



UNIT 17 | SESSION 2 | JANUARY 11-12, 2020

4s-5s Lesson

The Captives Came Home

Bible Passage: Ezra 1-3

Story Point: God kept His promise to bring His people home.

Key Passage: “I know the plans I have for you ... plans ... to give you a future and a hope”
Jeremiah 29:11.

Christ Connection: One day Jesus will come back. He will fix up a greater home for all God’s people.

Big Picture Question: How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? God speaks to us through Jesus.

**KID CONNECT:
30 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah. These are the words of the Lord: “These nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years” (Jer. 25:11). Then the Lord said, “When seventy years for Babylon are complete, I will attend to you and will confirm my promise concerning you to restore you to this place” (Jer. 29:10). The time had come for God’s people to go back home.

Cyrus, the king of the Persian empire, had overthrown Babylon. Cyrus took over the kingdom, including the lands of Israel and Judah. In the following year, the Lord did something miraculous in Cyrus’s heart. He prompted Cyrus to issue a decree: All the Jewish exiles are free to return to their ancestral homes.

The exile was over! God’s people were free to return to their own land. They were free to live as God’s special people. The first group of Judean exiles returned home under the leadership of Zerubbabel (zuh RUHB uh buhl). Zerubbabel was the grandson of King Jehoiachin, who had been taken to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. (See 2 Kings 24:8-13.)

Ezra 2:64-65 says nearly 50,000 people traveled back to Judah. When they got to Jerusalem, they

began working to rebuild the temple that the Chaldeans had destroyed. (See 2 Chron. 36:19.)

Explain to preschoolers that the temple was the place where God met with His people. Jesus came to earth to rescue God's people from sin. When Jesus returns, He will restore the earth and will dwell with His people forever.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: ARRIVAL MUSIC)

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

FOLLOW THE ROAD HOME

(1 roll of masking or painters' tape - per class)

Guide children to follow the path of tape on the floor, making sure they end where they begin. Encourage children to walk the path without falling off. Suggest they walk forward, heel to toe, backward, hoping on one foot, in pairs, or holding a toy. Repeat the activity as time allows.

SAY • Walking around the room did not take us very long, but some of it, like walking backward, was hard to do. In today's Bible story, God brought His people home. They had to walk for a long time, and they had to carry all that they owned. It was not an easy trip, but they were happy to be home. Listen to the Bible story to hear what they did when they got home.

SEE 70

(1 large sheet of paper - per class, 70 colored dot stickers per class)

Display a large sheet of paper with 70 written in the center. Divide 70 stickers between the preschoolers. Invite them to decorate the paper with the stickers.

SAY • God's people were away from their homes and land for 70 years. God kept His promise to bring His people home. Jesus is fixing up a greater home for all of God's people where we will live with Him forever and never be sent away.

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: JESUS LOVES ME, VIDEO: JEREMIAH 29:11)

Sing “Jesus Loves Me” and “Jeremiah 29:11.”

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

(Bible, Bookmark)

Place a bookmark at Ezra 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Display the open Bible.

SAY • Our Bible story comes from the Book of Ezra. Like all the stories in the Bible, this story is true. After being gone for many, many years, God brought His people home just like He promised to do.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues people through His Son, Jesus.

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: THE CAPTIVES CAME HOME, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)

(1 empty doll house per class - optional)

Open an empty dollhouse. Ask preschoolers to help you come up with a list of what is missing in the house.

SAY • God’s people lived far away from their homes for 70 years. 70 years is a very long time! When they arrived back in their homeland of Judah, each family set up its house. They were happy to be home and thanked God. Let’s watch our Bible story to see what happened.

Show the Bible story video.

SAY • God kept His promise to bring His people home. God brought His people back home after 70 years of being away. Zerubbabel (zuh RUHB uh buhl) led God’s people to begin fixing the temple when they got back to their land in Jerusalem. The temple was a special place where God’s people gave Him praise. Some people were so happy to be home that they sang praises to God! Other people were sad because they remembered what the old temple looked like and felt sorry for disobeying God.

CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY • One day Jesus will come back to earth and make everything right. He will fix up an even greater home for all of God’s people, and we will live with Him forever.

PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible, Key Passage Marker)

Place the key passage marker at Jeremiah 29:11. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Watch the key passage song for an example.

SAY • “I know the plans I have for you (*point to temples*) ... plans (*display arms in front*) to give you a future and a hope (*rainbow arms from left to right*)” Jeremiah 29:11. Our key passage reminds us that God has a plan for His people. God planned all along to bring His people home. We can have hope knowing that God has a good plan for us too!

LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Our big picture question asks, *How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? God speaks to us through Jesus.* A prophet is someone who tells people God’s message. Jesus told people God’s messages. One day Jesus will come back. He will fix up a greater home for all of God’s people, and we will live with Him forever.

PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Ezra 1-3

Story Point: God kept His promise to bring His people home.

Key Passage: “I know the plans I have for you ... plans ... to give you a future and a hope” Jeremiah 29:11.

Christ Connection: One day Jesus will come back. He will fix up a greater home for all God’s people.

Big Picture Question: How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? God speaks to us through Jesus.

BUILD A FOUNDATION

(1 set of blocks per group, 1 roll of masking tape per group)

Tape a small square on the floor for every group of preschoolers. Encourage preschoolers to work together to fill the square with blocks. Add some blocks on top and make sure the base holds the blocks you add. Try other items in the room to put on top of the foundation to make sure it is strong.

SAY • God kept His promise to bring His people home. When God’s people returned to home, they started rebuilding the temple. They built a base or foundation for the temple. A foundation

supports a building from underneath. The temple was the place where God met with His people.

MAKE PLAY DOUGH EXPRESSION

(1 paper plate with a happy face per group, 1 paper plate with a sad face per group, 1 container of play dough per group)

Display the happy face paper plate and give each child a small ball of play dough. Demonstrate how to roll it into a log shape and use it to make a happy mouth. Guide preschoolers to make a happy face on a paper plate by forming eyes, a mouth, a nose, and hair. Talk about how the people were so happy that God brought them home. Then, display the sad paper plate and have children form the sad features on the sad plate. Talk about how the older people were sad because they remembered what the temple looked like before and they felt sorry for disobeying God.

SAY • God kept His promise to bring His people home. The people set up their houses and started rebuilding the temple. Some of the people were happy. They sang songs of praise to God. Other people were sad because they remembered what the old temple looked like and they felt sorry for disobeying God.

KEY PASSAGE WITH MOTIONS

Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying. "I know the plans I have for you (*point to temples*) ... plans (*display arms in front*) to give you a future and a hope (*rainbow arms from left to right*)" Jeremiah 29:11.

REVIEW AND PRAYER

(1 Bible story picture poster per group)

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

How many years did God's people live far away from their home? (*70 years*)

What gifts did the people of Judah receive before leaving Babylon? (*gold, silver, and animals*)

Why were some people sad and crying when the temple's foundation was done? (*They remembered what the first temple looked like and felt sorry for disobeying God.*)

Did God keep His promise to bring His people home? (*Yes, God kept His promised to bring His people home.*)

What did God's people rebuild after returning home? (*the temple*)

How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? God speaks to us through Jesus.

SAY • God's people lived in Babylon, far away from their homeland. God promised to bring the people back home to Judah. God kept His promise. After 70 years, the people went back home to Judah, set up their houses, and started rebuilding the temple.

Ask your group for prayer requests and pray together. If you can, pray for your preschoolers by name. Encourage them to talk to God in prayer throughout the week.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Preschool Activity Page, 1 per child and crayons)

Preschoolers may color the Story Point coloring page as parents arrive. Encourage them to do the activity page at home with their family this week.

