



Materials I Need:

Memory Verse:

This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes, its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."
Jeremiah 17:5-8

The Prophet Jeremiah
The People Judah
The Prophecy God's punishment is exile to Babylon
The Principle Godliness is the goal, Not popularity

Aim Questions:

1. **Who does Jeremiah warn about Babylon?** (*Judah*)
2. **Who is the last king of Judah?** (*Zedekiah*) **What is he known for?** (*Provoked Babylon to the point that they are laying siege upon the city of Jerusalem. He also failed to recognize Jeremiah as God's prophet, he turns to him probably because he is the only prophet whose word has come to pass.*)
3. **God offers a chance of escape. How can the people of Judah escape?** (*leave the city and surrender to the Babylonian raiders.*)
4. **God gave Jeremiah a vision that communicates his future plans for the Israelites. What was the vision?** (*The good figs are the remnant; those who God will protect and prosper in their Babylonian captivity. The bad figs are the leaders, including Zedekiah, who have consistently led people away from God's truth guided by their own self-deluding prophets.*)
5. **Who will you follow? Do you tell people what they want to hear or what God wants them to hear?** (*The truth is not always popular. Can you be a truth teller of the Word of God?*)

Hook:

- FIG NEWTONS.** Bring in a bag of fig Newtons for a snack. What are figs? How are they farmed? Can you remember another lesson where figs were mentioned? Perhaps it was a fig farmer. Listen to today's Adventure for Jeremiah's vision. Did God give a fig? Of course He did! [small joke.]
- JEREMIAH CLAY POTS.** This week, the students will break their pots as Jeremiah broke his, as an example to the children of Israel of the coming judgment. Ask them about last week, what they learned and why the broken pot this week?
- JUMP ROPE REVIEW.** Review the 4 P's as the Bible students arrive this morning.
- THE SHEPHERD.** Read about the Shepherd in "A SHEPHERD LOOKS AT THE 23RD PSALM" by Phillip Keller. When Jeremiah talks about bad shepherds, who does he mean? **3JER21JR.GF1**



Book:

Presentation Ideas -



TREE OF KINGS. Use the tree of kings to see the progression of leaders of the Israelites. How many were good leaders? Who wanted a king, God or the Israelites? Be careful what you ask for, you might get it. **3JER21JR.GF2**



JEHOIAKIM. King of Judah **3JER21JR.GF3**



JEHOIACHIN. King of Judah **3JER21JR.GF4**



FIG BASKETS. These two pictures represent Jeremiah's vision: the good figs and the bad figs. **3JER21JR.GF5-6**

Bible Adventure -

Have you ever wished you were a king? Can you imagine yourself living in a fine palace, surrounded by people who were ready to carry out your every command? It would be an interesting experience, wouldn't it? It would be a big responsibility, without a doubt!

The kings who ruled Judah during Jeremiah's lifetime had a big responsibility, too. God had given them leadership over His people, to guide and protect them. These kings were supposed to be spiritual leaders of God's people, setting an example of obedience to Him. They were supposed to bring justice and care for those who were wronged. From what you've heard of Jeremiah's prophecies so far, have Judah's Kings done what God had asked them to do? No, they certainly have not. Let's take a look at what Jeremiah had to say about these Kings.

After King Josiah, the good king of Judah, died, his son Jehoahaz, also known as, Shallum ruled Judah for only three months. Because Jehoahaz did not honor God, Jeremiah predicted that he would be taken captive and never return to Jerusalem alive. Then after Jehoahaz came King Jehoikim to rule. Even though he was also Josiah's son, Jehoikim did great evil to the people of Judah, making them build for him a great palace, and paying them nothing for their work. God's Word to Jehoikim through Jeremiah was that God had expected the king to do what was right, just and defend the poor and needy. But, all Jehoikim cared about was getting what he wanted. Because of his sin, Jeremiah continued to say, when King Jehoikim dies, no one would be sad. There would be no fancy funeral. He would be dragged out of the city like a dead donkey.

Jehoikim's son Jehoichin was the next king of Judah. Jehoichin was also a wicked king, not caring for God's ways. God said that even if Jehoichin were a very valuable ring on His finger, He would pull him off because of his sin. God said that Jehoichin would be handed over to the Babylonians, and taken to a foreign country where he would die.

