

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE BEGINS

Old Testament Lesson #150

Many Jews from Judah had been exiled to Babylon by the Babylonians. Several years later, Persian King Cyrus (SI-rus) conquered Babylon and told the exiles that they could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Some 42,000 Jews happily began the long journey home. They resettled the towns they had left, then assembled at Jerusalem to begin the work.

The neighboring peoples were not happy that they had returned. The Samaritans (sa-MAR-i-tanz) on the north side and the Moabites (MO-a-bites) and Edomites (E-do-mites) to the east made the people of Judah afraid.

Jeshua (JESH-oo-a), the high priest, and Zerubbabel (ze-RUB-a-bel), the governor of Judah, worked with their associates and built the altar of God for sacrifices and burnt sacrifices. The priests offered burnt offerings, and the people celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, even though the foundation of the temple was not yet laid. The Levites supervised the rebuilding of the temple, and when the foundation was completed, the people gathered to praise and thank the LORD.

When news about the building progress reached their neighbors, some of them volunteered to help with the work, claiming to worship the LORD. Zerubbabel and Jeshua told the Samaritans (who worshiped several gods and had been placed in Jerusalem years earlier by Assyria) that their help was not needed. "We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us," explained the Jewish leaders.

This answer angered their neighbors, and they planned to stop the work. They wrote to the Persian king, falsely accusing the Jews of rebuilding the city walls and of planning to stop paying taxes to Persia once the rebuilding was complete. Cyrus had died, and the new king believed the letter. He sent his own letter back, saying that the rebuilding should stop. So the work did stop until God sent his prophets to encourage the people to begin again.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- The Feast of Tabernacles was first celebrated when God delivered Israel from Egypt. Celebrating it at this point was appropriate because they had just been delivered from Babylon.
- The very old men, priests, Levites and family heads wept when they saw the foundation of the new temple. They could remember the glory of Solomon's temple and could see that this temple would not be as glorious. Because of this, they knew that this would not be the final restoration (see Haggai 2:2-9).

Rebuilding the Temple Begins

- I. Faithful Jews left Babylon and returned to Jerusalem.
 - A. They resettled in towns they had left.
 - B. They began work on the temple.
 - C. The neighboring peoples were unhappy that the Jews had returned.
- II. The Jews built an altar of God for the new temple.
 - A. Priests offered sacrifices, and the people celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - B. People celebrated when the temple's foundation was laid.
- III. Some of the Samaritans volunteered to help.
 - A. Jeshua and Zerubbabel refused their offer.
 - B. This angered the Samaritans.
 - C. The Samaritans wrote to the Persian king, falsely accusing the Jews.
 - D. The king ordered that the temple building be stopped.
- IV. The work on the temple stopped until God, through his prophets, told the people to begin it again.

ANSWER KEY:

Samaria, Jerusalem, Babylon, Moab, Edom

altar, sacrifices, burnt, offerings, Feast, Tabernacles

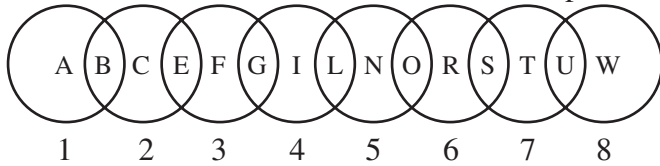
The faithful Jews began the long journey home.

Find the names on the map using the code.

Code

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
☆	✕	☾	■	☞	●	○	▲	*	✕	+	+	♣	*	†	▼	⊠	♠	♣	♣	♥	✈	☆	✓	□	

Use the circle code to fill in the blanks. Example: 4,5 = L



Jeshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor,

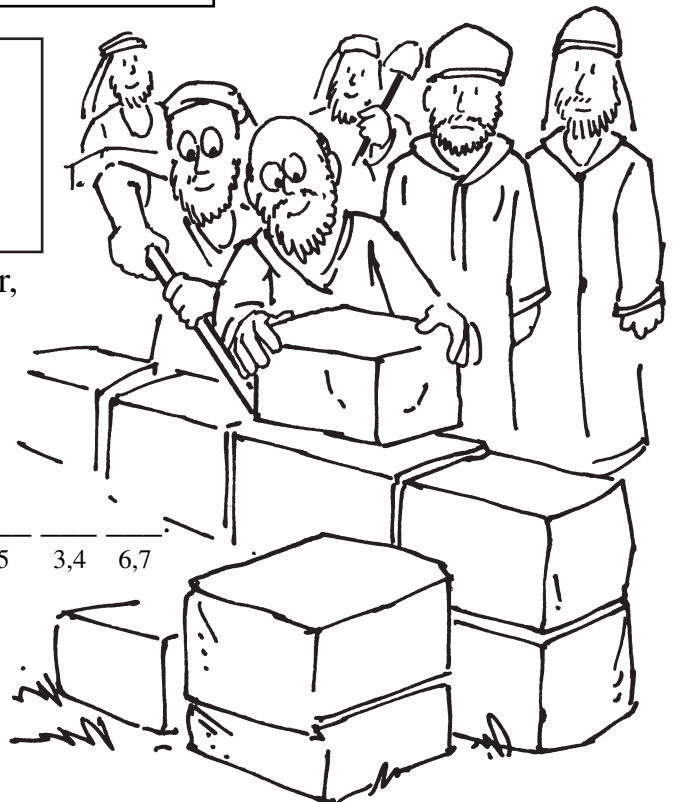
built an 1 4,5 7 1 6 of God for

6,7 1 2 6 4 3 4 2 2,3 6,7 and

1,2 7,8 6 5 7 5,6 3 3 2,3 6 4 5 3,4 6,7










The people celebrated the 3 2,3 1 6,7 7 of

7 1 1,2 2,3 6 5 1 2 4,5 2,3 6,7.



