



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

## K-1 Lesson

# God's People Repented

**Bible Passage:** Nehemiah 8-13

**Story Point:** God's people repented and promised to be faithful.

**Key Passage:** "The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." 1 Peter 5:10

**Christ Connection:** When Ezra read God's Word, the people loved God more and changed their ways. The Bible says that Jesus is "the Word." Jesus has the power to change our hearts.

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

**KID CONNECT:  
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:  
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:  
20 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 kids, 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: INTRO/OUTRO MUSIC)

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Prompt kids to discuss what brings out different emotions in them. What makes them happy? What makes them sad? How do their faces and their actions show those emotions?

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

### LARGE GROUP GAME

(SFX: GAME INTRO MUSIC, SFX: FUN MUSIC)

#### ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS – BATTLE ROYALE EDITION

(No Supplies Needed)

SAY • It's game time again! Everybody stand up. We are going to play a game called Rock, Paper, Scissors – Battle Royale Edition. It's Battle Royale because all of you are playing it – even Small Group Leaders! OK, everyone go ahead and pair up with someone for the first round. You will have only one chance to beat your opponent. Everyone knows how to play, right? Rock beats Scissors, Scissors beats Paper and Paper beats Rock. If you tie, just go again until someone wins and if you win, remain standing and find a NEW opponent. If you lose, you

MUST sit down. We will do this over and over until 1 person is left. They will claim the title “Victory Royale”! Ready? Let’s do it!

## WORSHIP

(VIDEO: O TASTE & SEE, VIDEO: THIS IS LIVING NOW)

SAY • Let’s worship God!

## INTRODUCE THE SESSION

(CG: IMAGE OF MONOPOLY)

(No Supplies Needed)

SAY • Hey guys! Welcome back to KidCity. We have been talking about games. Video games AND board games. Who here likes playing board games? What are some of your favorite ones? *Choose a few kids to share their favorite board games and respond accordingly.*

Those are some awesome games! Let me ask you something else. What do you think would happen if you and your family or friends tried to play a game without reading the rules? Do you think it would go well? For example, what if I tried to play Monopoly without reading the rules? How would I know what to do with the properties I buy? How would I even know how to buy properties? It would be pretty chaotic! Rules and instructions are very important.

That reminds me of this week’s Bible story. It has to do with God’s people listening to and learning God’s Word. Which are instructions on how to live life...

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Do you remember the big picture question and answer from the last few weeks? Say it with me: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

God knows when things will begin and when they will be finished. He cares about every part of our lives and works out all things for His glory and our good.

## GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • Last week, we learned that the walls and gates around Jerusalem were destroyed. These walls were important because they kept God’s people safe from their enemies. God’s people often faced others who did not agree with them. Nehemiah was far away, still working for the king of Persia, but when he heard that God’s people were in danger, he was sad. The king allowed Nehemiah to go back to Jerusalem. God used Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem’s walls.

In today’s story, we will fast forward 52 days to the time when the walls and gates were

finally repaired. The people of Jerusalem gathered together to listen to God's Word and to celebrate. Check it out.

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

**(VIDEO: GOD'S PEOPLE REPENTED, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)**  
**(Bible)**

Show the Bible story video "God's People Repented."

**SAY** • Did you all notice how much respect the people showed for God's words? Men, women, and children came to hear Ezra read God's Word. What are some ways the people showed how much they loved God's words? (They stood for hours, listened carefully, lifted their hands, and bowed their faces to the ground.) The people did not even understand the words at first, but the people knew God's words were important. Some of the leaders explained God's words.

The words they heard were not all happy words. As the people listened, they realized that they had not followed God's rules; they had sinned. The people felt sad. Some of them even cried. They didn't make excuses for their sin or ignore God.

Ezra helped the people understand that God still loved them and that they could repent and follow God. So God's people repented and promised to be faithful.

When we repent, we turn away from sin and self, and we turn toward God and the things that honor Him.

## CHRIST CONNECTION

**(CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)**

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

**SAY** • God's Word is powerful. When Ezra read God's Word, the people changed their ways and loved God more. The Bible says that Jesus is "the Word." Jesus has the power to change our hearts.

## KEY PASSAGE

**(CG: KEY PASSAGE)**  
**(Bible)**

Show the key passage slide. Open the Bible and lead the kids to read 1 Peter 5:10 together.

**SAY** • Our key passage says that God will support us. Even when we make poor choices, God gives us the opportunity to turn away from those wrong choices and turn toward Him. God will never stop loving us.