The last King Jeremiah writes about is Zedekiah. Zedekiah had become boastful and confident in the strength of Jerusalem, thinking that no one could attack them. Judah thought they were too mighty for anyone to touch. Zedekiah had false prophets who told him that no harm would come to Judah. These prophets claimed their messages were from the Lord. Zedekiah and the people listened to them. Because the people were so proud and disobedient, God pronounced judgment on them. God told them that He would allow the Babylonians to attack Judah and take many people captive. This would not be a captivity of just a few years. Jeremiah predicted that the people would be slaves in Babylon for 70 years. Just think of it, imagine yourself being taken captive as a baby and being given your freedom 70 years later! You would be quite old by the time you were released from captivity.

This was God's judgment on Judah and her wicked kings. But even in the midst of judgment we see God's mercy. He promised, in the future, to gather His people together from all the lands He has sent them and He will tenderly care for them. He promised a King for His people who would rule wisely and do what was just and right in the land. The people would live in safety under this King who would be known by the name "The Lord our Righteousness." Can you guess who He is? If you guessed Jesus Christ, the Messiah, you are right. Though God's people had been disobedient and God had to judge them, He was looking toward their future. God gave Jeremiah an interesting vision that told something of His plans for

that future. God showed Jeremiah two baskets of figs. One basket had very good figs, ripe and ready to eat. The other basket had figs that were in very bad shape, so bad they could not be eaten. God explained that the good figs were the people of Judah who were sent away to Babylon. Even though it was a long, difficult time for them, God would use it to teach them to obey and honor Him as before. The bad figs were Zedekiah, his officials, and his false prophets who led the people away from God's truth. They did not listen to Jeremiah, God's true prophet. The people did not like Jeremiah's message. They followed prophets who told them what they wanted to hear. They didn't want the truth, they wanted comfort.

Do you sometimes fall into the same trap? Do you try to avoid people you know will be honest with you about your sin? Do you like to hang out with kids who think everything you say and do is all right, even when you know it's not? Or do you have a Jeremiah in your life, someone who will lovingly tell you when you've messed up? That's real love, because it's the kind of love God shows us. Yes, He loves and accepts us, but He also warns us about sin, because it can destroy us. Remember that in your relationships with others. If you lovingly give someone a warning about sin, it may hurt them, but it will keep them from a larger hurt later. Let's try to be the kind of friend that God is to each of us.



Look:



PICK THE PROPHET. [TO TELL THE TRUTH] Have 3 teachers sit at desks or at a long table in front of the class (possibly dressed in robes and head scarves). Attach numbers 1,2, and 3 in front of where the teachers will be sitting. Pass out small pieces of paper and pencils to the students. See **3JER21JR.GF7** and cut the questions from the top of this sheet. Give these to the students who will be addressing the teachers as "Prophet #1, #2, and #3. There will be two "false prophets" and one plays Jeremiah's role. Have the students write the number of the true prophet on their paper as soon as they know. When questions have all been answered, have the "true" prophet reveal himself by standing up. You can improvise and add to the questions and answers on this sheet.



MAZE. Help the Israelites who listened to Jeremiah, God's prophet. The people need to get from the center of Jerusalem to the Babylonian raiders encampment. [Notice there are several ways to get there.] Many people don't want to believe God's Word when they hear it because it seems to hard. The Israelites had several opportunities to listen, but only a few did. **3JER21JR.GF8**



SKIP IT. Cross out every other letter to reveal the memory verse, Jeremiah 17:5-8. It is a long one and you only have one more week. How are you doing teachers? **3JER21JR.GF9**



Took:



P's. The four P's is a little ditty to help you remember the prophet, people, prophecy and principle of each book of the Old Testament that we are studying this year. You can jump rope to each little ditty if you can do that rhythm thing!


The Prophet is Jeremiah
The People are from Prophecy . . . God's Punishment
Exile . . . to Babylon
The Principle . . . godliness goal
Popularity No.
These are the 4 P's
Got 'em from Jeremiah
Now it's time . . . to jump out.




