



The BIBLE STORY

Ezra Read the Law

Nehemiah 8:1-12

The walls around Jerusalem were finished—at last! With God’s help, the people finished rebuilding the walls and the city gates in just 52 days. **All the people in Jerusalem gathered together early in the morning at one of the city gates. Men, women, and children—anyone who could understand—came to listen to the reading of God’s Word.**

As the sun was just coming up, **Ezra (EZ ruh) the priest brought out the book of the law of Moses that God had given to His people.** God’s words were written on a scroll. Ezra stood on a high wooden platform and began to read.

Ezra read the law for several hours, and all the people listened carefully. All the people stood up. They had respect for God’s Word. Ezra praised God, and the people lifted up their hands.

“Amen! Amen!” they said. The people in the crowd bowed down with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped God.

Some of the leaders there—the Levites (LEE vights)—explained the law to the people and helped them understand the words Ezra read. As the people heard the words of the law, they began to cry. The law was God’s rules for living, and the people had disobeyed God. **They realized they had sinned.**

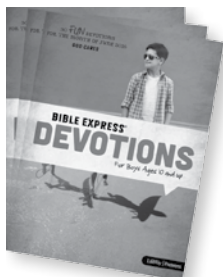
Ezra, the Levites, and Nehemiah (NEE huh MIGH uh) the governor said, “This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not be sad or cry.” Even though the people’s sin made them sad, this was a happy day.

Then Ezra said to them, “Go home and prepare a

feast! Eat rich food and drink sweet drinks. **Share what you have prepared with those who have nothing prepared.**” And again Ezra said, **“Today is holy to the Lord our God. This is not a day to be sad because the joy of the Lord is your strength.”**

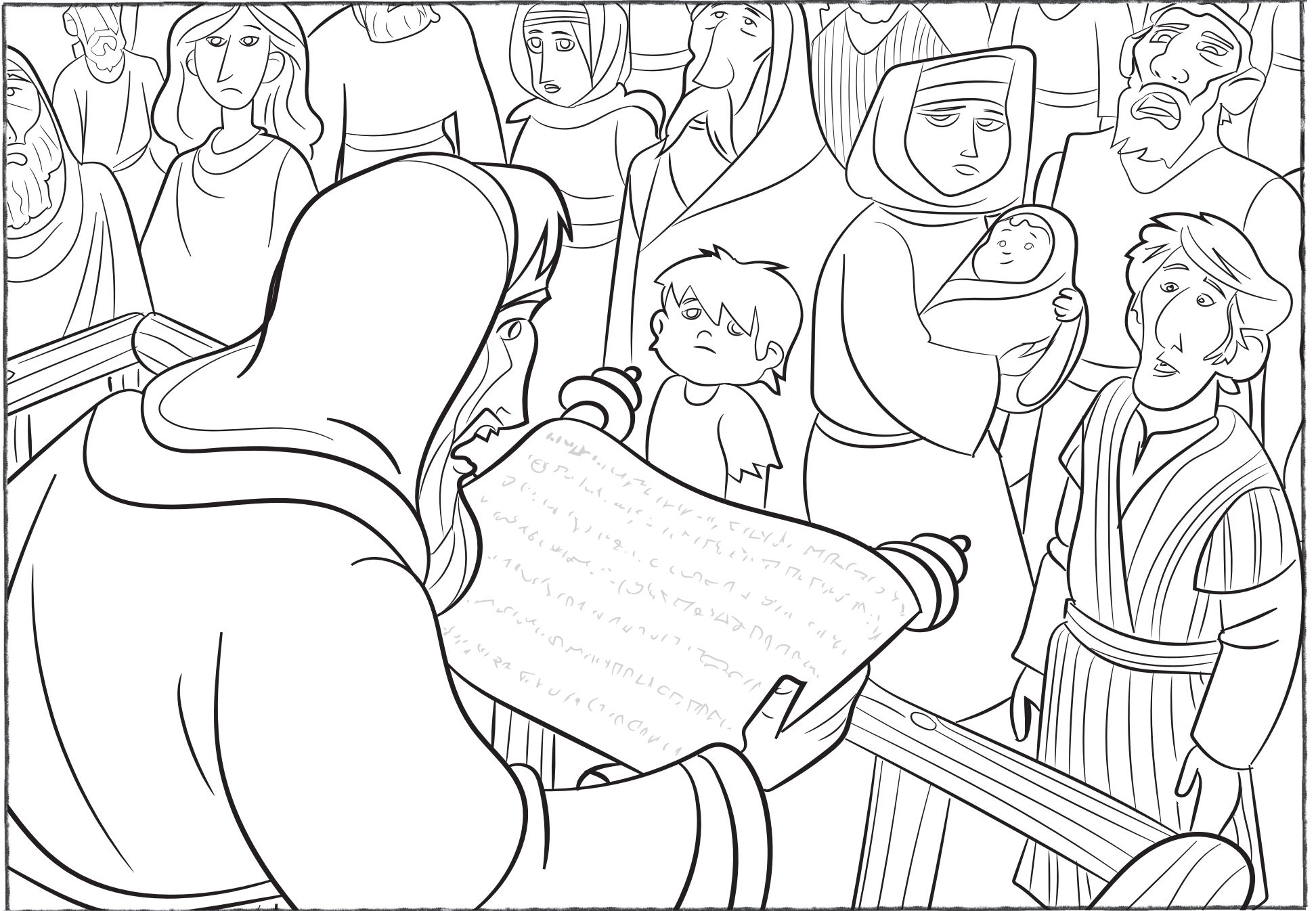
The people obeyed Ezra. They prepared a feast. They ate rich food and drank sweet drinks. They shared what they had with people who did not have food and drinks, and all the people had a big celebration. **They were glad because they understood the words of the law that were explained to them.**

