



PEOPLE OF PRAYER

GOD HEARS THE PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE



PEOPLE OF PRAYER

UNIT 11-PEOPLE OF PRAYER: GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS

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SOLOMON: PRAYING GOD'S PROMISES

BIBLE PASSAGE

2 Chronicles 6:13-17, 21 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God hears our prayers.

FOCUS VERSE

"Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you." Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Poster Paper | Black Marker | Blindfolds | *Promise Cards* | Tape | *God's Promises Labels* | Envelopes | Bibles | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Have you ever made a promise to anyone?
- What is your favorite season of the year? Why do you like that one best?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Invite the children to lift their hands in worship. Some kids are ready to express their worship physically but need assurance that it's acceptable for them to do so. Other children are comfortable being demonstrative in worship, but they need to know why believers respond to God this way. Explain that raising our hands in worship is a sign of dependence and surrender to God.



MODEL LIFTING YOUR HANDS IN WORSHIP. WE WANT CHILDREN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS A NORMAL AND BIBLICAL WAY TO RESPOND TO GOD.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the class for a time of prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, we look to You for help. We want to understand Your Word, and we want to hear what You want us to know. We need You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "In the last unit, we learned that God transformed David from ordinary to extraordinary. Well, today, we are beginning a brand-new series of lessons called *People of Prayer*. Each week, we will look at a different person and a specific type of prayer to learn how to pray ourselves. Who would like to put up this month's first puzzle piece?"



DOING A WEEKLY REVIEW MAY SEEM UNNECESSARY, BUT IT IS CRITICAL TO REMIND KIDS OF WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY LEARNED AND HOW THAT CONNECTS WITH OUR CURRENT STUDY. SINCE THE CURRICULUM IS CHRONOLOGICALLY ORDERED, REVIEWING HELPS CHILDREN UNDERSTAND EACH LESSON'S PLACE IN GOD'S GRAND STORY.

TRANSITION: Say, "Who is ready for a game?"

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Promise Cards* (1 card per child) | Poster Paper (1 per class) | Black Marker (1 per class) | Blindfolds (1-2 per class) | Tape |

Say, "The game we will be playing together is called *Pin the Promise*. When someone makes us a promise, where do we keep that promise? Right! In our minds. Let's learn how to play *Pin the Promise*."

GAME GOAL: To be the one who places their "promise" closest to "the mind."

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Outline a person vertically on poster paper, and tape it to the wall.
2. Line everyone up behind the poster.
3. One at a time, blindfold the kids and give them a *Promise Card* with tape on the back.
4. Spin the first blindfolded person and instruct them to walk to the poster and stick their *Promise Card* where they think the mind (or the brain) is located.
5. Once everyone has had a turn, observe who taped their "promise" closest to the middle of the head. That person wins!
6. Replay if time remains.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job playing *Pin the Promise* with me! In case you haven't guessed, we are talking about promises in today's story!"

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Our passage starts with a man named King Solomon. Solomon was a good king who happened to be King David's son! God made a BIG promise to King David, but it wasn't a promise FOR David. Instead, this was a promise for David's son, King Solomon. Now, listen for the word 'promise' as I read, and let's find where King Solomon prays about a promise from God." Read 2 Chronicles 6:13-17, 21 (ICB).

¹³ Solomon stood on the platform. Then he kneeled in front of all the people of Israel who were gathered there. Solomon spread his hands out toward the sky. ¹⁴ He said, "Lord, God of Israel, there is no god like you in heaven or on earth . You keep your agreement of love with your servants who completely obey you. ¹⁵ You have kept your promise to my father David, your servant. With your words you made a promise. And with the work of your hands, you have made that promise come true today. ¹⁶ "Now, Lord, God of Israel, also keep this promise you made to my father David, your servant. You said, 'David, you will always have someone from your family rule Israel..." ¹⁷ Now, Lord, God of Israel, keep your promise. Let this promise to your servant David come true. ²¹ Hear my prayers and the prayers of your people Israel. Hear us when we pray facing this Temple. Hear from your home in heaven."

Say, "Wow! King Solomon prayed a powerful prayer. He prayed about a promise God had given his father, David. When we pray God's promises, it means that we are talking to God about things He has already said He will do. Sometimes, we pray God's promises to Him to remind ourselves of what God will do, just like King Solomon did. Praying this way can encourage us and give us hope when we are discouraged or need to remember the truth about our loving God."

JOINING TO JESUS: *"Did you know that King Solomon was praying about one of God's biggest promises? Solomon prayed that someone from David's family would always be king—and that promise came true through Jesus! Jesus, King of Kings, was a descendent (or "from the family") of David. God's biggest promise was fulfilled (or "made complete") in Jesus, the eternal king!"*

Ask, "Have you ever tried to keep a promise? How did it go? Could you keep the promise? Have you kept every promise you've ever made? It is hard to keep promises! But I have good news to share: God is not like us! **God hears our prayers**, and He never forgets His promises. God always does what He says He's going to do. We can be joyful knowing that God hears us when we pray His promises. His ears are always listening when we talk to Him."

TRANSITION: Say, "God hears our prayers, and He always does what He says He will do!"

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's see what you can remember about today's story."

1. Who hears our prayers?

Response: God hears our prayers.

2. What kind of prayer did King Solomon pray?

Response: King Solomon prayed God's promises.

3. Why do we need to pray God's promises back to Him? Does He forget His promises?

Response: God never forgets His promises, but sometimes we have to wait for Him to do what He has promised. God always knows the best time to fulfill His promises. However, praying God's words can help us trust Him, and it can remind us that He loves us and will

do what He says.

