Trouble Rebuilding the Temple

EZRA 3:8-6:22, HAGGAI 1-2

KIDS WILL UNDERSTAND:

• The story of the Israelites rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem.
• That the Israelites faced opposition during the building of the temple.
• That we should make Jesus Christ our foundation. He will help us and encourage us when we face opposition.
GAME

The children will stand in a circle holding hands, backed up as far as they can go without breaking their grips. The leader will choose one child to stand in the center of the circle. This child will run and try to break through a pair of hands. If the child succeeds and breaks through the opposition, the leader will choose another child to be in the center of the circle. If the child does not break through, that child should not give up, but keep on trying until he can break through the opposition. Allow at least 10 kids the challenge of breaking through the opposition.

The child in the center of our circle had one goal. What was it? (to break out of the circle) The rest of you tried to stop him from achieving that goal. The kid in the center may not have reached his goal on the first try, but he kept on fighting through the opposition until he was successful! Today, our Bible story tells about a time when the Israelites had a goal to rebuild the temple, but people were constantly trying to stop them from successfully reaching that goal! Let's listen to Jeshua and hear what happened.

BIBLE ACCOUNT

Project the PowerPoint slide of the temple. (This is a Wikipedia photo shot by Ariely.) Someone dressed in a robe and sandals will play the part of Jeshua who is telling the story. Jeshua will stand in front of the temple picture, holding a long, wide piece of ribbon and scissors. (The bigger the scissors, the better.) There are lots and lots of names in this story, so pay close attention.

Oh, hello there. I’m so happy you came to join us for the ribbon cutting ceremony today! My name is Jeshua, and I am a Jewish man living 516 years before Christ. This is a huge celebration today, and one that the Jewish people have waited many years for. Since you’re here, you probably already know that we finished building the house of God in Jerusalem. If you look behind me you will see it. (Point to the screen.) A beautiful site, isn’t it? I have such an important job to do today. Will some of you help me? The king told me to hang the ribbon that will be cut to officially announce the completion of the Holy Temple. (Ask two children to come up and hold the opposite ends of the ribbon. Tape the ribbon to two secure objects in front of the picture of the temple on the screen. The volunteers may sit down. While you are saying the next part, start creating a bow with more ribbon.)

You see, I feel completely honored to be doing this job. You all look pretty young to me, so you might not know about the difficult time the Jewish people have had in the past century. There’s a city called Babylon about 400 miles from here in Jerusalem, and many years ago King Nebuchadnezzar took the Jewish people captive. King Nebuchadnezzar made the Jewish people leave Jerusalem and move to Babylon. Babylon was a wild city that was full of sin. That’s when the house of the Lord here in Jerusalem was destroyed. King
Nebuchadnezzar had our first temple completely torn down, and he destroyed everything good the Jewish people had in Jerusalem. It was a terrible time!

But thanks to God our Father in heaven the Jewish people were finally set free and were allowed to come back to Jerusalem. Seventy years ... yeah, 70 years ... after King Nebuchadnezzar took the Jewish people captive, Babylon got a new king that set us free. Can you imagine being away from your home for 70 years? The new king’s name was King Cyrus, and he commanded ... yes, commanded ... the Jewish people to rebuild the house of the Lord!

God is so faithful to His people! He brought us home to Jerusalem and we were allowed to start rebuilding God’s house! The first thing we did when we returned to Jerusalem was to build an altar for our Lord where we could worship Him. My friend Zerubbabel and I were responsible for making sure the altar got built. We burned sacrifices to the Lord on this altar every morning and evening. All the people who had returned to Jerusalem gave supplies and offerings to help with the rebuilding, and the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. What do you kids know about the foundation of a building? (cement, sturdy, very important, comes first)

(Attach the bow and admire it.) Perfect! Now ... the building of this new and beautiful temple came with its own share of problems! Just like for the members of your church now, when someone is doing something for the Lord, the devil will try to stop it! If you have a minute, I’ll tell about some of these troubles before the others gather and we cut the ribbon.

