



UNIT 15 | SESSION 3 | NOVEMBER 2-3, 2019

## 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Lesson

# Jeremiah, Prophet to Judah

**Bible Passage:** Jeremiah

**Story Point:** Jeremiah told God's people about a new and better covenant.

**Key Passage:** "If my people, who bear my name, humble themselves, pray and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land." Chronicles 7:14

**Big Picture Question:** How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.

**KID CONNECT:  
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:  
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:  
20 MINUTES**

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Jeremiah lived in Judah, just north of Jerusalem. At the time God called Jeremiah into ministry, Josiah was king of Judah. Each time God calls someone, He equips that person to do His work. Like Moses, Jeremiah was hesitant: "Oh no, Lord GOD! Look, I don't know how to speak since I am only a youth" (Jer. 1:6). God assured Jeremiah: "I will be with you" (Jer. 1:8).

God called Jeremiah to be a prophet. The people of Judah had broken the covenant God made with them at Mount Sinai. God said through Moses, "If you will carefully listen to me and keep my covenant, you will be my own possession out of all the peoples, ... and you will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation" (vv. 5-6). God's people responded, "We will do all that the LORD has spoken" (v. 8). But Judah was deep in idol worship and other sins. God's judgment was coming for Judah, and Jeremiah's job was to warn them.

Along with the warnings, Jeremiah brought a message of hope. Jeremiah told God's people about a new and better covenant. He prophesied about a day when God would forgive sin and write His law on the hearts of His people. The new covenant promised that God would forgive sin. God forgives sin through His Son, Jesus. Jesus did not come to get rid of the law. (See Matt. 5:17.)

Through His sinless life, Jesus fulfilled the demands of the old covenant. He changes our hearts and gives us power through His Spirit to obey His commands.

## KID CONNECT

### WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

*Play* intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share something they think they'll be able to do once they're older. Could they do it while they are young? Why or why not?

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

*Show* the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

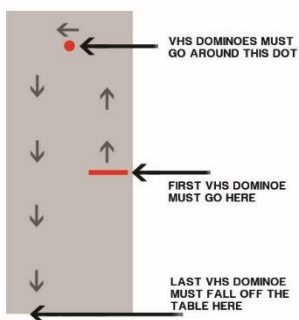
### LARGE GROUP GAME

(SFX: GAME INTRO MUSIC, SFX: RETRO MUSIC)

#### VHS DOMINOES

(30 VHS tapes, 15 tapes per team)

SAY • It's game time again! I need 6 volunteers - 2 boys + 1 Small Group Leader and 2 girls + 1 Small Group Leader. *Hold up a VHS tape* Who knows what this is? Yes, it's called a VHS Tape and believe it or not, this is how we used to watch movies. And we had to *rewind* the movie when we were done watching it! Ask your parents what the word rewind means. OK, here's how you play!



All VHS tapes start stacked in the middle of the table. Once the game starts, teams' race to set up the tapes like dominoes in a "U" shape (or to be more precise, a "J" shape). Once the tapes are all set, one of the players needs to push over the first VHS tape that's on the starting line in hopes that all the tapes fall over in sequence including the very last tape which needs to fall off the edge of the table. If every tape doesn't fall, you need to hurry and

set them back up to try again. The first team to get all of their tapes to fall (including the last tape to fall off the edge) wins!

## WORSHIP

(VIDEO: THIS LITTLE LIGHT, VIDEO: ONCE AND FOR ALL)

SAY • Let's worship God!

## INTRODUCE THE SESSION & GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

(Bible)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues people through His Son, Jesus. Josiah was king when God called a priest named Jeremiah to speak to the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

## TELL THE BIBLE STORY

(CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT, CG: QUESTION 1, CG: QUESTION 2)

(Bible)

Tell the Bible story using the script below.

SAY • When Josiah was the king of Judah, God called a priest named Jeremiah to be a prophet. God told Jeremiah, "I knew you before I made you". Before you were born, I chose you to do very special things. I chose you to be a prophet to the nations." "Oh no, God!" Jeremiah said. "I don't know how to speak in front of other people. I'm just a boy, only a youth."

"Don't say that," God replied. "You will go where I send you and say what I tell you to say. I am with you. I will protect you." For many years, Jeremiah spoke God's message to the people of Judah. He reminded them that God had made a covenant with them: If they obeyed Him, He would bless them. But the people did not obey. Now God had to punish their sin. God said the people would lose their land, their wealth, and their freedom.

Jeremiah explained that people's hearts trick people into wanting things or doing things that God does not want for them. The people did not want to listen to Jeremiah, and Jeremiah was sad. He warned them that God's punishment was coming, but he also said that God had a plan to change His people's hearts.

God promised a new and better covenant so, the people could be saved from their sins. God would write His law on people's hearts and give His people power to obey His commands. God said, "I will forgive their wrongdoing and never remember their sin."

God told Jeremiah to write God's message on a scroll. So, Jeremiah spoke God's words, and his friend Baruch (BAY rook) wrote the words on a scroll. Baruch read from the scroll so that all the people heard God's words. He warned that the king of Babylon would come and destroy Judah. King Jehoiakim sent one of his officials to get the scroll. Jehoiakim cut off each part and threw it into the fire until the entire scroll was burned up.

