

GCG Sunday School - 5th May 2024

Lesson Outline



Lesson: Mission accomplished? Not yet!

Passage: Ezra 1:1-11, 3:10-13

Big Idea: Some of the Lord's promises came to the Israelites, but they had to wait for the rest.

Main Aim: Remember how the Lord always finishes completing his promises.

Please pray for the lesson preparation, that we and the children would be built up by God's word.

Unless you are at the Greenwich service, you will need to bring a **laptop/tablet** to play the videos. If needed, Jonny can provide a **laptop and a Bluetooth speaker**. 😊

Additional resources: [Mustard Seeds Lesson Plan](#), [St Helen's Sermon](#)

The Passage

Passage context - ["Getting our bearings in Ezra", St Helen's Video \(5mins\)](#)

Israel (Northern Kingdom) has been destroyed. Judah (Southern Kingdom) is in exile. The Babylonians have been destroyed and taken over by the Persians. King Cyrus reigns. The year is 539 BC.

Summary.

Ezra 1:1-11. The Lord changes Cyrus' heart to release the exiles with great wealth.

This looks a bit like all of Jeremiah's promises are being fulfilled! Is it the New Exodus?

New land & people? Tick. Back to Israel. 2:64

New leader? Tick. Jeshua (Joshua). 2:2

Stuff to build the temple? Tick. (Cf. The first Exodus) 1:9-11

Is this the New Exodus, New Covenant, New Temple mega-promise fulfilled?!

Let's see...

Ezra 3:10-13. The bittersweet temple building.

Levites and music? Tick. (Like at the first temple.)

A Psalm of praise? Tick. (Like at the first temple. 2 Chron 5:13)

God dwelling in the temple? **NO!**

Weeping? **Yes.**

For them then.

The promises were partly fulfilled, but they still needed to wait for the full fulfilment.

New hearts, new temple, new exodus, new everything was on the way.

For us now.

We have better, fuller fulfilment of promises: The new Exodus, the new temple (Jesus), a new heart.

But we still need to wait for the full fulfilment, the new creation.

The Age Ranges


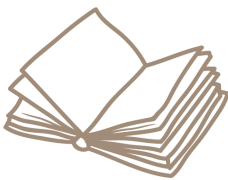



CW (average age 4-5 years) - Prepare the lesson for **all ages**. Then separate **Sailor** and **Officer** groups for **Heart & Hands** teaching.

GR and EC - Personalise **all material** for the Sailors or Officers.


Sailors: Ages 3-6

Officers: Ages 7-11

The Rough Format.

| Get Going 3 min + song | Main Teaching ~15 mins | Heart & Hands ~20 mins | Land The Lesson ~10 mins | Extra Fun Time ~10 mins |
|--|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Welcome & Pray Quick Recap Song | The Big Idea The Main Aim | Activities Discussion | Recap Memory Verse Pray to close. | Optional: Can go mid-session. |

Outline Idea

| | |
|--|---|
|  | Get Going Welcome, Pray, Quick Recap & Song |
|--|---|

At Greenwich and Eltham, the Sailor leader will lead the “Get Going” section.

Welcome and connect briefly with the children

- Ask them a fun question, showing we’re interested in their lives.
 - What’s the best thing you did yesterday/ this morning?
 - What was the tastiest food you ate?

Prayer by group leader

- Let’s listen carefully to what God has to say to us today.

Introduce the theme

- You could ask a question.
 - Can you think of a time you’ve ever waited for something? A bus? A birthday? School to finish?
 - How did you know it was going to come?
 - How did you feel when you got it? Happy/ sad?
- Examples of people waiting a long time. (Pictures on Powerpoint)
 - Solar Eclipse in America this year.
People got ready and waited for it for a long time!
 - In Japan, there’s a butcher known for beef croquettes.
The waiting list to buy them is 38 years long!
 - Israelites, coming home from exile.
They had been waiting 70 years. Then they were told it was time to go!

Link: Today we’ll see the Israelites needed to wait for something that hadn’t come yet.
They would need to wait a really long time!

Very Speedy Recap - Scroll of time

Last week's big idea:

We've been doing a Bible overview, the Israelites are in exile.
But God made promises to bring them back.



Link: We'll see more now!

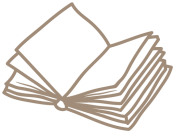
Song

If needed, talk through the words and actions before singing.

Long Long Long Long Time Ago

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-pdrEWaRXc>

GR & EC: Split into **Sailor and **Officer** groups for the remainder of the session.
CW remain together.**



Main Teaching

Teaching the Big Idea & Main Aim.


Have a Bible open throughout for the children to see that we're teaching from God's word, and not from our heads.

Arrive clearly and repeatedly to the Big Idea and Main Aim.

Keep it clear.

Think about how you'll make the lesson interactive by asking questions and getting children involved.

- Video Recap option:

 The Captives Came Home -Ezra 1-3

- Teaching Idea

Tick boxes.

Lay out the promises God made.

Mark whether or not the boxes were partly ticked in Ezra's day, as you tell the story.

Mark that the boxes are now completely ticked, except one.

- Lesson Points

Intro: God's promises.

God promised many things, here are 4 of them.

- A: Return back from Exile after 70 years.
- B: New Temple.
- C: New forever-King.
- D: New Creation.

