



# Children's Bible Lessons



## Minor Prophets

Hosea – God Comes First	2
Joel – Repent and Be Restored	6
Amos – To Pronounce God's Judgement on Israel	11
Obadiah – Pride	16
Jonah – A Story of Obedience	23
Micah – Do Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly With Your God	28
Nahum – A Stronghold In The Day Of Trouble	30
Habakkuk's Watchtower	34
Zephaniah – Hope	38
Haggai – Putting God First	41
Zechariah – Bigger Isn't Always Better	44
Malachi - Special Treasure	48

# HOSEA – GOD COMES FIRST

Hosea was a prophet of God who lived at the same time Isaiah lived and God's people were disobeying Him constantly. There were always a few people who were trying to live God's way of life, but most were disobedient.

**Q1:** What was a prophet?

**Q2:** What job did he have?

**Answer:** A prophet's job was to tell the people what God was telling him. He did not tell part of what God told him or just the parts that were good. A prophet of God always said exactly what God wanted him to say and was not afraid to say it, no matter the consequences. A prophet of God was very brave.

Names have meanings:

Hosea's name means "salvation" and that is what he preached to the people. He warned the people that if they did not repent or turn from their wicked ways, then they would go into captivity.

There are some big words here:

**Q3:** What does it mean to repent?

**Q4:** What do you think captivity means?

At the time Hosea lived, they were living a life of prosperity. Things were good. They had food to eat, there were not too many wars, and when times were good, the people forgot God.

(This is kind of what was going on several years ago, things were going good, people forgot about God, then the virus came.)

They had not learned that God was serious about allowing the people to be captured, even though God's prophets were constantly telling the people to repent or they would go into captivity.

Hosea, also, told the people that they were going to be destroyed because they had a lack of knowledge of God. (This meant that they did not know anything about God. They did not want to learn of God and His ways, so God was going to reject them.) The people had forgotten God, and, as a consequence of their sin, God was going to forget His children.

Hosea's life and the words that he spoke drew a picture of the relationship that God had with his people. When times were tough, the people remembered how good God was to them and they would pray to Him, asking Him to help them. But, when times were good and they began to believe that they were the ones who were independent and could do things their own way, then they forgot God. God would then send something--a war, pestilence, famine--to remind the people that He was in control. That's how it was in Hosea's time and in our time now. Always remember though: whenever the people repented, God always took them back and continues to take them back today.

**Memory Verse:**

Hosea 4:6 (ERV) "My people are destroyed because they have no knowledge. You priests have refused to learn, so I will refuse to let you be

priests for me. You have forgotten the law of your God, so I will forget your children."

Hosea 4:6 (NKJV) "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

God wants to come first in our lives whether times are good or bad, not just during the bad times. God wants us to study His word, pray, fellowship, and live his way of life. This is what Hosea wanted the people of his day to understand, but these people didn't listen to Hosea. They did their own things and didn't care about God.

**Q5:** What are some ways you can make sure God Comes First?

- Pray before play
- Read your bible with your parents
- Include God in your decisions

Today's craft goes along with putting God first. It's a reminder, and we all need a constant reminder to put God first.

### **God Comes First Medallion**

You'll need:

- 1 large paper plate
- Blue ribbon or tissue paper
- Blue and yellow markers, crayons, pencils (child's choice of coloring instrument)
- 1 Contrasting color to write in the words "GOD COMES FIRST"
- Tape

1. Color the outer portion of the plate blue
2. Color the inside yellow.
3. Write inside the yellow, with your best writing "GOD COMES FIRST" in Capital Letters. (You can use the photo as a guide)
4. Cut the ribbon or tissue paper into two pieces about 2 inches wide and 9 inches long.
5. Cut a triangle at one end of each piece.
6. Turn plate over and tape the ribbon/tissue paper in place to look like a blue ribbon.



# JOEL – REPENT AND BE RESTORED

Joel was a prophet, and we learned in our last lesson that a prophet is a person who told the people what God was telling him. As a prophet of God, Joel was very brave. He warned the people of Judah of God's coming judgment because they had sinned. Joel also warned these people to turn back to God.

When we become prosperous, and everything is good in our lives we tend to forget who made that all possible. We forget God. For the people of Judah this is what was happening. They forgot to acknowledge God and lived their lives to worshipping idols and themselves.

Joel warned them that with this kind of lifestyle they would endure the judgment of God.

**Memory Verses:** Joel 2:12-14 “Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” So rend your hear and not your garments; Return to the LORD you God. For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He Will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him – A grain offering and a drink offering For the LORD your God?” NKJV

**Q1: What happens when you don't follow the rules in your family?**

**Q2: Do you get punished for not obeying your mom and dad?**

When I was a little girl, I got into a bunch of trouble one day because I didn't listen to the teacher at school. We had a snowstorm while we were in school, and they said the school was closing. The teacher said that no children were to leave without their parents. Well, I didn't want to wait so a friend and I walked home. When we both got home, our parents weren't

home. When my mom got home, I got a spanking and was grounded for a week...I couldn't go out to play in the snow like all my friends. That was the last time I disobeyed my mom that way. After and during my punishment, my mom and dad were there and talked to me about how I needed to listen to the teachers and my parents. My parents loved me and didn't want anything bad to happen to me.

Just like God loves His people and doesn't want anything bad to happen to them. However, when the people of Judah were not listening to His Laws and not obeying Him, He needed to punish them because of their sinful nature. God needed to help them see how much they needed Him in good times as well as the bad times.

### **In come the Locusts:**

#### **Q3: What is a locust? Have you seen a locust?**

They are like giant grasshoppers and travel in swarms. They eat up crops and leave nothing behind.



Because Judah was sinning against God and not living by His words, God sent the locusts that destroyed all the crops the people were growing for

food. God also sent a drought and the water dried up in the land. It was so dry that fires burned up the pastures the animals used to eat green grass.

## **THE LOCUSTS, DROUGHT AND FIRE WERE CONSEQUENCES TO THE SIN OF GOD'S PEOPLE.**

**Just like the coming Day of the Lord where an army will take over the land like these locusts did in Judah. The Lord will come to judge the nations. We have a choice to turn our hearts back to God, just like the people of Judah. God promised he would restore what the locusts had taken, just like He promises to restore what the armies will take in The Day of the Lord.**

**Memory Verses: Joel 2:12-14** "This is the LORD'S message: "Now come back to me with all your heart. Cry and mourn, and don't eat anything! Show that you are sad for doing wrong. Tear your hearts, not your clothes." Come back to the LORD your God. He is kind and merciful. He does not become angry quickly. He has great love. Maybe He will change His mind about the bad punishment He planned. Who knows, maybe He will change His mind and leave behind a blessing for you. Then you can give grain and drink offerings to the LORD your God" ERV (Easy-to-Read Version)

When we turn from doing evil and repent, God blesses us with forgiveness and restores us back to Himself. Just like my mom and dad were happy with me after I said I was sorry and would never disobey them like I did. My parents forgave me and they even let me out of my grounding after only two days, (it was supposed to be a week.)

