



Use Week of:

Unit 15 • Session 5

Judah Taken Captive

BIBLE PASSAGE:

2 Chronicles 36

STORY POINT:

Judah did not listen to God's warning.

KEY PASSAGE:

2 Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?
God planned to send Jesus.

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LEADER Bible Study

Warnings had come from the prophets for decades. God patiently waited for His people to turn from their sin. The Northern Kingdom of Israel had fallen to Assyria, and the prophet Jeremiah spared few details when he warned Judah what would happen if they did not turn from their evil ways. (See Jer. 25:1-14.)

But the people of Judah did not change their ways. The kingdom had been declining for years, despite King Hezekiah's—and later, Josiah's—efforts to prompt nationwide repentance. When King Josiah died, the people went back to their old ways, worshipping idols and disobeying the Lord.

The time of judgment had come. God used Nebuchadnezzar—the king of Babylon—to deport the people from Judah to Babylon where they would live in exile for 70 years.

Nebuchadnezzar went to Judah when Jehoiakim was king. He put Jehoiakim in chains and took him to Babylon. Jehoiachin became king, and Nebuchadnezzar came back for him too. Many of the people in Judah were taken, along with treasures from the Lord's temple. Nebuchadnezzar put Zedekiah on the throne in Jerusalem.

The people of Judah were unfaithful to God. Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and God poured out His wrath on Judah. Nebuchadnezzar showed no mercy to the people of Jerusalem. The Babylonians set fire to the Lord's temple and the king's palace. They destroyed the wall around Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar's armies carried most of the people away to Babylon as prisoners; only poor farmers were allowed to stay and work the land. The people were held captive in Babylon, serving the king for 70 years.

Yet God did not abandon His people. The prophet Jeremiah told what would happen next: “The days are coming ... when I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel and Judah” (Jer. 30:3). God was going to save His people from captivity and raise up a new King—a forever King—from the line of David. (See Jer. 30:9.)

The BIBLE Story

Judah Taken Captive

2 Chronicles 36

Josiah, the king of Judah, had three sons: Jehoahaz (jih HOH uh haz), Jehoiakim (jih HOY uh kim), **and** Zedekiah (ZED uh KIGH uh). Josiah had **a grandson** too. His name was Jehoiachin (jih HOY uh kin).

Each of them had a turn at being king. None of them was good like King Josiah.

After Josiah died, Jehoahaz became king. Jehoahaz was not king for very long. He did bad things that God did not like. The king of Egypt took Jehoahaz away and made him a prisoner. So Jehoahaz's brother Jehoiakim became king.

Jehoiakim also did what was wrong. The king of Babylon took Jehoiakim away and made him a prisoner. So Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin became king.

Jehoiachin also did what was wrong. The king of Babylon sent some of his servants to Judah. **They** took Jehoiachin to Babylon. The king of Babylon made Jehoiachin's uncle king.

His name was Zedekiah.

Zedekiah also did what was wrong. He **led God's people to do wrong things** too. **God loved His people.** He did not want to destroy them, **so He sent prophets to talk to the people.** The prophets said, **"Stop sinning! Turn back to God!"** But the people did not listen.



It was time for God to punish the people of Judah for their sin. **God allowed the king of Babylon and his armies to attack the people in Judah**, and many of the people died.

The king of Babylon took everything out of the Lord's temple and burned the temple. They tore down the wall that stood around the city of Jerusalem. The army destroyed anything that was left.

The king of Babylon took the rest of the people to Babylon, and he made them work for him and his family. All of this happened just as God said it would.

Christ Connection: God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God still loved them, and He was going to give His people a good king, just like He said He would. Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our King forever. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin.

Bible Storytelling Tips

• Call their names:

Write the name of each king mentioned in the Bible story on a paper crown including Jesus. Call on volunteers to wear the crowns and stand in front of you as you tell the Bible story. As each new king is mentioned, direct the previous king to sit down. Allow the child wearing the Jesus crown to stand at the end.

• Use people

figures: Collect several people figures to recreate the story as you tell it. Put one figure forward each time you name a new king, then toss him aside to represent his exile. Use a couple of figures as the prophets. Then sweep the whole crowd away.

INTRODUCE the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.

Welcome time

- "Come, Thou Fount" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Choose the Good" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Guide preschoolers to choose the one good thing in each row of bad items.

SAY • Good job choosing the good thing in each set! In our Bible story today, we will hear how one good king was followed by several bad kings. Those bad kings later became prisoners. We will hear the whole story today from the Bible.

LOW PREP

Play reverse red-light, green-light

Choose one child to stand at the front of the group, and line up the rest of the children directly in front of him. Explain that when the child at the front turns his back, children may sneak away from him. But when he says "turn back!" and spins around, children must freeze and face him. If he catches anyone moving when he looks, that child must

return to her starting position. Whoever reaches the other side of the room first may lead the next round.

SAY • These past few weeks, we have been learning about some of the prophets and kings who told people to turn back to God. But the people did not listen. In today's Bible story, we will learn what happened to the people who kept turning away from God.

Vote on rules

Invite a child to name a rule for the group to obey. It can be a real class rule or a made-up one. Write a brief paraphrase of the rule on a large sheet of paper or dry erase board, then take a vote on whether to establish the rule for the day. Make a tally mark for each yes or no in separate columns, then count the vote with preschoolers. Determine whether the rule received more yes votes than no votes to establish the class rule. Repeat with more rules suggested by other children.

- large sheet of paper or dry erase board
- marker or dry erase marker

SAY • Some of these rules are silly! I'm glad we could vote on which of these rules we want to follow. All of God's rules are good! He wants us to follow all of them because He made them for our good and our joy. Some people don't think that God's rules are good or that we should follow all of them. Our Bible story today will explain what happened to people who did not honor God's good law.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Tell children to walk like prisoners to Bible study with their hands clasped behind their backs.

