

8

Journey to Jerusalem

Worship
We worship God, whose presence changes us.

POWER TEXT

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: 'He is good; his love toward 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 REFERENCES

- Ezra 1-3; Nehemiah 8:14-18
- *Prophets and Kings*, chap. 45, pp. 557-566
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 6, pp. 66-70, 77-88
- Student lesson on page 92 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 11, Growing in Christ
- No. 22, Christian Behavior
- No. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ

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 participating in the worship activities of the church.

POWERPOINT

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

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.

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).

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

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice. »

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Your Turn*	beanbag or paper wad
		B. Group Gathering	colored stickers, cards, or tags; pins or tape to attach them
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 87. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering plate/basket, assortment of tools
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	three copies of *Net Kids* script (p. 147)
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, art/building supplies (optional)
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles, Bible dictionary or encyclopedia (optional)
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Build It Up*	children's plastic or wooden building blocks, permanent markers
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Let's Make a Plan*	
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

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

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ beanbag or paper wad

Your Turn

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? Let's say together our power text, Ezra 3:11:**

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: 'He is good; his love toward 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).

Today we are learning that

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

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ colored stickers, cards, or tags
- ☐ pins or tape to attach them

Group Gathering

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 would have made this activity 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: **Let's say together our power text, Ezra 3:11:**

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: 'He is good; his love toward 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).

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Prayer & Praise

Notes

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given 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.
Close with a prayer that God will show everyone in your Sabbath School, adults and students alike, a way that He would have them "stand still" in their lives and allow Him to win victories for them.

Suggested Songs

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

"The Lord Is Building Jerusalem" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 117)
"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 350)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ offering plate/basket

Use Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students identify and mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place.

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.**

YOU NEED:
- ☐ assortment of tools

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 for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors. Then say: **Dear 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 to worship by working together to build up Your church. Amen.**

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- three copies of *Net Kids* script (p. 147)

Introducing the Bible Story

***The* Net Kids**

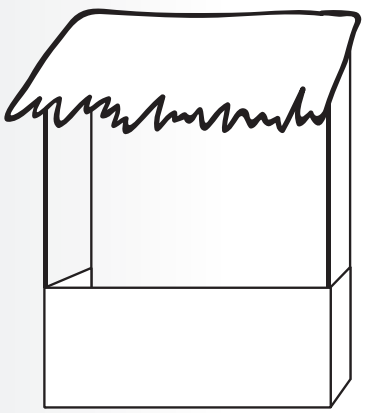
(Note: The *Net Kids* script is an imaginative way to introduce the Bible story. If you prefer not to use this imaginary element, read over the script yourself and introduce the lesson concept in your own words.)
(Refer to Lesson 1, "Introducing the Bible Story," p. 18, for background and setup information.)

Make three copies of the *Net Kids* script found on page 147 of this guide. Distribute to the students you have selected as early as possible. Allow practice time before using this activity. Present the skit.

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.**



YOU NEED:
- Bibles
- (optional art/building supplies)

Experiencing the Story

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.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Bible dictionary or encyclopedia (optional)

Exploring the Bible

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. Let's say together our power text, Ezra 3:11:**

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: 'He is good; his love toward 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).

Today we are learning that

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

YOU NEED:

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

Build It Up

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 repeat with the students the power point:

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

Say: **Let's make a plan. How can we help build up our church?** 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

Invite students to share if they talked with their family members or other adults about what it means to "build up" God's church. Ask: **What did you learn about how you can "build up" God's church? In what ways can you actively contribute to the church programs? What gifts has God given you that you can use to serve Him?**

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 project 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

Prayer and closing comments:

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.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **The Israelites face discouragement. We worship God even when we are discouraged.**

Notes

Student lesson

Journey to Jerusalem

How would you feel if your family planned to move to a place where you had never been before? Scared, excited, or both? This week we'll learn about some people who made a big move during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

As the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity were coming to a close, Cyrus the Great rose to the throne and ruled the Persian Empire. Daniel, who had been living in Babylon during the captivity, had left a positive impression on Cyrus. As a noble statesman who had survived the lions' den, Daniel had earned the utmost respect of the Persian emperor. Now, as God told the people that it was time to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, He moved upon Cyrus's heart to decree the rebuilding of the Temple as it was prophesied by Isaiah:

"Thus says the LORD to His anointed,
To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—
To subdue nations before him
And loose the armor of kings,
To open before him the double doors,
So that the gates will not be shut: . . .
'I have raised him up in righteousness,
And I will direct all his ways;
He shall build My city
And let My exiles go free,
Not for price nor reward,'
Says the LORD of hosts" (Isaiah 45:1-13).

