



UNIT 17 | SESSION 3 | JANUARY 18-19, 2020

## 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson

# The Temple Was Rebuilt

**Bible Passage:** Ezra 4-6; Haggai

**Story Point:** God's people rebuilt the temple to glorify God.

**Key Passage:** "I know the plans I have for you"- this is the Lord's declaration- "Plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope" Jeremiah 29:11.

**Christ Connection:** Jesus provided something better than the temple; He gives us Himself.

**Big Picture Question:** How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

**KID CONNECT:  
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:  
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:  
20 MINUTES**

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

At last! God's people returned to Jerusalem, the home of their ancestors. God had given them another opportunity to live as His special people. They got to work right away, completing the foundation of the Lord's temple.

Many of God's people had been born in Babylon, but they had likely heard the stories of their parents and grandparents, stories of a life in the land God had given them. They probably heard of their families' mistakes-ignoring God, worshiping idols, and mistreating the poor. But the Lord had been gracious! He kept His promise to bring His people back to Judah.

Life in Judah wasn't exactly what they had imagined. It was difficult. Their national wealth was gone. The work of rebuilding the temple and the city of Jerusalem was hard. The land was desolate, and crops failed. Their neighbors opposed their efforts. (See Ezra 4:6,11-16.)

God's people were disappointed and discouraged. Rather than fight their enemies, God's people gave up. The temple of the Lord sat unfinished for 16 years. The people made excuses. "Maybe it's

not time to rebuild the temple,” they reasoned. If that was what God wanted, wouldn’t He make it easier for them? (See Hag. 1:2.) God’s people moved on to building their own homes.

The prophet Haggai stepped onto the scene and rebuked the people for their misplaced priorities. (Hag. 1:4) He brought words from the Lord, commanding them to finish the work they started. God promised to fill the temple with His glory and comforted His weary people with this promise: “I will provide peace in this place” (Hag. 2:7,9).

God promised to be with His people and bless them—and not only them, but the whole world through them, keeping the promise He made to Abraham long ago. (See Gen. 12:3.) Through God’s servant, Zerubbabel, God would send His Son, Jesus—the greater Servant who is God with us.

## KID CONNECT

### WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

Play intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them what is the farthest they have traveled from home. Where did they go? What was it like being so far away?

SAY • Traveling the world can be a lot of fun. It’s a great way to learn about the world God created and experience the cultures of different people, all of whom are loved by God. But it can also be great to come back home after being away. That was especially true for the Jews, who had been forced to live away from their homes for 70 years.

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

## LARGE GROUP GAME

(SFX: GAME INTRO MUSIC, SFX: LEGO MUSIC)

### TILTED TOWERS

(Table, Legos of many different sizes, 2 Lego Plates/Boards)



SAY • It's game time again! I need 2 volunteers - 1 boy and 1 girl. This game is called Tilted Towers. And no, it's not about Fortnite. It's about Legos!

What you have to do for this game is build the tallest tower! There's only one rule-each piece that you add must be larger (by counting the studs) than the one you last added. So if I start with this small one with only 2 studs then I could add this one with 4 on top and so on. What you should end up with is a very weird looking upside down tilted tower. Whoever builds the tallest tilted tower after 2 minutes is the winner! Got it? Let's go!

## WORSHIP

(VIDEO: LET IT BE KNOWN, VIDEO: O TASTE AND SEE)

SAY • Let's worship God!

## INTRODUCE THE SESSION

(CG: THEME BACKGROUND)

(No Supplies Needed)

### Leader enters

SAY • Man, am I glad to see you kids! My trip home today was awful! For starters, my first flight was super delayed. Mechanical issues or something. I thought we'd never take off. That flight was so bumpy, I thought my eyeballs were going to jiggle right out of my head. When we landed, I was glad to be back on solid ground. Then I had a long layover in a strange city, and my next flight was overbooked, so I didn't even have a seat on the plane! I was just about ready to give up and sleep in the airport but I wanted to get home, so I kept asking until they found another available flight. Now here I am: tired and hungry, but home at last!

You know, my crazy traveling day reminds me of another Bible story. It's a story about how God's people rebuilt the temple. It was a difficult process, and they had so many enemies trying to stop them that they almost gave up, but God encouraged them to keep going.

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Do you remember our big picture question? *How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.* Because Jesus is God the Son, His words, thoughts, and actions were perfectly in line with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus provided a perfect example of what God is like, because Jesus is God. Every prophecy in the Old Testament will come true through Jesus. Many of them already have!

## GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • Last week we learned that God kept His promise to bring His people home. The Jews had been in exile for 70 years, and finally it was time for them to return and rebuild the temple where they had once offered sacrifices to God. I can't wait to find out what happens next.

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: THE TEMPLE WAS REBUILT, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)  
(Bible)

Show the Bible story video "The Temple Was Rebuilt."

SAY • The Jews had a lot of enemies who didn't want them to rebuild the temple. These enemies were afraid the Jews would become too strong and rebel against the king of Persia. So the governor wrote letters to King Darius to warn him about what the Jews were doing. It may seem as though the king and the governors had all the power to stop God's people, but let's not forget who was really in charge here—God! God is the One who brought the Jews back to the land He had given them. God was the One directing their steps. God's people rebuilt the temple to glorify God and give thanks to Him for the way He had provided for them.

Rebuilding wasn't always easy. In fact, the Jews faced so much opposition that they even gave up for a while! Sixteen years went by when they did no work on the temple at all. Thankfully, God sent the prophet Haggai at just the right time.