1. The return from Exile. (Some promises partly given.)

Ezra 1:1-11.

A: Tick.

Fantastic! This is great!

Let's see what comes next.

2. The not-yet full return from Exile. (Promises not-yet given.)

Ezra 3:10-13.

B: Tick? Not really.

C: No.

D: No.

Oh dear. Very sad.

3. The wait for something more. (Some promises still to wait for.)

They know that promise A was kept, they just need to wait for B, C and D.

For us, repeat the same points:

1. Many promises fully given.

Jesus came!

A: Tick (From Ezra's day)

B: Tick. Jesus.

C: Tick. Jesus.

2. Some promises not-yet given.

Death defeated.

D: Not yet!

3. The wait for something more.

D: New creation. It's coming!

We know that promises A, B and C were kept, we just need to wait for D.

- Question ideas to ask while teaching.

1. How do you think the Israelites felt coming back home, finally!

What do you think it was like, to wait 70 years in a bad country?

How hard might it have been to trust God's promises?

2. How did the Israelites feel when the temple was built?

Why do you think they felt sad? (Maybe the Israelites were hoping for all the promises)

3. Which promises did they still have to wait for?

How do you think they felt waiting?

What could have helped them wait all that time?

- Brief Application - Main aim expanded.

- Sailors: You may need to state the application.

- Officers: You can ask questions to arrive there:

How does this help us think differently/ act differently/ talk differently?

What about at school/ at home/ at church?

We know the Lord always finishes giving what is promised.

Hebrews 11:13-16

We can remember how the Israelites partly received what was promised and kept trusting!

- Sailors

Interactive talk through the text.

Helpful questions might be: *What noise do you think it made? How did he feel? What face would she have made?*

Helpful teaching methods: *Make actions to copy at certain points, act it out, place pictures on the wall, go for a walk around the room, use Lego figures.*

- Visual aids (To stick on the wall using Bluetak) - They'll need cutting out.

Ezra 1:1-11

Page 1. Intro. Cyrus sending them home from Exile.

Page 2. Israelites. Return from Exile promise, had it arrived? Yes! Tick!

How did they feel? Happy!

Ezra 3:10-13

Page 3. New Temple promise. Had it arrived? Maybe?

They start building.

They realise, no! It's not here yet, they'll have to wait.

Page 4. Some are very happy about this. Some are very sad.

There are other promises. New forever king, New creation.

Had they arrived? No. They'd have to wait.

Page 5. For us, the promises have arrived. The New temple, the forever king.

That's brilliant! We can be happy!

But we still need to wait for the New creation.

- Officers

Interactive talk through the text.

Helpful questions might be: *Why do you think he did that? How did he feel? What did she get right/wrong? What would you do in his situation?*

Helpful teaching methods: *Act it out, have them draw scenes, shout out the best thing they see in the passage, make a puppet show using paper and card, go for a walk outside, use Lego figures.*

- Use the **lesson points above**.

- Visual aids - They'll need cutting out.

Page 1. Promises in Ezra's day, Cross or tick as you tell the story.

Page 2. Promises in our day. Cross or tick as you apply to us.



Heart and Hands

Think more about the Main Aim with: Activities and discussion.

Activities - Craft or worksheet

- Sailors - [Craft](#).
- Officers - [Worksheet](#)
- Extra games - In the GDrive.

If you finish craft early, you may want to play a game with the remaining time.

Discussion - What would it look like to believe the Main Aim?

Think through with the children what the Main Aim means for our lives.

- Talk through the Main Aim further.
 - Sailors - *Go further than Brief Application.*
 - Officers - *Go further than Brief Application, with questions to provoke thought.*



Land the lesson

Bring everything together with: Recap, Memory Verse and Prayer.

Scroll of time update

Memory verse

“Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back.” Deuteronomy 30:4 (NIVUK)



[Ideas for learning the memory verse.](#) I will provide the verse on laminated paper with Blu Tack.

- Sailors - Song and actions can be sent on Whatsapp.
- Officers - If capable, they can come up with a rap/ spoken word for the verse. They can repeat and improve it each week.

Pray

Encourage the children to pray with you about the Big Idea and Main Aim.

They could **thank/praise God** for it or **ask for help** in believing it.

- Sailors

You could ask for hands up/ thumbs up for those who would like to pray.

You could suggest “Popcorn prayers” - really short prayers. Or “Arrow prayers”- We all shoot up like an arrow at the end. Or you could try the idea we use with Officers.

- Officers

You could pass an object, like a Bible, around the room. When a child receives the Bible, they can choose to pray in their head or aloud.



Extra fun time.

An optional game, which can be played mid-session.

Game idea. Feel free to play something different!

- Sailors - *Grandma’s footsteps, as King Cyrus allows the Israelites to leave.*
- Officers - Temple building relay.
Use the Jenga blocks. Each member of a team can run across the room, place two blocks to build their Temple. Then run back for the next person.

Link (not super-important): Reminds them of the passage.

Sign out with Take Home Sheets

- While signing out with Rollcall, Take Home sheets will be provided to carers and parents about the children's lesson.

Final notes

The following items will be printed for you and brought to the lesson:

- Main teaching pictures and materials.
- Activities: Sailors craft and Officers worksheets.
- Memory verse, laminated.
- Take Home Sheets.

Additional materials will be available:

- Craft materials.
- Pens, paper, glue, scissors.