

LESSON 71

# The Fall of Jerusalem

2 KINGS 23:28-37; 2 CHRONICLES 36:1-23



**BIBLE TRUTH**

**GOD'S JUDGMENT COMES WHEN HIS PEOPLE DO NOT REPENT**

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN**  
Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN**  
Read 2 Chronicles 36 from the Scriptures or read story 71, "The Fall of Jerusalem," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 10 MIN**  
Read the Warning Label  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ various household items with warning labels
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**  
Hunting for Grace  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ pencils and paper
  - ✓ prizes
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 15 MIN**  
Jerusalem Destroyed  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**  
Hope  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ long rope

**TOTAL 80 MIN**

## PREPARING TO TEACH

## TEACHING POINTS

**Judah's last kings are wicked**—This week, we will look at the final tragic decline and fall of the kingdom of Judah. After Josiah dies, two of his sons, one grandson, and another relative follow him as kings of Judah. Each of these is wicked and does not worship God. The end result is that God, after many years of patience and mercy, finally brings foreign armies to attack and humble the kingdom of Judah.

**God sends messengers but the kings don't listen**—God sends many prophets to the kingdom of Judah warning them to repent of their wickedness. But the people and their kings keep slipping back into paganism, never following God for long. They often mock the prophets, despising their words. God uses Jeremiah to warn the people by saying things like, “Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place” (Jeremiah 7:3). He also says, “Hear the words of this covenant and do them. For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice” (Jeremiah 11:6–7). But neither the kings nor the people of Judah repent of their sin. As a result, Jeremiah's prophecy comes true, and the people of Judah get taken into captivity for seventy years.

**Jerusalem falls in judgment**—Not long after Jehoiachin became king, Nebuchadnezzar surrounds Jerusalem, takes the king prisoner, and carries off the rest of the treasures in the temple (2 Kings 24:10–13). Nebuchadnezzar arrests the mighty men and the craftsmen of Jerusalem—Daniel among them—and takes them as captives into Babylon. Zedekiah is made king, but even after all this, he does not listen to Jeremiah. Zedekiah does what is evil in God's sight and even rebels against Nebuchadnezzar. Because of this, Nebuchadnezzar kills many in Jerusalem, burns the temple, sets the city on fire, and breaks down Jerusalem's walls. Those who survive are carried into exile to Babylon.

These were terrible times. God brought such destruction to Jerusalem because his people had ignored his warnings through the prophets for hundreds of years. But there is a glimpse of hope. After the people of Judah are in captivity for many years, the kingdom of Babylon is conquered by Persia. Through Cyrus, king of Persia, God has mercy on Judah. Cyrus declares that the people of God can return home.

**A LITTLE BIT MORE**

*Nebuchadnezzar*

King Nebuchadnezzar was the oldest son of Nabopolassar who founded the Neo-Babylonian dynasty (sometimes referred to as the Chaldean dynasty). He is the king who besieged Jerusalem and carried off its craftsman and other wise and/or prominent men and soldiers. He is the king who had dreams that Daniel interpreted; and he is the king who sent Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace. He also is the proud king who God humbled, making him to eat grass like an ox.

**WHERE IS JESUS?** \_\_\_\_\_

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Read Jeremiah 23:5–6.

God sent his prophet Jeremiah to warn the kings of Judah. The kings did not listen to Jeremiah, and in the end, there was no remedy—God allowed Jerusalem to be ransacked and the people carried into captivity (2 Chronicles 36:16).

God, however, was not finished speaking through Jeremiah. Jeremiah said that God would give his people another king from the line of David. This king would be a “righteous Branch” and he would be called “The Lord is our righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:5–6). Jesus is that King!

**THE LESSON**

**OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN**

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

**BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN**

Read 2 Chronicles 36 from the Scriptures or read story 71, “The Fall of Jerusalem,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

**OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Read the Warning Label**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ various household items with warning labels

Show the items to the children and see if they can guess what the warning label says.

Then read 2 Chronicles 36:15–16 and ask the children if they can guess what the warning of the Lord to Israel might have been.

Read Jeremiah 7:1–20 to them. Then ask the class the following questions:

- **What did the Lord threaten to do to the people if they did not repent?**  
*(Cast them out of his sight [see Jeremiah 7:15] and burn the city [see Jeremiah 7:20].)*
- **Did the judgment have to come or would God give them another chance?**  
*(God would give them another chance [see Jeremiah 7:1–7].)*
- **Even after they rejected God and Jerusalem was sacked, did God permanently cast the people out of his sight?**  
*(No, God brought them back out of captivity and allowed them to rebuild the city and the temple. God was looking forward to the coming of his Son, Jesus. There would be another Jerusalem, another King, and another Covenant, all better than the ones that had failed.)*

**TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

**OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Hunting for Grace**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ pencils and paper
- ✓ prizes

The object behind a quick review of Jeremiah is to see just how much grace the Lord poured out upon his people.

Explain to the class that the prophet Jeremiah prophesied during the reign of the last kings of Judah and through the Babylonian captivity. Read 2 Chronicles 36:11–20 to set the context. Divide the class into seven teams and assign each team one of the passages below. Tell the teams to hunt for grace in their assigned passage from Jeremiah’s prophecy.

Give the teams about three minutes to work, and then ask each one to present how their passage demonstrates the grace of God toward Israel.

Passage	Demonstration of grace
Jeremiah 7:3	God warns Judah and is willing to forgive them.
Jeremiah 11:1–11	God warns Judah in their rebellion.
Jeremiah 15:15	God promises to bring back Israel to their own land after disciplining them.
Jeremiah 22:1–5	God promises to bless Judah if they obey his word.
Jeremiah 29:10	God limits the captivity to seventy years and promises hope for the people of God.
Jeremiah 31:34	God promises a new covenant to his rebellious people.
Jeremiah 31:38	God promises that the city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

**WORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the WORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 15 MIN**

Jerusalem Destroyed

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a picture of the walls of Jerusalem being torn down.

**CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

**BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

Hope

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ long rope

Explain to the children that when Nebuchadnezzar attacked, he took the key leaders of Jerusalem captive. Read 2 Kings 24:10–16. Recruit someone to play the role of Jeremiah and have that person, at your signal, read Jeremiah 23:1–8.

One by one, tie each child's right hand to the rope so that you can lead them around the room. (Be careful not to tie the knots too tightly. If you want, you can tie loops into the rope ahead of time and just have the children slip their hands through the loops.)

Tell the children you are taking them captive and that they should act very sad and say over and over again, "God has brought judgment on us, all is lost." Have them walk around the room twice but then have "Jeremiah" read the verses.

Have the children stop for a minute and ask them how the verses encouraged them. Ask them, "What promises did Jeremiah give the people?" (Jeremiah foretold of the day when God would bring back his people from captivity. But more than that, Jeremiah prophesied the coming of the Messiah. See the "Where Is Jesus?" section of the lesson.)