

JUDAH WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE

2 CHRONICLES 36



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 145:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The people of Judah continued to sin and were destroyed by Babylon. Even though God was patient, all sin deserves judgment. God's patience is meant to lead us to repentance. Those who repent and trust in Jesus will escape God's judgment.

STORY POINT: The people's consequence for disobeying God was exile to Babylon.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Growing up, you likely learned that disobedience has consequences. The people of Judah learned that the consequence for their disobedience to God was exile to Babylon. Despite their sin and unfaithfulness, God had been very patient with His people and was slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Not only had God sent the prophets to warn and encourage the people, but He also gave them good kings to help set an example. Still, the people continued to sin and worship idols. In today's text, the people of Judah once again find themselves in the hands of evil kings.

King Jehoahaz, son of the final good king, Josiah, was dethroned by King Neco of Egypt after only three months of ruling. King Neco made his brother, Jehoiakim, king in his place. Jehoiakim, however, was captured by King Nebuchadnezzar eleven years later. Next came his son, King Jehoiachin. He also did evil in the Lord's sight and was quickly replaced by Zedekiah.

King Zedekiah ruled over Judah for eleven years. He is described as a hard and stubborn man who refused to turn to the Lord (2 Chronicles 36:13). In the same way, the people and priests became more and more unfaithful to God.

Because of the sin of the people and their disregard for the many warnings they received, God allowed the Babylonians to destroy the nation of Judah. The Babylonians took all the treasures from the temple and palace and burned them down. This all came to pass just as God had said through the prophet Jeremiah. God's people were captured and taken to Babylon. Yet, hope remained: after 70 years, God promised to rescue and restore His people to their land.

When we disobey God, we also face consequences. For those who have not trusted in Jesus, the consequence is eternal death in hell. The good news is that Jesus bore the consequences for all who trust in Him. The Bible shares how Jesus "bore our sins in his body on the tree; so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Our sin has been paid for by His death and defeated by His resurrection.

As you prepare this week, remember that we serve a God who is faithful to keep His word. Pray for boys and girls to understand the consequences of their sin, so they can experience the gift of Jesus' forgiveness and eternal life.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ “What Doesn’t Belong?” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ clear glass of water
- ☐ various food colors

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ strips of paper, 40
- ☐ staplers, 2



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ plastic cups, 20–30
- ☐ marshmallows, 20–30
- ☐ party blowers, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ “Judah Was Taken Captive” video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ Old Testament Mediterranean Map or world map (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ “Unit 15, Session 4” Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ “A Moment of Vast Opportunity” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ “The Lord Is Good (Psalm 145:9)” song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What’s the longest trip you have taken? How did you pass the time?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What Doesn’t Belong?” activity page.

| **SAY** “Today, we will see how the people of Judah were taken to a new country, called Babylon. They didn’t belong there, but because of their sin, they were taken captive.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: DARKER AND DARKER

Place a clear glass of water on a table and invite the kids to gather around it. Invite one kid to select a color of food color to be added to the clear water. Then ask another kid to add a different color. Repeat this process until the water is no longer colorful, but dark. Prompt the kids to consider anything that might reverse the color of the water.

| **SAY** “Our glass of water started out clear, but the more color we added, the murkier the water became. This reminds me of how sinful choices lead to consequences. The more we choose to disobey God and go our own way, the darker our consequences become. In today’s story, we will discover that the people’s consequence for disobeying God was exile to Babylon.”

☐ OPTION 2: PAPER CHAIN RELAY



Form kids into two teams and give each team 20 strips of paper and a stapler. Provide each kid with a piece of construction paper. Explain that on your start, the first kid will form the first link of a paper chain by stapling a strip of paper into a ring. Then the first kid will pass the stapler to the next kid who will add another link to the chain. Kids on each team will continue to assemble their paper strips into a paper chain using the stapler. The first team to assemble their paper chain wins. As an added challenge, kids could be required to write a word of the story point on their strip of paper before creating the chain.

| **SAY** “Chains remind me of someone being taken as a prisoner. Chains can hold a person captive. Today, we will learn how the people of Judah were taken captive by the nation of Babylon. **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON.**”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m so glad you’re here. Did you bring your Bible with you? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today’s Bible story can be found in the book of 2 Chronicles. [Assist kids in finding 2 Chronicles in their Bible.] As we hear our story, we will learn how Judah was taken captive by the nation of Babylon.