4. Why was Jesus' coming the fulfillment of God's most important promise?

Response: Jesus is the greatest king, and He was a descendent of David. (He was from the family line of King David.) Jesus is the forever king.

5. How can learning about King Solomon's prayer help us?

Response: Praying promises from Scripture teaches us about God and His truth.

6. What does this lesson tell us about God?

Response: **God hears our prayers**, God doesn't break His promises, God is always listening to our prayers, God wants us to talk to Him, God speaks to generations, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Nice job answering those questions! Let's do an activity to help us remember some of God's promises."

RESPOND – 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *God's Promises Labels* (1 sheet per child) | Envelopes (1 per child) | Bibles (1 per child) | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

Say, "For today's craft, we are making something to help us remember God's promises to us so we can pray them back to Him."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *God's Promises Label* sheet, an envelope, a Bible, scissors, and markers or crayons.
2. As a group, go through each of *God's Promises Labels* and fill-in the missing words using a Bible to help.

Answers:

- Deuteronomy 31:6- LEAVE
- James 4:8- GOD
- Jeremiah 29:11- GOOD
- Jeremiah 29:13- HEART
- John 8:12- LIGHT
- Proverbs 3:5-6- TRUST
- Psalm 145:9- ALL
- Psalm 37:4- GIVE

3. Ask the kids to cut out their filled-in promise labels and put them in their envelopes.
4. Finally, tell the children to write "God's Promises to Me" on the front of their envelopes.
5. If there is extra time, have the children decorate their envelopes.

CHALLENGE: If you teach older children, have them work independently or in pairs to find the Scripture passages and fill in the blanks.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job! Now, you can open your envelope when you're at home and use the labels to pray God's promises all by yourself. Remember, **God hears our prayers.**"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, we have a new memory verse. The verse is about how **God hears our prayers**. First, I'm going to read it out loud, then we can say it together. How does that sound?"

"Come and pray to me (*praying hands*), **and I will listen** (*cup hands behind ears*) **to you."** **Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV)** (*hold your hands out like a book*)

CHALLENGE: Talk about the verse together. Let the children share what they think it means. Here are some questions to get you started:

1. How does this verse remind you of today's story?
2. What do you learn from this verse?
3. What does this verse tell you about the kind of God we serve?

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Don't forget to use your envelopes of God's promises when you pray. God will never make a promise that He won't keep. When we pray, day or night, God always hears us and is always listening. I'm so grateful **God hears our prayers!** If you are a person who has a hard time believing God listens to you, remind yourself of our memory verse: 'Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.' That's another one of God's promises! **God hears our prayers!**"



DURING YOUR PRAYER TIME, USE ONE OF THE GOD'S PROMISES LABELS AS PART OF YOUR PRAYER. THIS WILL HELP THE KIDS SEE HOW TO USE THESE PROMISES AT HOME.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"God, You are so kind to listen each time we talk to You. Even now, I know that You hear our prayers. So, thank You for loving us, and please remind us of Your promises. (Have children take turns thanking God for promises He has made). In Jesus' name, Amen."*

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

As children leave, use every moment to remind them of who Jesus is. Say, "God is a promise keeper and a great listener!" When parents arrive, give them a copy of the monthly Parent Guide (downloadable).

PARENT GUIDE EXPLANATION:

1. Provides engaging questions and activities for family discipleship.
2. Reviews what the children are learning each week.

“The Lord your God will go with you. He will not _____ you or forget you.”

Deuteronomy 31:6

“Come near to _____, and God will come near to you.”

James 4:8

“I have _____ plans for you. I don’t plan to hurt you. I plan to give you hope and a good future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

“You will search for me. And when you search for me with all your _____, you will find me.”

Jeremiah 29:13

“I am the light of the world. The person who follows me will never live in darkness. He will have the _____ that gives life.”

John 8:12

“_____ in the Lord with all your heart. Don’t depend on your own understanding. Remember the Lord in everything you do. And he will give you success.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

“The Lord is good to everyone. He is merciful to _____ he has made.”

Psalms 145:9

“Enjoy serving the Lord. And he will _____ you what you want.”

Psalms 37:4



SOLOMON,
PRAYER OF
PROMISES

WEEK 1

PEOPLE OF
PRAYER

Promise Cards

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

PROMISE

JEHOSHAPHAT: PRAYER FOR HELP

BIBLE PASSAGE

2 Chronicles 20: 1, 3, 6, 9, 14-15, 17 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God hears our prayers.

FOCUS VERSE

“Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.” Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | 6' Ropes | Swimming Inner Tubes | | Life Jacket or Life Preserver (Optional) | *Life Preserver* Activity Page | Decorations (Optional) | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Have you ever been in danger? Tell me what happened.
- Have you ever needed someone to save you?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Worship reminds us that God is holy. Holiness means two important things: 1) God is set apart; there is no one like Him, and 2) God is perfect; there is nothing bad about God at all. Because God is holy, we can trust Him, and knowing we can trust God is crucial to our children understanding this month's theme. We pray to God alone, because He alone is holy. One way to teach our children about God's holiness is by encouraging them to take their shoes off before they worship. In the Bible, and even still in some cultures, removing one's shoes is a sign of honor and reverence.