This craft will remind us of God's warning, our choice, and His promise.



**Joel's Traffic Light Craft** – Joel's message from God to the people in Judah had these three things: A warning, A choice, and a Promise.

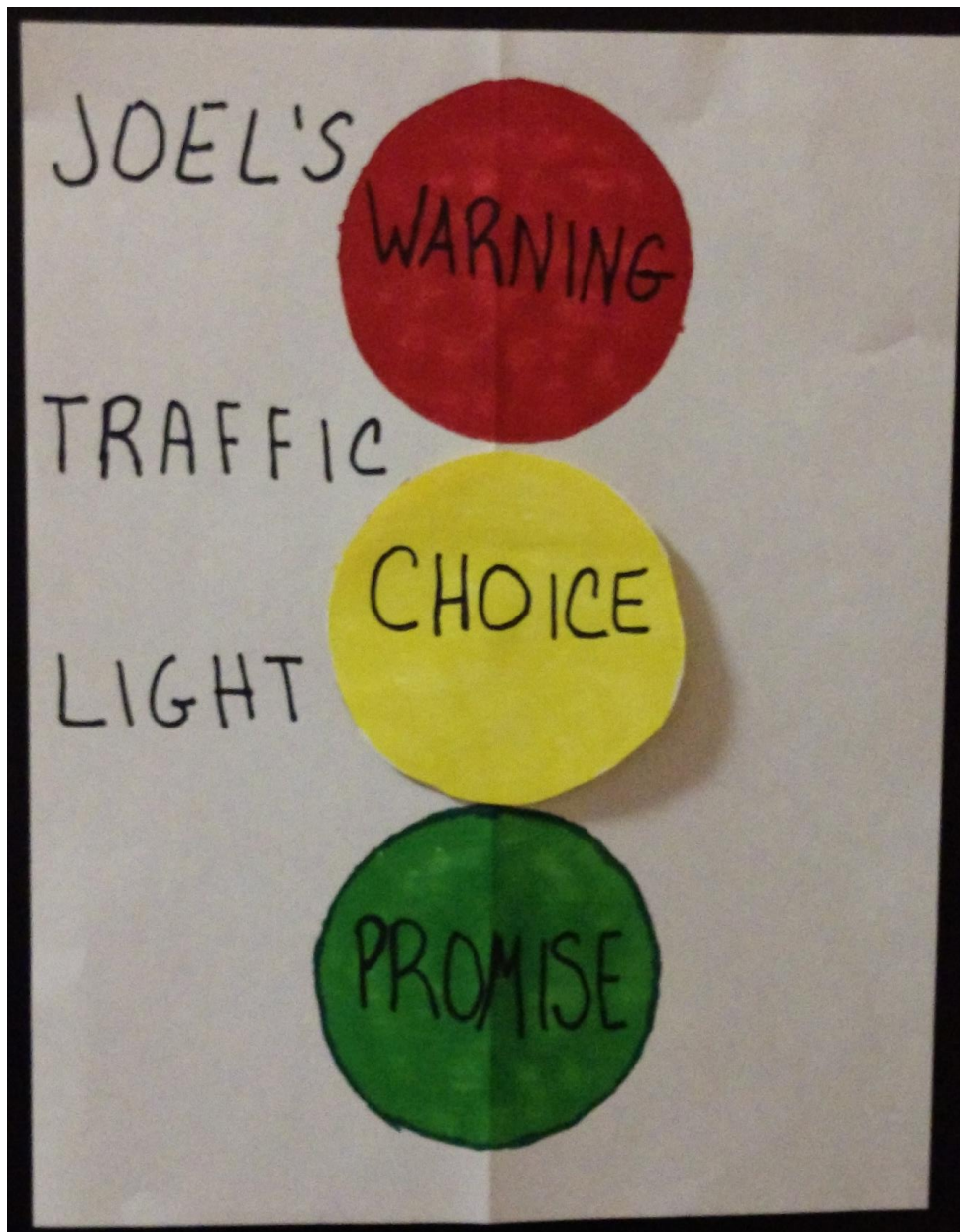
Supplies needed:

- Sturdy White Paper
- Pencils, crayons, or markers
- Tape or glue
- Yarn
- Hole punch
- Scissors

Directions: On the sheets of white paper trace or draw three 3-inch circles in a traffic light pattern. Children will color them in with red on top, yellow in the middle, and green on the bottom. After the children color in the circles, accordingly, have them write or have an adult write the words WARNING, CHOICE, PROMISE in the circles as follows:

- Red Circle – WARNING
- Yellow Circle – CHOICE
- Green Circle – PROMISE

Punch holes at the top in each corner and thread the yarn through the holes to create a hanger.



The children will take Joel's Traffic Light home and hang it where it will remind them that God gives us warnings. We need to make the choice to follow Him, then God promises to restore us. You can always choose to turn from doing wrong and do what is right in God's eyes!

# AMOS – TO PRONOUNCE GOD’S JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL

We don’t hear too much about Amos. When was the last time you heard the minister tell us to turn to a scripture in Amos? I can’t remember that time. However, Amos was a prophet like Hosea and Joel. Amos was inspired by God to write nine chapters. Amos was alive when Isaiah was alive.

Amos had several jobs besides being a prophet. He was a herdsman and a fig farmer, too.

In the time of Amos, the LORD was judging the cities and nations like Damascus, Gaza, Tyrus, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah, and Israel.

**Q1: Do any of these cities and nations sound familiar?**

**He listed many wicked things that the people did and told them what the consequences of their sin would be.**

Sin always has consequences.

This seems to be a theme just like we learned in Hosea and Joel, and like we’ll learn in the other books of the Minor Prophets. Most of the time, people will turn from their evil ways and follow God, but then after a bit of time they go back to the way they lived before like nothing ever changed.

**Q2: Does this happen to us, as well? Do you get punished for doing something wrong and then for a bit you’re happy doing what’s right, but you forget about what your mom and dad taught you, and you go right back to the wrong behavior?**

Amos told the people of Israel to turn back to God and stop serving idols.

### **Q3: What's an idol?**

An idol can be anything we worship in place of God.

(Continue the conversation by asking what can be used as an idol today, what can we worship in place of God—social media, YouTube, playing games, doing our own things)

Amos also told the Israelites to stop treating poor people badly.

### **Q4: How can you treat poor people badly?**

He also told them to stop doing the things that pleased only themselves.

