

### LESSON 2

## PETER IN PRISON

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Hears Our Prayers for Others

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 12

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** The apostle Peter is in prison for teaching the good news about Jesus. But believers in Jesus pray for him, and God miraculously rescues Peter from prison because God hears our prayers for others.

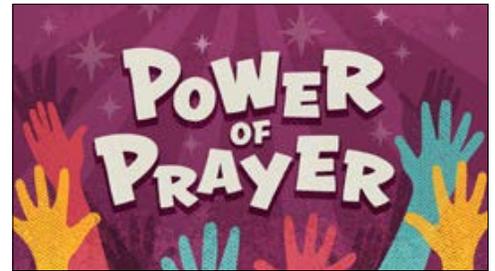
**WORD OF WONDER:** God listens to me and hears my prayers. I can praise Him. —from Psalm 66:19–20

### CURIOSITY

### BELIEF

### FAITH

- Play Stations:
  - What's that Sound?
  - Who's at the Door?
  - Peter in Prison Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Testing Strength
- Word of Wonder: From Psalm 66:19–20
- God's Big Story/Snack
- Circle Time: Knock, Knock
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Breath Prayer
- Game: Guess My Voice



[Power of Prayer Preschool Spotify playlist](#)



## 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

Belief

Faith

Identity

## LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Hears Our Prayers for Others

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 12

**WORD OF WONDER:** From Psalm 66:19–20

### Play Stations

**SUPPLIES:** small, opaque containers with lids, such as jewelry boxes or cups (6–8); various items to fill containers, such as uncooked rice, dry beans, pom-poms, coins, etc. (enough to fill 6–8 containers); dollhouse; toy people figures; coloring utensils; rubber bands (6–8, optional); boxes (shoebox size, optional), scissors (prep only, optional)

**RESOURCES:** [Peter in Prison Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

**"Welcome to RBKids! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?"**

#### Play Station: What's that Sound?

**Set-up:** Gather small, opaque containers with lids, as well as various filler items that make noise, such as uncooked rice, dry beans, pom-poms, coins, etc. Put a small amount of one type of filler in each small container and put a rubber band around each one to keep it closed (if needed).

**Play:** Invite kids to shake the containers. See whether the kids can guess what's inside each box by listening to the sounds being made while shaking the container.

**Allergy Caution:** This activity includes possible food allergens!

#### Play Station: Who's at the Door?

**Set-up:** Set out a dollhouse and toy people figures. You could also use shoeboxes as houses by turning them on their sides and cutting out a "door" for the figures to enter and exit.

**Play:** Invite the kids to play with the houses and toy figures. Show kids where the doors are on the houses and encourage the kids to have the figures enter and exit the houses using the doors.

#### Play Station: Peter in Prison Coloring Sheet

**Set-up:** Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

**Play:** Let the kids color. The kids can also turn over the sheet and draw a picture of a house.

## Curiosity Activity: Testing Strength

**SUPPLIES:** paper towels or tissue paper (5), strips of paper (5), craft sticks (5), pieces of string or yarn (5), heavy metal chain or similar object

Ahead of time, set out the various objects on a table or the floor for kids to see the types of objects.

**"Today, we're going to test your strength. Who thinks you are strong enough to break one of these objects?"** Hold up each type of object and describe it. **Do you want to test your strength today?** Invite kids one at a time to choose an object and try to break it. Hold up paper towels or tissue paper, strips of paper, craft sticks, pieces of string or yarn, and a heavy metal chain. Let each child choose one thing to try and break or tear apart.

**You are strong! You were able to break some of these things. But what about this metal chain? Could anyone break that? What do you think it would take to break the metal chain?** Allow kids to respond. **It would probably take someone with extreme power and strength to break that chain!**

**Today, we're going to learn how prayer is powerful and strong. Our prayers are powerful because God hears our prayers, and He is all-powerful! We'll learn about a time when God heard the prayers of others and broke some chains so a follower of Jesus could escape prison! We'll learn that God hears our prayers for others!"**

**Leader Tip:** If kids are hesitant to volunteer, invite them to guess which items can and can't be broken.

## Word of Wonder

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, painter's tape, construction paper (1 sheet per kid), scissors (prep only)

**RESOURCES:** [Word of Wonder Cards \(1 set per kid\)](#)

**WORD OF WONDER**  
God listens to me and hears my prayers.  
I can praise Him.  
—from Psalm 66:19–20



Before the kids arrive, print the Word of Wonder Cards and cut out one set of cards for each kid. Use painter's tape on the back to attach the cards to various places around the room. When you begin the activity, give each kid a sheet of construction paper. If you have a lot of kids, you can print one set of cards for every small group, and color-code the sets, so each group looks for one color.

**"Today, you'll go on a scavenger hunt for parts of the Word of Wonder. You need to find three different pictures around the room. Each of you will look for a picture of an ear to remind us that God listens to us, a picture of praying hands to remind us He hears our prayers, and a picture of confetti because we can praise Him! When you find the pictures, carefully peel them off the surface where you found them, stick them onto your paper, and then sit down.** Point out where the kids should join you after gathering cards. **Then we'll practice our Word of Wonder together as we point to the cards. Ready?"**

Allow the kids to find the cards around the room. Help kids stick the cards to their papers as needed. When they return, say each part of the Word of Wonder as the kids point to the corresponding cards on the paper.