THE HYMN “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY” AND THE MODERN SONG “HOLY IS THE LORD” ARE GREAT CHOICES FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP TIME. DON'T FORGET TO CHECK YOUTUBE FOR KIDS' VERSIONS OF BOTH.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the class for a time of prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, thank You for meeting us in worship! We want to honor Your holiness. We love You, Holy God! In Jesus' name, Amen.”

REVIEW – 5 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This month, we are in a series called *People of Prayer*. Who remembers which person of prayer we talked about last week, and what kind of prayer he prayed? Yes! We read about King Solomon and how he prayed promises God had given his father, David. We discovered that we could pray God’s promises back to Him, knowing He will keep His word because **God hears our prayers**. This week, we will learn about another person of prayer! I wonder who we will learn about this week.” Hang up the next puzzle piece.

TRANSITION: Say, “Before we read our story, let’s play a game to help us get our minds and bodies ready to listen!”

ENGAGE – 15 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | 6’ Ropes (2 per class) | Swimming Inner Tubes (2 per class) |

Say, “We’re going to learn a new relay game called *Come to the Rescue!* Have you ever seen a lifeguard? What is a lifeguard’s job? Right! They ‘come to the rescue’ when someone needs saving! Let’s learn how to play this relay race.”



TIE ONE INNER TUBE TO THE END OF EACH ROPE IN PREPERATION FOR THE RELAY GAME.

GAME GOAL: To be the first team to have each person drag their group’s inner tube down and back.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Break your class into two teams (split evenly between boys and girls).
2. Give each group a rope with an inner tube tied to the end of it.
3. Both teams must line up on one side of the room.
4. Choose one person to start the relay for each group and give each starter one rope tied to the inner tube.
5. The starter will run, pulling the rope and inner tube, to the opposite side of the room. Then, they should touch the wall and run it back.
6. The next person in each team’s line must repeat the process until all members of each group have completed the relay.
7. Whichever team finishes the fastest wins.

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job playing *Come to the Rescue!* The prayer we will read about today is a prayer of help, asking for God to rescue them. Let’s get to it!”

LEARN – 15 MINUTES

Say, “Our story is about a man named King Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat asked God for help. Have you ever been afraid and needed someone to save you? Me too! Well, King Jehoshaphat is going to teach us what to do when we need help! Let’s read 2 Chronicles 20:1, 3, 6, 9, 14-15, 17 (ICB).”

Later some people came to start a war with Jehoshaphat. 3 Jehoshaphat was afraid. So he decided to ask the Lord what to do. 6 He said, "Lord, You are the God in heaven. You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. You have power and strength. No one can stand against you. 9 'Trouble may come to us... [But] we will stand before you... We will cry out to you when we are in trouble. Then you will hear and save us.' 14 Then the Spirit of the Lord entered Jahaziel. He stood up in the meeting. 15 And he said: "Listen to me, King Jehoshaphat! The Lord says this to you: 'Don't be afraid or discouraged because of this large army. The battle is not your battle. It is God's battle. 17 You won't need to fight in this battle. Just stand strong in your places. You will see the Lord save you... Don't be afraid. Don't be discouraged. The Lord is with you."

Say, "What a great example! King Jehoshaphat was afraid, but instead of hiding and running away, Jehoshaphat asked God for help! He prayed!"

Ask, "When you are in trouble, do you usually pray to God first? Why or why not? God wants us to come to Him in prayer. He wants us to ask Him for help. He is our Rescuer. We can be assured of this because **God hears our prayers!**"

JOINING TO JESUS: "God is our Rescuer! The most important way He rescued us was by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. Did you know that Jesus can rescue you from all the bad things you've done? He can rescue you and bring you into His family. Isn't that amazing? If God can rescue us from sin and death, we can trust that He listens every time we call for 'help.'"

TRANSITION: Say, "God hears our prayers just like He heard King Jehoshaphat's. When you need saving, pray to God and ask for help!"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's take some time to talk more about our story."

1. Who hears our prayers?

Response: God hears our prayers.

2. What kind of prayer did King Jehoshaphat pray?

Response: King Jehoshaphat prayed for God's help.

3. Why should we pray when we need help?

Response: God always hears our prayers, and the Bible tells us (over and over) that God answers us when we talk to Him. God is loving AND powerful. He is our Rescuer.

4. Give an example of a time when you should ask for God's help.

Response: When we're scared, lost, make mistakes, sin, etc.

5. Who did God send as our most incredible Rescuer?

Response: Jesus is our most incredible Rescuer! If we repent (say we're sorry for our sins) and believe in Him as our Savior, He will rescue us!

6. How can hearing about King Jehoshaphat's prayer help us?

Response: Answers will vary.

7. What does this lesson tell us about God?

Response: God hears our prayers, God is our Savior, God always listens to our prayers, God wants us to talk to Him, God sent His son to rescue us, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Nice job answering those questions! Let's do an activity that will remind us that **God hears our prayers** for help."

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Life Jacket or Life Preserver (Optional) | *Life Preserver* Activity Page (1 per child) | Decorations (Optional) | Markers or Crayons |

Say, "For today's craft, we are making life preservers. When do people need life preservers? Great! Life preservers are 'thrown out' to a person who is in danger of drowning. Similarly, **God hears our prayers** for help, and He saves us. Prayers are like life preservers; they are the things we 'throw out' when we are in trouble."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Life Preserver Activity Page* and markers or crayons.
2. In the middle of the life preserver, ask the kids to write or draw a prayer request about one way they need God's help.
3. Have the kids color their life preserver.