I already told you that we built the foundation for the temple. Well, that went smoothly, but after the foundation was finished, the Israelites stopped working on the house of the Lord for 16 years! Why, you ask? Well, there were some people in the land who were against the building of the temple. They tried to stop it from being completed. These people tried to discourage God’s people and to make us afraid to go on with the construction plans. They were bad people and pretended to want to help us rebuild the temple, but we knew their motives were not good. They didn’t serve our God, and they were not going to help us with the building of His temple! For 16 years, these people stirred up trouble, told lies, and persuaded rulers not to allow us to continue our work! Boy, the Jewish people were frustrated!

In the meantime, we got a new king named King Darius. King Darius did some research on King Cyrus to see if he really did command the Israelites to rebuild the temple of the Lord. There was so much commotion over the rebuilding that King Darius wanted to know the truth. Well, he discovered that King Cyrus had issued a decree concerning the temple of God. The document also said that the supplies used to build the temple should be paid fully by the king’s treasury! Not only that, the decree said that if any man tried to stop the building of the temple, he should be put to death and his home destroyed!

God also sent a word to His people during this 16-year standstill through a man named Haggai. You may have heard of him before. He
wrote a book in your Bible. God gave a word to Haggai to share with His people and this is what the Lord said: “Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored.” After hearing those words from God, spoken by the prophet Haggai, we obeyed and got busy!

So here we are! It took us about two years to build the foundation. We stopped building for 16 years because of all of the opposition. And once we started construction again, it took about 4 more years to complete the house of the Lord! For those of you who love math, that’s a total of 22 years, but it will be worth it! Do you want to know why? Because the prophet Haggai told us that God said He Himself will fill this house with glory and in this place He will grant peace! Wow! Isn’t He faithful! He brought His people out of Babylon, He helped us rebuild the temple, and now He wants to fill it with His peace! That’s why this is such a special day of dedication, and why I am so excited that you could join all of us! Here comes my friend Zerubbabel and the Jewish people now! Let the celebration begin! Scissors please! Now when I cut this, I want to hear some cheering out of you! (Cut and cheer!)

What were the names you heard in this story? Who were the 3 different kings mentioned? (Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, and Darius) Who were the 2 men who worked on the altar? (Jeshua and Zerubbabel)

GAME

It’s amazing that not only did King Darius discover the documents that said a decree had been given by King Cyrus to rebuild the temple, BUT it also said that it was to be paid for completely out of the royal treasury!

We’ve got a fun and simple game for the kids to play. Beforehand, put down a masking tape line across the middle of the room. Form teams and place a bucket for each team at the other side of the room. (The masking tape line should go across the room, halfway between the teams and the buckets.) Each team will also need some pennies. At the signal, the first player from each team will place a penny on their forehead. They will then carry the penny (on their forehead) across the room and drop it in their bucket. If the penny does not go in the bucket, they pick up the penny and go back to the mid-point masking tape line and start over from there. Keep doing that until the penny goes in the bucket. Before leaving the bucket, though, they have to say, “The temple was paid for by the king’s treasury!” The first player to return to his team after getting their penny in the bucket and saying the statement will then get a chance for his team to answer one of the questions below about the story they just heard.

- What was the name of the man telling the story? (Jeshua)
• What was Jeshua celebrating?
  (completion of the temple)
• What sinful city held the Israelites captive?
  (Babylon)
• How many years were the Jewish people held captive in Babylon?
  (70)
• What king made a decree to send the Israelites back to Jerusalem and to start rebuilding the temple of the Lord?
  (King Cyrus)
• What was the first thing that the Jewish people built?
  (an altar for sacrificing to the Lord)
• What was the name of the friend who helped Jeshua in the construction of the temple?
  (Zerubbabel)
• What part of the temple building did the Jewish people build first?
  (foundation)
• Why did the Israelites stop the work on the temple of the Lord?
  (People stirred up trouble, told lies, and made the builders afraid.)
• How many years passed without any work being done on the temple?
  (16)
• Who was the new king who checked King Cyrus’ records that said the temple of the Lord should be rebuilt?
  (King Darius)
• What prophet did God send to the Jewish people to encourage them to rebuild the temple?
  (Haggai)
• What did God promise would fill the temple of the Lord?
  (His glory and peace)

MESSAGE

(show slide #2) O faithful King!

