

LESSON PLAN

JUDAH CAPTURED

Jeremiah 16, 39, 52

(Cf. 2 Kings 24-25; 2 Chronicles 36)

Lesson Memory Verse: Romans 5:8 – “God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Lesson Aim: God punishes sins, so we need Jesus to save us from God's punishment of our sins.

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

KEY (for Attention): The story is told of a shepherd that had an unusually faithful sheep dog, which found many lost sheep for him. One day two sheep had foolishly wandered away from the flock and got lost, but they were not missed until the shepherd counted his sheep that evening. It so happened that the night was a miserable, stormy night, but the sheep had to be found or they would die before morning. So the shepherd went to his faithful sheep dog and said, “Two sheep are missing! Go and find them.”

The dog obediently left her warm comfortable kennel where she had been sleeping and went out into the cold, stormy night to hunt for the lost sheep. When she found one of them, she brought it home. The shepherd praised the dog for her good work, but then said, “There is one more sheep missing! Go again!” The faithful dog searched her master's face and then obediently turned and went out once again into the stormy night.

This time the dog stayed out a long time before she returned, but once again she did her job and safely brought back the other lost sheep to the shepherd. He patted her head and praised her for her good work and then took the lost sheep to the fold. The faithful dog turned to go back to her kennel, but just outside the door, she fell over and died. She had given her life in obedience to her master to save the lives of two foolish sheep. Did they deserve to have this faithful dog die for them? No, but the price was paid and they were saved from certain death.

This is a sad story, but the story of Jesus is even sadder. In the story of Jesus, we were like the two foolish sheep that went astray in our sins and got lost. We deserved to die and go to Hell, but God sent His Son to earth to save us from Hell. Our memory verse will tell us what Jesus did to save us from Hell.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse tells us that God loves us, even though we have sinned against Him, and He wants to save us from the punishment of our sins. God could not change His law to save us, so He had to punish our sins. How could He save us? He sent His Son, Jesus, to take our sins and be responsible for them. When He did this, He had to be punished and die in our place. We should have died on the cross, but He died on the cross for us. Now we must believe Jesus took the punishment for our sins and receive Him as our Savior. If we do not receive Jesus as our Savior, then we will have to be punished for our sins.

Words and phrases explained:

“Commended His love” – God showed or demonstrated His love

“Yet sinners” – God loved us when we were His enemies.

“Christ died for us” – Jesus Christ did not die for good people, but for sinners. We all are sinners.

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 see how God punishes sin.

I. Judah's Wickedness – Jeremiah 16:11-12

Judah left the true God and worshipped false gods like their fathers before them had done. But the people in Jeremiah's day did worse than their fathers. These people not only worshipped the golden calves and Baal like their fathers, but they also worshipped the queen of heaven, the sun, moon and stars and they worshipped Molech. The worship of Molech caused the people to sacrifice one of their baby sons before this false god by burning the baby to death. Judah became very wicked as she worshipped these false gods, but she loved her sin so much that she refused to repent and leave her sin. Therefore, God punished the nation by letting her enemies destroy her...

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WE: We must love God and hate our sins. God has given us the Ten Commandments, so we might know when we have sinned against Him and against our neighbors. Do you know any of these commandments? Let us see how many of them you can name. (They are found in Exodus 20.) These commandments cannot save us from being punished forever in Hell, but they show us how wicked we are. If you have told a lie, you are a liar. If you hated someone, you are a murderer. If you have stolen anything, you are a thief. If you have used God's name in cursing or even in expressing surprise or disgust, you deserve to die. That shows us how wicked we are in God's eyes.

II. Judah's Warning – Jeremiah 16:13, 16-21

Judah was warned again and again about the punishment that she would receive for her sins. Since she would not turn away from her sins, Judah would be cast out of her land and taken to Babylon where she could worship other gods day and night, if she wished, but she would not be able to worship the true God at His temple in Jerusalem. If they refused to surrender and go to Babylon, God would allow their enemy to destroy their country and force them to go to Babylon as captives. If they would try to hide in their country or in other countries, God would help their enemy to hunt for them, find them and bring them to Babylon as captives. God promised that He would not let any of them escape the punishment of their sins.

WE: We also are warned about the punishment of our sins. We are told in the Bible that we will be sent to Hell and punished with fire forever, if we do not turn from our sins and ask Jesus to save us from our punishment. We may try to hide from God, but we will not succeed. He sees everything that happens in the heavens above or on the earth below. He will find us and send us to Hell. Listen carefully to God's warning and turn from your sins and ask Jesus to save you. God means what He says and says it because He loves you and wants to save you.

III. Judah's Whipping – Jeremiah 52

Jerusalem was Judah's capital and it was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar (52:4). The Lord had sent him to punish Judah for her sin as He said He would. After one and a half years all of the food in the city was gone and they had to surrender (52:6). Zedekiah and a few of his men tried to escape, but they were captured. His sons were killed before his eyes, and then his own eyes were put out. Then he was bound in chains and carried off to prison in Babylon where he remained until he died (52:7-11). The Babylonians then burned the houses of Jerusalem, even the Lord's house, and also broke down the walls of Jerusalem (52:12-14). Finally, the Babylonians took the people captive to Babylon (52:15), and also took most of Jerusalem's wealth to Babylon (52:17-23).

WE: We will be wise if we learn to hate sin from learning about the punishment that Judah received for her sin. We, too, will be punished if we do not want to leave our sins and ask Jesus to save us. We will lose everything and will go to Hell. What a terrible punishment!

BE (for Action): You do not need to be punished in Hell for your sins. You can escape because Jesus has already been punished for you. You can escape the fires of Hell, if you will ask Jesus to save you from your sins. Do it today! It may be too late tomorrow.