MODIFICATION: Decorate the life preserver. Decoration options include sequins, beads, tissue paper, glitter glue, paint, jewels, rope, ribbon, stickers, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job with your life preservers! Hang your preserver somewhere you will see it regularly to remind you that **God hears our prayers** and comes to our rescue when we ask Him for help!"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month's memory verse reminds us that **God hears our prayers**. I'm going to read it first, and then we can all say it together. Ready?"

"Come and pray to me (praying hands), and I will listen (cup hands behind ears) to you." Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV) (hold your hands out like a book)

CHALLENGE: Have the children get in groups of three and take turns saying the verse to each other.



SHOW THE KIDS THAT YOU ARE MEMORIZING THE VERSE WITH THEM.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

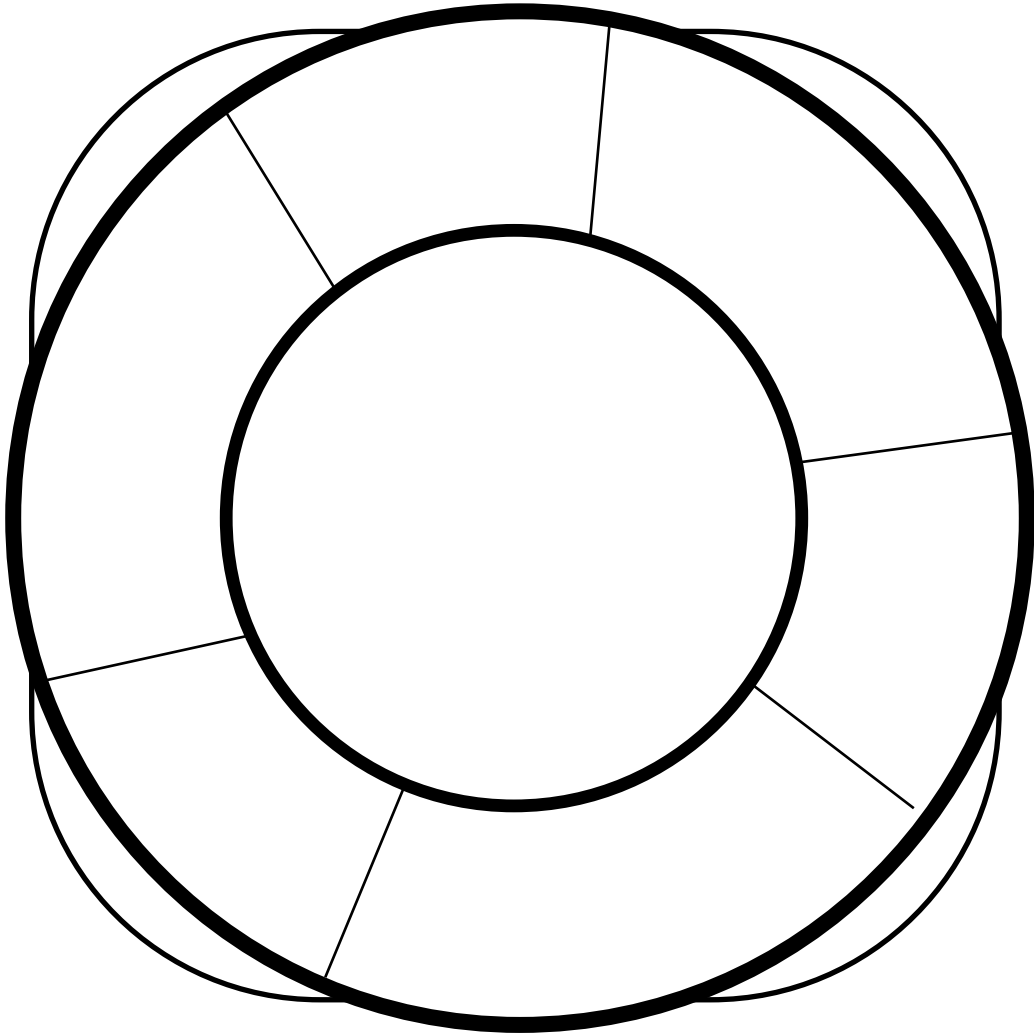
Say, "I'm so grateful **God hears our prayers!** He hears our requests for help, no matter when we pray. God is always listening! Does anyone need God to save them or someone they love? Let's ask for God's help! As we pray, remind yourselves that **God hears our prayers!**"

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, You are amazing! Thank You for always listening to us. You never grow tired of our requests. Remind us to pray when we are in trouble or are scared. Remind us to ask You to save us every time we need help! In Your name, Amen.”*

