

LESSON PLAN

JEREMIAH

Jeremiah 1, 20, 26, 36-38

Lesson Memory Verse: Jeremiah 1:8 - "Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord."

Lesson Aim: God has promised to be with us, so we must not be afraid.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Have you ever been afraid when you were alone? Maybe you were afraid of the dark because you did not know what would happen in the dark. Maybe you were afraid of some people that looked like they would hurt you. Maybe you were afraid of a storm that looked like it was going to hurt or even kill you. Can you tell me of something that made you afraid when you were alone?

HE (for Authority): Did you know that Christians are never alone? That is right! The Lord said He would never leave them so they never have to be afraid of bad people (Heb 13:5-6). Our memory verse tells us what the Lord said to Jeremiah. He told him not to be afraid of his enemies, even though they looked mean in their faces. The Lord promised to deliver (protect) Jeremiah from them when they would try to kill him.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our Bible lesson today we will study about Jeremiah and see how the Lord protected him from his enemies even though they mistreated and fought against him.

I. Promise of Deliverance (Jeremiah 1:18-19)

God had a difficult job for Jeremiah to do. He was to tell the people that they were going to be captured by Babylon and carried away into that land. He was to tell them that they should surrender without fighting because they were being punished by God in this way for their wicked sins. Of course, many of the people did not want to believe Jeremiah and they would make much trouble for him. But the Lord said He would be with Jeremiah to protect him from these wicked people when they would try to kill him.

WE: The Lord will be with all believers and He will protect them if they are obedient to Him. He will protect us so that we do not need to be afraid.

II. Persecution in Stocks (Jeremiah 20:1-13)

When Jeremiah preached what God wanted him to preach, many people were upset with him. Pashur, the chief governor of the house of the Lord, hit Jeremiah and put him in the stocks for a night. But that was not all that Jeremiah suffered. There were others who wanted to persecute him (20:11) and even kill him (18:23). They watched for any opportunity to hurt him (20:10). As a result, Jeremiah decided not to preach anymore. He must have thought the Lord was not protecting him. But God's Word was in his heart and it burned like a fire. He could not forget that God had called him to preach to these people, so he went back to preaching, even though they did not like God's message (20:9). Once more, he trusted the Lord to protect him (20:13).

WE: We may feel like Jeremiah some days when our friends laugh at us as we tell them about God's way of salvation. We may think that the Lord has forgotten us and is not protecting us after all. Maybe we will feel like quitting. If we do, remember that Jeremiah did not quit for long. He went back to the job that the Lord gave to him and trusted Him to protect him in any way that He wanted to do it. Will you keep witnessing for the Lord as Jeremiah did?

III. Passion of Rage (Jeremiah 26:1-24)

When Jeremiah told the people that God would destroy Jerusalem and even the temple, they were angry and wanted to kill him (26:1-11). Jeremiah assured them that he had told them exactly what the Lord had told him. Then he told them to repent. He also showed them that he was not afraid of them. He told them to do with him as they wanted, but if they killed him they would bring innocent blood upon the city. They would be guilty of murder. As a result, the princes defended him and would not let the people put him to death (26:12-19). However, when another prophet preached the same kind of message as

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Jeremiah, he became afraid when the people talked about killing him and he fled to Egypt. He did not trust the Lord and so the Lord did not protect him from death. The king found him and ordered that he be killed (26:20-23).

WE: Will we trust the Lord or will we be afraid and run? If we are afraid, we show others that we do not trust the Lord. He will protect us if we trust Him.

IV. Penknife against Scripture (Jeremiah 36:1-32)

The Lord told Jeremiah to write in a book the words that He had spoken to him. These words were against the sins of His people and the punishment He would bring on the nations of the world (36:1-2). After he had done this, he told Baruch, his scribe, to read these words from the scroll in the temple because he had been forbidden to go to the temple (36:5-7). When the leaders heard these words of the Lord against their sins, they were alarmed and wanted their king (Jehoiakim) to hear them, too. When the book was read to the king, he took his knife and cut the Word of God in pieces and threw it into the fire that was before him (36:20-25). Then the king wanted to punish Baruch and Jeremiah, probably with death, but the Lord hid them (36:26). Although the king destroyed the first book that Jeremiah wrote, the Lord commanded Jeremiah to write another one, which he did (36:27-32). God's Word cannot be permanently destroyed.

WE: We need to believe the Bible is God's Word. We know that it cannot be permanently destroyed. It will last forever because Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Mt 24:35). If we are faithful to God's Word, God will be faithful to us and protect us.

V. Prison of Mire (Jeremiah 38:1-13)

When Jeremiah told the people that the Lord was going to let the Babylonians take the city of Jerusalem and that they should surrender right away, they were angry with Jeremiah and wanted the king to put him to death (38:1-4). King Zedekiah let the princes do whatever they wanted with Jeremiah and so they put him in a deep dungeon filled with mire at the bottom. When Jeremiah was let down into this awful place, he sank down into the mire (soft mud), and there he was left to die (38:6). But the Lord did not forget Jeremiah. Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian in the king's house, pleaded with the king to take Jeremiah out of that awful dungeon. The king listened to him and told him to take thirty men and pull him out, and Jeremiah was saved from death.

WE: The Lord may let us suffer for Him, but He promises to be with us and protect us from death until it is time for us to go home to Heaven and be with Him. Can we trust the Lord to protect us even when we are suffering? It may be hard to do, but it is what we should do.

BE (for Action): What does the Lord say in our memory verse that He will do for us? (He will be with us to deliver us.) Does that mean that we will not suffer? (No) What does it mean? (It means that no one can take away our lives until God wants to take us home to be with Him in Heaven.) What can you do to remove your fears? (Believe the Lord will deliver us and then trust Him to do it every day.) One way to learn to trust the Lord and lose your fears is to memorize the memory verse for today's lesson and then think about it every day, especially every time you are afraid. Will you do that? I will check next Sunday and see how many of you have memorized this verse. I hope that you all do it and that you will never forget it.