



LESSON 2 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Hears Our Prayers for Others

SCRIPTURE: Acts 12

WORD OF WONDER: From Psalm 66:19–20

Take a few moments to read Acts 12:1–16.

I know it sounds strange, but this is almost my favorite passage in Scripture. Why? Because you couldn't make this stuff up if you tried.

A huddle of desperate Christians is deep in prayer for their imprisoned friend, Peter.

Peter, who they love, and who might be executed the following day.

Then, a knock at the door.

It's Peter, whose miraculous release now means he needs someplace safe to shelter. But those praying can't quite believe their prayers have been answered in this way and figure it must be an angel at the door, not Peter himself. It takes a brave servant girl to insist it really is Peter until finally they crack open the door and get him inside.

Sound familiar? Like those believers, we sometimes pray without much expectation that God will answer. We don't want to get our hopes up, don't want to risk disappointment.

But God hears our prayers, including our prayers for others. And when our prayers align with His purposes, remarkable things happen.

So pray your kids come to know and love Him. That the diagnosis is reversed, the crisis calmed, the relationship healed. Pray boldly and specifically for God to act in the lives of people you love.

Do that now—pray for a Peter in your life you'd like to see set free from some sort of captivity. If you take that risk, what might happen?

And then keep listening for a knock at the door.

—Mikal Keefer

Children's Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The book of Acts and the Gospel of Luke were written by the same author. While the Gospel is focused on the life and ministry of Jesus, Acts focuses on the growth of the church and spread of the good news after Jesus' ascension.

WHAT?

[Acts 12](#) is part of a longer series of stories beginning in [Acts 8](#) about the rise of persecution against the church and how God protected His people through it all. In fact, God used the persecution against the church to help spread the gospel.

WHERE?

The story takes place in Judea, where Herod Agrippa, the grandson of the Herod who tried to have Jesus killed ([Matthew 2:16](#)), reigned.

WHEN?

[Acts 12](#) places the story of Peter's imprisonment and rescue by an angel around the same time that Paul began his ministry with Barnabas in Antioch. Persecution against the church in Judea increased as the gospel began to go forth to the Gentiles.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Luke says that his Gospel is about what "Jesus began to do and to teach [emphasis added]" ([Acts 1:1, NIV](#)). Acts is about what Jesus continued to do and teach through the Holy Spirit in the apostles. Jesus continues to work in us by His Spirit today!



Curiosity

LESSON 2 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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Curiosity Activity: God Hears Us

SUPPLIES: beanbags (1 per kid), large plastic hoop or small rug

Place the large hoop or small rug on the floor and have kids sit in a circle around the outside. Give each kid one beanbag to hold, or you can hold onto the beanbags and pass them to the kids.

Today, we're going to learn that God hears us. When I call your name, you can put your beanbag here and say your name. Point to the hoop or rug.

Call the kids one at a time, saying, **"God hears (child's name) praying!"** Wait for the kid to place her beanbag on the rug or inside the hoop and shout her name before calling the next child. Play until all the kids have had a turn.

Leader Tip: To help kids wait for their turn, give directions about where they should keep their hands or beanbag (tucked into their laps, on their knees, etc.).

Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS FOR OTHERS.**

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

GOD HEARS—*Cup your hands around your ears.*

OUR PRAYERS—*Fold your hands in prayer.*

FOR OTHERS.—*Point to the people around you.*



Belief

LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Guide kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we know You hear us when we pray for others, and You answer our prayers. So we come to You today, excited to learn about Your truth and to see how our prayers have power because of You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

****Note to leaders:** This story is not in any of our picture Bibles. To aid in telling the story, you can use the puppet figures included in the Belief bag for this week.

Pull out the Bible.

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible important? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Read Acts 12:3-16 NIV from the text below:

³ Herod saw that the death of James pleased some Jews. So he arrested Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ After Herod arrested Peter, he put him in prison. Peter was placed under guard. He was watched by four groups of four soldiers each. Herod planned to put Peter on public trial. It would take place after the Passover Feast.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison. But the church prayed hard to God for him.

9:00 Service

⁶ It was the night before Herod was going to bring him to trial. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. Two chains held him there. Lookouts stood guard at the entrance. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared. A light shone in the prison cell. The angel struck Peter on his side. Peter woke up. "Quick!" the angel said. "Get up!" The chains fell off Peter's wrists.

⁸ Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." Peter did so. "Put on your coat," the angel told him. "Follow me." ⁹ Peter followed him out of the prison. But he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening. He thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ They passed the first and second guards. Then they came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself. They went through it. They walked the length of one street. Suddenly the angel left Peter.

¹¹ Then Peter realized what had happened. He said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent his angel. He set me free from Herod's power. He saved me from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen."

¹² When Peter understood what had happened, he went to Mary's house. Mary was the mother of John Mark. Many people had gathered in her home. They were praying there. ¹³ Peter knocked at the outer entrance. A servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. ¹⁴ She recognized Peter's voice. She was so excited that she ran back without opening the door. "Peter is at the door!" she exclaimed.

¹⁵ "You're out of your mind," they said to her. But she kept telling them it was true. So they said, "It must be his angel."

¹⁶ Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the door and saw him, they were amazed.

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**But God has surely listened. He has heard
my prayer. Give praise to God.**

— Psalm 66:19–20a

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **Who can you pray for this week?**
- **How do you know God hears you?**



Faith

LESSON 2 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

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Craft: Mother's Day Flowers

SUPPLIES: cardstock cards, paper muffin cups, buttons, green paper strips

We're going to make cards to tell our moms how much we love them!

Allow children to assemble the flower using paper muffin cups, buttons and paper. Inside the card, children can write or draw a message to their moms or create another flower.





9:00 Service

Identity

LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

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Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for hearing their prayers.

God, You love when Your kids talk to You in prayer. And You hear us, God. Thank You that we can come to You in prayer and that our prayers have power because of You. We pray for the people we know. Please remind us of Your presence and Your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you go out this week with the knowledge that God made you, He knows you, and He loves you. He will hear your prayers for others!

Closing Activity: God Hears!

In God's big story today, we heard how Peter was set free because of his friends' prayers! When you hear me knock on different things, you can say, "God hears!"

Walk around the room and knock on different things, such as doors, bookshelves, toys, or the floor. You might also say, "Knock, knock" as you are knocking. Encourage the kids to shout, "God hears!" You can also let the kids take turns knocking.