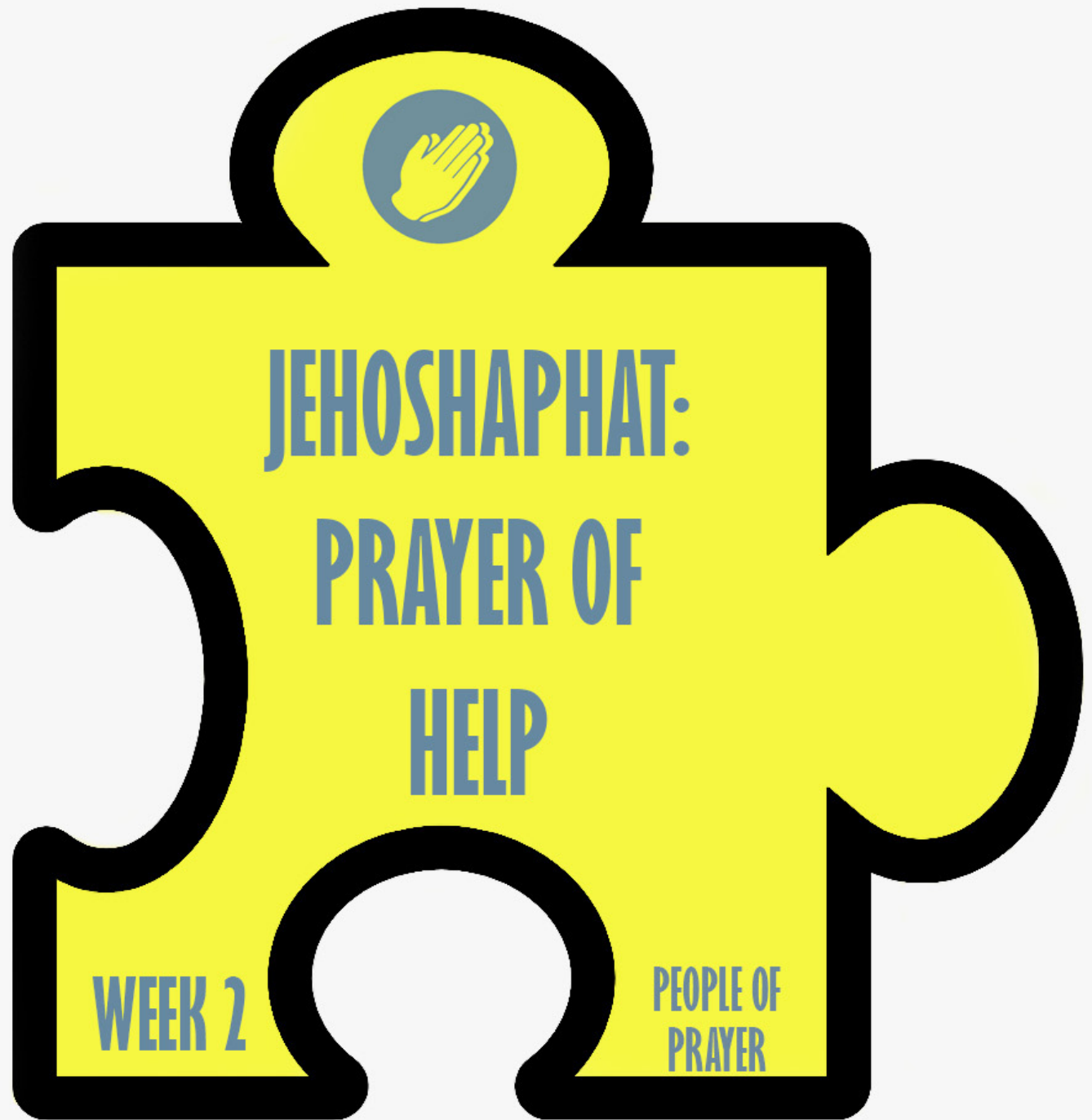
RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

Wisely use every minute you have with the kids in your class. If you are looking for things to do, you can replay *Come to the Rescue*, practice the monthly memory verse again, or finish incomplete crafts.

S O S



GOD HEARS OUR
PRAYERS



DANIEL: PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

BIBLE PASSAGE

Daniel 9:3-9, 20-23 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God hears our prayers.

FOCUS VERSE

“Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.” Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Straws | Construction Paper | Scissors | Sackcloth Burlap (Optional) | Ashes (Optional) | *Prayer of Repentance* Page | 1” Burlap or Brown Construction Paper Squares | Glue | Pencils | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Would you prefer to help a friend with homework, cook for your family, or clean your room?
- When do you most often think about God? At church, at bedtime, when you need Him?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Start your worship time by proclaiming (out loud) some of the incredible things about God.



SHOW YOUR CLASS HOW TO DECLARE THE PRAISES OF GOD IN A GROUP SETTING. THEN, ENCOURAGE THE KIDS TO JOIN YOU.

DECLARE: “God You are faithful! You are unchanging! You are powerful! You are perfect! You are holy! You are good!”

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the class for a time of prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, thank You for being far greater than we can imagine! We are so grateful that You call us Your sons and daughters and that we can call You Father. We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "Today, we are continuing our unit called *People of Prayer*, and our focus is on how **God hears our prayers**. In the first week, we read about how King Solomon prayed God's promises back to Him! Last week, we learned that King Jehoshaphat prayed for help when he needed rescuing! Did you know that those are not the only kind of prayers we can pray? This week, we'll hear about a third person who prayed a completely different type of prayer! Who wants to put up this week's puzzle piece to get us started?"

TRANSITION: Say, "Before we read our story, we're going to play a game to get our hearts ready to understand God's Word. Let's play!"

ENGAGE – 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Straws (1 for each child) | Construction Paper (20 pieces per class) | Scissors | Timer (1 per class) | Black Markers (1 per class) |

Say, "Our game is called *Fishing for Feelings*! Have you ever been fishing? Great! Well, instead of fishing for fish, we are going to fish for feelings! Each feeling will be worth a certain amount of points, and whichever team collects the most points wins! Sounds like a fun game, right?"



BEFORE THE GAME, CUT OUT AT LEAST 20 MEDIUM SIZED CIRCLES (ABOUT 5" IN DIAMETER) AND DRAW ONE OF THREE TYPES OF FACES ON EACH ONE: HAPPY, ANGRY, AND SAD. FOR ALL THE HAPPY FACES, WRITE A "1" ON THE BACK. FOR ALL THE ANGRY FACES, WRITE A "2" ON THE BACK. FOR ALL THE SAD FACES, WRITE A "3" ON THE BACK.

