

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Jeremiah And The Scroll

THE BIG YEAR SEASON 3 WEEK 2

1

WHAT YOU NEED

- Sheets of blank A4 paper
- Old tea bag(s)
- Sticky tape
- 2 sticks (you can find 2 straight sticks in your garden or use skewers, chop sticks, or anything else similar you have around your home)
- Koki/Crayon
- OPTIONAL: Matches/lighter, a piece of ribbon

LET'S READ THE BIBLE

Take turns reading the following passages:

- Jeremiah 36:1-8
- Jeremiah 36:14-19
- Jeremiah 36:20-26
- Jeremiah 36:27-28
- Jeremiah 36:32

2

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

God promised His people that He would always take care of them. All the people had to do was to follow and worship God and try their best to obey Him. If they did this, then God promised to never let the enemies win over them and hurt them. God's people used to be divided into two kingdoms. They had two names – Israel and Judah. The kingdom of Israel did not obey God. They worshiped idols and treated each other badly. Enemies came and destroyed the kingdom of Israel.

The other kingdom, Judah, had many kings over the years. Some were good kings who worshiped God; others were not good and worshiped idols. At this point in the story, Jehoiakim was still the ruler of Judah. The King of Egypt had appointed him, and he did not obey God. Although he ruled eleven years, he only did what the king of Egypt wanted him to do. Judah was in terrible shape. King Jehoiakim did not respect or worship God.

God sent the prophet Jeremiah to the kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah spoke the word of the Lord. God told Jeremiah, "Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you." Before the invention of books, both the Old Testament and New Testament were written and copied onto scrolls. This scroll that would be written could then be read and copied, even if Jeremiah himself was not there. This was a sure way to make sure the message of God would be kept alive.

So, Jeremiah asked his helper, Baruch, to help him. Jeremiah would say the words from God and Baruch would write them down on a scroll. Soon the scroll was filled with the messages from God. The message the Lord gave Jeremiah was that if the people did not stop worshiping idols, the big city of Jerusalem would be broken down and the beautiful temple and houses would be burned.

The king and many other people were already angry with Jeremiah. They did not like it when Jeremiah told them that they needed to repent of their sins. To repent meant that they would have to say they were sorry for what they had done wrong. They had to say they were wrong in following idols and not God. But that was not all. Repenting is not just saying you are sorry for the bad things you have done. Repenting means that you have to stop doing the bad things and then try to do good things. They needed to start following God and do what God wanted them to do.

3

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Since so many people were angry with Jeremiah, he knew that they would probably not listen to him. So, Jeremiah asked Baruch to take the scroll to the temple where there were crowds of people gathered. Jeremiah asked Baruch to read the words written on the scroll to all the people gathered at the temple.

Baruch went to the temple and read the message of the Lord to the people gathered there. While the people were listening, some of King Jehoiakim's officials also heard the message. They knew that King Jehoiakim would not like the message. King Jehoiakim liked to worship idols and to disobey God. He would not want to say he was sorry for the bad things he had done. He would not want to change and do good things. The officials knew that the King would not want to hear a message from God about repenting.

Some of King Jehoiakim's officials invited Baruch to come and read the message on the scroll to them. After they heard the message, they asked Baruch where he got the message. "I got it from the prophet Jeremiah, of course."

The king's officials knew that they had to take the scroll to the king, and they knew that the king would be angry. Before they took the scroll, they told Baruch to get Jeremiah so both of them could go and hide.

Then the officials took the scroll away from Baruch and told the king about it. The king sent someone to go and get the scroll and read it out loud. The king grew very angry when he heard God's message. He did not like it when the message said that he should repent.

Then the king noticed the fire. Because it was winter, there was a big fire burning to keep everyone warm. Now, whenever a few lines of the message were read, the king would use a scribe's knife and cut off that part of the scroll. Then, when a little more was read, he would cut that part off and throw it in the fire. Soon the whole scroll was burned up! The king did not respect the word of the Lord!

The king sent men to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch, but no one could find them. They were safely hidden. Soon another message came to Jeremiah from the Lord. Again, Jeremiah said the words out loud, and Baruch wrote them down. This time on a brand new scroll. The new scroll contained all of the words that the old one did, and it also had a special message for King Jehoiakim. Bad things would happen to the king because he did not obey the words of the Lord and repent of his sins.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- Which prophet said the message of God out loud while his helper wrote it on a scroll?
- What does repent mean? (*To say you are sorry for what you have done wrong and then stop doing it*)
- What did King Jehoiakim do with the scroll when his servant read from it?
- After the king burned the scroll, what did Jeremiah do?

5

LET'S GO A BIT DEEPER

- God instructed Jeremiah to write down His message (His Word) on a scroll. Why do you think God wanted His Word written down? *(Lead the conversation towards God wanting to preserve His Word for Jeremiah's generation but also future generations, including us - so that we can also hear God's Word and turn to Him).* Is it important to read the Bible for ourselves? How and when do we do this on our own and as a family?
- At the time that Jeremiah lived, not many people could read or had access to scrolls - it was usually only the priests and teachers (Rabis) who could read or even get their hands on a scroll to read. What did Jeremiah and Baruch do to make sure the people knew what God was saying to them? *(Baruch read the scrolls out loud to the people gathered at the temple).* How do we hear God's Word today? *(By coming to church and listening to the preacher or our Kids Church teacher).* Do you think it is important to go to church and listen to God's Word being preached/taught? Do we do this often enough as a family?
- It's all good to read God's Word and to hear God's Word at church, but we also need to make sure that we understand God's Word and allow it to come into our hearts and change us. The people of Judah and the king needed to understand God's Word to them and allow it to come into their hearts and change them. They needed to hear and understand that what they were doing was wrong and then repent and turn back to God. How are we as a family making sure that we understand God's Word and allow God's Word to change us? *(Lead the discussion towards spending time talking about God's Word/what was preached so we can understand it better - like what you are doing right now 😊)*

6

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

Pray together:

- Thank God for His Word, the Bible, and that even today, many years after God's Words were written down, we can still learn from it.
- Pray that God would help you as a family to make time to read God's Word together, to go to church regularly to hear God's Word being preached/taught, and to make sure that you understand God's Word and that it goes into your heart and changes you into the kind of people God wants you to be.

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LET'S HAVE SOME FUN

- Say: "We are going to make a scroll that we can display in our home to remind us of what we learned today."
- Take a few A4 sheets of paper and use an old tea bag to colour the paper to make it look old - wet the tea bag and then wipe it all over the page until you are happy with the colour, then allow it to dry out. You can use as many sheets of paper as you would like to and make your "scroll" as long or short as you prefer.
- OPTIONAL: You can burn the edges of the paper to make it look even more authentic - NB please do not allow your kids to do this unsupervised
- When the sheets of paper are dry, attach them to each other with sticky tape (put the sticky tape on the back of the pages) to form a scroll (one continuous sheet of paper)

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN

- Attach your 2 "sticks" to the 2 ends of the scroll by rolling the edge of the paper around the stick and then sticking it down with tape.
- Write these 3 things onto your scroll - you can space them out any way you like:
READ GOD'S WORD
HEAR GOD'S WORD
UNDERSTAND GOD'S WORD
- Roll up your "scroll" by rolling the paper around the sticks on both sides until they meet in the middle.
- OPTIONAL: You can tie your scroll together using a piece of ribbon if you would like to.
- Display your scroll somewhere in your home as a reminder of what you've learned today.