### **Q5: Do we do this today? Do we say to our parents, I'll wash the dishes when I'm done playing my game? Do we forget to feed our cat because we want to do our own things?**

Amos told the Israelites to return to the LORD. Amos said that God stopped the rains, which caused the plants to die because He wanted all the people to repent of their evil ways...but the people were stubborn and would not repent.

After hearing that the Israelites would not repent, Amos warned them that they would go into captivity, but the people did not care at all. They just went on about their lives as they always have.

## **Q6: What does captivity mean?**

(Some answers can be: caged like an animal, or in prison, or lockdown)  
Captivity means that the people would not be able to do their own thing; they couldn't leave, or go about their lives in the manner they were used to.

God always gives a way out. All the people of Israel had to do was acknowledge God, turn from their wicked ways, and live God's way of life. But, these people refused to listen to Amos' warnings.

Through Amos, God told the people that a famine was coming, but it wasn't a famine of food. It wasn't a famine of water, even though the drought dried up the water. It was to be a famine of God's Word. The people wouldn't hear God's Word anymore. God said people would thirst and hunger after God's Word like they did for food and water, but they would not hear it. Still the people were stubborn and ignored the words of Amos.

## **Q7: Do we do this today?**

I remember a time when my mom used to tell me, don't pick on your cousin or you will lose dessert tonight. She must have told me that at least seven times in one day. I didn't listen. I thought it was fun to make my younger cousin cry. However, when dessert came around after dinner, I didn't get any and mom made my favorite chocolate cake. Not only didn't I get dessert, but also I had to sit and watch my cousin eat the chocolate cake in front of me.

I didn't know my mom was teaching me a lesson back then; the same lesson that Amos was trying to get the people of Israel to listen to. My mom's punishment was not as bad as what came to these people.

Amos also told these people that God would not completely destroy them. There would always be a small group of God's people who loved and served him with their whole heart. God would bless this small group of people with the good things that would come.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Amos 8:11 (NKJV) "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land. Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."

Amos 8:11 (ERV) "The Lord GOD says: "Look, the days are coming when I will cause a famine in the land. The people will not be hungry for bread. They will not be thirsty for water. No, they will be hungry for the words from the LORD."

### **Amos Activity Amos 8:11**

This wall plaque will help us remember the warning in Amos 8:11.

Supplies needed for each child:

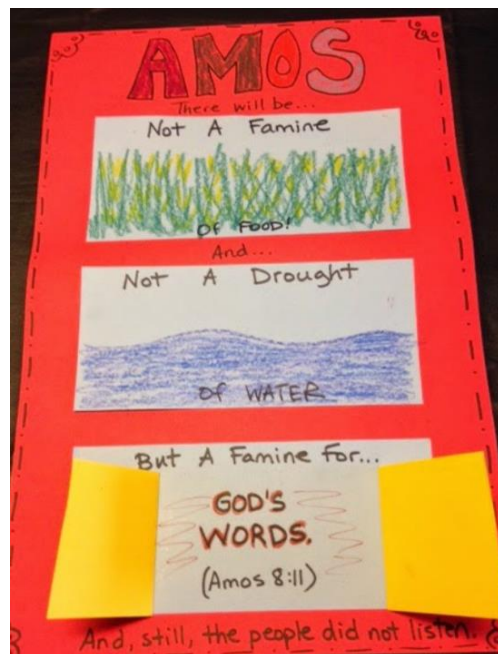
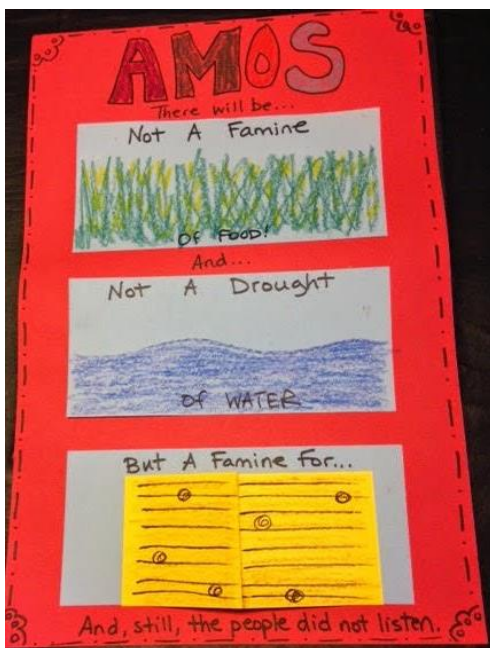
- 12" x 18" red construction paper
- 9" x 12" light blue construction paper, cut into thirds.
- 3" x 6" yellow construction paper, cut in half
- Markers, crayons or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue

Directions:

1. Hand out the three blue strips of paper to each child.
2. On the first strip, have each child draw green stalks and yellow corn. Have them write "NOT A FAMINE OF FOOD." (As in the example below.)

3. The middle strip, have each child draw a blue river or lake. Have them write "NOT A DROUGHT OF WATER."
4. The bottom strip, have each child write "BUT A FAMINE FOR..." at the top of the blue strip.
5. Hand out the red paper to each child.
6. Glue the three strips in the order as on the example below, leaving room at the top.
7. At the top of the red paper, have children write "AMOS" in all capital letters. Under AMOS write "there will be..."
8. Between strips 1 and 2 write "AND..."
9. At the bottom of the red paper, write "AND STILL THE PEOPLE DID NOT LISTEN."
10. Hand out the yellow paper halves. On each of the halves, help the children fold back one small edge to create a door.
11. Place glue on one edge only.
12. Place the halves of yellow paper meeting in the middle; press on outer edges of glued edges, so the yellow papers will open.
13. Open the yellow paper doors. Write "GOD'S WORDS!" and Amos 8:11 in the middle of the strip.
14. Close the yellow paper doors.
15. Read what the children have written on their papers out loud.

If time allows, let the children decorate the edges.



# OBADIAH - PRIDE

The lesson teaches students that pride steals the credit that belongs to God. We honor God by giving Him the glory for all things.

**Supply List:** Bibles, 12 index cards for the names of the minor prophets, paper with the word pride written on it, activity pages, pens, pencils

**Learning Goal:** Students will learn that pride steals God's glory. (Explain that when we are prideful, we take the credit (glory) that belongs to God alone.)

We know that his name means the Lord's servant and that he brought a message from the Lord.

On White Board: Write **PRIDE**

Before we begin who can tell me what the word pride means?

**Pride:** the quality or state of being proud of ourselves and our accomplishments.

**Q1: How does God feel about pride?** (It is sin.)

**Q2: Why is pride a sin?**

God is creator of all things. He deserves all the glory or credit for everything we have in this life. When we are prideful we steal God's glory. An example of stealing God's glory is to be prideful about something you are good at.

**Q3: What is something at which you are good?**

(Allow responses) If you are really good at a sport, it is God who gives you the health and ability to play that sport. To brag about your ability is stealing the credit that belongs to God. If you are good at something, it pleases God when you give Him the credit (glory).