GAME GOAL: To work as a team to "catch" the highest amount of points.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Number the kids off by twos. Team one will go first.
2. Give each child a straw and then disperse the construction paper feelings all around the room (face-side up).
3. Team one will start by standing on one side of the room. When you say "go," each player will run to a "feeling" and will then pick up one "feeling" by placing their straw on the paper and inhaling through the straw.
4. If someone's "feeling" drops, they must follow the same process to pick it up again and bring it back to where their team started.
5. Before beginning, tell the kids that they will have three minutes to fish for as many "feelings" as possible.
6. When the three minutes are up, count the points and tally how many points the team collected.
7. Repeat the steps above with team two.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job playing *Fishing for Feelings*! Did you see some of those sad faces? Well, our story is going to be all about the feeling of sadness! Let's learn about it together."

LEARN – 15 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Sackcloth Burlap (Optional) | Ashes (Optional) |

Say, “Today’s story is about a man named Daniel! Daniel lived long before Jesus. At this time, most people didn’t love God, so they were not following His commands. Let’s listen closely to how Daniel asks God to forgive his sins and the sins of his people! See if you can tell how Daniel feels as he prays. Before we read, remember, **God hears our prayers**, and He heard Daniel too!” Read Daniel 9:3-9, 20-23 (ICB).



BEFORE YOU READ THE STORY, PUT ON THE WORN CLOTHES AND ASHES TO HELP YOUR KIDS UNDERSTAND THE SADNESS AND SORROW OF DANIEL’S PRAYER. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE CHILDREN TO KNOW THAT SIN SHOULD MAKE US FEEL SAD, BECAUSE IT HURTS GOD’S HEART.

³ Then I turned to the Lord God. I did not eat any food. To show how sad I was I put on rough cloth and sat in ashes. ⁴ I prayed to the Lord my God. I told him about all of my sins. I said, “Lord, you are a great God. You keep your agreement of love with all who love you and obey your commands. ⁵ But we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and turned against you. We have not obeyed your commands and laws. ⁶ We did not listen to your servants, the prophets. ⁷ Lord, you are good and right. But we are full of shame today. We were not loyal to you. ⁸ Lord, we are all ashamed. This is because we have sinned against you. ⁹ But, Lord our God, you show us mercy. You forgive us even though we have turned against you.”

²⁰ I was saying those things in my prayer to the Lord, my God. I was confessing my sins and the sins of the people of Israel. ²¹ While I was still praying, [the angel] Gabriel came to me. ²² Gabriel said to me, “Daniel, I have come to give you wisdom and to help you understand. ²³ When you first started praying, an answer was given. And I came to tell you, because God loves you very much.”

Say, “Did anyone notice how sad Daniel seems? Daniel is sad and is praying because he knows that his sin and the sin of his people hurt God’s heart. This type of prayer is called a prayer of repentance. When we repent, we tell God we are sorry, we ask for His forgiveness, and we commit to follow Him.”

Ask, “How do we know Daniel is sad in this story? Daniel asked God to forgive all the bad things he and the people had done. He wore old clothes, sat in ashes, and stopped eating because he was sad about his sin. But there’s good news in this prayer too. The good news is that God heard Daniel’s prayer, and **God hears our prayers** too! Do you see that God sent an angel to answer Daniel’s prayer? Our **God hears our prayers** because ‘He loves us very much.’”

JOINING TO JESUS: “When we do something wrong, we can talk to Jesus because He loves us (no matter what) and He is able to forgive all of our sins. In fact, Jesus said, ‘I want you to know that the Son of Man (Jesus) has authority on earth to forgive sins’ (Matthew 9:6). Because of Jesus’ death on the cross, we can be forgiven and set free from sin’s power.”

TRANSITION: Say, “**God hears our prayers** every time we say them just like He heard Daniel’s prayer of repentance. When you need to be forgiven, pray that Jesus will forgive you and take your sin away, and He will!”

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's take some time to talk more about our story."

1. Who hears our prayers?

Response: **God hears our prayers.**

2. How do we know that God heard Daniel's prayer?

Response: God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Daniel.

3. What did Gabriel say to Daniel?

Response: "When you first started praying, an answer was given. And I came to tell you, because God loves you very much." (Daniel 9:23)

4. What is important to you about Gabriel's words?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. What are prayers of repentance?

Response: Prayers of repentance are when we confess (tell) God we are sorry for our sins, ask Him to forgive us, and commit to following Him.

6. Why was Daniel sad when he was praying?

Response: Daniel understood that sin breaks God's heart, and he knew that he and God's people had sinned.

7. What does Jesus have the power to do?

Response: Jesus has the power to forgive us. He promises to forgive us when we ask.

8. What does this lesson tell us about God?

Response: God hears our prayers, God loves us, God sends us help, God is always listening to our prayers, God wants us to talk to Him, God wants us to pray for forgiveness, God gave us Jesus to take the punishment for our sins, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Nice job answering those questions! Let's do an activity that will remind us that **God hears our prayers** for help."

RESPOND – 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Prayer of Repentance* Page (1 per child) | 1" Burlap or Brown Construction Paper Squares (1 per child) | Glue | Pencils (1 per child) | Markers or Crayons |

Say, "Today, we are making praying hands to remind us of Daniel's prayer. Thankfully, Daniel didn't stay sad for long because God heard Daniel's prayer and answered him. Can you believe **God hears our prayers** too?! What great news!"

