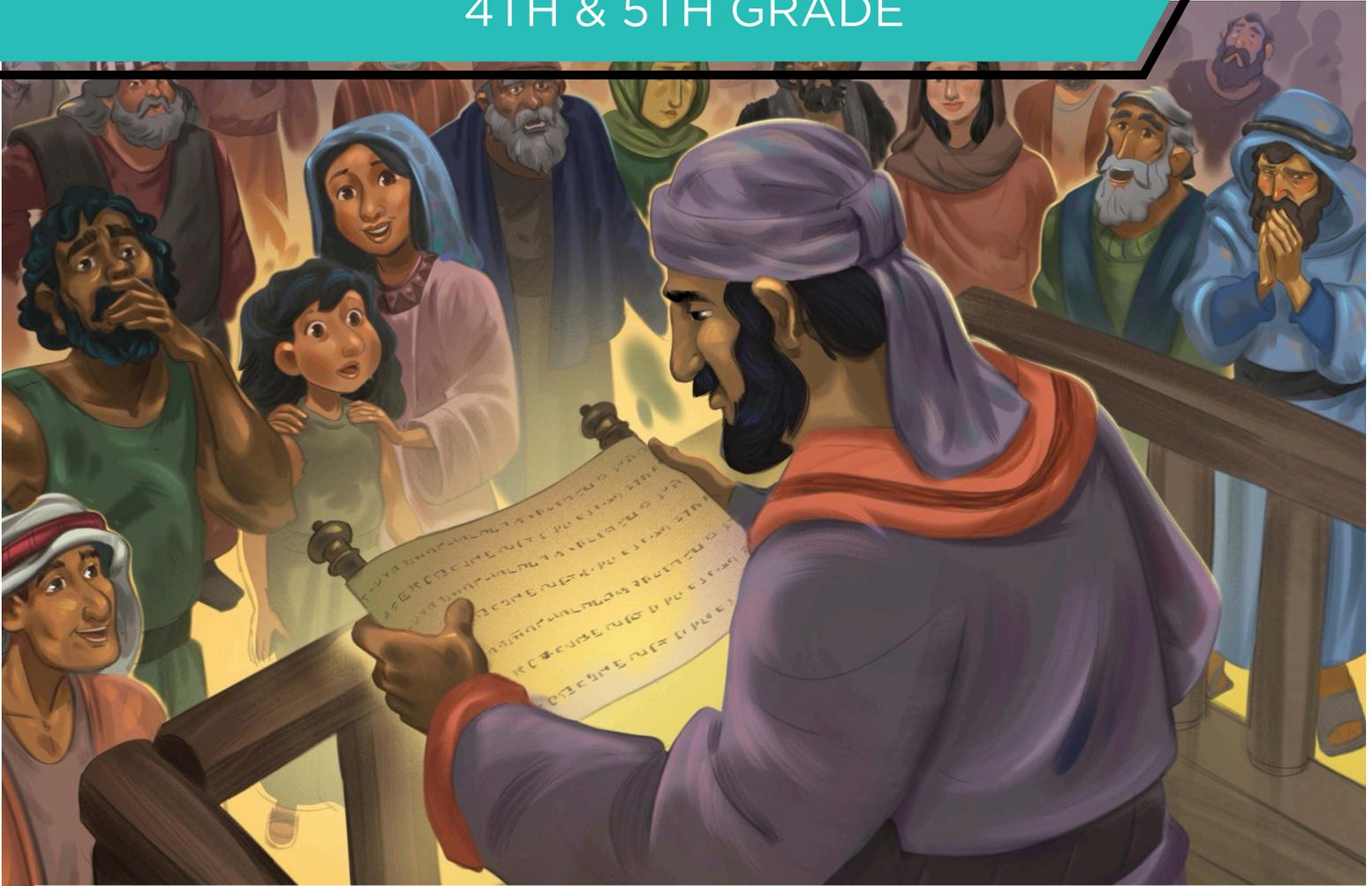


PRETEEN MINISTRY

4TH & 5TH GRADE



MARCH 1, 2026

EZRA TAUGHT GOD'S LAW

EZRA 7-10; NEHEMIAH 8

CHRIST CONNECTION

Ezra taught God's law, and the people recognized their sin. Jesus came to fulfill the law and gives us power to turn away from sin through His death and resurrection. Through faith in Jesus, our hearts are changed so we can love and obey God.

LEADER DEVO

In His providence, God raised up Ezra to be a leader who realized the people of God needed to do more than just rebuild the buildings and walls in Jerusalem. If all the buildings and infrastructure of Jerusalem were completely rebuilt, but the people did not know God and His good commands, then all their rebuilding would be in vain.

Ezra was a faithful scribe and priest who returned to Jerusalem with a clear mission: to teach the law of God to the people. Ezra 7:10 tells us that Ezra had determined to know the law, obey the law, and teach the law to the people of God in Jerusalem. Ezra's commitment and desire to teach the law was not merely to speak its truth; he intended to live the truth of it as well.