Obadiah is writing a message from God to the people of Edom. Maybe that is the first time you have heard about the people of Edom. Edomites are people who came from Esau's family.

**Q4: Does anyone remember who Esau is?**

Esau is Jacob's twin brother. As the firstborn son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, he would inherit God's promises that the Savior would be born from Abraham's descendants. Esau didn't care about God's promises. He showed how little he cared about the promises by selling his firstborn privileges to Jacob for a bowl of soup when he was hungry.

Jacob was in no way a perfect man but he loved and desired to be a part of God's promises. You may remember that he wanted to have the firstborn blessing so much that he tricked his father Isaac by pretending to be his brother Esau. When Esau learned that his brother Jacob had stolen his blessing, he hated him and wanted to kill him. (Genesis 27)

God had renamed Jacob, Israel, and years after this event happened the family of Esau didn't like the family of Israel and didn't treat them very well.

This is a good place to think about the world in which we live. Wherever we are there are always going to be two kinds of people. Believers, who like Israel (Jacob) love God's promises and put their faith in Him, and unbelievers who like Edom (Esau) despise God's promises and put their trust in themselves.

Now that we have the background of the people of Edom, we are going to look at God's message to them from the prophet Obadiah.

Obadiah 1-9--Edom is judged by God

Let's read verses 3-4 together.

**Q5: What deceived the people of Edom?** (The pride of their heart)

Pride puts ourselves above God and deceives us. Our purpose and desire should always be to put God first and honor Him above all things.

Pride steals God's glory. Edom was full of pride and God was going to punish them.

Obadiah 10-16--Edom's punishment for mistreating Israel

Because Edom was prideful, they did some other things that did not please God. Esau's family had mistreated Jacob's family over many years. Obadiah tells of some specific things they did to God's chosen people.

Verse 10 - Because of violence done to your brother Jacob shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.

Verse 11- Stood aloof (showed no sympathy) when enemies came into Jerusalem and carried off their treasures.

Verses 12-14 - The Edomites rubbed it in when they saw the enemies hurting the Israelites. They even took some of their treasures when the enemies were attacking Jerusalem.

Let's read verse 15 - "For the day of the LORD is near upon all nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head." God saw all the unkind things Edom had done to His people the Israelites and they would be punished.

God sees everything that happens to His children. He will punish those who hurt them.

The last part of Obadiah was good news for God's people. The punishment of God's people would end, and they would return to their land and even own the land that belonged to Edom. They would live in the land forever. However, Edom's punishment would be forever.

All of us are sinners. We all deserve to be punished forever for our sins. In Obadiah God says, "As you have done, it shall be done to you." (verse 15)

Pride phrases-

Let's change these sentences to ones that give glory to God:

1. I am better than everyone on my soccer team. (God has given me the ability to play soccer well. I can help others on my team to learn to play better with the things I have learned.)
2. I am prettier than her. (God created me. It's more important that I act like Jesus than what I think I look like.)
3. I've memorized more Bible verses than anyone I know. (God has helped me to hide His Word in my heart so that I will not sin against Him.)
4. Allow students to create more prideful statements if time allows.

## God's Glory Hopscotch

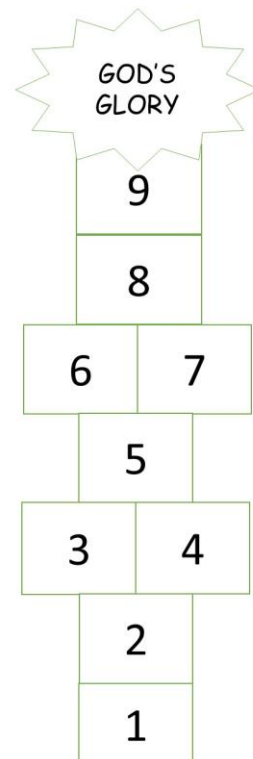
This Hopscotch needs only a bit of chalk or a large roll of paper to play indoors.

Draw the Hopscotch as shown in the photo below.

Give each child a place marker (a rock, small toy, or a coin).

The rules are the same as regular hopscotch but with a little twist. In order to move off the square they tossed/placed their place marker, they need to see if they can turn a negative prideful statement into a statement of humility.

Below are prideful statement cards that can be printed off on card stock so the children can draw their own card from a pile.



**I can do it all by myself!**

**I am better than everyone on my team!**

**I am cooler than her or him.**

**I've memorized more Bible verses than my: (sister, brother, friend)**

**I have better toys than my friends do!**

**I listen to my mom better than my brother does!**

**I saved so much money; I can buy whatever I want.**

**My parents buy me whatever I ask for.**

**I got an A on my test; I am smarter than anyone is in my class.**

**His shirt is ugly; mine is better.**

**I scored more points than anyone did on my team.**

**I am not sorry for anything.**

**I am always right.**

**I never say the wrong words.**

**I scream to get my own way.**

**Fighting with my friends helps me be the boss.**

# JONAH – A STORY OF OBEDIENCE

Read the book of Jonah

Have you ever been told to do something, but you really didn't want to do it, so you kept putting it off or making excuses about that one thing you were supposed to do? Like if, your mom told you to clean your room or tell your brother it's time to feed the dog. I can remember when my mom said it was my turn to do the dishes. I was eight years old when I was added to the rotation of dishwashing between my brother and sister. I not only didn't want to wash dishes, but I also didn't like it. So, I would say "I have to go to the bathroom, or I have homework!" You name it; I would come up with an excuse.

Well, turns out Jonah also had the same thoughts I did but on a much bigger scale. Jonah ran away from the task God told him do. God said, "Jonah, go preach to the people of Nineveh. Tell them that I said they should start believing in Me and start doing the right things I want them to do or else I am going to send fire down from heaven to destroy their city and burn them up."

But...Jonah decided he didn't want to go to preach to the people of Nineveh. Jonah thought all these people were Israel's enemies. Jonah wanted God to send fire down on them and destroy them.

So, instead of preaching, Jonah ran away. He got in a boat and sailed away and (everything was peaceful and calm) ...NOT!

**Q1: Did Jonah know he was disobeying God?**

Because Jonah disobeyed God, God sent a very bad storm to attack Jonah's boat. The wind was blowing; the waves were going up and down and into the boat. This was a very bad storm. The other people on the boat became very afraid. They thought they would die.

Here is where Jonah thinks to himself and he tells the other sailors, "This is because I am disobeying God. I am running away from God. If you want the storm to stop, throw me into the sea and God will save your lives."

The sailors tried to row back to shore but they were stopped because the waves grew stronger and stronger. The sailors prayed and asked God to not make them die for killing Jonah. They knew God and they would do whatever He wanted them to do. They were obedient to God.