MEMORY VERSE. Cut out the verses & attach them to 3x5 cards. Work on memorizing this scripture during the week. You only have one more week to work on this verse. **3JER21JR.GF10**

 **Aim Questions:**

1. **Who does Jeremiah warn about Babylon?** (*Judah*)
 2. **Who is the last king of Judah? (Zedekiah) What is he known for?** (*Provoked Babylon to the point that they are laying siege upon the city of Jerusalem. He also failed to recognize Jeremiah as God's prophet, he turns to him probably because he is the only prophet whose word has come to pass.*)
 3. **God offers a chance of escape. How can the people of Judah escape?** (*leave the city and surrender to the Babylonian raiders.*)
 4. **God gave Jeremiah a vision that communicates his future plans for the Israelites. What was the vision?** (*The good figs are the remnant; those who God will protect and prosper in their Babylonian captivity. The bad figs are the leaders, including Zedekiah, who have consistently led people away from God's truth guided by their own self-deluding prophets.*)
- Who will you follow? Do you tell people what they want to hear or what God wants them to hear?** (*The truth is not always popular. Can you be a truth teller of the Word of God?*)
-

 **PRESIDENT.** What are attributes of good and bad leaders. List them on the board or overhead. Ask students what they would do if they were elected President of the United States?

 **TREE OF KINGS.** Review some of the Kings of Israel. What are some of their attributes you remember? **3JER21JR.GF2**

 **BE LIKE A TREE.** *Paul and Denise Smith copyright 1994 Integrity's Hosanna! Music/ASCAP*

I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the Father
To keep me strong
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the Father
To help me grow
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord.

The deeper the roots go
The better the fruits grow
The Blessings bloom out
For all to see
The deeper the roots go
The more my life shows
That Jesus is the Lord of me.

(Repeat Chorus and verse)

I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the Father
To keep me strong
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord.

A Shepherd Look at Psalm 23
by Phillip Keller
3JER21JR.GFI

An excerpt taken from Phillip Keller's book:

No wonder Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd-the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." And again "I am come that ye might have life and that you might have it more abundantly." From early dawn until late at night this utterly self-less Shepherd is alert to the welfare of His flock. For the diligent sheepman rises early and goes out first thing every morning without fail to look over his flock. It is the initial, intimate contact of the day. With a practiced, searching, sympathetic eye he examines the sheep to see that they are fit, content, and able to be on their feet. In an instant he can tell if they have been hurt during the night-whether any are ill or if there are some which require special attention.

Repeatedly throughout the day he cast his eye over the flock to make sure that all is well.

Nor even at night is he oblivious to their needs. He sleeps as it were "with one eye and both ears open" ready at the least sign of trouble to leap up and protect his own.

This is a sublime picture of the care given to those whose lives are under Christ's control. He knows all about their lives from morning to night.

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits-even the God of our salvation." "He that keepeth thee will not slumber or sleep."

In spite of having such a master and owner, the fact remains that some Christians are still not content with His control. They are somewhat dissatisfied, always feeling that somehow the grass beyond the fence must be a little greener. These are Christians-one might almost call them "fence crawlers" or "half Christians" who want the best of both worlds.

I once owned an ewe whose conduct exactly typified this sort of person. She was one of the most attractive sheep that ever belonged to me. Her body was beautifully proportioned. She had a strong constitution and an excellent coat of wool. Her head was clean, alert, well-set with bright eyes. She bore sturdy lambs that matured rapidly. But in spite of all these attractive attributes she had one pronounced fault. She was restless-discontented-a fence crawler.

So much so that I came to call her "Mrs. Gadabout."

This one ewe produced more problems for me than almost all the rest of the flock combined.

No matter what field or pasture the sheep were in, she would search all along the fences or shoreline (we lived by the sea) looking for a loophole she could crawl through and start to feed on the other side.

It was not that she lacked pasturage. My fields were my joy and delight. No sheep in the district had better grazing.

With “Mrs. Gad-about” it was an ingrained habit. She was simply never contented with things as they were. Often when she had forced her way through some such spot in a fence or found a way around the end of the wire at low tide on the beaches, she would end up feeding on bare, brown, burned-up pasturage of a most inferior sort.

But she never learned her lesson and continued to fence crawl time after time.

Now it would have been bad enough if she was the only one who did this. It was a sufficient problem to find her and bring her back. But, the further point was that she taught her lambs the same tricks. They simply followed her example and soon were as skilled at escaping as their mother.

Even worse, however, was the example she set other sheep. In a short time she began to lead others through the same holes and over the same dangerous paths down by the sea.

After putting up with her perverseness for a summer I finally came to the conclusion that to save the rest of the flock from becoming unsettled, she would have to go. I could not allow one obstinate, discontented ewe to ruin the whole ranch operation.

It was a difficult decision to make, for I loved her in the same way I loved the rest. Her strength, beauty, and alertness were a delight to the eye.

