

The Captives Came Home- May wk 2- Elementary

Bible Passage:

Ezra 1-3

STORY POINT:

God kept his promise to bring His people home.

Key Passage:

Jeremiah 29:11- For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Big Picture Question:

How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

**Watch the Bible story video “The Captives Came Home” posted May 10th on
www.theparksa.org/family-lessons/**

Meal Time Family Discussion Questions:

- Which king of Persia allowed God’s people to return to Israel? (*King Cyrus, Ezra 1:1*)
- What did the priests build first when they got back to Israel? (*the altar, Ezra 3:2*)
- Why were some of the older Israelites crying? (*They remembered the first temple that had been destroyed, Ezra 3:12*)
- Why do you think God allowed His people to live in exile for 70 years? *Guide the kids to see that God takes sin seriously. He wanted to purify His people; to punish sin and bring new life to the people who truly wanted to follow Him. God wanted to give His children a chance to recognize their sin and turn back to Him. He used the exile to glorify Himself in foreign nations.*
- How can we know God loves us in difficult times? *Help kids understand that God’s love for us never changes. We don’t always understand why we face hard times but we can trust that God will never leave us. He will never stop loving us. Sometimes He allows us to experience pain so we can better understand how much we need Him. When we face hard times while relying on God, it glorifies Him and builds our faith.*
- The temple needed a strong foundation. What is the foundation of our lives? *Help kids see that our faith is built on Jesus’ sacrifice for us. We trust the Bible as God’s Word, and it tells us what is true about God and ourselves. With such a firm foundation, our lives can stand up to various trials.*
- Say • **God kept His promise to bring His people home.** The Israelites returned to their homeland and began rebuilding the temple so they could worship God.

Family Activities:

Option 1: Treasure hunt

Hide chocolate coins around the room. Encourage the kids to search the room to find the treasures. Once kids find all the objects, invite them to return to the center of the room.

Say • Today we heard a special story today about how God's people returned home from living in a foreign country for 70 years! We will hear that the people of Babylon gave God's people gold and silver coins, as well as other gifts, when they went home. The people of Israel took up a free will offering to be used to pay for materials and craftsmen to rebuild the temple. In all, the book of Ezra says the priests collected over 5,400 articles of gold and silver. Why were the people of Israel so happy to part with their gold and silver in order to rebuild the temple?

Option 2: Build a tower

Provide a variety of building materials or lego and invite the kids to work together to build a tower. Help them experiment with different foundations for their towers. Give the groups a chance to present their towers to the rest of the class.

Say • For any building to stand tall and strong, it must have a solid foundation. Today our story is about God's people's return to the land God had given them. Not only did they return, but they also set out to rebuild the destroyed temple. Today we'll hear that they began by building a strong foundation.