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

- **GOD LISTENS TO ME**—*Point to your ears.*
- **AND HEARS MY PRAYERS.**—*Fold your hands together.*
- **I CAN PRAISE HIM.**—*Hold your hands above shoulders and turn wrists back and forth.*
- **FROM PSALM 66:19–20**—*Hold your hands out together with palms open, as if opening a book.*

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

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

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Acts in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

### Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (*Point to yourself.*)

**Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Acts in the Bible.**

**Read pages 388–391 in the My First Hands On Bible.**

## Circle Time: Knock, Knock

**SUPPLIES:** colored paper (1 sheet per kid), marker or pen

Before the kids arrive, fold each sheet of paper in half; you'll need one sheet for each kid. You could make the papers look like doors by drawing a doorknob and window on the outside. Inside the folded papers, write a discussion question or a silly action (such as "Jump up high!" or "Spin in a circle!" or "Run in place!"). When you're ready to begin this activity, set the paper doors on the floor. You need one paper door for each kid (or the kids can share). Instead of writing the full question, you can write a number corresponding with the questions below.

**"When we talk to God in prayer, He hears us—just like He heard Peter's friends when they prayed for Peter while Peter was in prison. Let's pretend that we are knocking on a door like Peter did. When it's your turn, choose a door to knock on and we'll see what's inside!"**



Call on kids to choose a paper door and pretend to knock on it. Then open the paper door and read what's inside. The kid will either do the silly action or answer the question inside. The kids could also knock on a door (without leaving your room) and another leader could stand behind the door and hand out a paper with a question on it.

**Make It Inclusive!** If you have a kid unable to reach the paper doors on the floor, bring one to the child so she can knock on it.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **How did Peter get out of prison?** *(God broke the chains; an angel led him out.)*
- **What were Peter's friends doing while he was in prison?** *(praying for him)*
- **Where did Peter go when he got out of prison?** *(to a house where his friends were praying)*
- **What did Rhoda do when Peter knocked on the door?** *(In her excitement to tell the people Peter was there, she accidentally left him outside.)*
- **How might you have felt if you were Rhoda answering the door?**
- **What do you think Peter's friends felt when he entered the house?**
- **Why do you think the people were praying for Peter?**
- **Share about a time when you prayed for someone else.**

**"God hears our prayers when we pray for other people. We can pray for family members, friends from church or school, and our neighbors. Let's talk to God now in prayer!"**

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for hearing their prayers for others.

**Head to Large Group!**

## Responding in Worship: Breath Prayer

**"Do you remember in God's big story what Peter's friends were doing?"** Pause for response.

**Praying! And we can pray too. The Bible says, "The prayer of a godly person is powerful. Things happen because of it" (James 5:16)! Did you know that we can pray using not just our words, but our body and our breath too? I'm going to teach you to pray this way, and maybe you can teach someone at home!**

**Start by pulling your arms in like you're hugging your body.** Demonstrate motion. **Now push your arms straight out with your palms facing up.** Demonstrate motion. **Next, let's put our breath with it. I'm going to breathe in and pull my hands around myself like a hug.** Demonstrate motion. **And breathe out while I push my arms out and open my hands.** Demonstrate motion. **Practice this with me.** Spend a few moments practicing breathing in and out while bringing hands in and out.

**Now we can add some words to our prayer. Let's think of different people we can pray for as we breathe and pray."** Repeat each pair of lines a few times before moving to the next. Try a few of these suggestions, then invite the kids to suggest other people or have them pray on their own with names. Encourage the kids to repeat the words and mimic the motions after you.

**I pray for someone in my house.** *(Breathe in; pull your arms in.)*

**God, You hear me.** *(Breathe out; push your arms out.)*

**I pray for my friend.** *(Breathe in; pull your arms in.)*

**God, You hear me.** *(Breathe out; push your arms out.)*

**I pray for someone who is sick, hurt, or lonely.** *(Breathe in; pull your arms in.)*

**God, You hear me.** *(Breathe out; push your arms out.)*

**I pray for my neighbor.** *(Breathe in; pull your arms in.)*

**God, You hear me.** *(Breathe out; push your arms out.)*

**I pray for someone who cares for me.** *(Breathe in; pull your arms in.)*

**God, You hear me.** *(Breathe out; push your arms out.)*

**Leader Tip:** Don't worry if kids struggle with the movements and breaths matching. Encourage them to move, breathe, and pray!

## Game: Guess My Voice

**SUPPLIES:** blindfold

**In God's big story today, Rhoda knew it was Peter standing outside the door just by hearing his voice! I wonder who can guess someone else's voice in our room. In this game, we will have one person pretend to be Rhoda. The person playing Rhoda will wear a blindfold (or close her eyes) and guess who is talking. If I tap your shoulder, you can knock on a table or door and say, "God hears me!"**

Choose one person to be Rhoda and blindfold that kid. One at a time, tap a kid on the shoulder and encourage him to knock on a table or door and say, "God hears me!" Be sure to choose in random order so it's hard to guess. The kid with the blindfold should guess who is speaking by pointing to or saying the kid's name. Continue playing with other kids volunteering to guess. If kids don't all know one another's names, go around the room and let the kids share their names before you play.