

## Rebuilding the Temple

Ezra 4-6; Haggai 1-2

## How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah.

In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

Isaiah 25:9

### Story Point:

God's people rebuilt the temple to worship Him.



### PREPARE HEARTS

- Starter Activity and Question of the Day
- 11:00 - Kids Worship



### ACTIVATE HEARTS

- Lesson Review - Rebuilding the Temple
- Discussion Questions
- Group Demonstration: Special Purposes



### ENGAGE HEARTS

- Group Game: Stay Focused and Keep Going
- Share and Care Prayer Time
- Group Activity: God Gives Us Strength

## SHEPHERD GUIDE

Continuing through the book of Ezra, we find that the Jews faced off with enemies who tried to hinder the building of God's temple. Though temporarily paused, God commanded His people to continue the work. They resolved to obey the Lord rather than human rulers, and He protected His people. This story gives us a deeper appreciation for God's plans as He calls us to obedience in the face of opposition, or even persecution. We are to fear the Lord, not man, and find the strength we need in His presence and provision. Consider the following key points as you meditate on this story.

**God's plans cannot be stopped.** God's will is sovereign and cannot be thwarted by any circumstance or person. His divine purpose will always come to fruition, no matter the challenges or opposition. Even when things seem uncertain, we can trust that God's plan is unshakable and will unfold according to His perfect timing.

**We can celebrate God's protection and provision.** God is our constant protector and provider, offering His care and blessings in ways that we may not always see. We can rejoice in the many ways He shields us from harm and provides for our needs, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual. His faithfulness in providing is a reason to give thanks and find peace in His constant presence.

God strengthens us when we face opposition. When we encounter difficulties or face opposition, God offers us His strength. He does not leave us to struggle alone but empowers us to persevere through His grace. In times of trial, He builds our character, fortifies our faith, and equips us to stand strong against the forces that seek to bring us down.

As you prepare to teach kids this week, consider this: What are some areas of your life where you've felt uncertain or frustrated by your circumstances? How can you trust God's greater plan in those moments?

REMINDER: Our VIP meeting is from 10:20 - 10:30 in C1. Your supply bin will be in your classroom.

## MAIN TAKEAWAYS: We want our kids to:



*As you arrive and children come and go - Welcome them by name and invite them to play with you and the others. Use this time to get to know your kids - ask them about their week, about their likes and dislikes and about their school, family and friends.*

*Ways to connect - Play a game from the closet, color or draw together, build with legos/blocks, etc.*

*When most kids have arrived for 2nd service (by 10:50ish), ask them to clean up the toys and find a seat at one of the tables to begin the class.*

*\*Option - Pen Pal Kit!!*



## PREPARE HEARTS

### Starter Activity

Welcome and  
Question of the  
Day

#### Question of the Day:

***Have you ever been working on a project or game and you kept getting distracted? Or maybe someone was purposely trying to get you to stop what you were doing? How did that make you feel?***

Last week, we heard how the exile was over, and God brought His people back to Jerusalem. **What did they start to rebuild?** [Allow responses.]

That's right, the temple of God! They laid the foundation and rebuilt the altar. The work was long and difficult and frustrating because there were lots of people trying to stop them. but today we'll hear that God's people rebuilt the temple to worship Him. The temple was a special place where the people could worship the Lord and offer animal sacrifices to pay for their sin.

What is sin? Sin is when we do, say, or think something that goes against what God has said is right. We are all sinful, no matter how good we try to be. The Bible tells us that the payment for sin is death. Sin disconnects us from God and breaks our relationship with Him. How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah. Who is the Messiah? Jesus! Jesus paid the price for our sin when He died on the cross. But because Jesus is sinless and did not deserve to die, He rose from the grave. Jesus is alive and rules over His people.

Our story today is from the Old Testament books Ezra and Haggai. Ezra tells the story of God's people returning to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. Haggai was a prophet and leader who encouraged the people to keep trusting God.



KIDS  
WORSHIP

11:00

Kids Worship for Pre-K - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade in LG2.



## ACTIVE MINDS

You can use the REVIEW VIDEO on your TV and / or use this lesson as a review of what was taught 1st service.

### Rebuilding the Temple

Bibles,  
Review Video –  
Bible story on TV

Open your Bible to Ezra 4-6 and Haggai 1-2. You can use the Kids Sermon Outline as you go through the story.

KIDS SERMON OUTLINE:

**God's plans cannot be stopped (Ezra 4):** God's enemies tried to stop the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord.

**We can celebrate God's protection and provision (Ezra 6:16-22):** The people finished the temple and had a great celebration. They worshiped God and celebrated Passover.

