



WORSHIP

REMEMBER | WONDER | ADORE

FOCUS ON GOD

WOOHOO! WE GET TO WORSHIP TOGETHER AGAIN!

Imaginative Bible Story based on Nehemiah 8

Don't be sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength! Nehemiah 8:10 (ICB)

Imagine! You are a kid in Bible times. You were born in a place that was never really 'home' to you, to your parents, or to your grandparents.

Your grandparents were taken captive to live in this place called Babylon after a battle that took place a long, long time before you were even born! In fact, imagine that your parents were born in captivity in Babylon also, and now your grandparents are getting very old, and finally—after 70 years in captivity—you and all your family and all your friends and their families are finally allowed to return home. Only, when you get home, almost everything in the place has been destroyed.

So you get to work along with everybody else to rebuild 'home'. Your job is to carry bricks to rebuild the wall around your city. Eventually everyone starts rebuilding their homes, their schools, their lives, their places of worship.

Then one day, an important guy named Ezra (there's a whole book named after this man in the Old Testament) called all the people—the women, the men, and also the children—to meet together for a very important festival of celebration. And this man, named Ezra, opened the Scriptures and began to read.

But Ezra didn't just read a little bit . . . the Bible says that he read from daybreak until noon, while all the people stood and listened . . . even the girls and boys like you. But instead of being tired of standing there (yep, the Bible says that all the people stood while the Scripture was being read!), and instead of being bored listening to Ezra read, the Bible says that the people lifted their hands in the air and shouted "Amen! Amen!" Then they all together bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground!

The thing is . . . you don't mind at all! And all the other kids and parents and grandparents and everyone else is just so happy to be back in their home and out of captivity in Babylon. And all that time in captivity, the only way they could worship was in secret and without the Holy Scriptures to read to each other. You and your friends had heard the stories of the time before, and now you are hearing all the stories of what home was like, and you are getting to stand right out in the open and worship God!

Talk about the story together... what do you wonder?

- I wonder what it felt like to be free to worship God! I wonder what it feels like today to be free to worship God with our whole church family? Do you think that we sometimes forget what a privilege that is?
- Can you imagine what it would feel like to be in captivity in a foreign place your whole life? Never free to go home? Never free to worship God?
- Now can you imagine what it would feel like to be with your family and all your friends in a place where you finally have the freedom to worship and listen as God's holy word is read aloud for everyone to hear?
- I wonder if it is a privilege to worship God together? If you heard someone say that it is boring to have to go to worship every week, what would you say to them?