

Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2010

Through the Old Testament in Two Years

Part Two



Created for use with young, unchurched learners
Adaptable for all ages including adults

Old Testament

Ezra

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.

Ezra 1-6

Read the Bible

READ: Ezra 1:1-8 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Memory Verse:

Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory.
(Romans 3:23 NIV)

Begin with Prayer

Ezra's name means "help." He helped people learn more about God.

After 70 years of being prisoners the new king let God's people go back to Israel. Cyrus, the king of Persia, said "The Lord is the God of heaven. He has given me all of the kingdoms on earth. He has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah." (Ezra 1:1-2)

Cyrus told the people that anyone who wanted to could return and build God's temple. Cyrus told those who were not returning that they should give gifts of silver and gold for the temple in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:3-4)

The Israelites got ready; their neighbors helped them and gave them gifts of gold, silver, livestock, and other goods. The king also brought articles that belonged to God's temple. (Ezra 1:5-8)

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. (Ezra 3:1-9)

"The builders laid the foundation of the Lord's temple. Then the priests came. They were wearing their special clothes. They brought their trumpets with them." (Ezra 3:10)

The Levites from the family of Asaph also came and brought their cymbals with them. The priests and Levites took their places to praise the Lord. David had taught them about praising God. They sang to God and praised him. They gave thanks to God. They were glad because the found-

Goals

1. Understand that Ezra taught the people
2. Recognize that the people of Israel had been prisoners for 70 years.
3. Learn that God used Cyrus to build His temple.
4. Understand that God freed the Israelites.

Ezra — Bible Facts

1. Ezra was a prophet of God.
2. King Cyrus told the Israelites to go build God's temple.
3. Ezra taught the people about their sin.
4. Ezra prayed and asked God for forgiveness.

dedication of the Lord's temple had been laid. (Ezra 3:11)

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. (Ezra 4)

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 5)

Ezra told the people about the things that they had done to displease God. Ezra prayed and asked God for forgiveness. 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 they had done and they wanted to make things right with God. The Bible says, "Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory." (Romans 3:23 NIV) If we confess our sins, God will forgive us. (1 John 1:9)

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.

Review

1. **Who was Ezra?** (Ezra was a prophet of God.)
2. **What did king Cyrus say?** (King Cyrus told the Israelites to go build God's temple.)
3. **What did Ezra do?** (Ezra taught the people about their sin.)
4. **What else did Ezra do?** (Ezra prayed and asked God for forgiveness.)

Do You Know Jesus?

God sent His only Son, Jesus, to us. Jesus died on the cross. He died on the cross to take the blame for all the sin that we have done. (John 3:16) Jesus came back to life. If we believe and ask Him to forgive our wrongs, Jesus will forgive us and cleanse us of sin. (Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 1:9)

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus so that our sins can be forgiven.
3. Ask God to help you ask for His forgiveness.
4. Pray for friends and family members who need to ask God for forgiveness.

Application

After the people of Israel had been prisoners for 70 years God freed the Israelites. Then God used Cyrus, King of Persia, Cyrus, to build His temple. Ezra taught the people about God's Word. He prayed and asked God's forgiveness for their sins. God wants us to ask for forgiveness for our sins. God will forgive us, too. (1 John 1:9)

Planning for Next Week

Ezra – Dedication of Temple and Passover — Ezra 3-6

Preschool Lesson

Read the Bible

READ: Ezra 1:1-8 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Teachers: Decorate boxes to look like gift boxes or treasure chests.

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.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus so that our sins can be forgiven.
3. Ask God to help you ask for His forgiveness.

Memory verse for younger children

He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. I John 1:9

Learning Activities

•**Memory verse activity** — Bring a pen with disappearing ink. Ask the children to write down some things they have done to displease God. Ask them to say the memory verse. Talk about God’s forgiveness as the ink disappears.

•**Test your memory** — The neighbors had to bring gifts of gold and silver. Wrap boxes in gold and silver wrapping paper to use as you tell the story. Label the boxes with names of key characters in the story. (Ezra, Cyrus, Israel)

•**Taste activity** — Bring candy and put it in a box that you have decorated like a treasure chest. Talk about the gifts the Israelites received from their neighbors.

•**Think about it** — Israel had been taken prisoner because of their sin. After 70 years God allowed them to be free and return to Israel. Talk about freedom from sin.