## **Q2: Did Jonah know how to swim?**

So overboard went Jonah!

The storm stopped.

God did not want Jonah to die. Jonah still had a job to do that God gave him. So, God allowed a whale to swallow Jonah and keep him safe for three days and three nights.

Sometimes God puts us in a place where all we can do is pray and ask Him for help. A place where we admit what we did was wrong.

The whale was that place for Jonah.



**Q3: You've never been swallowed by a whale, but have you been grounded to your room without any devices and no one to talk to?**

After Jonah prayed a prayer of repentance God told the whale to throw up Jonah from its stomach onto the dry land.

**Q4: Do you obey right away when your parents ask you to do something, or do you wait in your obedience?**

God tells Jonah again "Go to Nineveh and tell them what I tell you." This time Jonah obeyed.

Jonah went to Nineveh and told the people to believe in God and the people did as Jonah said. The people believed God. They decided to fast and think about their sins. They were sorry for all the sins they had committed. All the people of Nineveh did this from the most to the least important. Even the King obeyed and believed God and fasted.

God saw what the people did, and He changed his mind. He did not punish the people.

This is not the end of the story. Along with Jonah learning about his disobedience, Jonah also had a lesson about being angry. When God changed His mind and did not destroy Nineveh because they all turned from their evil ways and believed God, Jonah became very angry. He wanted the people of Nineveh to die. He was so angry in fact that he wanted God to kill him.

**Q5: Do you get angry when you think a sibling, cousin, or schoolmate should get in trouble because they did something wrong, but instead they don't get in trouble?**

God took this opportunity to teach Jonah another lesson, this one was about anger. God caused a shade plant to grow over Jonah's head but in the morning, it died, and Jonah became very angry about that, too. God taught Jonah, "If you get upset over the plant that died, then I can be sorry for a big city like Nineveh with about 120,000 people who did not know they were doing anything wrong."

Jonah learned about disobedience and anger. They kind of go together.

When people ask us to do something we don't want to do and they keep asking us, do we become angry with them and with the task they want us to do?

Some points we learned from Jonah.

- God never gives up on us.
- God hears our prayers wherever we are (Jonah was in a whale)
- God keeps His promises.
- God has love for those who turn from their evil ways and follow Him.
- God is forever teaching us.

**Memory Verse: Jonah 2:7** "My soul gave up all hope, but then I remembered the LORD. I prayed to you, and you hear my prayers in your holy temple."  
(ERV – Easy-to-Read Version)

## Jonah and the Whale Game

Reverse Fishing

Supplies

- A large trash can, bucket, or box at one end of the room (represents Whale)
- A blanket or towel for each student
- An action figure, doll, or stuffed animal (to represent Jonah)

Directions:

1. Students try to launch their action figure (Jonah) into the trashcan (whale's mouth) using only their blanket or towel (waves of the sea).
2. The first student who gets Jonah into the whale gets to make the whale throw up Jonah.

# MICAH – DO JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

**Memory Verse:** Micah 6:8 “He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, To love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah was a prophet who had the courage to stand up for the poor. He stood up against judges, priests, false prophets and rulers who were corrupt. Micah warns the people of the exile to come because of their sin, but also shares the promise of a return from exile afterwards.

Micah warned the people of Judah of their coming captivity for planning evil. They were being punished for their sin and for worshipping false gods; for practicing evil by being violent and taking what didn't belong to them.

**Q1: What are some things you and others might be tempted to love more than God? (Video games, sports, friends, and so on)**

Judah was being dishonest when making money, doing violent acts, lying, evil deeds, etc. All these acts have consequences: having nothing, not being satisfied, hungry, and sick.

God tells us in Micah 6:8 what he wanted the people to do.

To do justly – meaning to be fair and right – do the right thing no matter what.

To love mercy/loving kindness – to be kind and caring to others, forgiving their sins and giving them the things, they need.

To walk humbly with God - to have a relationship with God; knowing that God is in control and provides all things. We can't be arrogant, boastful,

and proud of our own accomplishments, but we need to give the credit to God for the good things we have in our lives.

## Q2. How can we always put God first?

In Micah 7:7 Micah said he was going to wait for the Lord. He would look to Him for help and know that God hears him and will help him.

To help us remember what God wants from us, we are going to **color and decorate this plaque**. Can I get someone to read the words?

As the children color and decorate their picture, talk about what it means to be just, merciful and humble. Ask them for examples of each. Ask them how they can be just, merciful and humble this week.



DO

justly

LOVE

mercy



WALK

humbly

with

your

GOD

Micah 6:8

# NAHUM – A STRONGHOLD IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE

**Memory Verse:** [Nahum 1: 7 \(NKJV\)](#) “The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him”

The SHRILL whistle pierces the air and all the action on the court suddenly stops. Pointing to the offending player, the referee shouts, “Foul!”

All games have rules and when you go against those rules, it's called fouls or penalties. Sporting games have referees, umpires, judges, and other officials whose job is to point out these fouls and penalties.

God created boundaries and laws that rule the entire living world. However, men, women, and children regularly go against these laws and boundaries. God calls this a sin – willful disobedience, or rebellion against His control. God will ultimately judge the world for their disobedience.

This takes us to the book of Nahum. Nahum was another minor prophet. He preached God's message of what was to happen to Nineveh 100 years after Jonah did, because the people forgot about the boundaries, laws, and God. Therefore, God used Nahum to tell the people of Nineveh that the proud and powerful nation would be totally destroyed because of their sins. The end of Nineveh came within 50 years.

God is good, a stronghold in time of trouble; He takes care of those who take refuge in Him. Nahum 1:7

Today we're going to take a look at what a stronghold is and does. We're also going to look at what it means to take refuge in that stronghold of God.

**Q1: Who knows what a stronghold is?**

A stronghold is a place that has been fortified to protect it against attack. Strongholds are designed to a safe place. As believers in Christ, we need to make the LORD our stronghold. He is our safe place and refuge (Psalm 27:1)

As usual what God has made to be good, Satan takes and makes it bad. A stronghold is one of those things. To the world, a stronghold is also an argument, high opinions, and thoughts that are raised against the knowledge of God. These kinds of strongholds are rooted in pride. Anything we trust in besides the Lord can become a stronghold.

Another verse about strongholds is Psalm 18:2 (NKJV) "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

## **Q2: What does it mean to take refuge?**

Refuge is a shelter or protection from danger or distress and a place that provides shelter or protection.

When we take refuge means, we seek out protection from danger.

So, let's put this together. Nahum 1:7 says, "God is good, a stronghold in time of trouble; He takes care of those who take refuge in Him."

When we do what God asks us to do, like we learned from Micah 6:8, "Do justly, Love mercy and Walk humbly with your God," we can take refuge in His Stronghold and He will protect us from the dangers of this world.