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Prayer of Repentance* Page, a burlap (or brown construction paper) square, a pencil, and markers or crayons.
2. The kids will do three things to their praying hands: 1. They will glue down the piece of burlap (or brown construction paper) to represent sackcloth. 2. They will make a small, thick pencil line and then smear it with their fingers to make it look like ashes. 3. They will draw and then color blue raindrops to represent tears.

3. While the kids are working on their projects, say, "Our sins should make us sad for a short time, but we can be joyful knowing God hears our prayers and forgives us."

TRANSITION: Say, "What a great craft today! Now, we can remember that although Daniel was very sad and sorry for his sins, he could later rejoice because God loved him very much. Aren't you glad that **God hears our prayers?**"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month's verse reminds us that **God hears our prayers**. Let's practice it together!"

"Come and pray to me (praying hands), and I will listen (cup hands behind ears) to you." Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV) (hold your hands out like a book)

CHALLENGE: Repeat the verse at different speeds to make the memorization experience more fun.



IF YOU HAVE EXTRA TIME, GIVE EVERY KID AN OPPORTUNITY TO COME UP WITH THEIR OWN ACTIONS FOR THE VERSE AND THEN SHARE THEIR NEW VERSIONS WITH THE GROUP.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "**God hears our prayers** and is always listening! When we do something wrong, Jesus wants us to repent. Let's learn from Daniel and ask for God's forgiveness whenever we sin."

SAMPLE PRAYER: "Jesus, we love You. We are so grateful for Your forgiveness and that You love us enough to hear us when we pray! Please help us be quick to ask for forgiveness when we do something wrong. In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

It's so easy to finish the lesson and then switch to clean-up and dismissal mode. Don't miss out on the extra time you have to build relationships, drive home the big idea, or let your students ask questions about the story.



God Hears Our Prayers



**DANIEL:
PRAYER OF
REPENTANCE**

WEEK 3

**PEOPLE OF
PRAYER**

EZRA: PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

BIBLE PASSAGE

Ezra 3:10-13 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God hears our prayers.

FOCUS VERSE

“Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.” Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Thankful Cards* | *A to Z Prayers of Thankfulness* | Pencils |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What kind of board games or card games do you like to play?
- What is your favorite day of the week? Why?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Help the children focus their thoughts on God by starting with a reading from Scripture each week. Psalm 3:8 says, “Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people.” This is a simple one to use with kids. It points them to God and reminds us how blessed it is to be a part of His family.



REPEATING THE SAME VERSE FOR A FEW WEEKS (OR EVEN A YEAR) ACCOMPLISHES AT LEAST TWO GOALS: 1) IT HELPS THE CHILDREN MEMORIZE ANOTHER PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE, AND 2) IT BECOMES A SIGNAL FOR THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the class for a time of prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, thank You for being with us today! Help us experience You and draw closer to You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "This is the final lesson in our unit, *People of Prayer*. Do you remember when we talked about King Solomon and how he prayed God's promises? Then, in the second week, we discussed King Jehoshaphat's prayer for help. Last week, we read about Daniel and his prayer of repentance. In all of these lessons, we talked about how amazing God is because **God hears our prayers!** This week we have one more prayer to learn about: The prayer of thanksgiving! Who wants to put up our final puzzle piece for this unit so we can get to our story?"

TRANSITION: Say, "Now, let's play a game together!"

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Thankful Cards* (1 per child) |



CUT OUT EACH *THANKFUL CARD* BEFORE BEGINNING THE LESSON.

Say, "Our game today is about thankfulness! What does it mean to be thankful? Those are great answers! Being thankful means that you appreciate and are glad about something. Who is ready to play our game of thankfulness?"

GAME GOAL: To partner up and answer all the questions on the *Thankful Cards*.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Give each child a *Thankful Card* with a question on it.
2. Then, assign each student a partner. Instruct Partner A to ask Partner B the question from their *Thankful Card*. Next, Partner B will ask their partner the question from their *Thankful Card*.
3. Once both partners have answered their questions, they should give a "thumbs up" and wait for the other pairs to finish.
4. When everyone has finished, the children should trade cards with someone else and find a new partner.
5. Once everyone has a different card and a new partner, they should repeat the previous steps. Play this as long as time allows.
6. If there is time, have students share some of their favorite "thankful" remarks.

TRANSITION: Say, "I loved hearing about all the things that make you feel thankful! Now, let's read a story about how a whole group of people thanked God."

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Today's story is from the book of Ezra. This Old Testament book was written long after David and Solomon lived, but before Jesus came to earth. Our story starts as the Israelites are laying the foundation for the new Temple of the Lord (place of worship for God). You see, God's people had been taken away from their beautiful country and had lived as captives of their enemy for seventy years. During that time, their holy city, Jerusalem, and the Lord's Temple were destroyed, but today was an exciting day! They had finally been allowed to go home, and they had started rebuilding God's house, the Temple. They were so thankful! Let's listen for the different ways these people thanked God in prayer!" Read Ezra 3:10-13 (ICB).

¹⁰ The builders finished laying the foundation of the Temple of the Lord. Then the priests, dressed in their robes, got trumpets. And the Levites, the sons of Asaph, had cymbals. They all took their places. They praised the Lord just as David king of Israel had said to do. ¹¹ With praise and thanksgiving, they sang to the Lord:

“He is good; his love for Israel continues forever.”