The Israelites were held captive in Babylon for 70 years. How do you think they felt after 70 years of captivity? I bet they thought God had forgotten about them. At times, I bet they felt that they had no hope. BUT OUR GOD IS FAITHFUL! God had a plan to return His people to Jerusalem, and He used King Cyrus to declare this return!

God has a plan for you and is faithful to you as well! Look up and read 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.” God has a great plan for your life! The Israelites didn’t know what God had planned for them, but God did! It was a future with hope!

• Even when things are tough in your life, how does it make you feel that God has a great future for you?
The Word is absolute truth. If God says something, He means it! He is so faithful to do what He says. If you obey Him and seek Him in His Word and prayer, that great future is going to hit you right between the eyes!

(show slide #3) First things first!

What was the first thing that the Israelites built when they returned to Jerusalem? Yes, they built an altar. They wanted to worship the Lord before taking any other steps!

- Starting your week off by worshipping at church is important! Do you look forward to worshipping the Lord at church on Sunday mornings?
- When you start each day, why do think that it’s important to spend time with God in prayer before you step out the door?
- When you do pray, do you jump right into asking God for stuff, or do you take the time to worship and praise Him first?

(show slide #4) Shouts of joy!

Ezra 3:11 says, “And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.” The Israelites completed the first step in rebuilding the temple. They laid the foundation and the people celebrated with great shouts of praise! When we think of our faith, the foundation is our belief that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. When we ask Jesus to forgive our sins and ask Him to save us, our foundation is laid!

So who do you think is celebrating with great shouts of praise when we lay our foundation? Look up and read Luke 15:10. “I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” The angels in heaven are giving great shouts of praise every time a sinner turns to Jesus and repents! Using your imagination, what do you think this party in heaven looks like?

This is a perfect time to pray with any kids who want to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior!

(show slide #5) Opposites do not attract!

God told the Israelites to rebuild His house. They started to build it, but there were some people who tried to stop them. These people told lies about the rebuilding. They tried to scare the Israelites so they would stop building the temple and they harassed the builders.

Still today, people try to stop you from doing God’s work! You can believe that the devil will try to discourage you when you are doing something for God! The Bible tells us that the devil is prowling around like a lion looking to bring harm to the people who are trying to do God’s work. HOWEVER, the Bible also says that the Holy Spirit in you is much greater than the devil and his plans!
How has the devil discouraged you or tempted you when you were trying to obey Jesus? (Give examples that will relate to the kids.)

Sometimes it’s very difficult to follow and obey Jesus when you have people opposing you. Maybe people have made fun of you for obeying Jesus. Maybe someone stopped hanging out with you because you were obeying Jesus. Maybe you had to miss out on some fun activities to avoid doing something you shouldn’t. Jesus will bless you for following Him and for standing up for what He says!

• What situation have you been in where it was difficult to follow Jesus?

(show slide #6) Encourage me, please!

The Israelites stopped building the temple for 16 years. Enough was enough! God sent a great encourager to announce that the Israelites must start building the temple again! The prophet Haggai spoke to the Israelites and encouraged them to obey the Lord! God will send encouragers into your life, too! If you are obeying God, sending a friend at just the right moment may be one way He will encourage you. Someone might send you a nice letter or give you a compliment. These are encouragements from God!

• When has God sent an encourager into your life when you needed encouragement?
• The Bible talks about Christians encouraging other Christians. How can you encourage another Christian when he is feeling down?
• How do God’s words in the Bible encourage you? For example, how does it make you feel when God says I will never leave you? Or, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me?

PUPPETS/SKIT

The little sister should have a tiara on (or something that makes her look like a princess.) In front of the children, the big brother builds a Lincoln Log or Lego structure. He is working very hard at his creation and is thrilled when he finishes it. While he is sitting there admiring his work, his little sister runs into the room and destroys his work of art!

Brother: There … perfect! That is so cool!