## God is My Stronghold Craft

We're making a stronghold with cardboard tubing and flat cardboard.



Materials Needed:

- Cardboard Tubing (paper towel tubes, TP, Foil, plastic wrap tubing, etc.)
- Glue (for strength along with the tape)
- Tape
- Scissors
- Paint
- Paint Brush
- Tee Shirt Cover Up for those who want to paint it.
- Markers, stickers, colored paper for decorations

Directions:

1. Cut 4 pieces of cardboard and 4 pieces of the tissue roll. Your tissue rolls should be taller than the cardboard pieces. Make half-inch marks on all the cut pieces and cut them out like in the picture below.



2. Secure all four edges of the cardboard together with tape to form a square.





3. Cut the tissue rolls from the bottom (at 12 and 9'o clock) up to the level of your stronghold

4. Insert tissue rolls to castle edges using the space you cut.



5. Cut a door space at the front.



5. Paint it if you feel like it.

6. Your cardboard stronghold is ready.

# HABAKKUK'S WATCHTOWER

## MEMORY VERSE:

Habakkuk 2:1 "I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart (*guard post*), And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected." (NKJV)

Habakkuk 2:1 "I will stand like a guard and watch. I will wait to see what the LORD will say to me. I will wait and learn how He answers my questions." (ERV: Easy-to-Read Version)

Questions I want to ask God:

- Why did you make the sky blue and the grass green?
- How does a cloud stay up in the sky?
- How do you keep the stars from falling to earth?
- Why did you create frogs?
- How long did you think about creating man before you created Adam?

These are some of the questions I can't wait to ask God. I remember asking my mom and dad a couple of these questions on a daily basis. I also remember asking my parents lots of other questions like, "Do I have to eat the peas?" I hated peas (and still do) but their answer was always, "YES!"

**Q1: What are some of your questions you want to ask God?**

**Q2: Do you ask your parents questions? What are some of those questions you ask?**

The book of Habakkuk is a conversation between Habakkuk and God. Habakkuk had a lot of questions for God about the time he was living in.

Here are a couple of Habakkuk's questions to God: (Hab. 1:1-4)

1. Why does God seem uncaring when bad things happen?

2. Why do bad people seem to go unpunished?

Habakkuk stood on the watchtower and saw all the bad things that were happening in the city. It made him very sad and confused, but Habakkuk trusted God to take care of him and his people.

Sometimes we see all the bad things that people do and we get sad and confused, but like Habakkuk, we need to trust God and listen for his answer just as Habakkuk did while he sat in his watchtower.

In Chapter 2 of Habakkuk, God answers these questions and has Habakkuk write them down plainly for all to see and to see how we should live. (Hab 2:2)

"Then the LORD said to me, "Write My answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others. This vision is for a future time. It describes then, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed. Look at the proud! He is inwardly not upright; but the just will walk by his faith."

### **Q3: How do we ask God questions today?**

Through Prayer.

Sometimes we need to wait and watch for God answers to our questions and prayers. We need to walk by faith. Pray and wait patiently. Our questions and prayers are not answered instantly like this TV remote (I'll be holding up a TV remote) that changes the channel instantly.

#### **Q4: How does God answer our prayers?**

Through our parents, our teachers, through more prayer, through reading our bibles, and through Sabbath School.

#### **Q5: What happens to all the “bad and evil people”?**

God has a plan for them as well. They will have their chance to change their ways live God's way of life, just like in Amos, Jonah, Micah, and Nahum. God always gives people ways out of their evil ways and rejoices when people turn their hearts toward Him.

After God answered Habakkuk questions, Habakkuk rejoices in who God is and in what He will do.

In **Habakkuk 3:18 – 19**, he writes, “Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like a deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills.”

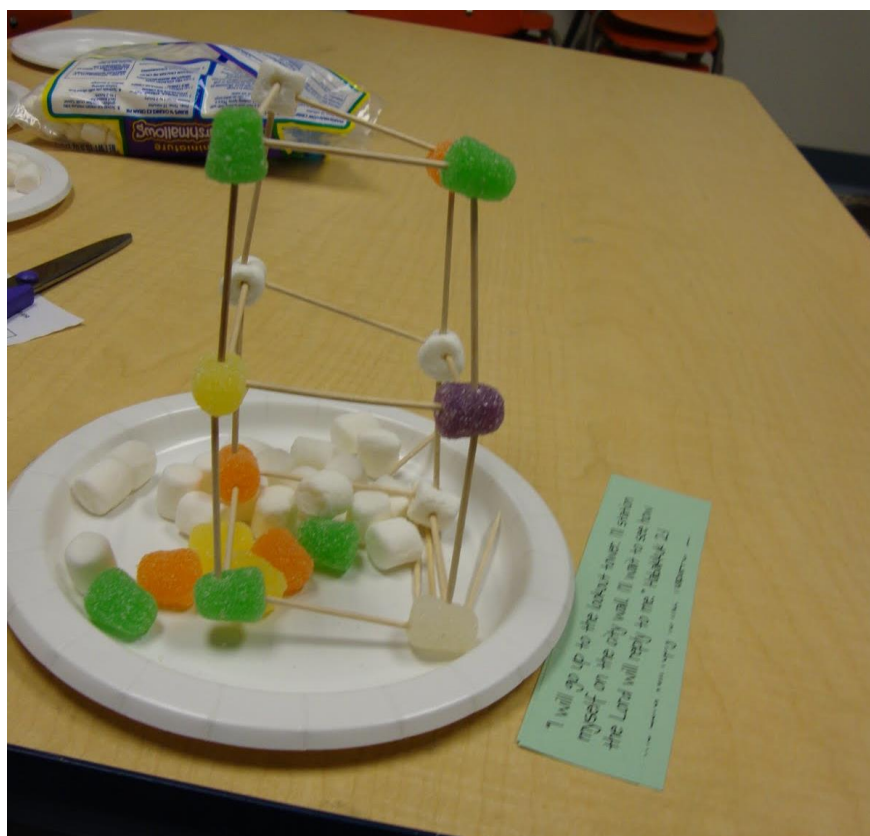
#### **Habakkuk's Watchtower Craft**

Remember our last lesson where we made the stronghold with 4 watchtowers on the ends? Today we are going to make a watchtower out of marshmallows, gumdrops (all kosher) and toothpicks. You can make it as intricate or as open as you like. You can also eat the gumdrops and marshmallows (but then you won't have enough for your sculpture).

Materials needed:

- Toothpicks of various sizes
- Gum drops
- Marshmallows
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Tape

Directions: Have the children build a watchtower out of these materials using the photo as a guide or make one of their own designs. Leftover marshmallows and gumdrops can be passed around as a snack.