**God strengthens us when we face opposition (Haggai 1-2):** God spoke through the prophet Haggai to encourage the Israelites to continue building the temple.

When God's enemies who lived in Judah heard that the people of God had returned and were rebuilding the temple of the Lord, they decided to stop them.

They wrote a letter to Artaxerxes (ahr tuh ZUHRK seez), king of Persia. The letter said, "Let it be known to the king that the Jews who traveled from your nation have returned to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding the city, finishing its walls, and repairing its foundations. We are loyal to the king, and believe that once the city is finished, the people will not pay taxes to you anymore. Search your record books, and you will discover that the city is rebellious and harmful to you."

The king replied, "I searched our records and discovered that this city has rebelled against kings in the past. Therefore, I order the people to stop building the city until another decree from me." The people stopped rebuilding the temple until King Darius became king of Persia.

God sent the prophet Haggai to speak His words to the people. The Lord said through Haggai, "Is it time for you to live in a nice house, while the house of God lies in ruins? Think carefully of your ways. Rebuild my house, and then I will send rain for the crops and help you prosper. Work, for I am with you! I promise that this temple will one day have more glory than the one that came before!"

The people obeyed and started to build again. Then Tattenai, the governor of the region, said, "Who gave you the order to rebuild this temple?" Tattenai sent a letter to King Darius that said, "Let it be known to the king that the people of God are once again rebuilding the temple. When I asked them why they were rebuilding, they told me that many years ago, King Cyrus issued an order to rebuild the temple of God. He also gave us the gold and silver that had been taken from the first temple. We have been rebuilding the temple from that time until now."

King Darius searched his royal records and found the order from King Cyrus. He knew the people were telling the truth. He issued a new law: "Leave the people of God alone, and let them rebuild the temple. In addition, you are to use all the tax money from that region to pay for everything that is needed to rebuild the temple. If anyone interferes with this order, they will be punished."

The people finished the temple and had a great celebration. They resumed the worship of God at the temple and celebrated the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The people were glad and rejoiced in God.

## CHRIST CONNECTION

God's people rebuilt the temple so they would have a place to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people. Jesus provides something better than the temple; He gives us Himself.

**What did you hear in the story? [Allow responses.]** God's people rebuilt the temple so they would have a place to worship God. **What problem did the Jews face along the way?** [Allow responses. Read Ezra 4:4-5.] The Jews had enemies in nearby nations who wanted to discourage them from rebuilding the temple. They wrote letters to the king of Persia trying to get them in trouble. But their plans failed, and the temple was built. God had given His people strength to continue even when they felt threatened. The people had a place to worship God again and were so thankful!

Even though this story comes from the Old Testament, it points us to the coming Savior. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people. Jesus provides something better than the temple; He gives us Himself. Jesus is fully God and fully man, and He offered Himself to us as the perfect sacrifice for our sin. When we trust in Jesus, we do not have to offer animal sacrifices as the priests in the temple. Jesus is the fulfillment of the sacrifice! Just as the Spirit of God dwelt in the temple, now followers of Jesus have the Holy Spirit within them. When we are joined to Jesus we become like mini temples of God!



### Discussion

Discussion questions listed here

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**Why should we obey God even when others might challenge our obedience?** Discuss how God deserves our obedience because He is greater than anyone or anything. Even when others might encourage us to disobey, we can remember that God loves us and always wants what is best for us. Loving and obeying God will bring us the most joy. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 5:29.)

**The prophet Haggai reminded the people to put God first. How can we show God is most important?** Answers will vary. Share that God is worthy of being as the most important person in our lives. Encourage kids to think about how they can seek God through prayer, the choices they make, reading His Word, etc. Tell kids that those who trust in Jesus desire to seek Him above everything else. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:31-33.)

**What are some ways you can celebrate and worship God for how He has worked in your life?** Answers will vary. Remind kids that God was working in His people's lives and providing the way for them to continue rebuilding the temple. Tell kids that God is working in our lives in more ways than we can recognize. Discuss how no matter what we are facing or what will come, God is worthy of our worship. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 95:1-3.)



## Special Purposes

- “Rebuilding the Temple” printables
- Bible

Pull out the “Rebuilding the Temple” printables. Show pictures of different rooms, buildings, or areas. **Ask kids to tell you the purpose of those spaces.**

**SAY:** There are many places that have special purposes. You may have a fun treehouse where you hang out with friends. A kitchen is for preparing yummy meals. Your bedroom is where you get a good night’s rest. You go to the library to find delightful books. The soccer field is where you’d go with your team to play a game. These spots are used for special purposes.