Sister: Here I come, kids! I will save you! The beautiful princess is on her way! (runs into the room and accidentally knocks down what her brother has been working on)

Brother: Look out! Nooooo! I worked so hard on that! Moooooom!

Mom: What’s going on in here?

Brother: (very upset) Look what she did!
Sister: I didn't mean to! It was an accident! I was right in the middle of saving the children from the fire-breathing dragon!

Brother: You ran through here like a dragon, and I don't care if it was just an accident. You are always ruining my stuff!

Mom: How about the princess and I will just get out of your hair and you can rebuild your creation?

Brother: That took me forever! I don’t want to start over!

Mom: Oh come on ... we promise not to come near it when you're done!

Sister: (looks at Mom and pleads) Just a little peak for the princess? Please?

Brother: See! She'll just ruin it again! How would you like it if you built something totally cool and someone else just tore it down?

Mom: Well, actually, I just read about this same situation in the Bible.

Sister: I'm in the Bible? WOW!

Brother: (growling) No precious princess, you are not in the Bible!

Mom: No, I was reading about the Israelites in the book of Ezra. The Israelites were taken away from their homeland for 70 years by a mean king.

Sister: Oooohhhh, that's bad. They needed a princess like me to come in and save the day!

Brother: (mumbling) Or ruin it.

Mom: The Jewish people had built a beautiful and very expensive temple for the Lord. This temple was very fancy and extremely special to the Jewish people.

Brother: I know how they felt. What I built was special to me, too.

Mom: When the mean king took the people captive, he also had their temple completely destroyed.

Brother: No way! I would've been so mad!

Mom: I bet they were mad. And sad. And frustrated. And ...

Sister: (interrupting) And in need of a beautiful princess!

Mom: They were in need of a hero, but it wasn’t a princess. God was faithful and came to their rescue. After 70 years in captivity, God had a new king release the people. God also told the king to command the Jewish people to rebuild the temple of the Lord!
Brother: After they saw all of their hard work destroyed, they were willing to build another temple?

Mom: Yep! Oh, there were some people who tried their best to keep it from happening, but they struggled through it. When they were finished, God filled the new temple with peace.

Brother: (looking at sister) A little bit of peace around here would be nice.

Mom: So ... if the Israelites fought through their opposition and rebuilt their temple, what do you say to starting over on what you built?

Brother: I guess I can give it another try, IF she promises not to come in and plow it over again.

Sister: (holds up her hand) Princess promise!

Brother: Okay princess. Now go and fight your fire-breathing dragons somewhere else. I've got a temple to rebuild and nothing is going to stop me!

Sister: Unless, of course, a real fire-breathing dragon actually enters your room ...

Brother: Mooooom!

Mom: She's out of here.

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OBJECT LESSON

Label 5 small square building blocks with the following words (one word per block): friends, sports, music, family, and school. Label a large rectangular block with the word Jesus. This block will be much larger and heavier than the other blocks. This activity must be practiced prior to presenting it to the children.

After building an altar to worship the Lord, the Israelites built the foundation to the temple. Why do buildings need a sturdy foundation? The foundation supports the rest of the building! When storms rain down on a building with a strong foundation, the building stands strong! The same is true about your life and your relationship with Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ is your foundation, you will stand strong in His power. When the storms and difficult times come in your life, you will not crumble if Jesus Christ is your foundation!

We all have a lot of activities going on in our lives every day. I’m going to talk you through two days that were exactly the same, but the foundations of these days were very different. Pretend with me. I
woke up this morning and the first thing I thought of were my friends! We all like to spend time with our friends, don't we? (Pick up the block labeled friend and place it in the middle of a table.) I couldn't wait to spend time talking to my friends at school. I couldn't wait to play with my friends at recess. I just had my friends on my brain!

I got to school and found out that we had a surprise math test. Now my thinking switched to school and math, and I started to panic! (Place the school block on top of the friends block.) I was worried about taking this test, but I got through it and tried to do the best that I could. I just kind of felt sick to my stomach after taking it, though.