When we are finished with our watchtowers, we will be attaching our scripture to them. If children are old enough to write out the scripture on their own, let them; otherwise, have the scripture typed out or handwritten on a strip of paper.

Habakkuk 2:1

I will stand my watch and set myself on the guard post And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected.

# ZEPHANIAH - HOPE

## Memory Verse:

Zephaniah 2:3 "Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger." (NJKV)

Zephaniah 2: 3 "All you humble people, come to the LORD! Obey his laws. Learn to do good things. Learn to be humble. Maybe then you will be safe when the LORD shows his anger." (ERV: Easy-to-Read Version)

Zephaniah's prophecies from God centered on the terrible things that would happen if they continued to worship false gods and idols (stone and woodcarvings they made with their own hands).

**Q1: What other kind of false gods are worshipped today?** (The stars, the earth, animals, television, social media, movie stars, sports stars)

The people in Zephaniah's time only worshipped God on the outside only. They didn't clean their hearts towards God's way of life. They eventually forgot about God and went back to their old ways.

**Q2: What does it mean to worship God on the outside?**

Throughout the book of Zephaniah, God shows us what's going to happen just before the second coming of Jesus Christ. It's not a happy time. It's called The Day of the LORD. It's the time when God punishes all the people for the bad things they've done.

But, as always, God gives all people opportunities to change. Zephaniah also tells the people about the hope they can have if they change from their wicked ways and follow God.

Zephaniah 2: 3 "Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger."

If we do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God, (like we learned in Micah), He will protect us in the day of destruction. We'll be gathered together and hidden in Him just like what Zephaniah's name means--Hidden in the LORD.

**Q3: What does it mean to be "hidden in the LORD"?**

To be "hidden in the LORD" means (you'll be protected from the anger that God will rain down on the people who haven't turned their lives to God and lived God's way of life. Hidden in the LORD also means that God will put a protection around you like he did in the time of the plagues when the people of Israel put blood on their door posts so the angel of death would pass over their homes and none of their children would be killed.)

This is the hope we have because we try to live God's way of life the best we humanly can.

**Q4: What does hope mean?**

**Q5: Do you feel God's hope in your life?**

I feel hope when I learn how important it is that we can teach others no matter how young we are. I also feel God's hope when I get so excited in knowing that when Christ comes back to earth, everyone who ever lived will have the opportunity to live God's way of life, and life will be filled with gladness and happiness because all the evil of this world today will be gone.

**Q6: How can we give this hope to others?**

## Seed Bags of Hope

These bags are to be given away to someone outside our family.

Supplies Needed:

- Chocolate Covered Sunflower Seeds (no food coloring)
- Sunflower seeds to plant
- Little 2 x 3-inch bags
- Cardstock to glue on our scripture.
- A hole punch
- Ribbon or yarn
- Party favor gift bags

Directions:

1. Fill the little 2 x 3-inch bags with a Tablespoon of the chocolate covered sunflower seeds.
2. Fill another little bag with two or three planting sunflower seeds.
3. Open the little gift bag and place both bags into the gift bag.
4. Glue or write out our memory scripture on the card stock.
5. Punch a hole in the corner and thread the ribbon through the hole and tie onto the gift bag.
6. Give these gifts to people in your congregation, your school, your community (neighbors). Explain to them that throughout the Bible, God gives us hope and you are giving them a bit of hope as well. Immediate sweet hope in the chocolate and hope that grows in the planting of the sunflower seed.



# HAGGAI – PUTTING GOD FIRST

**Memory verse:** Haggai 1:5-7 (NKJ) Now, therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: “Consider your ways!” “You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes” Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Consider your ways!”

Haggai is no different than any of the other Minor Prophets we’ve read about during these lessons. God gave him a mission to preach to the people of Judah to consider their ways, to think about what they were doing.

It is sad isn’t it because that’s the message throughout these books. The people of Judah, just like the people today have forgotten to think about what they’re doing, and what’s important in this life. They lost their priority. They forgot to put God first and let everything else fall into their rightful place.

**Q1: What are some priorities in your life?** (mom, dad, siblings, school, pets, playing video games, playing with friends, being on social media, scouts, sports, movies, TV, the list is endless)

Let’s read the entire chapter of Haggai 1 together.

God was with Haggai and God stirred up the spirit in Zerubbabel. The two of them helped the people to think about what they were doing. They had forgotten to put God first.

**Q2: What do you think it means when God says to “Consider your ways”?**

**Q3: Do we still forget what God wants us to do?**

**Q4: Have you noticed a theme for these Minor Prophets?**

## **The Priority Rock Project**

Materials Need:

- Bags of large rocks for each child
- Bags of medium rocks for each child
- Bags of small rocks for each child
- 1 very large rock for each child (Represents God)
- Glass mason jars or plastic jars with lids (must be able to fit the very large rock into its mouth and the jars are the same size) one for each child.
- A tin pie pans for each child (this can be a messy project)

Directions:

1. Make up a jar ahead of time so you'll know just how many rocks the children will need with the jars you use. Make sure when you place the large rock in the jar first you can add in all the other rocks so the lid will close. Play around with it yourself, put in the other rocks first and see if you can add in the very large rock then try to close the lid.
2. Pass out a tin pan and a bag of each of the rocks, 1 very large rock, a jar with lid to each child.
3. Explain to the children that all these rocks need to fit into the jar with the ability to close the lid.

4. Have the children think about their priorities and put in the rocks as they see fit. (You'll be doing this a few times. Most of the children will not choose the very large rock the first time.)
5. As they are working on this, talk to them about your experience in doing the project.
6. Ask questions:
  - What do you think the very large stone represents?
  - What does the lid not fitting right mean about our lives?
  - How can you think about this project a little differently?
  - What are your thoughts about this lesson?
  - Why do you think the people of Judah kept forgetting God?



# ZECHARIAH – BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

**MEMORY VERSE:** Zechariah 4:10 (NKJ) “For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD. Which scan to and from throughout the whole earth.”

Zechariah 4:10 (NLT) “Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel’s hand. The seven lamps represent the eyes of the LORD that search all around the world.”

Zechariah was the prophet who ministered to a small remnant of Jews who returned to Judah to rebuild the temple and their nation. He encouraged the people to finish rebuilding the Temple, but his message went far beyond just the people of his time.

In Zechariah 4: 1-14, we learn about Zerubbabel. He was a man who was born while Judah was in captivity in Babylon. During that time, he was considered as the Prince of Judah. It was Zerubbabel who was given the task from King Cyrus II to rebuild the temple when the people of Judah were released from captivity and able to return home.

Let’s look into this rebuilding of the temple.