We learned about some of the good kings of Judah, but Judah also had many wicked kings. The bad kings led the people to worship the idols of other nations and turn away from God. Even in their sin, God was patient. But God will punish sin. In our story, we’ll see how **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, help us hear Your Word and turn away from sin. Please give us hearts that love You and want to follow You. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “What is God like? [Allow responses.] God is holy, good, and loving. To be holy means that God is without sin and everything He does is right. God’s holiness will always mean that sin must be punished. And God is good to punish sin. It would be wrong for God to allow evil and sinfulness to never be punished. In His love, God disciplines His children so they will turn away from their sin and trust in Him. Today, as we learn about the consequences Judah faced for their sin, we can remember how Jesus faced the punishment we deserve for our sin. Even though Jesus never sinned, He took the punishment for sin in our place. God shows He is holy, good, and loving through Jesus. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “We have already learned how the Northern Kingdom was destroyed, and the people were taken captive to Assyria. Judah, the Southern Kingdom, was all that remained of God’s people. While God sent prophets to Judah to tell them to repent of their sin, the people remained stubborn and did not repent. The prophets said God would judge their sin by sending the nation of Babylon to destroy Judah. Today, we will see that **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON**. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Chronicles 36. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Judah Was Taken Captive.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JUDAH WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE

“Even though the people of Judah continued to sin, God gave them chance after chance to turn from their sin and return to Him. He **sent prophets to warn and encourage them**. He gave them good kings who did what was right and set good examples. **But God’s people did not listen**. They hated God’s words and mocked His prophets. The people continued to sin and worship idols.

Josiah was the last good king of Judah. His son, Jehoahaz (jih HOH uh haz) was only king for three months before God allowed the king of Egypt to take him away. The king of Egypt made Jehoahaz’s brother, Jehoiakim (jih HOY uh kim), king over Judah.

Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of God. So, God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to attack him and take him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar also took some of the riches of God’s temple to Babylon.

Jehoiakim’s son, Jehoiachin (jih HOY uh kin), became king in his place. He did evil in the sight of God and was only king for three months. Nebuchadnezzar sent for him and brought him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar told Jehoiachin to bring even more riches from God’s temple. **Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah (zed uh KIGH uh), Jehoiachin’s brother, king over Judah.**

Zedekiah also did what was evil in the sight of God. He did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah. **Under Zedekiah’s leadership, the people became more and more sinful like the other nations.** They dishonored the Lord’s temple in Jerusalem.

Because the people continued to sin and rebelled against God, God allowed the Babylonians to destroy the nation of Judah. Their army attacked and conquered them. They took all the treasures from God’s temple and from the king’s palace. They burned the temple and the palaces and tore down the wall of the city. **King Nebuchadnezzar took the people who survived the attack to Babylon to be servants. Jeremiah had warned God’s people about this, and now his words had come true. God said the people would be captives in Babylon for 70 years.**

Christ Connection: The people of Judah continued to sin and were destroyed by Babylon. Even though God was patient, all sin deserves judgment. God’s patience is meant to lead us to repentance. Those who repent and trust in Jesus will escape God’s judgment.”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Display a map: Point to Babylon (E1) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Or, point to Iraq on a modern-day map.

Active listening: Invite kids to cover their eyes, every time they hear the phrase, “did evil in the sight of God.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God showed the people of Judah faithfulness and patience by giving them multiple chances to turn away from sin. Who did God send to warn His people and tell them to turn back to Him? **[Allow responses.]** God sent prophets to warn His people, but they did not listen to the prophets. The people continued to sin and worship idols.

The last four kings of Judah were wicked. They led the people away from God, so each king was punished for his sin. **God is holy, loving, and good**; He will punish sin. Jehoahaz was removed as king of Judah by the king of Egypt. Then Jehoiakim became king of Judah. Who did God allow to attack Jerusalem when Jehoiakim was king? **[Allow responses.]** God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to attack Judah and take Jehoiakim to Babylon.

Next, Jehoiachin became king, but he was punished for his sin too. He was also taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Finally, the last king Zedekiah was also punished for his sin. Because of his sin, and all the people of Judah’s sin from all the years, God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to attack Jerusalem again. The walls, temple, and palace of Jerusalem were destroyed. What was the people’s consequence for disobeying God? **[Allow responses.] THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON.** Even though God was patient, all sin deserves judgment. God’s patience is meant to lead us to repentance. Those who repent and trust in Jesus will escape God’s judgment. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ We all deserve punishment for our sin, but through Jesus, we don’t have to face the punishment we deserve. God made the way for us to be right with Him through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Anyone who calls on the name of Jesus will be saved (Romans 10:13). ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 15, Session 4” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can we know that God will always be there for us, even when we sometimes feel He isn’t?
2. Why is trusting in Jesus the only way we can be with God forever?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Play the missions video, explaining how many people in North Africa and the Middle East need to hear the gospel. Invite kids to point out how the cultures in the video may be similar or different to their own.