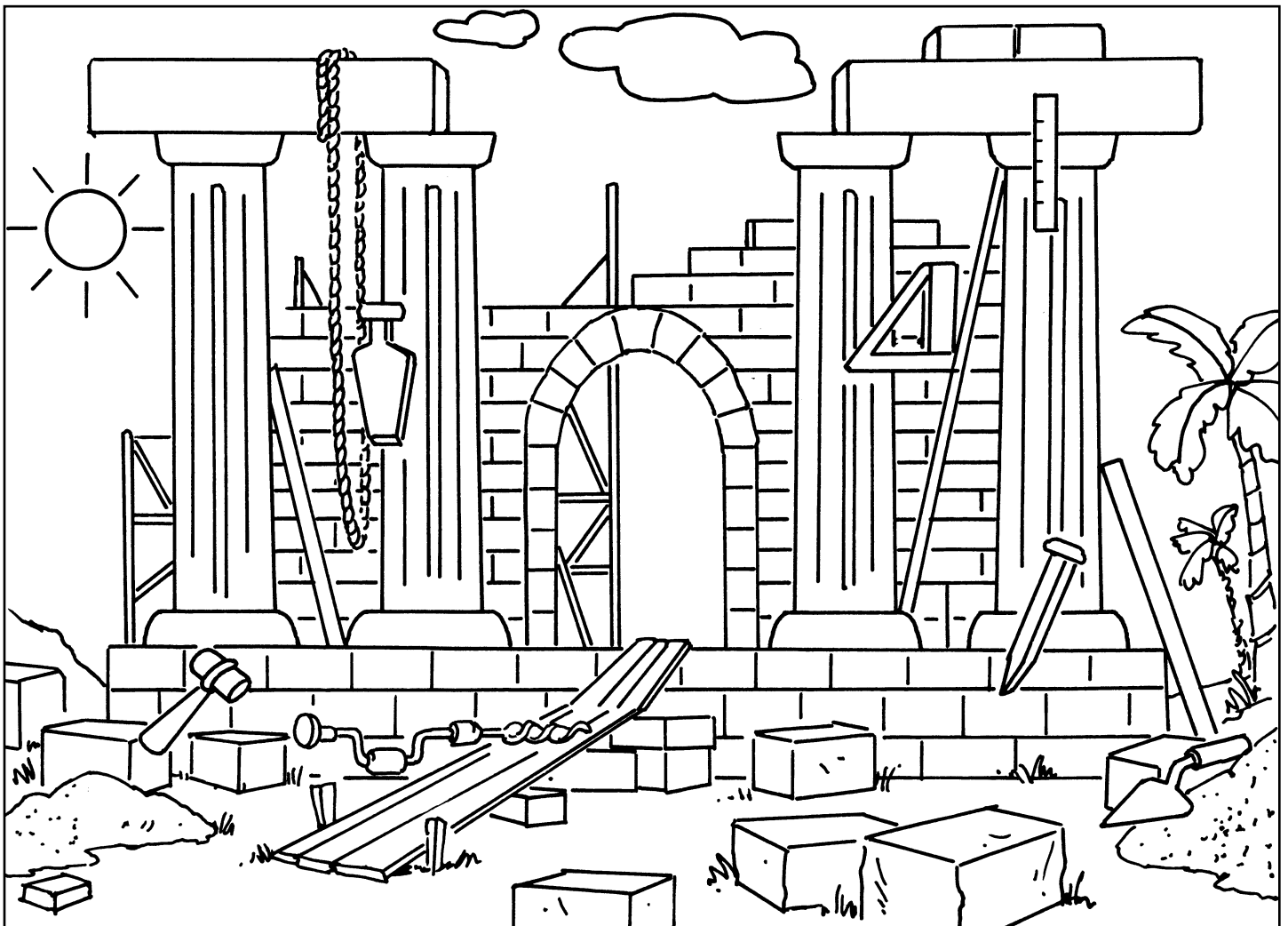
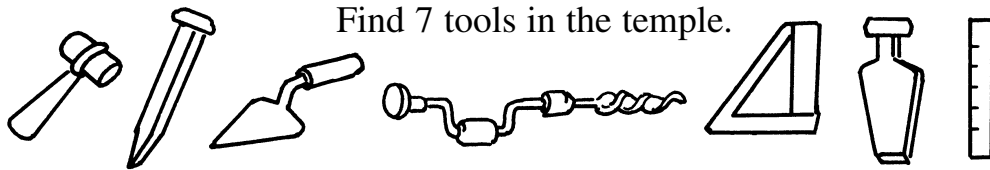
Name _____

Read the story.

Jerusalem's neighbors were ☹️ that the Jews were back. They tried to  them from  ing the . The neighbors sent a  to the . The  sent a  back. The  ing did  for a while.

Then God sent prophets to help them get started again.

Find 7 tools in the temple.



Name _____