

K-5th Grade
Judah Taken Captive
Parent Devo & Bible Study

BIBLE PASSAGE: 2 Chronicles 36

STORY POINT: Judah ignored God's prophets and was captured.

MEMORY VERSE: 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.

Parent Devotional

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, worshiping 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.)

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The last four kings of Judah came from King Josiah's family. His three sons—Jehoahaz (jih HOH uh haz), Jehoiakim (jih HOY uh kim), and Zedekiah (ZED uh KIGH uh)—and his grandson Jehoiachin (jih HOY uh kin) each ruled as the king of Judah for a short time.

Jehoahaz was not king for long. He did what was evil, and the king of Egypt came and made Jehoahaz a prisoner. The king stole silver and gold from Jehoahaz. Then he put Jehoahaz's brother Jehoiakim on the throne.

The king of Egypt took Jehoahaz to Egypt. When Jehoiakim was king of Judah, he too did what was evil. The king of Babylon attacked Jehoiakim, made him a prisoner, and took him to Babylon. The king of Babylon stole some of the things from the Lord's temple and put them in his own temple.

When Jehoiakim was taken away, his son Jehoiachin became king of Judah. Jehoiachin was king of Judah for just three months. He too did what was evil. The king of Babylon sent for Jehoiachin and brought him to Babylon. The king of Babylon made Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah king of Judah.

Like his brothers, Zedekiah did what was evil. He led the people of Judah to do evil things too. The prophet Jeremiah warned Zedekiah that God would punish him, but Zedekiah did not listen.

God was angry with the people of Judah. They sinned and did not obey God. But God loved His people. He wanted them to turn back to Him. God sent prophets to warn the people, but the people did not listen. Finally, it was time to punish the people of Judah for their sin. God allowed the king of Babylon and his army to attack Judah. Many of the people died. The king of Babylon took everything out of the Lord's temple and carried it back to Babylon. Then the king and his army burned the temple. They tore down the wall around the city and burned the palaces. Anything they did not take with them was destroyed. All of the people who were still alive were taken back to Babylon. The king forced them to be slaves. Everything the prophet Jeremiah had warned about happened, just like God said it would.

Christ Connection: God was right to punish His people for their sin, but He kept His promise to provide a king through David's family. Ultimately, God punished our sin through His Son, Jesus, and made Him our King forever.

Memory Verse:

"if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14