in the United States, most all of the milk we drink comes from the wonderful cow. Cows were trained to grind grain, and they were often given as gifts or wages. In Genesis 32:15, Jacob gave his brother Esau “forty cows and ten bulls.”



Cattle come in all shapes and sizes. This long-haired highland cow shows us some of that amazing diversity.

One of the most important uses for cattle was sacrifice. God commanded the Israelites to sacrifice every firstborn cow or bull. The blood of these sacrifices allowed the sins of the Israelites to be “rolled forward” until Jesus could die on the cross and forgive those sins. Hebrews 10:4 says, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” Only Christ’s sacrifice can take away sins.

Today, we do not sacrifice cattle to God, because Christ was the true sacrifice. But we do continue to use cows in many of the same ways that the people in the Bible used them. Cattle truly are one of God’s good gifts.

ANSWERS

ACTIVITY PAGES MAY BE COPIED FOR MULTIPLE STUDENT USE

MATCHING: 1-G (Bulls); 2-J (Arabian); 3-A (Sheep); 4-B (Cows); 5-I (Cocks or roosters); 6-C (Oxen); 7-F (Pig); 8-D (Hens); 9-E (Goats); 10-H (Bactrian). **KNOW YOUR BIBLE:** 1-Hebrews 10:4; 2-Matthew 3:4; 3-John 1:29; 4-Matthew 23:37; 5-Mark 13:35. **CRYPTOGRAM:** Only Christ's sacrifice can take away sins.

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