



UNIT 18 | SESSION 3 | FEBRUARY 15-16, 2020

## 4s-5s Lesson

# God's People Repented

**Bible Passage:** Nehemiah 8-13

**Story Point:** God's people promised to obey God.

**Key Passage:** "God ... will himself restore ... you after you have suffered a little while." 1 Peter 5:10

**Christ Connection:** God sent His son Jesus to save us from our wrong choices.

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

**KID CONNECT:  
30 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:  
15 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:  
15 MINUTES**

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Ezra was a priest in Babylon at the end of the exile. More than 50 years after the first group of exiles returned to Jerusalem and completed and dedicated the temple, Ezra led a second group back to Jerusalem.

Just as God had been with Nehemiah, He was with Ezra—granting him favor with the Persian king. The king gave Ezra permission to go to Jerusalem. He provided Ezra with a letter and access to resources to ensure safe travel. (See Ezra 7:11-26.)

Ezra traveled to Jerusalem with a purpose. God's people had spent 70 years in exile, and they needed to be reminded how to live. As a scribe, Ezra was an expert on the law of Moses, and he had "determined in his heart to study the law of the Lord, obey it, and teach its statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:10).

Under Nehemiah's leadership, the people had rebuilt Jerusalem's walls. They gathered together at the Water Gate to hear the law of Moses. Men, women, and children—anyone who could understand—came to listen to the reading of God's Word.

From early morning until midday, Ezra read from the book of the law of Moses. He stood on a high wooden platform where everyone could see and hear him. Ezra opened the book of the law, and everyone stood up. The Levites helped the listeners understand the words of the law. The people reacted strongly to hearing and understanding the law of Moses. Verse 9 says the people wept. The law revealed their sin, and they repented.

God's Word is powerful. The law reveals our sin and how short we fall of meeting God's standard. As you teach preschoolers, help them recognize that we cannot meet God's requirements. We need a Savior. God sent Jesus to obey the law perfectly and die for our sins. We can trust in Him for salvation.

## KID CONNECT

### WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: 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.

### MAKE A FEAST

(Paper Plates, 2 per child, Food Stickers, 3-4 per child)

Give each child two paper plates. Invite preschoolers to choose their favorite foods and stick them on the paper plates. Encourage children to give one paper plate of food to another child. Talk about times that families gather and share meals together like during the holidays or with friends. Remind the children that families prepare food at home and bring it to share with others.

SAY • I wish the food on your plates was real! We could have a feast! In today's Bible story, Ezra told the people to get ready for a feast. He told them to eat good food and drink good drinks and to share what they made with people who didn't have any food or drinks. Listen to the Bible story to hear why Ezra told the people to celebrate.

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

### WORSHIP

(VIDEO: WHEN I LOOK UP, VIDEO: GOD WILL!)

Sing “When I Look Up” and “God Will!”

## INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

(Bible, Bookmark)

Place a bookmark at Nehemiah 8 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Display the open Bible.

SAY • Last week our Bible story was from the first part of Nehemiah. This week our story is from the last part of Nehemiah. The Bible is God’s Word, and it is true!

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 saves people through His Son, Jesus.

SAY • I love sharing stories from the Bible with you every week! In today’s story, God’s people had not heard His Word for a very long time. Let’s find out what happens when they hear God’s Word after all that time.

Show the Bible story video.

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: GOD’S PEOPLE REPENTED, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)

SAY • When the people understood God’s Word, they realized they had not been living the way God wanted them to live. They were sorry for disobeying God. God’s people promised to obey God, but they needed God to change their hearts and help them want to obey.

## CHRIST CONNECTION

(CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)

SAY • We do wrong things too, but Jesus died to save us from our wrong choices. When we trust in Jesus, God changes our hearts and help us want to obey Him.

## PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible, Key Passage Marker)

Place the Key Passage Marker at 1 Peter 5:10. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying.

SAY • “God will (*pump fist upwards*) himself (*point up*) restore you (*display same arm in front*) after you have suffered a little while (*roll fists in front*)” 1 Peter 5:10 (*open hands like a book*).

To restore means to bring something back to the way it was meant to be. God's Word, the Bible, can help us become who God wants us to be. God's Word reminds us of the truth of who we are and who God is.

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

**SAY** • Our big picture question asks, *Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.* God made the world and keeps it going, so He knows how life works best. God tells us the right things to do in the Bible, and when we trust in Jesus, God changes our hearts to help us live that way!

## PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

### SMALL GROUP

**Bible Passage:** Nehemiah 8-13

**Story Point:** God's people promised to obey God.

**Key Passage:** "God ... will himself restore ... you after you have suffered a little while." 1 Peter 5:10

**Christ Connection:** God sent His son Jesus to save us from our wrong choices.

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

## CHOOSE TO OBEY

(No Supplies Needed)

Share different situations with the preschoolers. Invite them to stand if the person is obeying and sit down if they think the person is disobeying. Stand or sit with the children to help them make the right choice. Use the following situations or create your own.

- Jada told her dad she did not know where the cookie went even though Jada ate it.
- Mateo picked up all the blocks like his teacher asked him to do.
- Isabela shared her crayons with Ava.
- Jordan's mom told him to brush his teeth before bed, but Jordan did not brush his teeth.

**SAY** • God's Word tells us the right way to live. When we disobey God's Word, we are disobeying God. If we believe that Jesus took the punishment for our wrong choices by dying on the cross, He changes our hearts and helps us want to obey. We will still make mistakes when we follow Jesus, but God will never stop loving us.

## PRACTICE WRITING

(Alphabet Letters, 1 set per group, Index Cards, 1 per child, Crayons)

Provide alphabet letters for the children to make “words.” For older preschoolers, write short words from the Bible story on index cards for preschoolers to “write” with their letters.

**SAY** • You may not be able to read the Bible yet, but you can listen when your parents and teachers read it, like the people listened to Ezra long ago. Ezra read God’s Word, and God’s people promised to obey God.

## KEY PASSAGE WITH MOTIONS

Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying. “God will (*pump fist upwards*) himself (*point up*) restore you (*display same arm in front*) after you have suffered a little while (*roll fists in front*)” 1 Peter 5:10 (*open hands like a book*).

## REVIEW AND PRAYER

**(Bible Story Picture, 1 per group)**

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

The people knew they had not obeyed God’s Word. How did this make them feel? (*sad*)  
Did Ezra say this was a happy day or a sad day? (*a happy day*)  
What did Ezra tell the people to do? (*go home and get ready to have a feast*)  
What did God’s people promise to do? (*obey God*)  
*Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.*

**SAY** • God’s people promised to obey God. God gives us the Bible so we will know what He is like. The Bible also helps us know the right things to do, but even when we know what the Bible says, we still disobey God. Only one Person was able to perfectly obey God— Jesus. Jesus lived the perfect life we couldn’t live and took the punishment our wrong choices deserve.

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

**SAY** • God, your Word shows us how to live in a way that makes you happy and gives us joy. Help us obey you. Forgive us for the times we disobey you. Give these preschoolers faith to trust in Jesus, who died for their wrong choices. Amen.

## 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.