

Lesson

Engaging Introduction

Welcome, everyone! Today, we're diving into a story from the Book of Numbers, chapter 23! Who here likes stories about adventures and different lands? Well, the Bible is full of such stories, and today we will talk about a special adventure involving a king, a prophet, and a talking donkey. Have you ever imagined animals talking like in movies or cartoons? It's amazing, right?

In this story, we meet a king named Balak who was worried about the Israelites. You see, the Israelites were God's chosen people, and they were traveling through the land on their way to the Promised Land. But King Balak was afraid that they might take over his kingdom. So, he came up with a plan.

He sent for a man named Balaam who was known to have special powers. Balak wanted Balaam to come and curse the Israelites so that they wouldn't be successful. But here's the twist: Balaam could only say what God allowed him to say, and that's where it gets exciting!

A talking donkey and a surprising message from God turn the story into an adventure and show us something important about God's love and power. Today, we're going to explore this story and find out what it can teach us about listening to God and trusting Him no matter what.

Are you ready for this adventure? Let's dive in together and see what lessons we can learn from Balaam, Balak, and God's amazing power!

Main Teaching Points

1. God's Command Overruled Balak's Plans

Let's begin by understanding Balak's plan. Imagine you have a toy castle, and you're worried some toy soldiers might come and take it away. This was similar to what King Balak felt. He was scared that the Israelites, moving through the land like a big group of toy soldiers, would take over his land. So, he asked Balaam, a well-known prophet, to curse them.

But here's the thing: no matter what Balaam tried, God was in control. God told Balaam that he could not curse the Israelites because they were blessed. It's like if you tried to put up an umbrella inside to hide from an imaginary rainstorm. It wouldn't make sense because the rain isn't real, and neither was the fear of Balaam's curse. God's love for His people was too strong, and nothing Balaam or Balak could do would change that.

2. Balaam's Listening Ears

Now, let's talk about Balaam. Can you think of a time when you received an unexpected gift? Balaam was surprised, too. When God used Balaam's donkey to speak, it was as surprising as when you talk to Siri and she helps you out unexpectedly. In fact, it was much more unusual because this was a real donkey speaking!

Through this miracle, God reminded Balaam to listen carefully. It's as if God was saying, "Balaam, pay attention!" The donkey saw God's angel when Balaam didn't, reminding us that we sometimes need to stop and listen to what God is telling us. Balaam had to open his heart and ears to

understand God's true message.

3. God's Message of Blessing

When Balaam finally listened, something amazing happened. Instead of curses, blessings came out of his mouth. Balaam spoke about the beauty of God's people and the blessings God would give them. It's like when you see a rainbow after a storm; the sky seems gloomy, but then something beautiful appears. Balaam's words were meant to harm, but God turned them into something wonderful.

Just like a rainy day turning into a sunny one, God's blessings shone through Balaam's words. God used this situation to show everyone that He has a special plan and purpose for His people, one that cannot be stopped by anyone.

4. Trusting God's Power Over Everything

Finally, this story teaches us about trusting God's power. Imagine you're building a tall tower with blocks. You want it to stand strong, and you trust the blocks to hold up. In the same way, we can trust God's power to stand strong in our lives.

King Balak didn't understand that God is stronger than any plan humans can make. He tried so hard to stop the Israelites, but God's plan was unbreakable. Just like we trust that our towers will stand with strong blocks, we can trust that God's will is always for our good and nothing can break it down.

Transition to Personal Application

These teaching points from our story in Numbers 23 help us see God's amazing power and love for His people. But how do these lessons apply to us personally, right here and now? Let's see how we can take this message back to our own lives.

Personal Application for Elementary Students

In our journey with God, just like Balaam and Balak's story, we learn valuable lessons about listening, trusting, and understanding God's plans for us. Let's think about how we can use these lessons in our everyday lives.

First, how can we be like Balaam and have our listening ears on? Maybe it means taking a moment each day to pray and listen for God's guidance. It could be before bed or when you wake up—choose a quiet moment to think about God's love for you.

Second, we can trust God's love for us just as the Israelites were reminded of His blessings. Imagine you're walking on a path through a forest. Even if the way gets a bit dark, you know there are guiding lights along the trail. Seeing God's blessings in our lives, like friends, family, and good health, can act as those guiding lights.

Finally, God's power reminds us not to worry about our own "Balaks"—the fears and plans that might make us feel worried or afraid. Instead of worrying, let's choose faith. If you're bothered about doing well in school or making friends, remember God's strong and loving plan. Talk to Him about it, because trusting God's power means knowing that His love will guide us through.

As we hold onto these lessons, let's promise to make time to listen and trust in God's guidance

each day, learning to walk in His light and allowing His love to bless our lives continuously.

Interactive Discussion Questions with Explanation and Teaching Guidance

1. Why was King Balak afraid of the Israelites?

Encourage the students to use their imagination and think about why a king with a big kingdom might be scared of a group traveling through his land. Help them understand that Balak saw the Israelites as a threat, much like being nervous when you face something you've never encountered before. Explain how his fear led him to make some unwise decisions and how fear can sometimes make us do the same.

2. What surprising thing did Balaam's donkey do?

Ask the kids if they have seen talking animals in cartoons or movies and what they think it would be like for a real animal to talk. Explain that Balaam's donkey talking was a miracle meant to show Balaam how important it is to listen to God, even when God's message might come in the most unexpected ways. This can help children see that God uses different ways to get our attention, and it encourages them to look for God's messages in their lives in unexpected places.

3. How did God turn Balaam's curse into a blessing?

Guide students to think about things in their lives that seem hard but turn into something good, like learning a difficult new skill. Discuss how God is mighty and can take what might seem like a challenge and turn it into something beautiful—a rainbow after a storm. This teaches them about God's ability to bring blessings and good out of difficulties.

4. How can we trust God's power and plan in our lives when we feel afraid or unsure?

Ask the children to come up with examples of what might make them feel afraid or unsure, such as a test at school or speaking in front of the class. Encourage them to share ways they might trust God's power, like saying a prayer or remembering His love for them. Explain that just like building a strong tower with sturdy blocks, trusting God's power means relying on Him to support us and knowing that His plan is good.

These questions and discussions can help deepen the kids' understanding of the story in Numbers 23 and relate it to their own lives. Encourage them to keep asking questions and exploring what God's stories mean for them!