- countdown video (optional)

TEACH the Story



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Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at 2 Chronicles 36 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • God gives us His true words in the Bible. We've heard His message through prophets. Let's find out if the people listened in our Bible story from 2 Chronicles.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline.

Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Judah Taken Captive" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • Even though King Josiah led the people back to God and God sent prophets to warn them, **Judah did not listen to God's warning.** They kept doing wrong things. God allowed the Babylonians to attack His people. God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God still loved them, and He was going to give His people a good king. Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our King forever.

Practice the key passage

Before the session, print each word of the key passage on a separate strip of paper. Place the key passage marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Invite a child to loop the first strip with tape. Invite another child to loop the second strip through the first. Continue adding loops and repeating words until you have completed the key passage paper chain.

SAY • God told His people that He would forgive them when they turned back to Him, but **Judah did not listen to God's warning.** God was right to punish His people because they sinned. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin.

Sing the key passage song, "If My People," and the theme song, "Come, Thou Fount."

- paper
- scissors (adult use)
- marker
- Bible
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "If My People" song
- "Come, Thou Fount" song

Learn the big picture question

SAY • None of the prophets, priests, or kings in our Bible stories could make people love God. ***How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.*** Jesus is our perfect Prophet, Priest, and King!

- Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

Ask preschoolers to stand and cheer when you say an activity that they might like to do. Use the suggestions in the margin or create your own.

SAY • No matter what you like to do, God can use that thing to help people turn to Him. Christian coaches in Baltimore use football to tell people about Jesus. Show the "Team Bible Study Photo."

- "Team Bible Study Photo" printable

Suggested activities:

- sports
- dancing
- cooking
- playing with friends
- playing with animals

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE the Story



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LOW PREP

Sing the story

Sing the following lyrics to the tune of "Father Abraham."

"King Josiah had many sons.

Many sons had King Josiah.

Every one of them did what was wrong.

So God sent King Jesus!"

After the first time through, shout "right arm" and begin waving your right arm as you sing again. Add the left arm after the second time, then right foot, left foot, nod your head, and turn around. Lead preschoolers to perform the motions and join in the song as they are able. Finish by shouting "sit down!"

SAY • The kings and people of **Judah did not listen to God's warning.** God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God still loved them, and He was going to give His people a good king, just like He said He would. Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our King forever. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin.

- "Old Testament Mediterranean Map" from the Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)
- local and global maps

Look at maps

Show preschoolers the distance between Jerusalem and Babylon on the "Old Testament Mediterranean Map." To give children context, find your hometown on a local map

and point out a comparable distance, explaining how long it would take to walk there. Ask preschoolers about distant places they have traveled and show them the places on a map. Talk about what it would feel like to have to stay there for the rest of your life.

SAY • Judah did not listen to God's warning, so God allowed the king of Babylon and his armies to attack the people in Judah. The king of Babylon took the people all the way to Babylon, and he did not allow them to return home. God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God still loved them, and He was going to give His people a good king, just like He said He would. Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our King forever. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin.

Draw with charcoal

Provide charcoal sticks or pencils and white paper. Encourage children to draw scenes from the Bible story with the charcoal. Explain that charcoal is made from burned wood.

- charcoal sticks or pencils
- white construction paper or art paper
- wipes

SAY • Judah did not listen to God's warning, so God allowed the king of Babylon and his armies to attack the people in Judah. The Babylonians burned the temple and destroyed Jerusalem. It was a dark, messy scene, like our pictures. God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God never stopped loving them. He was going to give His people a good king, just like He said He would. ***How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.*** Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our King forever. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin.

Knock down dominoes

• dominoes

Tip: If dominoes are not available, use blocks instead.

Show children how to set dominoes on end in a row. Gently knock down the first domino and watch the rest follow.

Allow children to set up and knock down their own domino sequences.

SAY • When you knocked down the domino, the rest followed. That is how it works with leaders of people, too. When a leader does wrong things, often the people do wrong things. God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God still loved them, and He was going to give His people a good king, just like He said He would. ***How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.*** Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our King forever. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin. Because our King Jesus obeyed perfectly, those who follow Him are rewarded too!



Cheer with pom-poms

• streamers or ribbons
• paper towel tubes or craft sticks
• “If My People” song (optional)
• “Come, Thou Fount” song (optional)

Invite preschoolers to make cheer pom-poms by taping strips of streamers or ribbons to paper towel tubes or craft sticks. Play music and encourage preschoolers to cheer while moving to the music. Lead preschoolers in cheering the big picture question and answer.

SAY • When we think about what Jesus has done for us, we want to tell other people about Him! That’s what missionaries do. They want people to know that God sent His Son, Jesus, to fix what sin broke. God sent Jesus to be our King forever. Jesus took the punishment we should get for our sin. ***How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.***

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Serve two choices for snack: a desirable one and an undesirable (but not dangerous) one. Warn children which snack they should choose and advise them to heed your warning. Talk about how **Judah did not listen to God's warning**. God was right to punish His people because they sinned. But God still loved them.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. Were any of Josiah's sons good kings? (*no*)
2. Did the people listen to the prophets' warnings? (*no*)
3. Who attacked the people in Judah? (*the king of Babylon and his armies*)
4. What did they destroy? (*the temple, the wall around Jerusalem, anything that was left*)
5. Where did the king of Babylon take the people? (*to Babylon*)
6. ***How did God plan to fix what sin broke? God planned to send Jesus.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- desirable snack (optional)
- undesirable snack (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "If My People" song
- "Come, Thou Fount" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers