



**Bible Sunday 2023**  
**Junior Church Lesson Plan**  
**Nehemiah 8.1-11 (GNB)**

**Key Verse:**

All the people raised their arms in the air and answered, ‘Amen! Amen!’ (Nehemiah 8.6, GNB)

**Learning Point:**

God is always worthy of our praise.

**Game:**

Play ‘Simon says’ and include ‘Simon says raise your arms in the air’ and ‘Simon says shout Amen! Amen!’ Include lots of other instructions, some of which the children should follow and some they should not.

Thousands of years ago a big group of children and adults gathered in the town square, heard God’s word and worshipped God by raising their arms in the air and shouting ‘Amen, Amen!’ It’s great that we know about it and can do the same today.

**Prayer:**

Encourage prayer in whatever way is normal for your group. You could say:

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that that you are worthy of our praise and love.

Thank you that no matter how old we are, where we are and who we are, we can worship you.

We are sorry that sometimes we don’t remember how great you are and forget to worship you.

Please help us to learn from the Bible that you are great and worthy of our praise.

Amen

**Teaching Time:**

Read Nehemiah 8.1–4a and 5–6.

Perhaps ask everyone to stand while you read, as they did in the passage.

Explain the people had lived away from their homes, that the city had been destroyed and now they have moved back.

If appropriate for the children, share images of modern towns damaged by war.

The people have done lots of repairs and asked the leaders to read God’s words to them.

Explain some of the words used:

- The seventh month would have been September or October and the weather may have been hot and dry
- Ezra is a boy’s name which means ‘help’ or ‘helper’ in Hebrew. They may know someone with the same name
- Jerusalem is their capital city, like London which had been damaged and repaired
- A priest and scholar is an important person who leads the people in their worship of God and has studied God’s word so he can lead them properly
- The Book of the Law is the Jewish equivalent of the Bible. Some of the books we know today hadn’t been written yet

Draw parallels with their life and the passage. Encourage the children to interact with you through questioning.

Verse 1 – Have they moved house or had repairs and had to settle back in? Maybe on arriving at a holiday home?

Verse 2 – As children, what’s the biggest event they have been to?

Verse 4 – Ask if they see anything like this in your church like a lectern, stage or microphone.

Verse 6 – After a Bible reading does your church regularly say ‘This is the word of the Lord’ or similar?

Verse 6 – After a Bible reading does your church regularly say ‘Praise be to God’ or similar?

### **Application:**

Encourage the children to see that this passage matters to them and is backed up by the New Testament.

Mark 10.13 – Jesus invited the children to be with him, as Ezra had invited the children.

We can come to church and invite our friends to come too.

James 1.25 – We’re encouraged to look into the Bible and to do what it says.

We can read our Bibles on our own or in a big group, and then do what it says.

Mark 11.9 – People worshipped Jesus at the triumphal entry, and we can too.

We can sing praises to God and tell him that he’s wonderful.

Recap by reading the whole passage or the key verse again.

### **Activity:**

Print the activity sheets provided based on the age of the children.

Colouring sheet (pre-school – KS1)

Word search (KS1–2)

Code to break (KS2)

If these activities do not fill the time, play ‘Simon says’ again. Include new instructions such as

Gather all together, stand with a friend, shout ‘Praise the LORD!’ or ‘Praise the great God!’