**Q1: Have you ever built anything? Maybe a sandcastle, a fort, or even a tower.**

Zerubbabel and the people of Judah went home and began rebuilding the temple. They laid the foundation, and everything was going well. Then some of the older people who remembered Solomon’s temple became sad and said that this temple wasn’t going to be any good because it was smaller than Solomon’s temple. They were telling so many of the other people working on the temple that they became distracted and defeated. They thought if they couldn’t make the temple as big or bigger than Solomon’s temple then they weren’t going to work on it at all.

And, that's what they did. Zerubbabel and the people of Judah who were working on the temple began to forget about this task and started building big homes for themselves. They forgot what they were tasked to do.

**Q2: Have you ever been given a task to do but you forgot about doing it and went to do whatever else you wanted? How did your parents feel about your forgetfulness?**

Just like the world around us today it seems like bigger is always supposed to be better. You get the newest pair of sneakers and then an even better pair come out and you nag your parents to buy those sneakers for you...And you forget about the ones you just bought. Everything in this world we live in is always upgrading.

**Q3: All of you have some kind of electronic device, correct? How often does that device need to update? Or you play your video games and in the middle of the game you get an alert the system needs to update?**

Bigger isn't always better with God. Sometimes the smallest thing is the best thing.

Let's look at these rocks set before you. All of these rocks are unique. Some are large, some are small, some are tiny, but they have one thing in common. They all have a purpose. Just like the temple that Zerubbabel rebuilt, each size of these rocks has a purpose.

(Parents: Gather some rocks of different size and shape for your children to evaluate. Let them hold each of the rocks in their hands. Ask them questions about how each one could be used.)

**Q4: Do you think the task God gave to Zechariah was less than the task that Zerubbabel was given to do?**

## **Q5: Is it easier to build something or encourage people to keep building something they aren't too excited about?**

Okay back to the story of the temple being rebuilt and Zerubbabel being awakened from his forgetfulness.

With the work on the temple being stopped for 16 years and the people of Judah just focusing on themselves and building their own homes, Zerubbabel is finally being awakened from this forgetfulness. He begins again on working on the temple with the encouragement of Zechariah. The temple was smaller in size than Solomon's but God affirmed a greater honor: "The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house," said the Lord (Haggai 2:9).

The glory given to Zerubbabel's temple came many years later when Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the temple halls.

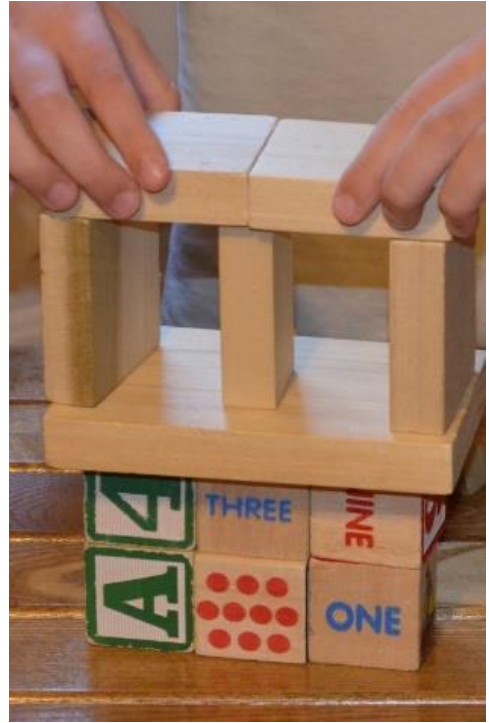
### **Zerubbabel's Temple Activity**

Supplies:

- Wooden or foam building blocks in various colors and shapes for each child.
- Can also use paper towel and TP tubes, small boxes, anything else you can think of that would help the children remember the lesson.
- For older children: Use plastic drinking cups, a deck of cards, marshmallows, graham crackers, pretzels (if using food think about a food glue to hold it together: peanut butter, marshmallow fluff, stiff frosting)

Directions:

1. Place all the materials you've chosen in front of the children so they can choose which they want to use to make a temple. If they choose food, make sure you give them the food glue.
2. Let the children build on their own encouraging each of them to encourage each other about what they've built.
3. Make sure to take photos of each of the temples being built and the finished temple to share with their parents.



# MALACHI – SPECIAL TREASURE

Malachi 3:16-17 “Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. “They shall be Mine, says the LORD of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels, And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him.”

**MEMORY VERSE:** Malachi 3:3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness.

**Q1: Do you have a special treasure?** (Ask the children will bring their special treasures to our class so we can see them.)

**Q2: What makes that item a special treasure?**

**Q3: Did you know that God has special treasures, too?**

We are God's special treasures, jewels of great value.

**Q4: What makes us jewels and special treasures to God?**

Today, we're going to compare how silver becomes valuable with how God makes us his jewels and special treasures.



1. During the silver refining process, the silver has to be put in the middle of a fire where the flames are hottest to take away all the dirt.

God removes all the dirtiness (Impurities) from us, by placing us in the middle of the hot fire through trials just like he did with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

2. During the silver refining process, the silver must not be left in the fire too long.

God makes sure that we are not in the heat too long. He watches over us. He protects us. He knows we have to go through some pain in order to become His jewels.

3. The silver is fully refined when the silversmith can see his image in it.

When God sees us after getting all the dirt removed from this world, does He see His reflection? Does He see only a little bit of it? Sometimes God has to put us back into the fire to continue cleaning us, and that is a good thing because that's when we can be called his special treasures.

## **Special Treasures**

Parental-Teacher supervision required.

Material:

- Clear Plastic Cups, (look for recycling number 6)
- Sharpie Markers in a variety of colors
- Scissors
- Plastic straw
- Awl (grown up use only)
- Ribbon or Yarn in desired color or length

- A toaster oven
- Aluminum Foil
- A small baking tray
- A cooling rack

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Cover the tray with aluminum foil.
2. Give each child a plastic cup, and some multi-colored sharpie markers.
3. Color your cup with the Sharpie markers in whatever design you'd like. Color them completely as possible.
4. With an awl, have a grown up make a small hole in the side at the top of the cup for the ribbon or yarn to go through.

-A. Optional if a Flower is desired: Cut slits in the sides of each using scissors to represent flower petals. Be careful with this step as plastic pieces may fly around.

-B. With an awl, and a grown up, make a small hole near the top of one of the petals for the ribbon or yarn to go through.

5. Place pieces on a foil covered baking sheet and bake 2-5 minutes. Be sure to watch your pieces in the oven, both because it's cool to see them melt and curl up, but also to make sure you don't leave them too long (like God watches us in the fire). Also, it's a good idea to put the fan on or open a window for ventilation because melting plastic can get a little smelly.
6. Optional: If you make more than one cup, you can glue them together with a hot glue gun in the center for a more abstract design.
7. Use the straw to thread the yarn or ribbon through the hole.

You can use your special treasure as a sun catcher, or as a necklace.



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*Church of God Ministries (CGM)*

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