In today's story, we saw that the people of Jerusalem turned away from their sin. God supported them, restored them, forgave them, and showed them grace.

## MISSIONS MOMENT

(CG: MISSIONS MOMENT)

(No Supplies Needed)

Show the missions moment slide.

SAY • Before you go into your small groups, I wanted to take a minute to talk about missions. Does anyone know what a missionary is? *take responses from kids* Yes, it all started with something that Jesus said before He went back to heaven. He said to his disciples in Matthew, "So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end." This is known as the Great Commission. In fact, it's where we get the word mission from!

In KidCity, we want to obey Jesus and do what He said, which is to go and make disciples. That means we should tell other people about what Jesus did for them so they can be a follower, too. So, every month we are going to have a Missions Moment and highlight some awesome stories and people that are doing just that. At Hope, we send people on mission trips to places in America as well as all over the world! It's really great to hear their stories and it can encourage us to be missionaries too...in our neighborhoods and at your schools and everywhere that we go.

## PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

## SMALL GROUP

**Bible Passage:** Nehemiah 8-13

**Story Point:** God's people repented and promised to be faithful.

**Key Passage:** "The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." 1 Peter 5:10

**Christ Connection:** God's Word is powerful. When Ezra read God's Word, the people loved God more and changed their ways. The Bible says that Jesus is "the Word." Jesus has the power to change our hearts.

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

## TURN AROUND

(No Supplies Needed)

Face one direction and then turn around and face the opposite direction as you explain that *repentance* means turning away from sin and turning to God. Call out various situations. Instruct kids to stand in a circle and face forward (facing inside the circle) if the situation is obeying God, but if the situation is disobeying God, they should turn and face the opposite direction (outside the circle).

- Your dad asks you to pick up your toys and you do it right away.
- Your teacher tells you to stop talking during class, but you don't listen and keep talking.
- Your mom asks you to brush your teeth, and you tell her you did, but you really did not.
- At lunch some kids are teasing another kid and you ask them to stop.
- You hit your brother or sister because they are bothering you.
- You share a new toy with your neighbor.

**SAY** • *Repentance* is a big word that means turning away from sin and turning to God. In today's Bible story, God's people did just that. When they realized they had not been living the way God wanted them to live, they were sorry for their sin, and God's people promised to obey God. We all disobey God sometimes, but we can always ask for forgiveness and turn to God for help. God can help us obey Him.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

(Paper, 1 per kid, Markers)

Give each kid a piece of paper and some washable markers. Allow them to experiment mixing colors to make new colors.

**SAY** • Were you pretty confident that you knew which color you would get when you mixed yellow and blue together? Every time we mix those two colors, we get green. Depending on how much blue or yellow you use you might get a different shade, but it'll always be green.

We can know some things for certain. We can also have confidence that God is going to keep His promises. He has promised to make a way out of sin for us, and He has done that through His Son, Jesus. We know that when we ask forgiveness and turn from our sin, He is faithful to forgive us.

## DISCUSSION

(Bibles)

Distribute Bibles. Help kids find Nehemiah 8–13. Remind kids that Nehemiah had led the people to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

SAY • God's people gathered to hear Ezra read the law. When they heard God's words, they understood that they had turned away from God. They needed to ask forgiveness and turn back to God. God's people repented and promised to be faithful.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

What did God's people do when they heard His Word? How did this help them make the right choice? *The Israelites trusted God's Word, listened attentively, and praised God. They respected God's Word and trusted that it was true, even when it showed they needed to make changes in their lives. (Option: Read 2 Tim. 3:16-17.)*

How does God's Word change us today? *Lead kids to recognize that the Bible can be used to teach, correct, and train people to follow God. The Bible is trustworthy and can speak to every area of our lives. We can respect, follow, and trust the Bible because it comes from God. (Option: Read Neh. 8:5-6.)*

What are some ways we should respond to God's Word today? *Invite kids to discuss. Point out how people responded to God's Word in today's story. They responded physically, but they also responded by turning away from bad choices and turning toward God. (Option: Read Rom.15:4.)*

## REFLECTION AND PRAYER

(Bible Story Coloring Page - 1 per kid, Crayons)

Ask the kids the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Make time for prayer requests and pray for your group. If time allows, have kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session.

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Younger Kids Activity Page, 1 per kid)

Hand each K/1<sup>st</sup> kid a Younger Kids Activity Page and encourage them to do it at home with their family this week.