**The Jews rebuilt the temple for God. What was the temple used for?** [Allow responses.] The temple was a special place where people could worship God. It wasn’t the only place where worship happened, but it was the spot where the priests offered the sacrifices on the altar for the sins of the people. [Read Haggai 1:7-8.]

**Why did God want the people to rebuild the temple?** [Allow responses.] The temple was a place where God was honored. God loves His people and wants the best for them. God knows that the very best thing people can do is worship Him. For the Jews, the temple was where they went to meet with God.

**We don’t have a temple today, so how do we meet with God?** [Read 1 Corinthians 3:16.] When someone turns to Jesus, they are given the Holy Spirit. This means God lives within all believers. We do not need to go to a special place to worship God, because God is always with us. We are like mini temples and can worship and honor God wherever we are and in whatever we are doing.



## Stay Focused and Keep Going!

- None

We’ve learned so much today from our Bible story! Let’s play a game to help us remember an important truth from God’s Word.

Have the children stand up and take a step back from their table/chair.

- Choose a category (example: fruit).
- Have each child silently chooses one item in that category. (apple, banana, etc.)
- Explain motions ahead of time:
  - Quiet tiptoe in place = “keep going”
  - Freeze like a statue = “stopped”
- Choose one kid to be the caller. They will stand in the front of the class with their back to the rest of the kids. The caller will announce different items within the category.
- If the Caller says your item, you:
  - Slowly tiptoe in place without making noise.
- The Caller listens carefully.
  - If they hear noise, they say “Freeze!”
  - Everyone freezes immediately
  - If they don’t, they can call out another item from the category
- The Caller says “Freeze” they turn around and point to anyone still moving.
  - Those kids sit down
- Continue playing until a few kids are left standing.
- One of the remaining kids becomes the next Caller.



## Continued...

In the game, you had to be careful to move quietly and swiftly to avoid getting stopped. The Israelites faced lots of forces that tried to stop them: opposition from their enemies and moments of discouragement. But God had given the people instructions. [Read Haggai 1:7-8.] Despite the threats and taunts of their enemies, God gave His people the strength to keep working toward their goal. Just like you had to stay focused to be quiet and not get caught, we need to keep trusting God to help us through tough times. Even when life feels like everyone is out to get us, we can rely on God's power to help us keep going.

In an even greater way, when we trust in Jesus, we must focus on Him as we walk through life. We will face hard things whether it's a difficult relationship, losing someone we love, moving away from family and friends, or being sick. Are any of these things bigger or stronger than God? Absolutely not! God gives us what we need when we need it to go through hard situations with faith. Christians know that this life is not all there is. Jesus will return one day and make all things new. Our bodies will be restored, and we will live in a world that is free of sin, sickness, death, and pain. This is the hope we have as we go through hard times now. God will redeem everything that sin has broken in the world.



## Share and Care Prayer

Spend some time as a class sharing about:

- Our Global Partner Family of the Month (**The Geesey Family**)
- Ask for specific prayer requests that any of the kids have to share about something going on in their own lives.

Have the class sit in a circle as you share and care for one another's needs. Ask for and share requests with one another. Review and follow up with any prayer requests from the chain made the week before. Use the Global Partner of the Month spotlight sheet (In the Pen Pal Kit) to talk about prayer requests from the Geesey Family.



## God Gives Us Strength

- Scenario Cards

Divide the class into six groups. Give each group a scenario card. Instruct them to read their card and discuss how they would respond to their situation.

Once you give them a few minutes to discuss, have them come back together as a class and share their scenarios and ideas with the whole group.

**SAY:** Great job, everyone! These are all situations you may face at some point, and there are plenty of other examples of things in life that feel difficult. In the story, the Jews had enemies that wanted to keep them from building the temple. In our lives, we'll know people who disagree with us about trusting in Jesus. They may call us names or try to convince us that the Bible isn't true. God gives us strength in those times to rely on Him for wisdom to know and believe what is true, even when people around us try to get us to believe lies.

You are sitting at lunch with your friends. One friend starts saying mean things about another classmate, and your other friends join in.

You are in your room playing with a new toy you got for your birthday. Your sibling comes in your room without knocking and starts demanding you give them the toy.

You're running through the house and knock over a special picture frame. Your parents hear and come in. They ask you what happened.

You and your friends are together studying for a test. Everyone would much rather play a video game even though the test is tomorrow, and you really need to focus.

You're at a friend's house. Their parents and your parents have told you both that you are not allowed to watch videos online. But their parents aren't in the room, so your friend gets out their tablet and starts watching videos.

Your mom has told you not to eat candy since it will spoil your appetite for dinner. But she is outside doing yardwork, and you have access to the sweets in the kitchen.