After school I had to go to basketball practice and piano lessons. (Place the sports block and the music block on top of the school block.) It was totally hard to focus on these activities while I was there. I didn't get the starting position that I wanted on my basketball team and I was really disappointed in myself. My head was starting to hurt because of my busy schedule.

When I finally got home, I ate supper with my family. (Place family block on top of the music block.) That was going okay until I got into a huge fight with my brother! I just didn't have any patience with him today!

Finally it was time to go to bed. I was exhausted and stressed out from my busy day. I am embarrassed to say this, but it was then that I remembered Jesus. (Place the large Jesus brick on top of the tower of other blocks.) So I said a quick prayer to Him before drifting off to sleep.

(Turn fan on high and blow it directly on the blocks until they tumble.) When I made all these other things the foundation for my day, I didn't do so well when the storms of my day hit! I lost my patience, I was disappointed in myself, and I literally felt sick inside!

Now I'm going to relive this same day, but I'm going to start with a much different foundation! I got out of bed today and immediately started talking to God. (Set the large rectangular Jesus block on the table.) I thanked Him for my safe night's sleep and for all of my blessings. I asked Him to help me focus on Him during the day. I asked Him to give me wisdom at school and love for all the people I came in contact with.

I got to school and found out we had a surprise test in math. (Set the school block on one end of the rectangular Jesus block.) Before I took the test, I prayed in my head and asked Jesus to help me think clearly so I could do my best. I felt pretty good afterwards!

I was full of peace when the recess bell rang, and my friends and I had a blast playing foursquare. (Place the friends block on the Jesus block right next to the school block. You are not building a tower.) One of my classmates pushed right in front of me in line and it didn't even bother me!

After school I went to basketball practice and piano lessons. (Place the sports block and the music block on the Jesus block, right next
to the friends block.) I was disappointed that I didn’t get a starting position on my basketball team, but I know that God gives different gifts to different people, and that He has great plans for my life. When I thought of that, my attitude immediately improved!

Supper was delicious! My brother was a little annoying, but when I started to get irritated with him I asked Jesus to fill me with patience. The annoying moment passed. (Set the family block on top of the Jesus block, right next to the music block.)

As I went to bed that night, I thanked God for helping me through my day. I focused on Him, and made Him the foundation of my entire day. (Turn the fan on and try to blow the blocks off of the Jesus block. They will remain in place.) You see, when you make Jesus the foundation of your day, you will stand strong during whatever comes your way! He filled me with peace, patience, and love throughout my day, even when it would’ve been easy to get upset! Think of ways you can make Jesus the foundation of your day!

CRAFT

The children will make a garden stone that will remind them that Jesus needs to be the foundation of their lives! In a large bucket, premix the dry cement with water to a consistency near peanut butter or brownie mix. The children will spray the inside of a soup bowl with non-stick pan spray and fill the bowl (3/4 full) with the premixed cement. Next, the children will choose decorative rocks to create a cross on top of the cement. They will gently press the rocks into the cement until ¾ of each rock is buried. Each child will need some newspaper to place on top of the cement to soak up extra water, because a small amount of water will separate from the cement. Remove the newspaper after a minute. The children can take the garden stones home, but instruct them to leave their stones in the bowls for another 24 hours. Then, they can turn their bowls upside down and the finished garden stone will fall out. They should set for 2 more days before placing them in a garden.

Each time you see this stone in the garden, it can remind you and anyone who passes by that Jesus needs to be the foundation of our lives.

OBJECT LESSON - VIDEO

How many sports fans do we have here? What is an instant replay in sports? Right, it’s when the referee is unsure of what the correct call is, so he watches the play again on a TV monitor.

Does anyone know what a lateral pass is in football? The rule for a lateral pass is that the pass must go behind the passer. In other words,
The football must travel backward down the field, not forward. One of the most controversial plays in NFL history happened on January 8, 2000. The Tennessee Titans were playing the Buffalo Bills, and there was such a critical play that the referees had to watch the instant replay monitors to make sure they had made the correct call. Let’s watch the Music City Miracle!

Download the following YouTube video called “The Music City Miracle” submitted by Graham Smeaton. We have included a file of instructions for both Mac and PC in case you need some assistance in the downloading process.