The Levites and priests took their place as they worshipped God. Talk about the importance of worship.

•**Touch activity** — Decorate boxes to look like gift boxes or treasure chests.

Bring instruments and sing songs.

Bring clothes to dress like the priests and Levites. Act out the story.

•**Run and play** — Israel had been a prisoner for 70 years. Walk 70 steps around your area.

Hide a treasure chest full of candy. Give the kids clues to find the treasure chests. When they have found it, give each child a piece of candy.

•**Listen** — As the children take time for silence, remind them that God wants us to ask for forgiveness when we sin.

•**Sing** — Sing “Unto Thee O Lord” or another song related to the story.

•**Reach out** — During class, pray (by name) for kids that did not come today. Ask the children to go with you to deliver the handouts to those who were absent. Take gift boxes to them. Pray with the children who were absent. Encourage them to read the story in the Bible.

Memory Verse

Everyone has
sinned.

No one
measures up
to God's glory.

Romans 3:23

Word Puzzle

Trace the letters.

Ezra asked

God for

forgiveness.

Word Search

F Y R A T E R C M S K N Y R C T B
D R E E R F L E A R S I R M K D L
E K G N I K J I S K R D L I U B N
S L A R Z E P R B H L S U R Y C U
B S T F I G R E V L I S D L O G Z
N V D F E I F S K N B D A B R F Z
L T N S L L R H P F G I I T S F I
P B E P P E S S R N K M S V D M A
S S L E M R W W S D G N R R V D H
V F T I E E T R D K J G E T A A G
D S M W T D L N P M D T P B R E F
T G G M K C O T S E V I L L S T L
R S B S K S L R L S N K L T V J D

EZRA
PERSIA
BUILD
GOLD

KING
ISRAEL
FREE
SILVER

CYRUS
TEMPLE
GIFTS
LIVESTOCK

Word Search

F Y R A T E R C M S K N Y R C T B
 D R E E R F L E A R S I R M K D L
 E K G N I K J I S K R D L I U B N
 S L A R Z E P R B H L S U R Y C U
 B S T F I G R E V L I S D L O G Z
 N V D F E I F S K N B D A B R F Z
 L T N S L L R H P F G I I T S F I
 P B E P P E S S R N K M S V D M A
 S S L E M R W W S D G N R R V D H
 V F T I E E T R D K J G E T A A G
 D S M W T D L N P M D T P B R E F
 T G G M K C O T S E V I L L S T L
 R S B S K S L R L S N K L T V J D

EZRA
 PERSIA
 BUILD
 GOLD

KING
 ISRAEL
 FREE
 SILVER

CYRUS
 TEMPLE
 GIFTS
 LIVESTOCK

Word Search

K F B G L R W H D F L J
S E Z R A S P F K B P M
B F V M T G S B P R D N
J M K G J B K D K I N G
T P J W M R F G L D C P
J C Y R U S L S Y K D M
S B R M K J D R K B N P
D M W F R G T E M P L E
R S H V B L D F T J D H
N I S R A E L B L V S M
S G F M J R S G J P C T
M B N G K S P E R S I A

EZRA

KING

PERSIA

CYRUS

ISRAEL

TEMPLE

Word Search

K	F	B	G	L	R	W	H	D	F	L	J
S	E	Z	R	A	S	P	F	K	B	P	M
B	F	V	M	T	G	S	B	P	R	D	N
J	M	K	G	J	B	K	D	K	I	N	G
T	P	J	W	M	R	F	G	L	D	C	P
J	C	Y	R	U	S	L	S	Y	K	D	M
S	B	R	M	K	J	D	R	K	B	N	P
D	M	W	F	R	G	T	E	M	P	L	E
R	S	H	V	B	L	D	F	T	J	D	H
N	I	S	R	A	E	L	B	L	V	S	M
S	G	F	M	J	R	S	G	J	P	C	T
M	B	N	G	K	S	P	E	R	S	I	A

EZRA

KING

PERSIA

CYRUS

ISRAEL

TEMPLE

Anagram

ZAER

NGIK

RSUYC

SIPAER

LIUDB

PEEMLT

EFER

ASLEIR

FTSIG

Anagram

EZRA

KING

CYRUS

PERSIA

BUILD

TEMPLE

FREE

ISRAEL

GIFTS