Haggai shared the word of the Lord with the people. He encouraged them by reminding them that God was with them and that God would be glorified through their hard work. The people were once again ready to pick up their work.

Have you ever felt like giving up because something was just too hard? Sometimes we all need a little encouragement. We can be comforted with the truth that even when things are difficult, God is still with us.

## CHRIST CONNECTION

### (CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

SAY • God sent the prophet Haggai to encourage the people to keep building. That reminds me of our big picture question. *How is Jesus the perfect Prophet?* Does anyone remember the answer? That's right! *Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.*

God's people rebuilt the temple so they would have a place to offer sacrifices to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people. Now God dwells not in the temple, but directly with His people. Jesus provided something better than the temple; He gives us Himself. When we trust in Jesus for salvation, He sends the Holy Spirit to live in us. He encourages us and helps us love and obey God.

## KEY PASSAGE

### (CG: KEY PASSAGE)

#### (Bible)

Show the key passage slide. Open Bible and lead the kids to read together Jeremiah 29:11.

SAY • Do you think it would have been encouraging for God's people to remember the truth of this verse? God had a plan for them, plans for hope and a future. He knew the trials they would face in rebuilding the temple. God didn't promise to make the process easy for them, but He did promise to be with them along the way. A similar promise is true for us today. God has given us hope and a future through Jesus' perfect obedience, sacrificial death, and miraculous resurrection. Because of our Savior we have hope for eternity with God!

## PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

## SMALL GROUP

**Bible Passage:** Ezra 4-6; Haggai

**Story Point:** God's people rebuilt the temple to glorify God.

**Key Passage:** "I know the plans I have for you"- this is the Lord's declaration- "Plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope" Jeremiah 29:11.

**Christ Connection:** Jesus provided something better than the temple; He gives us Himself.

**Big Picture Question:** How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

### KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

(1 key passage poster per group, 1 ball of yarn per group)

Display the key passage poster and lead the kids to read Jeremiah 29:11 aloud. Instruct the kids to stand in a circle. Give one kid a ball of yarn. Explain that she will say the first word of the key passage then toss the ball of yarn to another person in the circle while still holding the end of the yarn. The second kid will say the second word before tossing the yarn ball to someone else while holding a bit of the yarn. Continue this way until the whole verse has been said. Then challenge the kids to untangle themselves!

SAY • Great job, everyone! Let's keep working on our key passage for one more week. Next time we'll all try to say it for memory!

### THEN AND NOW

(1 "Temple Then/Temple Now" printable per kid, 1 pen per kid, 1 Bible story picture per group)

Show the Bible story picture and encourage kids to refer to the picture to draw the temple on the left side of the page. Then instruct kids to draw a self-portrait on the right side of the page.

SAY • Your pictures represent the temple then and now. God's people rebuilt the temple to glorify God. The temple gave them a place to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people. Now God dwells not in the temple, but directly with His people. Jesus provided something better than the temple; He gives us Himself.

Let's say our big picture question and answer together: *How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.*

### DISCUSSION

(Bibles)

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Haggai 1. Explain that the prophet Haggai recorded four messages to the Jewish people. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Haggai 1:1-2.

**SAY** • God used the prophet Haggai to deliver His message to rebuild the temple. This was an important message for God’s people, and Haggai was faithful to deliver the message that would result in God’s glory.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

How did rebuilding the temple bring glory to God? *Help kids conclude that God’s people were determined to rebuild the temple so they could worship God. Seeing the temple rebuilt showed God’s faithfulness. Hundreds of years later, God would send Jesus to dwell among His people so they would no longer need the temple.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 1:14.)

The Bible tells us that we are God’s temple. How should that change the way we treat one another or see ourselves? *Emphasize to kids that if we are in Christ, our bodies are the temple to the Holy Spirit. We should honor our bodies and treat others with respect.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Cor. 6:19-20.)

Why is God the best foundation for our lives? *Invite kids to discuss how we can often be tempted to build our foundation on other things (relationships, popularity, etc.), but Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is the only firm foundation. All other ground is sinking sand.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Cor. 3:11.)

## REFLECTION AND PRAYER

**(Journal Page - 1 per kid, pencils)**

Ask the kids the following questions:

What does this story teach me about God?

What does this story teach me about myself?

Who can I tell about this story?

Make time for prayer requests and pray for your group. If time allows, have kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY: I’M BUILDING A CHURCH

**(no supplies needed)**

Invite the children to sit down in a circle. Begin by saying, “I’m building a church today, and I need a \_\_\_\_\_.” Fill in the blank with a type of tool that you would use along with a hand motion that describes that tool. Encourage the next child to say, “I’m building a church today, and I need a \_\_\_\_\_.” Say your original statement again. Continue around the circle until every child has had the opportunity to add a tool and a hand motion. Be prepared to offer suggestions of tools and to help preschoolers remember their friends’ tools. Tool ideas include a hammer, saw, screwdriver, wrench, brick, bulldozer, wheelbarrow, sledgehammer, and paintbrush.

**SAY** • Today, we gather as a church to worship God in different buildings like church buildings, schools, and homes. In today’s Bible story, God’s people rebuilt the temple so they would have a special place to worship God.

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Older Kids Activity Page, 1 per kid)

Hand each 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade kid an Older Kids Activity Page and encourage them to do it at home with their family this week.

