

# Journal Page

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What promise did God keep to His people in exile?
- How has God been faithful in your life?
- How can you trust God this week?



## The Captives Came Home

Ezra 1-3

**STORY POINT: GOD KEPT HIS PROMISE TO BRING HIS PEOPLE HOME.**

Cyrus, king of Persia, had taken over Babylon. Cyrus said, "Let all of God's people go back to Jerusalem so they can rebuild the Lord's temple." The exile was over! God's people were free to go back to their homes.

Zerubbabel and the high priest led God's people back to Judah. They settled in their hometowns and set up their houses. Then the people met together in Jerusalem to rebuild the Lord's temple.

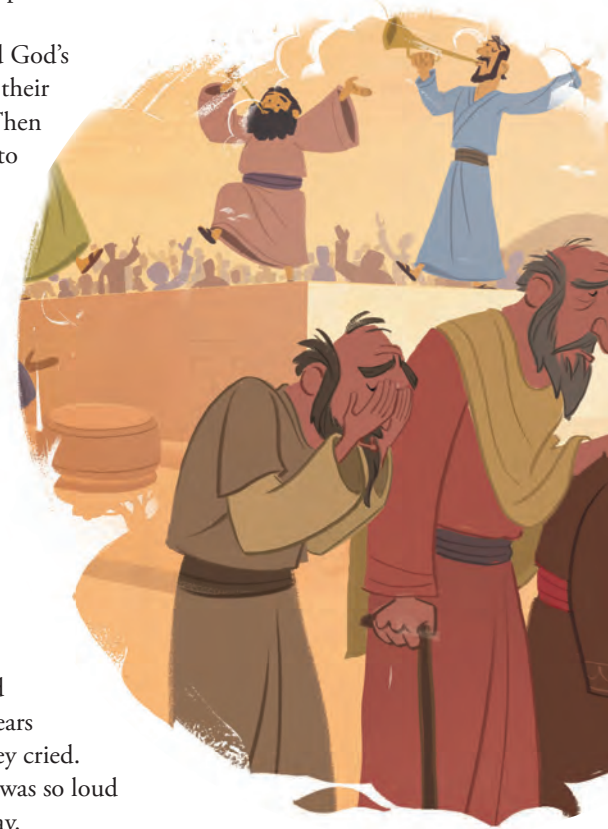
First, the priests rebuilt the altar. When the altar was finished, they offered burnt offerings to God.

Then God's people gave money to stonecutters and carpenters who would work on God's temple. They paid people to bring cedar logs to Jerusalem. They laid the foundation of the temple.

When the foundation was finished, the priests put on special clothes, and the people praised God.

Not everyone was happy though. Some of the older people remembered what the temple had looked like 70 years ago, before it had been destroyed. They cried. The noise of the crying and shouting was so loud that the people could be heard far away.

*Christ Connection: Zerubbabel led God's people back to the temple to rebuild it. The temple was the place where God met with His people on earth. Jesus came to earth to rescue God's people. One day Jesus will return to restore a greater home for all of God's people, and we will spend eternity with Him.*



FOLD



**Set the Scene** | Set the scene for today's Bible story. In the top space, draw a few people who are happy. In the bottom space, draw three people who are sad.



## The Long Way Back

Use the key to decode the special message.

**G \_ D** **K \_ P \_**  
 (Kettle) (Kettle) (Kettle)

**H \_ S** **PR \_ \_ \_ S \_** **\_ \_**  
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**BR \_ NG** **H \_ S** **P \_ \_ PL \_** **H \_ \_ \_ .**  
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**E** (Kettle) **O** (Kettle) **I** (Kettle) **M** (Kettle) **T** (Kettle)