Cyrus was moved and determined to fulfill the divinely appointed mission. So he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom:

"All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He *is* God), which is in Jerusalem. And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:2-4).

People from the tribe of Judah and Benjamin, including the priests and Levites, and others who were impressed by God, prepared to return to Jerusalem. Those who chose to remain in Babylon, encouraged them by giving the travelers their articles of silver, gold, livestock and other useful goods for their trip and for the temple (see verses 5, 6).

Then King Cyrus brought out the Temple utensils that Nebuchadnezzar had taken:

30 gold platters
1,000 silver platters
29 knives
30 gold basins
410 silver basins
1,000 other articles
5,400 articles of gold and silver

All these items were brought from Babylon and were being returned again to Jerusalem (see verses 7-11).

The number of those who left Babylon were nearly 50,000 people, along with 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys. Those staying behind gladly supported those who were leaving. They were happy for the families that were returning to their homeland.

After several hot days of traveling across the desert, the travelers finally 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. They prayed together, thanking God for the safe passage back to their home country. The people praised God joyfully for His care, protection, and guidance. After the prayer, Zerubbabel began to give instructions. Excitement ran high as the group separated into smaller clusters of people.

At first everyone returned to the village where their ancestors had lived before they had been taken into captivity. In a few months, however, everyone returned to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel and Joshua decided to rebuild the altar of God. Soon everyone was called together, and sacrifices were made. Then the priests and leaders gathered the people and celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles according to what was written in the book of the law. They gathered tree branches and built their shelters on rooftops, in courtyards, in squares, and in the Temple's courts. The people rejoiced greatly as they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles once again in Jerusalem after so many years of Babylonian captivity.

KEY REFERENCES

- Ezra 1-3; Nehemiah 8:14-18
- *Prophets and Kings*, chap. 45, pp. 557-566
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 6, pp. 66-70; 77-88
- Our Beliefs, nos. 11, 22, 14

POWER TEXT

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: 'He is good; his love toward 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.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 61.

Sunday

READ Read Ezra 1 and this week's story, "Journey to Jerusalem."

STUDY Read the power text several times. Then write it out in your own words in your Bible study journal.

PRAY Pray that God will guide you and give you wisdom today.

Monday

READ Read Ezra 1:2–4 again.

THINK How do you think you would have felt if you had heard Cyrus say this? Would you have wanted to help rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to keep your mind alert so you'll know His plans for you.

Tuesday

READ Read Ezra 2:1–70.

THINK Why do you think some were trying to prove that their families came from Israel (verses 59–63)? Why were the people so generous in giving freewill offerings for the rebuilding of the Temple?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to show you a way that you can help to build up His church.

Wednesday

READ Read Ezra 2:68–3:3.

THINK Where did the people live when they returned to Israel? Have you ever returned to a previous home? Why?

DRAW Draw a picture of a place that you love but haven't visited in a while.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that wherever you are you will serve God.

Thursday

READ Read Ezra 3:4-6 and Nehemiah 8:14-18.

MAKE Construct or draw a model of a booth. It may be life-size or to scale.

THINK What was the purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will feel welcome in God's house.

Friday

READ Read Ezra 3:7-12.

IMAGINE Close your eyes and imagine the scene. What sounds may have been heard? What scenes may have been seen?

REPEAT Say the power text aloud by memory.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, list five things for which you can praise God.

PRAY At worship, take turns with your family members to say prayers of thanksgiving. You may praise God for the things you wrote about in your Bible study journal.