View http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_zg-J0q42M.

In our Bible story today, King Darius had to play referee and watch an instant replay. The people in Jerusalem were divided—some wanted the temple rebuilt and some didn’t. Without technology, however, the king had to check the rules on written records, not TV monitors. King Darius had his servants search through the records that were in storage to see if King Cyrus had really ordered the temple in Jerusalem to be rebuilt. It may have been written on a scroll instead of flashed upon a TV screen, but the King made the correct call after “reviewing the play.” King Darius told the Israelites to continue with the building of the Lord’s house!

We are often put in similar situations. We make many decisions every day. We need a rules book that we can review to make sure we are making the correct call in our own lives! What is the book that we need to review? King Darius reviewed the decree made by King Cyrus very carefully and followed it perfectly. We need to be like the referees in the football game that we were watching. We need to review God’s Word to make sure we’re making the correct calls in our own lives!

- How often do you read your “rules book”—the Bible?
- When you hear the Word of the Lord, do you make an effort to obey it?
- Why is it beneficial for you to seek God’s answers in the Bible when you are unsure and want to make the correct call? (God wants what is best for you, and when you follow His commands, you will be blessed!)

PRAYER

The Israelites were stuck in neutral in our Bible story today. For 16 years, the temple sat untouched. People harassed and opposed the Israelites until they were scared to rebuild the house of the Lord. BUT, God had a plan to encourage His chosen children. He sent a prophet named Haggai to encourage the Israelites to keep rebuilding the temple! Haggai also told the Jewish people that the Lord said He was with them! WOW! How encouraging are those words to the people after they had stood still for 16 years? The Lord was with them! He would help them finish the temple!
God often sends us to encourage others. How does an encouraging word from a friend or family member make you feel? Divide the kids into groups of 10, and give each group a ball. The kids will sit in a circle and one person will hold the ball. This person will roll the ball to another member in the circle and speak encouraging words to him. The encouraging words could be a compliment, acknowledgement of an ability they have, or a special behavior that is Christ-like.

After the activity, the children will discuss how the words of encouragement made them feel. Lead the children in prayer, asking them to repeat after you.

Dear Heavenly Father,
Thank you for sending Haggai to the Israelites to encourage them.
Thank you for sending people to encourage me.
I want to be used by you to help others.
Please, place a person on my heart who You want me to encourage.
Help me to speak to others with Your love and grace.
In Jesus’ name,
Amen.

BLESSING

May you always rely on God as your foundation.
SUPPLIES
• 6-8 soft foam dodgeballs
• masking tape

GAME

God sent the prophet Haggai to encourage the Israelites to keep building the house of the Lord! We’re going to play “Haggai Dodge Ball!” If a player gets out during the game, “Haggai” is going to encourage them and help them get back to playing! Just like the prophet Haggai helped the Israelites to get back into building the temple, the dodge ball “Haggai” will help the children get back into the game!

Divide the children into two teams and line them up along the walls at opposite ends of the room. Each team will choose one child to be its “Haggai.” Create a line with masking tape across the center of the room. Place the dodge balls in a line on the tape. The children may not cross the center line during the game. When the leader shouts “Get in the game!” the children on both teams will race to the balls and try to grab them. The “Haggais” will remain in the back near their team’s wall. The kids with the balls will start throwing them at the people on the opposing team. If a child is hit, he must sit down immediately in the location he was hit. This is when his “Haggai” will sneak up behind him, tap him, and say “Be encouraged!” If “Haggai” successfully taps an out team member, that child can stand up and reenter the game. Haggai encourages them right back into the game! Both teams must try to protect their “Haggai,” because if he gets hit there’s no one to help an out child get back into the game! The first team to eliminate all the members of the opposing team wins!

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

2 Timothy 4:7-8
“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of His return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.”

What were the Israelites faithful to accomplish? How did they faithfully run their race?

Today we talked about having a good foundation. The people started with laying a good foundation for the temple. And, then we talked about how we need a good foundation for our lives. Part of that foundation is knowing and treasuring God’s Word.
That’s why we memorize scripture—so we will always have it with us wherever we go.

