

## Journey to Jerusalem

**WORSHIP** We thank God for His love.

### Power Text

“With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord: ‘He is good; his love to Israel endures forever.’ And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid” (Ezra 3:11, NIV).

### Key Texts and References

Ezra 1-3; Nehemiah 8:14-18; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 557-566; student story on page 50 of this guide.

### Objectives

#### The students will:

**Know** that they worship God by helping “build up” their church.

**Feel** a desire to thank God for His plan for His church.

**Respond** by doing their best to build up the church.

### Power Point



**One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.**

## Getting Ready to Teach

### The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Cyrus becomes conscious of the fact that God has chosen him to build the Temple in Jerusalem. God lets Isaiah know that He has a special plan for Cyrus’s life a hundred years before Cyrus is born (Isaiah 45:1, 13). Cyrus gives the command to the Jews that they should go back to Jerusalem, and he commanded his people to assist with the material needed. They all

shout with praise to God when the foundation to the Temple is laid.

#### **This is a lesson about worship.**

We worship God today by all the ways we “build up” or support our church. We worship God when we work together to take care of the church building and the people who attend the church.

# FIVE

<b>Program Notes</b>			
<b>Lesson Section</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Materials Needed</b>
<b>Welcome</b>	Ongoing	Greet students at door Hear pleased/troubled	
<b>1</b> <b>Readiness</b>	10-15	A. <i>Your Turn</i> B. <i>Group Gathering</i>	Beanbag or paper wad Colored stickers, cards, or tags; pins or tape to attach them
<b>*</b> <b>Prayer and Praise*</b>	15-20	See page 45. <b>*Prayer and Praise</b> may be used at any time during the program.	Assortment of tools
<b>2</b> <b>Bible Lesson</b>	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Three copies of <i>Net Kids</i> script
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles; (optional: art/building supplies)
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
<b>3</b> <b>Applying the Lesson</b>	10-15	<i>Build It Up</i>	Children's plastic or wooden building blocks, permanent markers
<b>4</b> <b>Sharing the Lesson</b>	10-15	<i>Let's Make a Plan</i>	Chalkboard or whiteboard

## Teacher Enrichment

"The deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions had been used of God to create a favorable impression upon the mind of Cyrus the Great. The sterling qualities of the man of God as a statesman of farseeing ability led the Persian ruler to show him marked respect and to honor his judgment. And now, just at the time God had said He would cause His temple at Jerusalem to be rebuilt, He moved upon Cyrus as His agent to discern the prophecies concerning himself, with which Daniel was so familiar, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty.

"As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; as he read the message addressed to him by the Ruler of the universe, . . . his heart was profoundly moved, and he determined to fulfill his divinely appointed mission. He would let the Judean captives go free; he would help them restore the temple of Jehovah" (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 557, 558).

*How has God called me to build and support His church? How well am I answering this call? What difference am I making?*

## Teaching the Lesson

### Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their table/small group leader. Have leader ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Then debrief student(s) on their Bible study activities last week. Say: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** (The leader should know what the students' activities were for the past week so he/she can direct discussion.)

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



### Readiness Activities

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

#### A. Your Turn

##### You Need:

- beanbag or paper wad

Seat or stand the students in a circle and have a beanbag, wad of paper, or something that can be tossed from student to student without harm. Explain that they will toss the object to another person. The person who catches the object is to call out the name of an item or tool used in building or carpentry. Start slowly and then go faster and faster until students run out of ideas.

##### Debriefing

Ask: **How easy would it be to try to build something if we had all the tools we needed? What if we had no tools at all?**

**Today we are learning that:**



One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.

#### B. Group Gathering

##### You Need:

- colored stickers, cards, or tags
- pins or tape to attach them

Use four to six different colored stickers, note cards, or tags. Without letting students see, attach one of the colored stickers or paper to each student's back so that others can see it. When all have a colored tag attached, tell the students to get together in a group with others having the same color. They are to do this with no talking or writing.

##### Debriefing

Ask: **What was the hardest part about this activity?** (Not telling, not knowing, nothing.) **What was the easiest?** (Answers will vary.) **What would have made it easier? Why? How was this activity like building up God's church?** (We all have to work together to accomplish something.)

Sometimes we have to help other people understand where they fit. Sometimes we don't communicate very well and it is harder to get things done.)

Say:



**One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.**

## Prayer and Praise



### Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they give you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week.

Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

### Suggested Songs

"The Lord Is Building Jerusalem" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 117)

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (*The SDA Hymnal*, No. 350)

### Mission

Use *Teen Mission* or another mission report available to you.

