



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's Good Plans Cannot Be Stopped

SCRIPTURE: [Numbers 22–23](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [From Ephesians 3:20](#)

One of the best sermons I've ever encountered came in the form of a broken seashell.

I had gone to see the sunrise, but it was cloudy so there wasn't one to see. I was disappointed and decided instead to hunt for seashells. The shoreline was full of shells, but most of them were broken.

Soon a mother with her girls joined me and, oh my, the shrieks of delight! "So many shells, Mommy! They are so beautiful!" These girls didn't care the shells were broken. They saw the beauty in their brokenness.

I felt God say to me, "I love broken shells too." That brief encounter spoke volumes to me about the love of God. It changed me.

I wonder if that's how Balaam in our story felt. Here he was, casting curses for money, when God interrupts his life through a talking donkey and a sword-wielding angel. Could he ever go back to the way things were again?

Read [Numbers 22:24–38](#). The final statement, "I can only speak the words God puts in my mouth" is pretty telling ([Numbers 22:38](#)). I tend to believe Balaam's words indicate more of a life change than a momentary utterance.

In what unexpected way has God spoken to you? What broken thing, familiar item, or everyday moment became life-altering and transformational? How has God used something ordinary—something unexpected—to further His plans in your life? God's good plans cannot be stopped.

—Christina Embree

Nonprofit Ministry Director and Minister of Generational Discipleship

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 2 **FOR LEADERS**
BALAAM'S DONKEY

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Balak, the king of Moab; Balaam, well-known Aramean diviner and prophet; the people of Israel who have entered Canaan and set up camp near Moab; Balaam's donkey; the angel of the Lord.

WHAT?

Israel has gained a reputation for conquering lands in Canaan, and the Moabite king Balak is scared of them. He employs the diviner Balaam to curse the Israelites, but the Lord intervenes, and Balaam is only able to bless them.

WHERE?

Israel is camped in the plain of Moab, east of the Jordan River, after their entrance into Canaan. The kingdom of Moab was located east of the Dead Sea in what is now Jordan.

WHEN?

This narrative takes place close to the end of the Israelites 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, shortly before the death of Moses and before God's people cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God protected His people from being cursed by Balaam while they wandered in the wilderness. God had promised land to His people, and in 2 Corinthians, Paul reminds us that God's promises are "all 'Yes' because of what Christ has done" (1:20). Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of God's good plans!



Curiosity

LESSON 2 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

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Activity: Donkey Face

SUPPLIES: cookie sheet, sticky back magnets, tape, scissors (prep only)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Donkey Face Sheet](#)



Ahead of time, print the Donkey Face Sheet. Cut out the different donkey mouths and attach a magnet to the back of each piece. Tape the donkey face to the cookie sheet and set the mouth pieces nearby.

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Welcome! Today we're going to hear a story about a donkey! Donkeys have mouths, just like we do. Can you point to your mouth? Show the kids one of the donkey face magnets you prepared earlier. Take one of the mouths and show how it will stick to the donkey's face. Let kids take turns sticking different donkey mouths onto the donkey face.

We'll learn more about how God did something really cool using a donkey in our story today!



9:00 Service

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, thank You for being with us. Please help us hear from You today. Open our ears and our minds so we can hear what You have to say to us today. Help us learn that Your good plans cannot be stopped. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

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

The Big Picture Bible, page 46

Balaam and the Donkey

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**God is able to do far more than we could
ever ask for or imagine.**

— Ephesians 3:20

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

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **How high do you think we could build our tower? How high do you think God could build a**
- **tower? Is there anything that God can't do? How do you know?**



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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Activity: Stop and Go

We're going pretend that we're donkeys! Let me hear you make a donkey sound. Say, "Hee-haw!" In God's big story, the donkey had to go and stop, and go and stop. Let's play a game where you have to go and stop too. If I say, "Go," you walk around the room and say, "Hee-haw," but when I say, "Stop," you freeze and be quiet.

Say, "Go" and encourage kids to walk around the room pretending to be donkeys. Every so often, say, "Stop" and encourage the kids to freeze and be quiet.

Prayer and Blessing

Pray with the kids, thanking God for His good plans and promises.

Let's talk to God. God, thank You for keeping Your promises. Thank You for always having a good plan for us. Help us remember that Your good plans cannot be stopped. 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 always remember that God's good plans cannot be stopped. God wants the best for you and will always love you and take care of you. May you remember that even when you don't understand why something is happening, God is there with you.