



The Bible Story: God Brought His People (younger)

Ezra 1:1–2:2; 2:64–3:13

God's people were in Babylon, far away from their homes and land. But God had made a promise. Through Jeremiah the prophet, God said that the people would have to stay in Babylon for 70 years, but then He would bring His people back home. God always keeps His promises.

Time went by. The children of God's people grew up. They had families and children of their own. When 70 years had passed, God kept His promise.

King Cyrus was the king of Babylon. God gave Cyrus the idea to make a new rule. Cyrus said, "Let God's people go back to their land. Let them rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem."

This was good news! Before, God's people had to stay in Babylon like prisoners. Now they were free! They could finally go home. So the people got ready to go. King Cyrus and the other people living in Babylon gave them gifts like gold, silver, and animals.

God's people started walking. A man named Zerubbabel (zuh RUHB uh buhl) led them. They walked and walked and walked. Some of the people had never seen Jerusalem because they had been born in Babylon. When they got to Judah, each family set up its house. Then the people met together in Jerusalem to start rebuilding God's temple.

God had special laws for how to build the temple, and God's people were careful to obey them. The priests made the altar in the same place the old altar had been. Then they made offerings and sacrifices to God.

The people started building. First, they needed money to buy supplies. God's people gave money to the men in charge of building the temple. They paid people to bring big logs to Jerusalem. The workers made the foundation, or the bottom, of the temple. The people were so happy that the foundation was done! The priests put on special clothes. The people shouted and sang songs to God. "God is good! He is loving and always will be!" they said. What a happy day for God's people.

Not everyone was happy though. Some of the older people remembered what the first temple had looked like long ago, before it had been knocked down. The people were sad, and they cried loudly. The sounds of people shouting and crying was so loud that it could be heard far away.

Christ Connection: God sent His people home to fix the temple. God sent Jesus to earth to save His people. 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.

Say: After many years in Babylon, **God brought the Israelites back home.** God sent His people home to fix the temple. God sent Jesus to earth to save His people. 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.

Ask the following review questions:

Where did God's people live for 70 years? (*Babylon*)

Who said God's people could go back to their land? (*Cyrus, the new king of Babylon*)

What part of the temple did the people build first? (*the foundation*)

How did the people celebrate that the foundation was done? (*The priests put on special clothes. The people shouted and sang songs to God.*)

Why were some of the older people sad? (*They remembered what the first temple looked like.*)



Crafts/Activities

Give Offering

Take children to the office area in the front of the children's wing to put their money in the wooden plinko bank or larger transparent bank.

Say: There are many ways we can worship Jesus. Collecting an offering is another way to worship Jesus. Each week you will have the opportunity to bring an offering to Jesus. You can talk to your parents and ask them if you can bring coins to church for the offering. God doesn't care if our gift is big or small. He wants us to give back with whatever we can. Every offering is important.

Activity page

Invite preschoolers to complete the maze to get God's people to Jerusalem.

Say: God's people were in Babylon, far away from their homes and land. But God had made a promise. Through Jeremiah the prophet, God said that the people would have to stay in Babylon for 70 years, but then He would bring His people back home. In today's Bible story, God kept His promise!

Sing a Song

Sing to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. [*Repeat once.*]

God was with them in the blaze, and the king was so amazed!

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

Daniel prayed to God no matter what. [*Repeat once.*]

The lions didn't roar or nip because God sealed their lips!

Daniel prayed to God no matter what!

God brought His people home from Babylon. [*Repeat once.*]

Though they were far from home, God did not leave them alone!

God brought His people home from Babylon!

Say: **God brought the Israelites back home** to the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a special city that God gave His people. One day, Jesus will come back. He will fix up a greater home for all of God's people. We will live with God where we will worship Him forever.



Little Kid Activities PS and PK: November 22, 2020

Play a Walking Game

- 15 sheets of construction paper (one per preschooler +1 additional piece)
- Marker
- Tape
- scissors

Write the numbers 1-10 on separate sheets of construction paper. Use more or less numbers based on the size of your group. Place the numbered sheets in a circle on the floor and secure with tape. Cut one sheet of construction paper into 10 pieces and label each with a number 1-10. Place the numbered pieces in a basket or bag. Invite preschoolers to walk around the circle, stepping on one sheet of paper at a time as music plays. When the music stops, draw a number from the bag. The child standing on the number you drew gets to stop the music and draw the number in the next round. Continue playing as time allows

Say: Did you have fun walking? In our Bible story today, God's people walked, and they walked, and they walked. They walked for a really long time. Listen to the Bible story today to find out where they were going.

Introduce the Bible Story

Say: Can you think of a time when you just wanted to go home? In today's Bible story, God's people had been away from Jerusalem for a very long time, but the time had come to go home.

Make a House Picture

- construction paper
- scissors
- glue
- marker

Cut squares, rectangles, and triangles out of colorful construction paper. On a separate piece of paper have each child draw a house shape. Suggest that children glue the shapes inside the house shape. Write **God brought the Israelites home!** on each child's paper.

Say: God brought the Israelites back home to the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a special city that God gave His people. One day, Jesus will come back. He will fix up a greater home for all of God's people. We will live with God where we will worship Him forever.