And then all the people shouted loudly, “Praise the Lord! The foundation of his Temple has been laid.” ¹² But many of the older priests, Levites and family leaders cried aloud. They have seen the first Temple. But most of the other people were shouting with joy. The people made so much noise no one could tell the difference between the joyful shouting and the sad crying. ¹³ It could be heard far away.

Say, “What a joyful moment for many of God’s people! As the passage shows, it is good to thank God when we see His good works! We can do that in many ways, just as these Israelites did. They sang and shouted with joy! They were so grateful that their voices could be heard from far away.”

Ask, “*What are some ways the people thanked the Lord?* We offer prayers of thanksgiving when we thank God for what He has done. We read in our story that some people thanked God with their voices and shouted praises to God. Other people played instruments like trumpets and cymbals while others sang to God! But, the best news about prayers of thanksgiving is that **God hears our prayers!**”

JOINING TO JESUS: “*Did you know that Jesus prayed prayers of thanksgiving too? After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He prayed, ‘Father, I thank you that you heard me. I know that you always hear me’ (John 11:41-42). Jesus knew better than anyone else that God hears our prayers and is always listening.*”

TRANSITION: Say, “No matter how we thank God (with our words, songs, or instruments), **God hears our prayers.** In a little while, we will practice praying prayers of thanks to God.”

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s take some time to talk more about our story.”

1. Who hears our prayers?

Response: **God hears our prayers.**

2. How did the Israelites thank God?

Response: They sang, shouted, and played instruments for God.

3. What are prayers of thanksgiving?

Response: When we say prayers of thanksgiving, we tell God how grateful we are for everything He has done for us.

4. Why was everyone joyful in today’s story?

Response: They were joyful because they realized how good God was to bring them back to their country and enable them to rebuild the Temple. The people recognized that God is the one who gives good gifts!

5. How do you think you would have felt if you had been one of the Israelites in today's story?

Response: Answers will vary.

6. How did Jesus model this type of prayer?

Response: Jesus also thanked God for His goodness. For example, when Jesus brought Lazarus back to life, Jesus stopped to thank God, His Father, for hearing His prayer.

7. What does this lesson tell us about God?

Response: **God hears our prayers**, God is always listening to our prayers, God wants us to praise and thank Him, God loves our thanks, God is worthy of being thanked and praised.

TRANSITION: Say, "Nice job answering those questions! Let's do an activity together that reminds us that **God hears our prayers.**"

RESPOND – 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *A to Z Prayers of Thankfulness* (1 per child) | Pencils |

Say, "For today's activity, we're going to get creative with our prayers of thanksgiving! Let's use the alphabet to help us."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child an *A to Z Prayers of Thankfulness* sheet and a pencil.
2. Challenge each child to think of something they are thankful for with each letter of the alphabet.
3. The kids will write down one thing beside each letter on their worksheet.
 - For example, they could write "apples" beside the A and "dad" beside the D.

MODIFICATION: If this activity is too challenging, work on it as a group, and have the kids help you fill in each blank. You can also turn this activity into a game. Give the kids a time limit and have them work alone or in pairs (depending on their age) to see how many of the blanks they can fill in 3 minutes. The child (or team) who fills the most blanks wins!

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job with your *A to Z Prayers of Thankfulness*! Now, we can remember how the Israelites prayed thankful prayers to God as they rebuilt the Temple. **God hears our prayers** of thanksgiving, just like He heard the people in this week's story. This activity reminds us that God has given us many good gifts."

MEMORIZE – 5 MINUTES

Say, "This is the last week to practice our memory verse about *People of Prayer*! Just as a reminder, the verse for this month talks about how **God hears our prayers.**" See if any of the children want to recite the memory verse by themselves.

"Come and pray to me (praying hands), and I will listen (cup hands behind ears) to you." Jeremiah 29:12 (NIV) (hold your hands out like a book)

CHALLENGE: When the parents arrive to pick up their children, have the kids take turns reciting their memory verse for them.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “**God hears our prayers**, and it’s important to incorporate thankfulness into our prayers. It’s easy to forget that without God, we wouldn’t have anything! So, let’s take some time to thank God before we leave.”



ENCOURAGE YOUR CLASS TO TAKE TURNS SAYING HOW GRATEFUL THEY ARE TO GOD FOR SPECIFIC THINGS. DON'T FORCE ANYONE TO PRAY, BUT IT'S GOOD TO VERBALLY AFFIRM THE BRAVERY OF THOSE WHO DO PRAY. YOU NEVER KNOW HOW MUCH COURAGE IT MAY HAVE TAKEN SOMEONE TO PRAY OUT LOUD.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “*God, You are the best Father! You hear us when we call. You listen when we are sad, angry, or joyful. You love hearing our voices. Thank You for being amazing! We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*”

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

If the children have not completed their *A to Z Prayers of Thankfulness*, let them return to that project. They can also share some things they are thankful for with a partner.

THANKFUL CARDS

WHAT PLACE ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT SMELL ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT SONG ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT ANIMAL ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?
WHAT TOY ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT PERSON ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT HOLIDAY ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT SEASON ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?
WHAT BOOK ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT SPORT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT FOOD ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT MOVIE ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?
WHAT FUN FACT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT GAME ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT COLOR ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?	WHAT TALENT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?

A-Z OF THANKFULNESS

Using the letters below as a guide, write different things that you are thankful for on these lines

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



**EZRA:
PRAYER OF
THANKSGIVING**

WEEK 4

**PEOPLE OF
PRAYER**