

CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

MARCH 15 2025

show reverence in My house!

Scripture Story: John 2:12-22.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 16.
Key Text: Isaiah 56:7 last part.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Isaiah 56:7 says, "Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

The money changers in the Temple completely disregarded this verse. They went against everything it said. Instead of having reverence for the house of the Lord, they sought to corrupt people with their lust for material gain. Pride is also an issue here. The money changers knew that it was a sacred place to worship God, yet in their arrogance they became blinded to what God wanted. Their greed and thirst for gain, as well as their blatant disrespect for His Father, is what angered Jesus. Think about it: if one does corrupt business dealings in any form, it's considered wrong. Yet to do these sorts of things in a place of prayer seemed to be the last straw.

In this story we learn about the importance of reverence to our God. Some Jews were using the Temple for their own ends, turning it into a place of greed and materialism. Some even justified their greed in the name of God and religion. When Jesus came and drove them out, it was because He was angry that they disrespected the place of worship.

Help the students understand the importance of reverence and respect in all things related to the Lord. Just like some of these people turned a place of worship into a "den of thieves," we can be guilty of the same thing but in different ways. We may not do exactly what the people did in the Temple, yet we may give in to our greed and try to justify it. Ask the students how they would feel if they had a certain place that they went to, or if they owned something that was special to them and that they treated with the utmost respect. Then ask them how they would feel if someone took it and defiled it or laughed and scorned it. This is probably how Jesus felt when entering the sacred Temple. God is the Creator of all things, yet many times we look past His amazing greatness and power and commit acts of irreverence.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Realize the importance of reverence in the house of God. *(Know)*
- Feel impressed to lift their thoughts to things above when they are in God's house of worship. *(Feel)*
- Be agents of change who show reverence in the house of God and through their example invite others to the same. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

The Church, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 12: "The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for

instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to humanity, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word revealed in the Scriptures. . . . (Gen. 12:1-3; Exod. 19:3-7; Matt. 16:13-20; 18:18; 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38-42; 7:38; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11; 5:23-27; Col. 1:17, 18; 1 Peter 2:9.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? *section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.*

Divide the students into groups. Have each group revisit the Bible passages in the *What Do You Think?* section of their Bible study guides and discuss what the functions of the church organization are. At the end, debrief by allowing them to share their answers, comments, and findings.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

"In 1850 architect Sir Joseph Paxton submitted his design for the building that would house London's Great Exhibition of 1851. Paxton conjured up a building of gigantic dimensions that would have nothing heavy or clumsy about it. He imagined a structure that would produce the effect of lightness, even weightlessness.

"The problem was, there was no way to construct such a building at the time. Large structures required massive walls to support them. There seemed no way to create the graceful, airy building Paxton had in mind.

"But then he remembered a certain plant he'd worked with as a gardener, the royal water lily. The floating leaves of this lily are huge, up to six feet in diameter, and very thin, yet in spite of this, they're quite stable. They achieve this stability by a complicated strutting on the underside. Ribs radiate from the center of the leaf outward, splitting into many branches.

"The royal water lily gave Paxton the key to making his architectural dream come true. He used a few main struts connected by many small ribs in his design. The result: the Crystal Palace, a tremendous success. It proved a great turning point in architecture. The bold skyscrapers of steel and glass we see all around us today date back to that graceful, airy Crystal Palace, and yes, back to the remarkable design of the royal water lily.

"The Lord constructed another magnificent edifice, His church. 'Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars' (Proverbs 9:1). Divine wisdom has built God's church on seven basic teachings. These scriptural doctrines are the struts that support the structure of truth God has established. They are the divine, eternal verities. Although many ribs connect to these main struts (doctrines), these seven are the 'pillars' of support. They are all centered in Christ, and all of Scripture revolves around them.

"These seven eternal truths are the foundation of God's revelation throughout history. They are identifying marks of God's last-day church.

"1. Scripture (John 17:17)

"2. Salvation (John 3:16)

"3. Second Coming (John 14:1-3)

"4. Sabbath (John 14:15)

"5. State of the Dead (John 11:11-26)

"6. Sanctuary (John 17:4, 11, 24)

"7. Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Prophecy (John 14:15-17)

"Christ in His Word, Christ's grace flowing from Calvary's cross, Christ returning, Christ the source of all true rest and peace, Christ the resurrection and the life, Christ alive imparting power from heaven's sanctuary, Christ imparting the gifts of the Spirit to empower His church on earth to finish the work. These are heaven's eternal truths, and all the powers of hell cannot destroy them" (Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, pp. 373, 374).