Christ Connection: 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 is God who came to live with people on earth. Jesus has the power to change our hearts.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

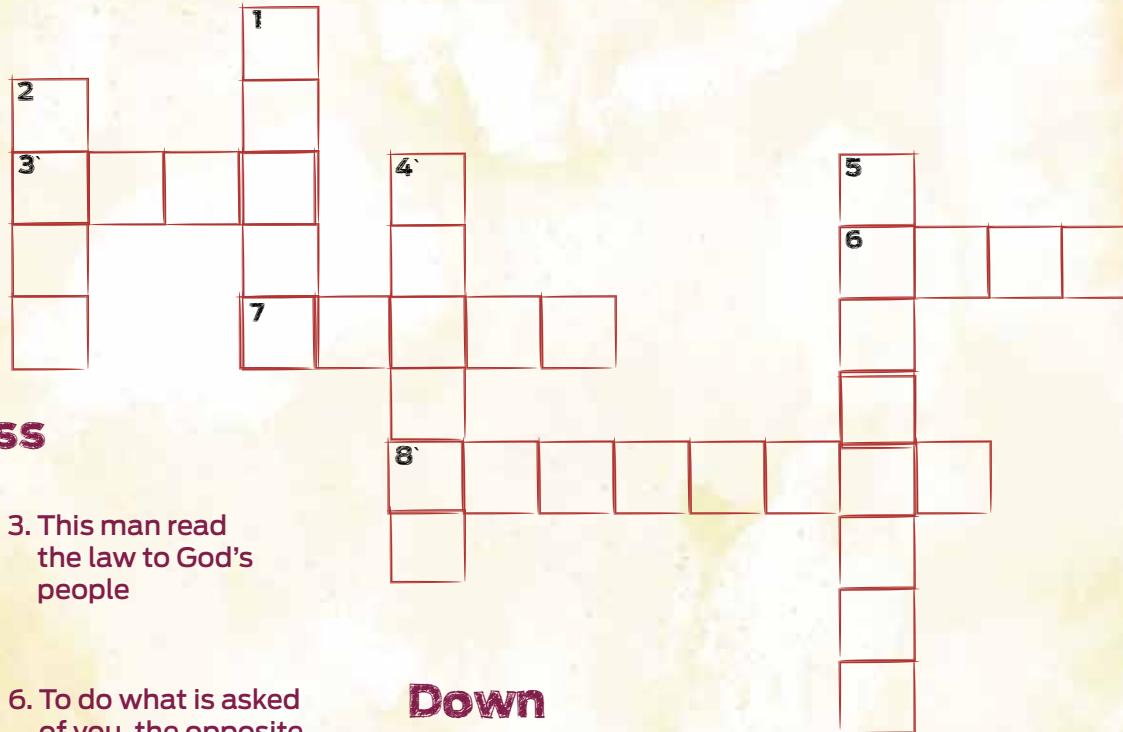
Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover that the people stood up to listen as Ezra read God’s Word. The Bible is God’s Word, and it points to Jesus as our hope for salvation. (2 Tim. 3:16) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.



