



FEBRUARY 8, 2026

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

EZRA 4-6; HAGGAI 1-2

CHRIST CONNECTION

God's people rebuilt the temple so they would have a place to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people. Jesus provides something better than the temple; He gives us Himself.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah.

MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 25:9



LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Like many projects, rebuilding the temple began with enthusiasm and purpose, but eventually the work stopped. Upon their return from exile, God's people were excited about rebuilding the temple and having a place to worship God. Eventually their passion for rebuilding diminished due to the opposition they faced from their enemies. Instead, the people turned their efforts to work on their own dwellings.

God used the prophet Haggai to remind His people of the importance of rebuilding the temple. Specifically, the prophet asked the people why their houses were completed and adorned beautifully when the house of the Lord lay in ruins. Because of the encouragement of the prophet, the people returned to rebuilding the temple. This time, they would persevere through all of the challenges to complete the rebuild.

So why was the rebuilding of the temple so important for the people of God who had returned from exile? For them, the temple was the place where the presence of God dwelt among them. Following the Exodus, God's manifest presence was experienced by His people in a number of ways. He dwelt with His people in the cloud and fire that guided and protected the Israelites on their journey. He dwelt with His people in a movable tabernacle where they were able to worship. And eventually, God dwelt with His people in Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. When the temple was destroyed, it was symbolic of God removing His presence from His people. When God's people returned, the rebuilding of the temple demonstrated God was with His people, inviting them to return to Him in prayer and worship (2 Chronicles 6:36-39).

Today, we are reminded that our God does not dwell in a house made by the hands of people. When Jesus died on the cross, a symbolic act occurred in the temple. At the moment of Jesus' death, the curtain in the temple that separated the people from God's presence split from top to bottom. The splitting of the curtain demonstrated our new reality that Jesus' death and victory over sin and the grave gives us direct access to the Father. Remind kids that God desires to be with them, and through faith in Christ, believers are promised His presence forever.

WELCOME



Connect with kids as they arrive.

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Greet each kid as they arrive. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group. Before heading to Large Group, you can play a game, chat with kids, or do the Memory Verse Activity below as a group!

MEMORY VERSE

It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Isaiah 25:9, ESV

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Each month, we'll have a new memory verse that goes with the lessons we're learning from the Bible. Choose one of the provided activities in your room's Memory Verse folder to review the verse with the kids. A hand motion video is also available to learn and review on your room's TV.

Note: Our next Bible Bucks Day will be on February 22!



LARGE GROUP LESSON



Review what we're learning in Large Group.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

When God's enemies who lived in Judah heard that the people of God had returned and were rebuilding the temple of the Lord, they decided to stop them.

They wrote a letter to Artaxerxes (ahr tuh ZUHRK seez), king of Persia. The letter said, "Let it be known to the king that the Jews who traveled from your nation have returned to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding the city, finishing its walls, and repairing its foundations. We are loyal to the king, and believe that once the city is finished, the people will not pay taxes to you anymore. Search your record books, and you will discover that the city is rebellious and harmful to you."

The king replied, "I searched our records and discovered that this city has rebelled against kings in the past. Therefore, I order the people to stop building the city until another decree from me." The people stopped rebuilding the temple until King Darius became king of Persia.

God sent the prophet Haggai to speak His words to the people. The Lord said through Haggai, "Is it time for you to live in a nice house, while the house of God lies in ruins? Think carefully of your ways. Rebuild my house, and then I will send rain for the crops and help you prosper. Work, for I am with you! I promise that this temple will one day have more glory than the one that came before!"

The people obeyed and started to build again. Then Tattenai, the governor of the region, said, "Who gave you the order to rebuild this temple?" Tattenai sent a letter to King Darius that said, "Let it be known to the king that the people of God are once again rebuilding the temple. When I asked them why they were rebuilding, they told me that many years ago, King Cyrus issued an order to rebuild the temple of God. He also gave us the gold and silver that had been taken from the first temple. We have been rebuilding the temple from that time until now."

King Darius searched his royal records and found the order from King Cyrus. He knew the people were telling the truth. He issued a new law: "Leave the people of God alone, and let them rebuild the temple. In addition, you are to use all the tax money from that region to pay for everything that is needed to rebuild the temple. If anyone interferes with this order, they will be punished."

The people finished the temple and had a great celebration. They resumed the worship of God at the temple and celebrated the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The people were glad and rejoiced in God.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God's people rebuilt the temple so they would have a place to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people. Jesus provides something better than the temple; He gives us Himself.

ACTIVITIES



Do crafts and games with kids after Large Group.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Have 3-4 kids come to the middle of the room and place a blindfold on each of them. Then provide them with a piece of rope.

Challenge these kids to create the shape you call out—such as a square, triangle, or circle—using their bit of rope. Invite the remaining kids to offer help by instructing the blindfolded kids how to manipulate the rope into the correct shape. If your group gets too rowdy, assign just two kids to instruct the blindfolded group.

Allow 30-45 seconds for the group to make the shape, then remove the blindfolds so they can see how they did. Repeat with a new group of 3-4 kids until everyone has gone.

CONNECT THE DOTS



While this was challenging at times, you all showed that by working together and following instructions you were able to create the shape. Today we learned that God's people were working to rebuild the temple, but as they did, they faced challenges. However, they trusted God and obeyed Him and worked together to rebuild the temple.

BIBLE SKILLS

Split kids into two groups and give each group a Bible and a set of craft sticks with the prophetic books of the Bible written on them.

When you say “go,” each group will arrange the craft sticks in the order they appear in the Bible. Allow kids to use their Bible for help. The first group to put them in the correct order wins!

Repeat as time allows and increase the challenge by removing the Bibles for reference.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES



Continue to engage kids before parent pick-up.

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

Ask the following questions and lead your small group to discuss.

1. Haggai encouraged God's people with God's words. How can we encourage others?
2. God's Spirit lives in Christians. How can this help Christians be brave and obey God no matter what?
3. What are some ways we can worship God?
4. Why should we obey God even when others might challenge our obedience?
5. The prophet Haggai reminded the people to put God first. How can we show God is most important? *(Share that God is worthy of being the most important person in our lives. Encourage kids to think about how they can seek God through prayer, the choices they make, reading His Word, etc. Tell kids that those who trust in Jesus desire to seek Him above everything else. Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:31-33.)*

HAVE EXTRA TIME?

If you have extra time or your group needs to get out some energy, play one of the games/activities in your extra time bin in the cabinet or the "extra time" folder on the TV.

If there's a new game or activity you want to have available for your group in the future, let Taylor know!

BEFORE YOU GO...

Second service leaders, please clean up by doing the following:

1. Put all extra supplies and binders back in the curriculum bins.
2. Clean all trash off the tables.
3. Put all crayons, markers, etc. back in the appropriate containers and cubbies.
4. Erase the whiteboards and put markers/erasers back in the holder.
5. Turn off the TVs as you leave.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!