From dawn until noon, Ezra read from the law of Moses, instructing God's people in His commands and reminding them of God's faithfulness. The response of the people to the reading of the law was overwhelming. They wept when they heard God's Word because they were confronted with the reality of their sin. Ultimately, the people repented of their sins and made a commitment to follow God's law.

Ezra's commitment to living and teaching the law reminds us of the importance of devoting ourselves to knowing, understanding, and living out God's Word. This opens our lives to God's transformative work through His truth and the power of the Holy Spirit who conforms us into the image of Jesus. Through our study of God's Word, we also realize our absolute need for Him. God's Word reveals our sin and reminds us that we are incapable of saving ourselves. Because of God's faithful love, He sent His Son to take our sin upon Himself so that we can be forgiven and receive eternal salvation.

Ezra's ministry reminds us of the power of Scripture to transform lives. God's Word reveals our sin, leads us to repentance, and shows us the way to restoration. Point kids to see how followers of Jesus are called to know, understand, obey, and share God's words as they point others to the gospel.

ARRIVAL

When kids arrive, they can play in the game room, Large Group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until Large Group starts. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids. Use this time to interact with kids and build relationships with them. Ask them about their week, big events coming up, or follow up on a prayer request from the week before.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

THIS MONTH'S MEMORY VERSE

...but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 20:31



NEXT BIBLE BUCKS DAY

MAR 22

There are many techniques and tools to help kids (and you!) memorize Scripture.

THIS MONTH'S TOOL: DIY VERSE PUZZLE

Grab at least eight "puzzle pieces" (these can be Legos, blocks, index cards, etc.). On each of the puzzle pieces, write a part of the verse so that when all the pieces are put together in the correct order, you can see the entire verse.

Use this to practice memorizing the verse by putting it together, racing yourself, trying to fill in the gaps from memory, etc.

LESSON

Ezra was a scribe and a priest, and he knew the law of Moses. He had committed to study the law of the Lord, obey it, and teach it to all God's people.

King Artaxerxes wrote a letter that said, "Any of God's people who want to go back to Jerusalem with Ezra may go. Make sure to bring all the silver and the gold that I and others have given to the God of Israel. And if you need anything else for the house of God, you may use the royal treasury to pay for it." Ezra praised God, thanking Him for the kindness and generosity of the king. God was with Ezra and strengthened him for the journey to Jerusalem.

After Ezra returned to Jerusalem, he met with some leaders of the people. Ezra learned that some of the people and their leaders had disobeyed God because they did not separate themselves from the surrounding nations and their wicked practices. Ezra tore his clothes and was very upset. Ezra got on his knees and prayed to God, confessing the people's sin. As he did this, God's people began to gather around Ezra. They cried and confessed their sin too, promising to be faithful to God.

Then Ezra brought the book of the law of Moses and read it before all who could listen with understanding. He read the law from dawn until noon. All the people listened very carefully and lifted their hands and said, "Amen, Amen!" Then they knelt and worshiped God with their faces to the ground.

Then, Levites came to the people and began to explain the law so the people could better understand what was read. The people began to cry as they heard the words of the law, because they realized they had not been obeying God. Nehemiah and Ezra said, "This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not be sad! Go and eat good food and drink what is sweet, because today is holy. The joy of the Lord is your strength."

Then all the people had a great celebration with food and drinks because they understood the words of the law that Ezra taught them.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Ezra taught God's law, and the people recognized their sin. Jesus came to fulfill the law and gives us power to turn away from sin through His death and resurrection. Through faith in Jesus, our hearts are changed so we can love and obey God.

SMALL GROUPS

OUR GOAL

To create opportunities that invite preteens to discover for themselves what it means to own and live out their faith.

DISCUSSION / APPLICATION

1) Read Ezra 9:1-3. How had the Israelites who had stayed in Jerusalem sin?

By not separating themselves from the people of the land. (See also Deuteronomy 7:1-3)

2) Why would God tell His people not to marry people of other nations? (See Deuteronomy 7:4)

3) Read Ezra 10:1-2. What does it mean that, “even now there is hope for Israel”? Why would they still have hope even when they were sinning against God?

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” – 1 John 1:9

4) Why is it important for followers of God to know His laws?

If we don't know His laws, we can't follow them.

5) How can we know the way God wants us to live today?

6) According to Jesus in Matthew 22:36-40, what is the most important thing a Christian should do today?

7) How can you show God's love to others this week?

PICK UP

After small group, kids can play in the game room, Large Group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until they are picked up. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids.

Use this time to interact with kids and follow up on any questions or discussions from small group time.

As parents arrive upstairs, direct them to the game room, Large Group room, or balcony to pick their kids up. Make sure to match their security code with their kid's name tag and remove the name tag before they leave!

CLEAN UP

- Put away any supplies used during small group.
- Turn off TVs and lights in the small group rooms.
- Turn off both air hockey tables and put away extra pucks or paddles.
- Gather any balls or other items left out in the game room and put them away in the correct bins.
- Put away any games, books, or supplies in the balcony area.
- Check for any items left behind by kids and put them in the lost and found.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING!