



PRESCHOOL FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

March 22 - God's People Repented

Bible Passage:	Nehemiah 8-13
Main Point:	God's people promised to obey God.
Key Passage:	1 Peter 5:10
Big Picture Question:	Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

PARENT'S BIBLE STUDY

(For you to read for your own studying to lead you into preparation for teaching)

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.

OPENING CROWD BREAKER QUESTION:

Ask your kids to share some things that bring them joy.

Share • A lot of things make us happy. Spending time with friends, playing a fun game, or getting to go somewhere special are all things that bring happiness to our lives. God is the ultimate source of our joy, and the Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength. We'll hear more about that in our story.

OPENING ACTIVITY "COFFEE FILTER SUNS"

Give your preschooler a flattened paper coffee filter. Guide him/her to use yellow, orange, and red markers to color their coffee filter. Then set the colored coffee filter on a towel. Have them use a spray bottle to spray the filter with water. Point out how the colors blend together to make a sun. Set aside his "sun" to dry.

Share • In today's Bible story, God's people—men, women, and children—got together early in the morning when the sun was just coming up. It was a special day. Listen to the Bible story to hear what made this day so special.

BIBLE LESSON:

Share • 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. We do wrong things too, but Jesus died to rescue us from sin. When we turn from our sin and trust in Jesus, God changes our hearts and help us say no to sin.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions & discuss them as a family:

- Who read God's Word aloud? (*Ezra*)
- What did the people do as God's Word was read? (*listened carefully, bowed down, worshiped*)
- Why were the people sad? (*They were sorry for disobeying God.*)
- What did Ezra tell the people to do? (*Do not be sad. Go home and have a feast and share with others.*)
- What did the people promise to do? (*worship only God and obey Him*)
- Who is in control of everything? (*God is in control of everything.*)

Share • God's people repented and promised to be faithful. When we sin, we can repent and confess our sin to God. And just like the Israelites celebrated God's faithfulness, we can celebrate because God has shown us mercy and grace!