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

Many times we look at the things of this world as of great importance and lose sight of the eternal truths of God's kingdom contained in the Holy Scriptures. Yet we should remember the example of Jesus. He lived, taught, and preached the truth that represents the foundation of His true church. Ultimately He sacrificed His own life to save humanity and to cleanse His church from the con-

sequences of sin.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the *Into the Story* section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- How was Jesus, by cleansing the Temple, announcing His mission?
- Jesus told the Jews: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19).
- Why was Jesus so concerned for His Father's house?
- How are you treating your physical body, knowing that in a spiritual sense it is a Temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? (See 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.)
- Of what desires and unholy thoughts do you have to get rid to make room for the Holy Spirit in your heart?
- What does reverence mean? Give some examples of how reverence can be expressed?
- What are some ways you can be involved in restoring and maintaining the true spirit of worship and reverence that should characterize each worship service, program, and function in your local church?

Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today's story: Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 5:23-27; Colossians 1:17, 18; Hebrews 10:24, 25; 1 Peter 2:9.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

RABBI 101

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

"Brainstorming"

Brainstorming can be a great technique to help students generate more creativity because there are no right or wrong answers. Make sure you allow everyone to contribute their ideas. Be aware not to criticize or demean anyone's answer, but seek to look at it objectively. When finished, evaluate their responses and discuss them as a group.

The closing activity in this week's teacher's lesson is an example of this technique.

"Commitment is a fading truth in our world today. Commitment to a church is disappearing. And yet it's one of the things we need the most. In fact, we're starving for it. The author of Hebrews writes, 'And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching' (Hebrews 10:24, 25).

"Don't give up meeting together. Why? Because that's one of the ways in which you are built up spir-

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**
  Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.
- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight *statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book* The Desire of Ages. *Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from* Out of the Story.
- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.
- **Further Insight**
  Ask them how the quote in Further Insight *conveys the point of the story in this lesson.*

itually. That's how you are encouraged to pursue 'love and good deeds.'

"You have to make a commitment in order to get fed. You won't get fed driving by churches. You won't get fed hanging out in the foyer. You won't get fed sampling sermons.

"You have to belong to a fellowship in order to be truly nurtured. You have to stick with a group through thick and thin, for better and for worse, in order to grow, in order to develop the kind of relationships that support you, that keep you accountable, that inspire you.

"We've lost sight of that today. We don't want to submit to the guidance of others. We don't want to conform to the rules of a church body.

"We've got a lot of freedom, but we are starving in it. Our souls are living on a subsistence diet. We're not getting the solid food we need. We're not hearing what we need to hear (but don't want to hear).

"Here are three specific things you can do to receive the greatest spiritual blessing from church:

"1. Commit to attend every week. Sporadic meals don't nourish your body, and sporadic church attendance will not nourish your soul.

"2. Prepare your heart for worship by praying. God will give you the spiritual blessing your heart needs most. Anticipate a blessing. Believe that God is going to speak to you through the music, the prayers, and the sermon. Attend church with a joyous sense of expectation, not a dreary sense of obligation.

"3. Be an active participant in worship, not a bored spectator. Bring your Bible. Concentrate on the words in the hymns. Enter into the spirit of the prayers. Take notes on the pastor's sermons.

"Commit yourself to receiving a blessing this week. God will surprise you with far more than you could ever imagine" (Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, pp. 62, 63).

You can start today to exercise these principles. Remember next Sabbath is Global Youth Day, you can be part of the global initiative to BE THE SERMON by taking an active part in sharing Jesus with people in our community. Are you ready?

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Have all the students brainstorm ways they can become more actively involved in their local church. Discuss their answers.

Today is Global Youth Day and you can be part of the global initiative to BE THE SERMON by taking an active part in sharing Jesus with the people in your community. Plan to record and photograph the students' involvement in this community service project and post their participation on the Global Youth Day Facebook page.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

God will always remain faithful to us. Even if we turn from Him and stray far away He will never be absent when we call out to Him. Ephesians 2:4, 5 says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)."

Nothing we can do on our own can save us in the end. It is what God did at the cross that rescues us. But because of what He did and because of His undying love for us, we should surrender our lives to Him and offer Him our praise and reverent worship that are due Him in His House of worship.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever" (Psalm 111:10).



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*),* chapter 16.

*A special adaptation, *Humble Hero*, has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.

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STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: John 2:12-22.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 16.

show reverence in My house!



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keytext

"For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

(Isaiah 56:7, last part)

flashlight

"God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride. They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit. The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 161).

what do you think?

Read the following Bible passages to find out the functions of the church organization:

Hebrews 10:25: _____

_____

Hebrews 3:13-15: _____

_____

1 John 1:3, 6, 7: _____

_____

Matthew 24:14: _____

_____

Matthew 28:19, 20: _____

_____

did you know?

The Bible reveals the characteristics of God's end-time church?

It has a worldwide message to proclaim (see Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6; 10:11).

It teaches that we are living in the time of judgment (see Revelation 14:7).