### Offering

Say: **Our church isn't just here in \_\_\_\_\_ (name town). It's here, and in all the congregations around the world. We help build up the church when we give our offerings to support the task of bringing others to Jesus.**

### Prayer

Place an assortment of tools in the middle of the room and invite the students to kneel around the tools. Say: **Today we are learning about how we can worship by helping to build up God's church. These tools remind us that we need a lot of tools to make a great building, and we need a lot of people to help build up the church family.**

Pray: **Jesus thank You for asking us to help You build a good and healthy church. Thank You for giving each of us the tools we need to work for You. Please help us this week to worship by working together to build up Your church. Amen**

### You Need:

- assortment of tools

\* Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

## 2

## Bible Lesson

### Introducing the Bible Story

#### *The Net Kids*

**You Need:**

- three copies of *Net Kids* script

(Note: The *Net Kids* are an imaginative way to introduce the Bible story. If you prefer not to use this imaginary element, read over the script yourself and introduce the lesson concept in your own words.)

(Refer to Lesson 1 for background and setup information.)

Make the appropriate number of copies of the *Net Kids* script found at the back of this guide. Distribute to the students you have selected as early as possible. Allow practice time before using this activity.

Present the skit on page 131.

#### **Debriefing**

Ask: **Do you know of anyone who has helped build a church in another country? How about in your hometown? In what ways have you ever helped to “build” or make your church stronger or better?**

Say: **Today we are going to learn about a whole nation that helped build a church.**

### Experiencing the Story

**You Need:**

- Bibles
- (optional art/building supplies)

Have student volunteers take turns reading Ezra 3:1-4 and Nehemiah 8:14-18.

Say: **The Feast of Tabernacles is also known as the Feast of Ingathering or Sukkoth (sue-coat). This feast took place in the fall and lasted for a week. Sukkoth is translated “booths.” It was celebrated for two reasons. The first was to remember the Israelites living in tents in the wilderness. It was also a time to remember all the blessings God had**

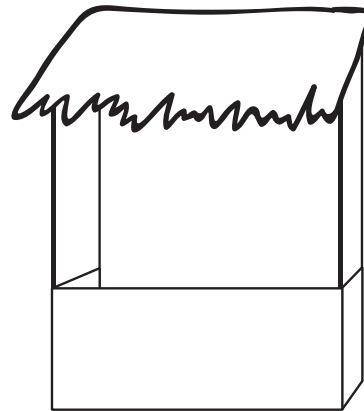
**given them during the year. It was especially important at the time of the rebuilding of the Temple, because they had not been able to celebrate the feast for a long time. It made the people feel very good to celebrate it again. It brought them together in unity and encouraged them as they rebuilt the Temple.**

Ask: **How was this like building up the church today the way God intended?** (Getting together to remember God’s blessings helps build up the church.)



**One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.**

**(Optional activity)** Divide into small groups and give each group a supply of art and building materials. Tell



them that in preparation for building the Temple, they will build models of booths for the Feast of Tabernacles. (These will not be life-sized.)

#### **Debriefing**

Ask: **How did your “booth” turn out? What was the hardest part of**

**doing this?** (not being sure what we were doing; working together) **What was the easiest? Was there any conflict in building your booth? Are you satisfied with your booth? Why or why not?** Encourage many answers and draw from them to connect with the power point:



One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.

## Exploring the Bible

### You Need:

- Bibles

Say: **God foretold the rebuilding of the Temple years before it happened. He even used Daniel's experience in the lions' den to bring it about. Let's**

**read the last part of that story.**

Have students locate and read Daniel 6:24-28. **Darius was king when Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. King Cyrus was king after him. King Cyrus was very impressed by Daniel's deliverance from the lions' den and by Daniel's faithfulness to God. Because of Daniel, King Cyrus studied the prophecies and decided to let the Jewish people leave Persia so they could rebuild their Temple.** (If you have a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia, let students discover the modern name for Persia.) **Let's look at some of the prophecies King Cyrus read.**

Have the students look up and read Isaiah 45:4-6, 13. **When King Cyrus allowed the Jewish people to leave and build the new Temple, he also helped them worship God.**

## 3

## Applying the Lesson

### Build It Up

#### You Need:

- children's plastic or wooden building blocks
- permanent markers

Provide an assortment of inexpensive children's plastic or wooden building blocks, and a permanent marker for each student (alternative, bring in small pieces of assorted scrap wood). As you discuss ways to build up our church, ask the students to choose a building block, or piece of wood and write a word or two on their block, indicating what they might do to help

“build up” the church.

Close by stacking the blocks together in the center of the room and remind the students that:



One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.

**Let's make a plan. How can we help build up our church this week?** Allow time for individuals to develop a specific plan, then encourage each student to follow through.

**4****Sharing the Lesson****Let's Make a Plan****You Need:**

- chalkboard or white-board

Ask each student to retrieve their block and begin to brainstorm on individual ways that they could help build up the church. If possible, plan a class option to work together: greeting, visiting a senior center, writing letters to inactive/ill members, etc. Agree on a time and place to work together to "build up" God's church.

Ask students to take their wood pieces/blocks home and put them in a place that will help to remind them that they have the opportunity to worship God by working together to build up His church.

Close with prayer, asking for God's power to cover our attempts to honor and build up His church.

**Closing**

Ask God to go with each student, bringing to their minds during the week ways that they can build up the church as an act of gratefulness and worship to Him.

