



VOLUME 6 SUGGESTED THEMES

Unit 16: Hope for Captives

How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

Theme Idea: Pit Crew: A pit crew is a dedicated team that works together to help their vehicle stay in the race. Each member of the pit crew has a specific job, just like God had specific plans and protections for His people in exile. Even though they were far from their land, God was still with them. Decorate for this theme using checkered flags, unused oil cans, and pretend tools.

- Session 1: The two members of the pit crew explain that they always have a plan for success for each race. Connect this to Daniel's decision to obey God. Just as a car needs good tires and fuel to keep going, Daniel stayed true to his faith and obeyed God's commands to stay on track, even in exile.
- Session 2: The crew members are testing a fire extinguisher. They discuss how a pit crew has to be ready for anything, including heat from the engine. Like a pit crew ensures the car stays cool in a tough race, God kept the men safe in the fire.
- Session 3: The crew is working on the list of items they'll need for the upcoming race. They talk about how a pit crew must make quick and calm decisions under pressure. Tie this to when Daniel stayed calm and trusted God in the lions' den, knowing God would protect him.
- Session 4: The crew members are looking at a large map of a course and are talking about how they need to have a strategy for the entire race. Even when the race is hard, the team keeps its eyes on the finish line. Just like a pit crew knows the car's route to the finish line, Daniel was given prophecies about the future. Daniel knew God's big plan for His people. Even when things seemed tough in exile, God's plan was moving forward, and His people would return home.



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Unit 17: Hope at Home

How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah.

Theme Idea: Woodworking Shop: Woodworking represents both building and restoration, making it a great theme to help connect kids to the ideas of God building His kingdom and restoring us to Himself. In this unit, we'll see how God's people were like builders working in God's workshop, taking part in a great restoration project. Decorate with tools like toy hammers, saws, and nails. Hang a large, unfinished temple blueprint on the wall, showing the stages of construction. Add construction paper cutouts of walls, windows, and roofs to make it look like a draft of a building project.

- Session 1: The woodworkers are building with blocks. They discuss how all woodworking projects start with a solid foundation. In a similar way, God's people began their return to Judah by laying the foundation for the temple.
- Session 2: The woodworkers are hammering nails to connect boards together. Just as a carpenter works to assemble all the pieces of a structure, God's people had to follow His instructions and keep building even when it was hard.
- Session 3: The woodworkers draw up blueprints for something they want to build. They explain that a blueprint is essential to guide them on any building project. Just as a carpenter uses blueprints to ensure a building is constructed properly, Zechariah's message gave God's people a blueprint for their future.
- Session 4: The woodworkers have a nearly finished project, but it still needs to be painted. They explain that just as every woodworking project needs to be finished, God used Esther to complete the work of saving the Jews in Persia. It takes courage to do what God calls us to do, but He equips us to finish strong.



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Unit 18: Hope to Come

What is the Bible about? The Bible is the story of God's plan to save people through Jesus.

Theme Idea: Research Lab: In this unit, we'll explore God's great plan for His people after the exile. We will use the theme of a science research lab to connect the idea of making discoveries to how God's people were learning and uncovering more about His promises. Decorate using lab coats and glasses, tools such as beakers, test tubes, and magnifying glasses.

- Session 1: Two scientists are working in their lab. They discuss how they carefully gather evidence and analyze it to solve the problem. Connect this to the lesson in which Nehemiah had to gather evidence about the state of Jerusalem's walls before he could lead the people to rebuild.
- Session 2: The scientists take turns peering into a microscope. The talk about how scientists uncover truths by investigating carefully. Tie this to how Ezra researched and taught God's Word to the people. Just like scientists carefully research to find truth, Ezra and the people carefully studied God's Word to understand how to live.
- Session 3: The scientists pour different liquids into test tubes and compare them. Like scientists test theories in a lab, the people of Israel tested their commitment to God by worshiping Him and following His commands.
- Session 4: The two scientists are reading and comparing information on graphs and charts. They discuss how, after conducting experiments, scientists analyze their findings. Malachi's message analyzed the people's behavior and pointed them toward the coming Messiah.
- Session 5: The scientists have made a big discovery! Tie this to how the Old Testament pointed to Jesus, the ultimate discovery and fulfillment of God's plan. The research is complete, and Jesus is the answer.