Keyword Crossing

DOWNLOAD THE
TGP FAMILY APP

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the clues provided to fill in the crossword puzzle. Use the pictures to help you figure out the answers.



Across



3. This man read the law to God's people



6. To do what is asked of you, the opposite of disobey



7. to help someone learn new things



8. another name for the Bible

Down



1. a body part in our chest, sometimes we think of it when we talk about love



2. You do this with words and books



4. to make something into something different



5. having lots of power or great ability to do things

KEY PASSAGE:

Lamentations 3:22-23

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Does God keep His promises? Yes, God is always faithful even when we are not.

BIBLE STORY:

EZRA READ THE LAW

- The people asked Ezra to read them God's law.
- Ezra read God's Word to teach the people how to obey God.
- The people were sad because they understood how sinful they were.
- Ezra told them to celebrate instead because God had helped them understand His words.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- When might we feel sad when reading God's Word?
- What do we know that is a reason to celebrate instead?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

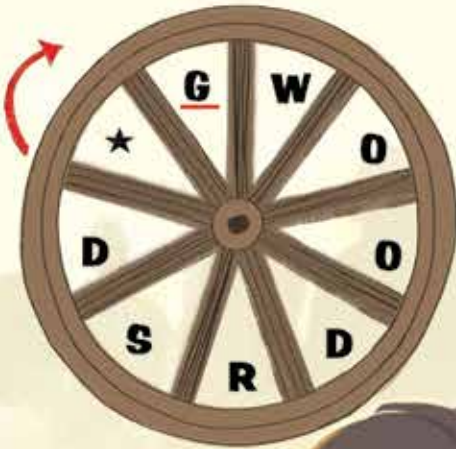
- Challenge your kids to memorize a Bible passage. Plan a time for everyone to recite their passage to the family. Then eat a celebratory dinner.

Younger Kids Activity Pages
Unit 18, Session 5

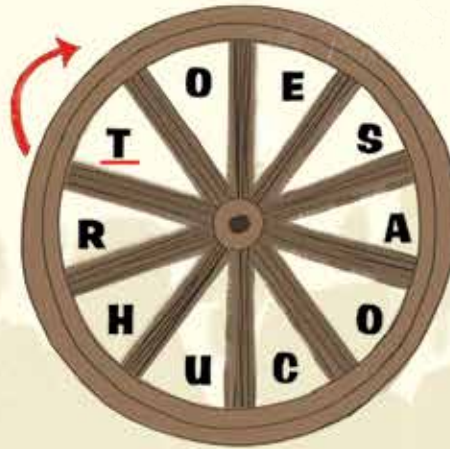
Word Wheels

Follow the instructions for each wheel. Use the words to fill in the main point of today's Bible story.

1. Begin at the G. Move around twice, collecting every other letter.



2. Begin at the T. Move around once, collecting every other letter.



3. Begin at the O. Move around once, collecting every other letter.



Ezra read _____ to _____
the people how to _____ God.

Where in the Bible?

Match each statement with where it is found in the Bible.

➤ God created everything.

➤ Everyone has sinned.

➤ God sent Jesus into the world.

➤ Jesus died to save sinners.

➤ Only Jesus saves.

➤ Romans 5:8

➤ John 14:6

➤ John 3:16-17

➤ Colossians 1:16-17

➤ Romans 3:23

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.