It proclaims Jesus' soon return (see Matthew 24:30, 31; Revelation 1:7; 22:20).

It calls people to keep God's commandments (see John 14:15; Revelation 14:12).

It teaches habits of healthy living (see 1 Corinthians 10:31).

It upholds the worship of the Creator on the seventh-day Sabbath (see Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8, 11; Revelation 4:11; 14:7).

It is founded on the Holy Scriptures as its creed and supreme authority (see 2 Timothy 3:16).

It warns against any human authority that is contrary to the truth found in the Word of God (see Revelation 14:9, 10).

It teaches that death is a peaceful rest until the resurrection at Jesus' return (see Revelation 14:13).

—Adapted from Mark Finley, *What the Bible Says About*, pp. 368-377.

INTO THE STORY

"After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

"Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, 'Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!' Then His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.'

"So the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?'

"Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'

"Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?'

"But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said."

(John 2:12-22)



OUT OF THE STORY

How was Jesus, by cleansing the Temple, announcing His mission?

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_____

What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19)?

_____
_____

Why was Jesus so concerned for His Father's house?

_____
_____

How are you treating your physical body, knowing that in a spiritual sense it is a Temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? (See 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.)

_____
_____

Of what desires and unholy thoughts do you have to get rid to make room for the Holy Spirit in your heart?

_____

Why do you think Jesus was distressed when He saw the Most Holy Place turned into a place of business and profit?

_____
_____

Define the word "reverence."

_____

List a number of ways you can be involved in restoring and maintaining the true spirit of worship and reverence that should characterize each worship service, program, and function in your local church:

_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" **(2 Corinthians 7:1).**

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" **(Hebrews 12:28).**

"You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD" **(Leviticus 19:30).**

"By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life" **(Proverbs 22:4).**

"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate" **(Proverbs 8:13).**

further insight

"In cleansing the temple from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin,—from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 161

Sabbath

Read 1 Peter 2:9.

God would have us hold different standards, morals, ethics, and habits from those of the world. "The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. . . . [And] we are called out from the world" (The Church, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 12).

What does it mean to you that God calls you to be part of "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people"?

_____

_____

What do you do to "proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"?

Sunday

Read Psalm 104.

When you realize how big God is in contrast to how small we are, we should realize that the things of this world don't matter much. Remember that God is your Creator and He created you in His own image. Realize that such a great love should call for reverence. Go about your day trying to think of different ways in which you could show your reverence, respect, and love for God. Remember, everything in your life, whether insignificant or monumental, means something to God. You may think the little things you do don't make a difference, but they do. God sees all things; He sees your small sacrifices as well as your large ones. Remember that if God can set the earth on its foundations, He can surely hear every little prayer and see every secret thing. He will never forget you.

Monday

Read Colossians 1:17, 18.

In the Temple Jesus showed His anger in His attempt to get the people to understand that all the sacrifices were pointing to His sacrifice on the cross. How can this story make us more aware of how we should show reverence to our Creator and Savior?

_____

_____

Tuesday

Read 1 Corinthians 1:2.

God knows where each choice you make is going to lead you, even if it seems innocent and worthy. Always remember that in every choice we make, we are temples of God's Spirit, and God should be present. Don't think that praying over the little things won't make a difference. Before taking any steps forward, pray and seek God's will. Write down additional ways you can be involved in Global Youth Day to make a difference in your community as you seek to honor God:

_____

_____

Wednesday

Read Deuteronomy 15:10, 11.

Remember that many people in this world have lost much and suffer immensely. Some don't have enough food to eat and/or can't even afford to put clothes on their backs. In our society, many of us may not be considered rich compared to many famous people, yet if we were to visit some of these countries, we would be seen as having the wealth of kings and queens.

Thursday

Read Malachi 3:8-12.

There have been stories about hardworking, honest people who after gaining wealth get greedy, materialistic, and lacking compassion toward others!

How can tithing and giving away money to charity and other causes help to prevent money from ruining people morally? How can you help support the ministries of your local church as well as overseas missions by paying a faithful tithe and offerings from all your income (i.e., from the allowances or monetary gifts you receive if you do not have an income yet)?

Friday

Read 1 Peter 1:16-23.

God calls us to live holy and godly lives. What does this mean to you?

_____

_____

Jesus redeemed you not with perishable riches but by sacrificing His own life that you may live eternally. What is your response to such immense love? How do your priorities reflect how much God's kingdom means to you? Who rules the Temple of your mind, soul, and body?

_____

_____

How can you fulfill your responsibility toward God and show your gratitude for all that He has done for you by serving others in your community?

_____

_____

Tomorrow is Global Youth Day! Plan to participate with your Sabbath School class in serving your community in a practical way.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 16.

**Humble Hero* is a special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companionbooks#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.