Divide the kids into groups of 6 or 8. For each group you will need 8 bricks, 2 paint stir sticks, and a masking tape square marked on the floor (about a 2-foot square). This square indicates where the foundation to the temple should be laid. The groups will assemble at the other end of the room from their taped-off square. In this activity, 2 players from each group will lay down their 2 paint stir sticks, parallel to one another, and about 4 inches apart. Another group member will lay the brick across the paint stir sticks. The 2 players will pick the brick up, touching only the paint stir sticks, and carry the brick to their masking tape square. There, they will lay down the brick, and return to their group with the sticks. Once they return, those 2 players will lead the entire group in reciting the scripture. Once the scripture is said, the next 2 players will carry another brick to the masking tape square. When they return from doing that, they will lead the group in the scripture and pass the sticks. Continue doing this until all 8 bricks have been laid and the foundation is in place at the other end of the room. (All groups are doing this at the same time, so there’s going to be lots of chatter.)

**ACTIVITY**

Provide a large supply of Legos. You can even invite the kids to bring their own. (Just don’t mix them up with others.) Feel free to use Lincoln Logs, building blocks, boxes, or a combination of them. Form groups of three kids. Once again, project the PowerPoint slide of the temple, as used in earlier elements. Each group will use the Legos, or whatever building block element you’re using, to rebuild the temple. Once the creations are done, give the kids a few minutes to walk around to admire (and ENCOURAGE) one another.

**KNOW YOUR BIBLE**

I love baseball! But during a game, I’m not always sure why an umpire makes the call he does. Today, we’re going to check out Major League Baseball’s official rules site to answer some of my questions! Then we’re going to check out God’s official rules book to answer some other questions I have!

My first baseball question is “What is the infield fly rule?” Let the children offer their answers before looking at the official rules.

Go to http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/official_rules/definition_terms_2.jsp and scroll down to INFIELD FLY. Let the kids see that any question they could have about baseball is answered at this official site. Act like you’re reading what the official rule says. **Ooohhh! I get it now.**
If my team has a base runner on first base, I am up to bat, and I hit a pop fly somewhere in the infield, the umpire calls the infield fly rule. That means that I am automatically called out and the runner on first base should just stay safely on first base.

Okay, I have another question for you. Is it okay for me to punch my little brother in the arm if he comes into my room and messes up my stuff? We better check “the Book” to make sure we answer this one correctly. Look up Romans 12:19. “Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: It is mine to avenge, I will repay, says the Lord.” So what is the official ruling on this question?

Alright! Back to baseball! I was at a game once, and the pitcher went to pitch the ball. After he pitched it the umpire stood up, called an illegal pitch, and allowed the base runners to go to the next base. What was that? Why did the runners go to the next base if no one hit the ball? (More than likely, a child will know that the umpire called a balk.) Let’s go to the official MLB site and read about what a balk is.

Here’s another question for you. I was the only kid in my class at school to get an A on this super hard math test. I studied really hard for that thing. Is it okay for me to brag about my grade to my classmates? To the official Book we go! Read 1 Corinthians 1:31, “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.” So the ruling is this—the only time it’s okay to brag is when you are bragging about the Lord!

I have one more baseball question for you, and then I should be an expert in the sport! How on earth can a player that is batting be allowed to go to first base if he didn’t even swing at the ball, let alone hit it? (Many kids will tell you that the batter was walked, meaning he received four balls while up to bat. Go to the official MLB site and scroll down to BASE ON BALLS.) How cool is that! Sometimes you can get to first base and you don’t even have to hit the ball!

I have one last question for you smarty pants! If I am telling my friends a story and I exaggerate it just a little. Is that wrong? I mean, this is such a tiny little white lie that it doesn’t hurt anyone! It just makes the story more exciting! We better ask the expert ... God! Look up Zephaniah 3:13. “The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will speak no lies.” Whoa! I guess it’s always wrong to tell a lie, even if it seems like a tiny one! Good thing we have this Book from God! It’s a great resource, and it can give you the correct answer to any question you might have!