SAY “ In the video, you may have noticed how the land of Northern Africa and the Middle East



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

is desert-like. The video also pointed out how many people in North Africa and the Middle East are Muslim or Jewish. A woman named Vera is a missionary to this area and is working to share the gospel with people who are Muslim. However, she faces some challenges. Oftentimes the people are not interested in hearing about Jesus. There is also the threat of persecution for Christians. And it can be difficult to reach people who live in remote, desert areas. Vera needs the wisdom of God to best know how to work among the people and build relationships that will allow the people to be open to hearing the good news about Jesus. ”

Pray for Vera as she continues to build relationships with the Muslim people. Ask God to open the hearts of the people of North Africa and the Middle East so they will be willing to trust in Jesus and be forgiven of sin.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, print a copy of the key passage from the Key Passage Poster on 8.5-by-11 inch cardstock. Cut the cardstock into 10–12 puzzle pieces. Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

SAY “ Our story reminds us that sin has consequences. But God is good, and He has provided the way for His people to come back to Him through Jesus. Anyone who trusts in Jesus will live with God forever. ”

Provide kids with the puzzle pieces and challenge them to put them together to complete the key passage. Then invite kids to remove one of the word pieces and say the key passage aloud, filling in the missing word. Repeat, until each of the word pieces is removed.

Lead kids to sing “God Is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Dear God, thank You for being patient with us, even when we sin. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your only Son to die for our sins. Help us turn away from sin and follow Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Chronicles 36. Explain that the book of 2 Chronicles mainly focuses on the kings of Judah from the time of Solomon until the people of Judah were taken into exile by Babylon.

Consider pointing out the location of Babylon (E11) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ God is so patient and kind. He kept warning His people, over and over again, about their sin and what would happen if they did not repent. But the people ignored God’s words through the prophets.

Today, God has given us His Word, the Bible, so we can know Him and recognize our need for a Savior. Like Judah, we continue to sin and cannot save ourselves. However, we don’t have to ignore God’s words like Judah did. When we read the Bible or hear the gospel, we can trust in Jesus and be saved from our sin. Jesus took the punishment we deserve when He died on the cross. Anyone who trusts in Him will be forgiven of sin and receive eternal life. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Does God give people unlimited chances to repent and follow Jesus? Why not? ”

Remind kids that the people of Judah were given many chances to turn away from sin, but God eventually brought judgment on them. Explain that the Bible tells us that we will all eventually die. If people die without trusting in Jesus as Savior and Lord, it will be too late for them to repent. Encourage kids with the mission of sharing the gospel with a lost world.

SAY “ Why does sin deserve to be punished? ”

Prompt kids to remember that God is holy, good, and loving. God is right to punish sin because sin is wrong and goes against Him and His ways. Tell kids that God’s standard is perfection, but because no one is perfect, we all deserve punishment for our sin. Share how only Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life.

SAY “ Did God ever stop loving His people? Why not? ”

Tell kids that God never stopped loving His people. Even though many of the people were taken to Babylon, God took care of them in a foreign land. God showed His faithful love by telling them that they would be free from captivity after 70 years. Years later, God would send Jesus, who came from the family of Judah, to die on the cross for our sins so that everyone who trusts in Him will be saved.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: KNOCK IT DOWN

Place a line of 10–15 cups on two tables. On top of each cup, place a large marshmallow. Form kids into two teams and assign a table of cups to each team. Provide each kid with a party blower. Line up each team at an end of the room opposite their table. On your start, send the first kid from each team to knock off the marshmallow on the first cup by using their party blower. After the first kid returns to his team, the next kid will run to the second cup and knock off the marshmallow using her party blower. Repeat, until one team is the first to knock off every marshmallow. Play again, as time allows. Consider adding more cups and marshmallows for an added challenge.

SAY “Today, we learned how King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon knocked down the walls of Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. The destruction of Jerusalem gives us a picture of what sin does: it leaves us broken and without hope. But God loves us so much that He didn’t leave us in our brokenness. He sent Jesus to restore or rebuild what sin destroys. Through Jesus we can be made right with God and have an everlasting hope.”

☐ OPTION 2: REMOVE THE KING



On a dry erase board, draw two stick figures with a head, two eyes, a nose, a mouth, two arms, two legs, and a crown. Form kids into two teams. Explain that you will ask review questions from the Bible story and the first team to raise their hand will get to answer. If they get the question right, erase one part of their “king” such as an eye or a leg. If they get it wrong, nothing is erased. The first team to erase their king entirely wins. Example questions may include:

- Who was the last good king of Judah? (Josiah)
- Who was the last king of Judah? (Zedekiah)
- Who destroyed Jerusalem and took the people captive? (Nebuchadnezzar)

SAY “God removed the last four kings of Judah and allowed Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to destroy Jerusalem. **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON.** Our sin has consequences too, but when we trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and made right with God. Christians want to be like Jesus and obey God.”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

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

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.