God told Jeremiah to write another scroll with the same words as the first. Jeremiah told the king, "God is going to punish you, your family, and your leaders for doing wrong things. God warned you that disaster will come to Judah but you did not listen."

## **QUESTION 1: What does this story teach us about God?**

SAY • God called Jeremiah to be a prophet. God promised to be with Jeremiah and to give him the words to say. When God calls someone to do something, God gives that person everything he or she needs to do God's work. Also - through the Spirit - God gives us power to obey His commands, and God will forgive our sins forever.

## **QUESTION 2: How are we like the people of Judah?**

SAY • Just like the people of Judah, we need a heart change so that we can obey and follow God. We obey God because He loves us, not because we are trying to earn His love. We already have it! God forgives our sin through His Son, Jesus. He changes us and gives us power through His Spirit to obey His commands.

## **CHRIST CONNECTION**

**Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.**

SAY • Jeremiah told about a day when God would forgive sin and change people's hearts. Jesus made these words come true. God forgives our sin through His Son, Jesus. He changes us and gives us power through His Spirit to obey His commands.

Jesus lived a perfect life with no sin, obeying all of God's rules perfectly for us. Then Jesus died on the cross for our sin and rose again on the third day to defeat death. After Jesus went back to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit, who lives in believers to help us love and obey God.

## **BIG PICTURE QUESTION** **(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)**

SAY • We have been learning about God's plan. Who remembers our big picture question and answer? [Allow responses.] Great job! *How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He*

*created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.* That means that God knew we would choose to disobey Him, and yet He still chose to create us, give us the freedom to make choices, and send Jesus to rescue us when we chose to disobey. What a good and loving God He is!

## KEY PASSAGE

**(CG: KEY PASSAGE)**

**(Bible)**

Show the key passage slide. Open Bible and lead the kids to read together 2 Chronicles 7:14.

SAY • God is faithful. He promised to help His people and heal their land when they turned from their sin. When we believe in Jesus, God forgives us and begins to heal the damage sin causes in our lives. One day, Jesus will return and fix everything that sin has broken.

## PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

## SMALL GROUP

**Session Title:** Jeremiah, Prophet to Judah

**Bible Passage:** Jeremiah

**Story Point:** Jeremiah told God's people about a new and better promise.

**Key Passage:** "If my people, who bear my name, humble themselves, pray and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

**Big Picture Question:** How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.

## DISCUSSION

(Bible - 3-4 per group)

SAY • Jeremiah said that because of sin, people's hearts are tricky. Apart from Jesus, we would not want to do what is right. Jesus gives us new hearts.

- How should you treat someone who is mean to you?
- Have you ever been surprised by someone else's kindness? How?

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Jeremiah 31. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Jeremiah 31:33-34. Remind kids that Jeremiah's message was to stop sinning and turn back to God before it was too late. Jeremiah told God's people about a new and better promise.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud Jeremiah 31:33-34 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. What did Jeremiah say would be different about the new covenant?

*Remind kids that in the old covenant, the people had God's commands in writing. They disobeyed His commands and made sacrifices every year for their sin. In the new covenant, God was going to write His law on their hearts. He would give His people the power to obey His commands. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Heb. 10:16.)*

2. How does God change our hearts today?

*Guide kids to identify that Jesus came to establish the new covenant. All of us have sinned and, just like the people of Judah, we need a heart change. Only a relationship with God through Jesus Christ changes our hearts and gives us power through the Holy Spirit to obey God's commands. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ezek. 11:19-20.)*

3. Why should we obey God?

*Invite kids to share their ideas. Help them recognize that We should obey God because*

*He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good. We don't have to earn His love. We already have it!* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Eph. 2:8-9.)

## KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

**(Bibles, paper, markers or crayons)**

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to 2 Chronicles 7:14. Lead the kids to read the key passage together. Provide paper and markers or crayons. Assign each kid a key word from the key passage and instruct them to draw a picture to represent the word.

Then lead kids to say the key passage, holding up the pictures for the key words. Challenge them to say the key passage from memory, referring to the pictures as prompts. (Sample key words: people, bear/called, pray, face, turn, hear, heaven, heal, land)

## NEW & IMPROVED

**(paper - 1 per 2-3 kids, pencils, markers)**

Form groups of three or four kids. Distribute paper, pencils, and markers to the groups. Assign each group a different household product (examples: spray cleaner, vacuum, toothbrush, toilet paper). Explain that kids should work together to think of ways the product could be “new and improved.” Encourage kids to design a poster advertising the better product. After several minutes, call on groups to share their advertisements.

SAY • What made each product new and better? Which new product would you like to be able to buy? [*Allow kids to respond.*] In today's Bible story, the prophet Jeremiah told God's people about something that was new and better. The old covenant was written on stone and required sacrifices for sin. The new covenant is written on the hearts of people and gives them the power to obey God. There is no longer the need for sacrifices because Jesus paid for our sin once and for all.

## REFLECTION AND PRAYER

**(Journal Page - 1 per kid, pencils)**

Ask the kids the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Make time for prayer requests and pray for your group. If time allows, have kids complete the Journal Page provided with this session.

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

**(Activity Page - 1 per kid)**

Send home the Activity Page and encourage kids to complete it with their family.