**Notes**

## STUDENT LESSON

# Journey to Jerusalem

## Key Text

Ezra 1-3;  
Nehemiah 8:14-18

*How would you feel if your family planned to move to a place you had never been before? Scared, excited, or both? We are going to imagine and give names to one of the families who made an important move during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.*

## Power Text

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord: 'He is good; his love to Israel endures forever.' And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid" (Ezra 3:11, NIV).

## Power Point

One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.

Tabitha looked up as her father rushed through the door for the noon meal. "I have good news!" her father exclaimed.

After Father blessed the food, he began, "King Cyrus issued an official decree this morning. Anyone who wants to return to Jerusalem and help rebuild the Temple has permission to go!"

"How wonderful!" said Mother.

Tabitha looked at her brother Samuel. She had a sinking feeling in her stomach. She wondered if Samuel was thinking the same thing she was. What if their parents decided to go back to Jerusalem? *Even worse, Tabitha thought, what if our family goes back to Jerusalem and Sarah, my best friend, and her family don't go?*

Father told them that King Cyrus had read the prophecy telling about himself in the writings of the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 45:1, 13). He was so moved that he made the decree.

As everyone finished eating, Tabitha quietly asked the question she was afraid to have answered. "Does this mean we are going to Jerusalem?"

Surprised, Mother and Father stopped in midsentence and looked at Tabitha.

Tabitha thought, *That's not a good sign.*

Father looked at Mother, who nodded her head. "Tabitha, you know we have prayed for years about going back to Jerusalem," he said. "Our grandparents and great-grandparents longed for this day."

"I know," Tabitha said. "But leaving here and going some place I've never seen is scary."

"You're right," Mother said. "It's scary for us, too, but to be able to go

back and rebuild the Temple is such a wonderful thing."

And that was that. Tabitha felt as if her world was turned upside down.

Father helped collect the gold, silver, cloth, supplies, and animals that were being given to those who were returning to Jerusalem. King Cyrus had said that anyone who wasn't returning would have to give gifts to those who were. He even returned the Temple utensils that Nebuchadnezzar had taken—gold and silver dishes, pans, and other bowls, along with many other items. In addition, he gave money from the government treasury.

At last everything was ready. Tabitha crawled into her familiar bed one last time. Mother came to sit beside her for a moment.

"Everything will be fine, Tabitha," she said. "We know this is the right thing to do. God will be with us."

"I know," she smiled. "And it helps that Sarah's coming too." Tabitha rolled over to go to sleep.

The long journey across the hot desert began. As the caravan left the city, thousands of people lined the streets cheering. Although they had chosen not to go, they were happy for the families who were.

Days of trudging across the desert passed slowly. Finally the day arrived when the throng came to the top of a hill and beneath them lay the city of Jerusalem. Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, who led them, called everyone together. "Friends, God has been good to us and given us safe passage back to our

home. Let's praise Him together." After the prayer, Zerubbabel began to give instructions. Excitement ran high as the group separated into smaller clusters of people. At first everyone would return to the village where their ancestors had lived before they had been taken into captivity.

In mid-September, however, everyone would return to Jerusalem. Tabitha was glad that their home was in Jerusalem. It meant they didn't have to travel again so soon. She was also glad that Sarah and her family lived next door.

Zerubbabel and Joshua decided that the first thing to be done was to rebuild the altar of God. They wanted to sacrifice burnt offerings as soon as possible.

Soon everyone was called together and sacrifices were made. Then Zerubbabel announced, "We will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles as our families have done in the past. Build your booths around the Temple, and we will keep this festival again in our homeland."

### Sabbath

- Do this week's activity on page 38.

### Sunday

- Read "Journey to Jerusalem."
- Study the power text, reading it over several times. Then write it out in your own words in your Bible study journal.
- Pray that God will guide you and give you wisdom today.

### Monday

- Read Ezra 1 about how Cyrus helped the captives return from Persia.
- Think about verses 2 to 4. How do you think you would have felt if you had heard Cyrus say this? Would you have trusted him? Would you have wanted to help rebuild?
- Ask God to keep your mind alert so you'll know His plans for you.

### Tuesday

- Read Ezra 2:1-70.
- Add up the total number of people and animals that returned.
- Why do you think some were trying to prove that their families came from Israel (verses 59-62)? How was the matter solved (verse 63)?
- Ask God to show you a way that you can help to build up His church.

### Wednesday

- Read Ezra 2:68-3:3.
- Where did the people live when they returned to Jerusalem? Have you ever returned to a place you used to live? How did you feel? What did you do? Why?
- Draw a picture of a place that you love but haven't visited in a while.
- Pray that you will be able to visit that place again someday.

### Thursday

- Read Ezra 3:4-6 and Nehemiah 8:14-18.
- Construct a model of a booth. It may be life-size or to scale.
- What was the purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles?
- Pray that you will live in God and He will live in you.

### Friday

- Read Ezra 3:7-12.
- Close your eyes and imagine the scene. What smells and sounds are there? What colors do you see?
- In your Bible study journal, list five things for which you can praise God.
- Pray a prayer of praise for the things you wrote about. Share it with your family.