



UNIT 15 | SESSION 6 | NOVEMBER 23-24, 2019

4-5's Lesson

Ezekiel Gave Hope

Bible Passage: Ezekiel 37

Story Point: God planned to bring His people home.

Key Passage: "If my people ... turn from their evil ways, then I will ... forgive their sin, and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

Big Picture Question: How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.

KID CONNECT:
30 MINUTES

LARGE GROUP:
15 MINUTES

SMALL GROUP:
15 MINUTES

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Ezekiel had a tough job: ministering to people who had rejected God and suffered the consequences. The exiled people of Judah were eager to blame God for their circumstances. "It's not fair!" they argued. (See Ezek. 18:25.) Ezekiel told the people that they were at fault for their exile; their faithlessness had provoked God's wrath. The people were getting what they deserved. "I take no pleasure in anyone's death," God said. "So repent and live!" (Ezek. 18:32).

God gave Ezekiel a vision. In this vision, God showed Ezekiel a valley of dry bones. The bones represented Israel. Ezekiel prophesied that God would put breath in them so they would come to life. Ezekiel encouraged the exiles. Apart from God, they were dead. But God was offering them life. He would restore their future. "My dwelling place will be with them," God said. "I will be their God, and they will be my people" (Ezek. 37:27).

We too are dead in our sin. (Eph. 2:1) Sin separates us from God because He is holy. We are apart from God's presence. But God does not delight in our death. He is patient and wants us to repent and live!

Hundreds of years after Ezekiel died, God’s presence came to His people through Jesus Christ, Immanuel—meaning, “God with us.” Jesus is the source of life; He offers us living water. (John 4:10,14) If we do not drink of it, we will be like the dry bones. No life will be in us.

Jesus changes that. He brings life to the spiritually dead. God saves us by grace, making us alive with Christ through the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 2:4-5)

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(CG: ARRIVAL MUSIC)

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

EXERCISE YOUR BODY

(large sheet of paper & crayons – per group/class)

Tip: Be sensitive to children with physical limitations.

Lead preschoolers through various exercises, talking about which parts of the body you are using. You may run in place to get hearts pumping, do push-ups to work arm muscles, do jumping jacks to work leg muscles, and so forth. Ask preschoolers to point to the place on the body where they feel the exercise working. Finish with stretches and deep breaths.

SAY • Our bodies are made up of lots of parts like bones, muscles, hearts, lungs, and brains. All of the parts work together, so we should take care of our whole body to stay healthy. Do you think a skeleton—that’s the bones in your body—could stand up by itself? God asked a prophet named Ezekiel a similar question in our Bible story today. Let’s listen to find out if bones can come to life.

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video to help preschoolers’ transition to Large Group. Invite preschoolers to march like an army as they move to Bible study.

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: WHEN I LOOK UP, VIDEO: I HAVE HOPE)

Sing “When I Look Up” and “I Have Hope”.

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

(Bible, Bookmark)

Place a bookmark at Ezekiel 37 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Display the open Bible.

SAY • Today's Bible story from the Book of Ezekiel may be hard to believe, but we know this story is true since it is in the Bible, and the Bible is God's Word!

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues people through His Son, Jesus.

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: EZEKIEL GAVE HOPE, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)

Show the Bible story video.

SAY • Can you imagine how Ezekiel felt watching all those old bones come to life as a big army? It might sound scary, but this vision gave God's people hope. They thought life was over now that they were prisoners in Babylon, but God planned to bring His people home. When we disobey God, we are like the dry bones God showed Ezekiel. But God sent Jesus to take away our sin. When we obey and trust Jesus, He gives us life so we can be with God forever.

PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible, Bookmark)

Place the key passage marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Use motions for the preschoolers as you say the key passage several times.

SAY • "If my people (*display arms in front*) ...turn from their evil ways (*turn your body*), then I will (*point up*) ... forgive their sin and heal their land (*cross arms over chest*)." 2 Chronicles 7:14
Our key passage reminds us that when we turn to God, He will forgive and heal us.

LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Let's answer our big picture question. *How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.* God gave us Jesus to take away our sin. When we turn from sin and trust Jesus, He gives us life so we can be with God forever.

PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP

Session Title: Ezekiel Gave Hope

Bible Passage: Ezekiel 37

Story Point: God planned to bring His people home.

Key Passage: "If my people ... turn from their evil ways, then I will ... forgive their sin, and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

CHANGING LEAVES

(fall-colored & green silk leaves or use paper leaves as an option, several of each color per group)

Mix up fall-colored and green silk leaves. Have kids separate by color and talk about how the red/yellow/brown ones are dying/dead and will not turn green again. Only God can bring dead things back to life.

SAY • Thank you for sorting these leaves! Over here we have our green leaves and the rest are fall colors. Real fall leaves, especially the browns ones are all dry and crumbly, right? The brown leaves are similar to the valley full of dry bones that God showed to Ezekiel. Once a leaf is dead it will not turn green again, will it? Only God can bring dead things back to life. But God did something amazing for Ezekiel to see. He brought those dead bones back to life! When we disobey God, we are like the dead leaves or the dead bones that God showed Ezekiel. But God gives us new life through Jesus.

PAPER BAG PUPPETS

(Paper bags - 1 per child, googly eyes - 2 per child, assorted construction paper & glue sticks for puppet mouth, nose, etc. - per child)

Provide each child with a paper bag. Help children make a puppet like they saw in today's Bible story.

SAY • At first our paper bags didn't look like people, but now your bags do look like people! We can put our hands inside the puppets and even make them talk like people. God showed Ezekiel that He could make dry bones come alive again. When we disobey God, we are like the dry bones. But, when Jesus is our friend, God gives us a new life forever with Him.

KEY PASSAGE WITH MOTIONS

Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying. "If my people (display arms in front) ...turn from their evil ways (turn your body), then I will (point up) ...forgive their sin and heal their land (cross arms over chest)." 2 Chronicles 7:14

REVIEW AND PRAYER

(Bible Story Picture Poster)

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

What happened when Ezekiel spoke God's words to the bones? (*They came to life.*)

Who are the dry bones like? (*God's people, us*)

What did God promise His people? (*to bring them home forever and to be with them*)

How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.

Ask your group for prayer requests and pray together. If you can, pray for each preschooler by name. Encourage them to talk to God in prayer throughout the week.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Preschool Activity Page, 1 per child and crayons)

Preschoolers may color the Story Point coloring page as parents arrive. Encourage them to do the activity page at home with their family this week.