

Old Testament

Ezra

Ezra 1-10

Younger Verse

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life." John 14:6

Older Verse

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6



Teachers: This new unit is designed to help your children understand some of the stories in the Old Testament.

PLEASE remember always to include the New Testament verses—this helps each child see how God's ultimate plan was fulfilled in Christ!

Welcome Time

Have you ever had to travel a long way to visit someone or go somewhere? Sometimes it seems like it will take forever to get there! God helped His people travel back to their homeland. Let's see what happens.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Teachers: It would be hard to read all 10 chapters of Ezra in class. If you are focusing on your kids reading one section, try Ezra 9:5—10:1 to see how the people saw their sin and asked for forgiveness from God.

We have learned many things about the Old Testament part of the Bible. We have read through 14 books! We have seen many things happen. Some of the stories in the Kings and Chronicles are the same. They share stories about the kings of God's people. They also share how God's people were taken as prisoners to another land. God allowed this to happen because of their disobedience. He still loved them and had a plan. In fact, the situation got so bad that one of the mean kings even destroyed God's temple church where they worshipped God. Things seemed hopeless, but God knew what would happen and how His people would finally be released.

Now we come to a part of the Bible where some of the books do not go in story order of how things happened. When the books of the Bible were first written, they were on rolls of paper called scrolls. It was not a book like we have. So, when people read parts of the Bible, they unrolled scrolls to learn about God and His plan for them.

One man who helped teach people about God's Word is Ezra. He was a special messenger from God who taught people about God. Ezra loved to read the scrolls and help people know how much God loved them and cared for them. In fact, Ezra's name means "help." He helped people learn more about God.

After 70 years of God's people being prisoners, the new king let them go back home.

Lesson Goals

See how important it is to read the Bible

Explain why Ezra was sad and what happened (God's people sinned and then asked for forgiveness)

When hard times happen, we must trust in God to help us

Many people traveled back to their homeland. It was a VERY long journey through the desert. It must have been hot and very tiring. Finally, the people got back to their home of Jerusalem. The first thing that they did was repair the temple church and the altar to God.

As they were rebuilding God's temple church, mean people tried to discourage them and make them stop the rebuilding. They even went to the new king to tell him what they were doing. When the new king heard the news, he made them stop the rebuilding. Finally King Darius told the people to continue and they finished the project.

Many years passed and several kings were in power. When King Artaxerxes came to become king, he made a law that Ezra could return to his homeland of Jerusalem and take many supplies with him. He was instructed to teach the people about God and His ways.

Ezra made the long trip in about 4 months (remember they did not have cars back then!) When he arrived, he saw how the people had disobeyed God. The men had married wives from other countries who did not believe in God. They worshipped false gods. He was very upset that they had disobeyed God. In front of the people, Ezra fell to his knees and cried out to God. He told God of all the sins of the people. He thanked God for how He helped them not be prisoners any more. He told God that He was sorry for the wrongs that the people had committed.

When the people heard Ezra's prayer, they too were sorry for the sins that they committed and asked God to forgive them. They knew that had been wrong and they wanted to make things right with God.

Ezra helped the people come back to God and learn about God and His ways. They followed God with all their hearts and served Him only.

Ezra helped the people see their sin and ask God for forgiveness. God knew that our sins (wrongs) separate us from Him. God had a plan many years later that would help us totally remove our sin and bring us back to God. God sent His only Son, Jesus, to us. Jesus did something that was amazing for us. Jesus died on the cross. He died on the cross to take the blame for all the sin that we have done. Jesus did not die for anything wrong that He had done. He died for all of OUR wrongs. If we believe that Jesus died and came back to life, and ask Him to forgive our wrongs, Jesus will forgive us and clean out our dirty sin. He will come into our lives and help us live for God and do things God's way. Then, one day, Jesus will take us to Heaven. If you want to know how God can forgive all your wrongs, talk to us about it anytime.

Learning Activities

Help the kids really see how important it is to read the Bible and obey God.

Memory Verse Activities

Bring a map and talk about different ways to get places. Read the verse and share how Jesus is the ONLY way to get to Heaven to be with God. Help the kids know that they will not automatically go to Heaven. They must trust in Jesus and follow Him.

Prayer Time

Ask God to help us obey Him and take time to read the Bible this week.

Snack Time/CleanUp

Share snacks together and talk about the Bible. Ask the kids if they have any questions. You may want to ask them questions to see how much they know and how you can help them learn more about Jesus.

Planning for Lesson 78
Nehemiah hears from God
Nehemiah 1 and 2

Preschool Lesson
For
Ezra

Ezra was a man who lived many, many years ago. He loved God very much. He read his Bible and wanted to do things to please God. Ezra lived far away from his home. That made him very sad.

One day, the king told Ezra that he could go back to his hometown of Jerusalem! The king told him that he could go back and help the people learn more about God. Ezra was so excited. He gathered a group of people and they traveled through the desert to get back to their home. It was very hot. Ezra and his friends must have gotten thirsty and sweaty on the trip. Remember, they did not have cars back then, so it took a long time to travel. Their feet probably hurt and they probably got sunburned during their trip.

When they finally got to their hometown, all the people were so happy. It felt so good to be back home. Some people had gone earlier to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple church. Long before, a mean king had torn it down. Now, God's temple church was rebuilt so that His people could worship Him there.

As Ezra looked around, he saw something sad. He saw how the people had disobeyed God. He was so sad that he fell to his knees and cried to God for help. He told God that he was sorry for all the wrongs that His people had done.

When the people heard what Ezra was saying, they saw that they had done wrong. They called to God and asked Him to forgive their mistakes. God heard their prayers and forgave their mistakes.

Sometimes we make mistakes too. It makes God very sad. He wants us to see our mistakes and tell Him that we are sorry for the things that we have done wrong. God wants us to stop doing wrong and start doing things His way.

Thank God for loving us and ask Him to help us read our Bible and learn more about Him. Ask Him to help us do right and be kind to others.

Hands-On Activities
For
Ezra

Sometimes when people have to travel long distances, they play fun games like “I Spy.” Play fun games with the kids.

Take a walk around the Bible study church or apartment complex. Talk about what it must have been like to travel a long way by walking or riding a donkey. Let them experience how the group must have been tired, hot, thirsty, dirty, etc. Using more of the senses will help the kids relate to the story and remember it!

God’s people rebuilt His temple church. Have the kids look around and see how we can improve our church. They can help clean up trash, organize things, sweep and mop, maybe even paint. See how they can help make the church look beautiful.

Try the disappearing knot trick to show the kids how God can forgive our sin and make it disappear!

Take time to read your Bibles and share how much God loves us. It is really important for the kids to see how they can read and learn about God by reading the Bible. You may want to pick out several verses for them to find and read together. Help them see how they can read and learn!

It took a long time for the people to rebuild God’s temple. In fact, some people did not like what they were doing and tried to stop them. Sometimes we may have a project or homework for school. It is really hard to stay focused sometimes and complete the task. God sent messengers to encourage His people to continue and complete the task. They did! God wants us to be encouragers too. Help the kids see how we must help and encourage others. Let them think of ways to encourage each other.