But, one morning I took the killing knife in hand and butchered her. Her career of fence crawling was cut short. It was the only solution to the dilemma.

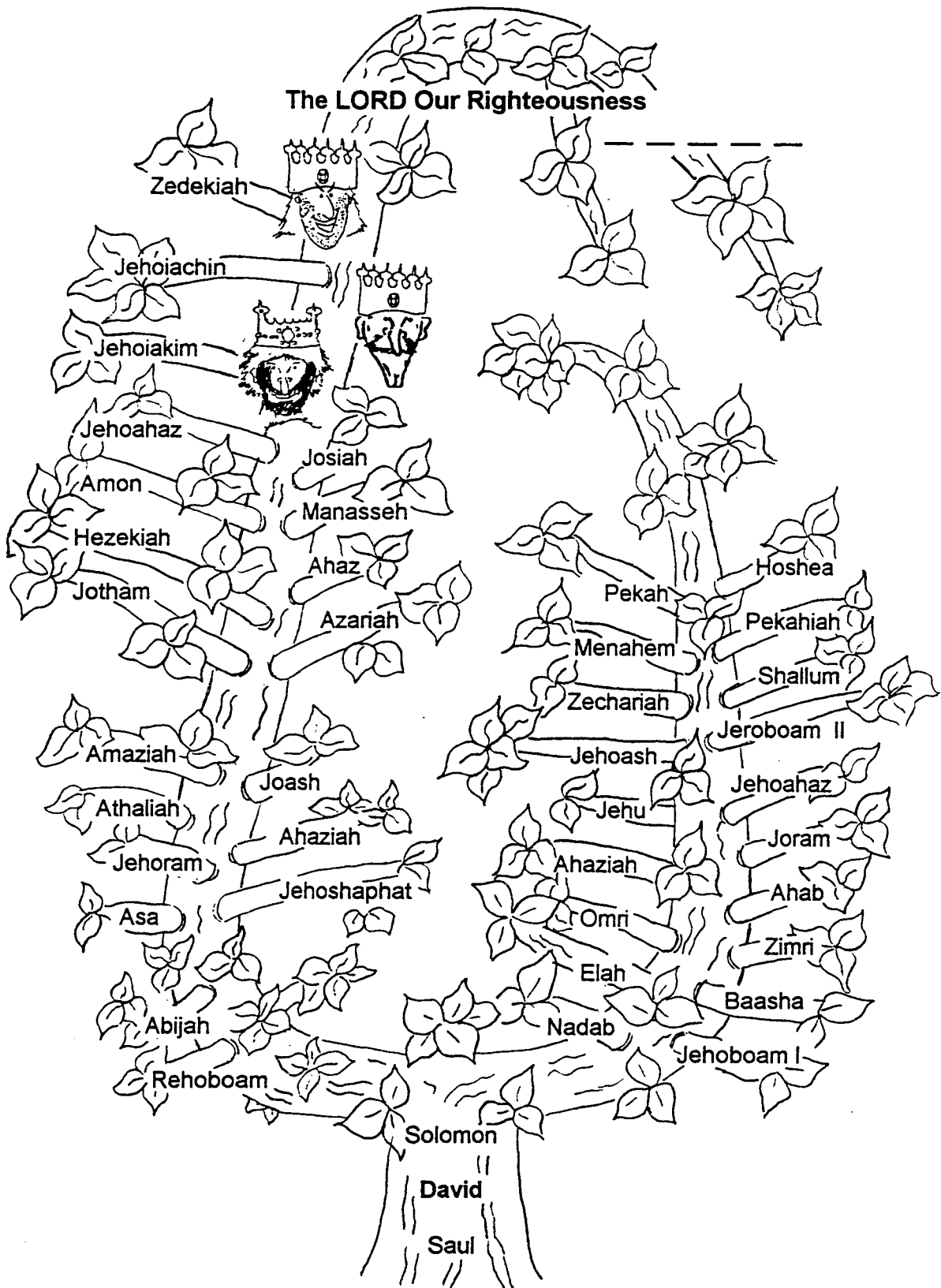
She was a sheep, who in spite of all that I had done to give her the very best care-still wanted something else.

She was not like the one who said, “The Lord is my Shepherd-I shall not want.”

It is a solemn warning to the Christian, non obedient, the one who wants the best of both worlds.

Sometimes, in short order they can be cut down

TREE OF KINGS



"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

King Jehoiakim would not change to God's righteous ways.

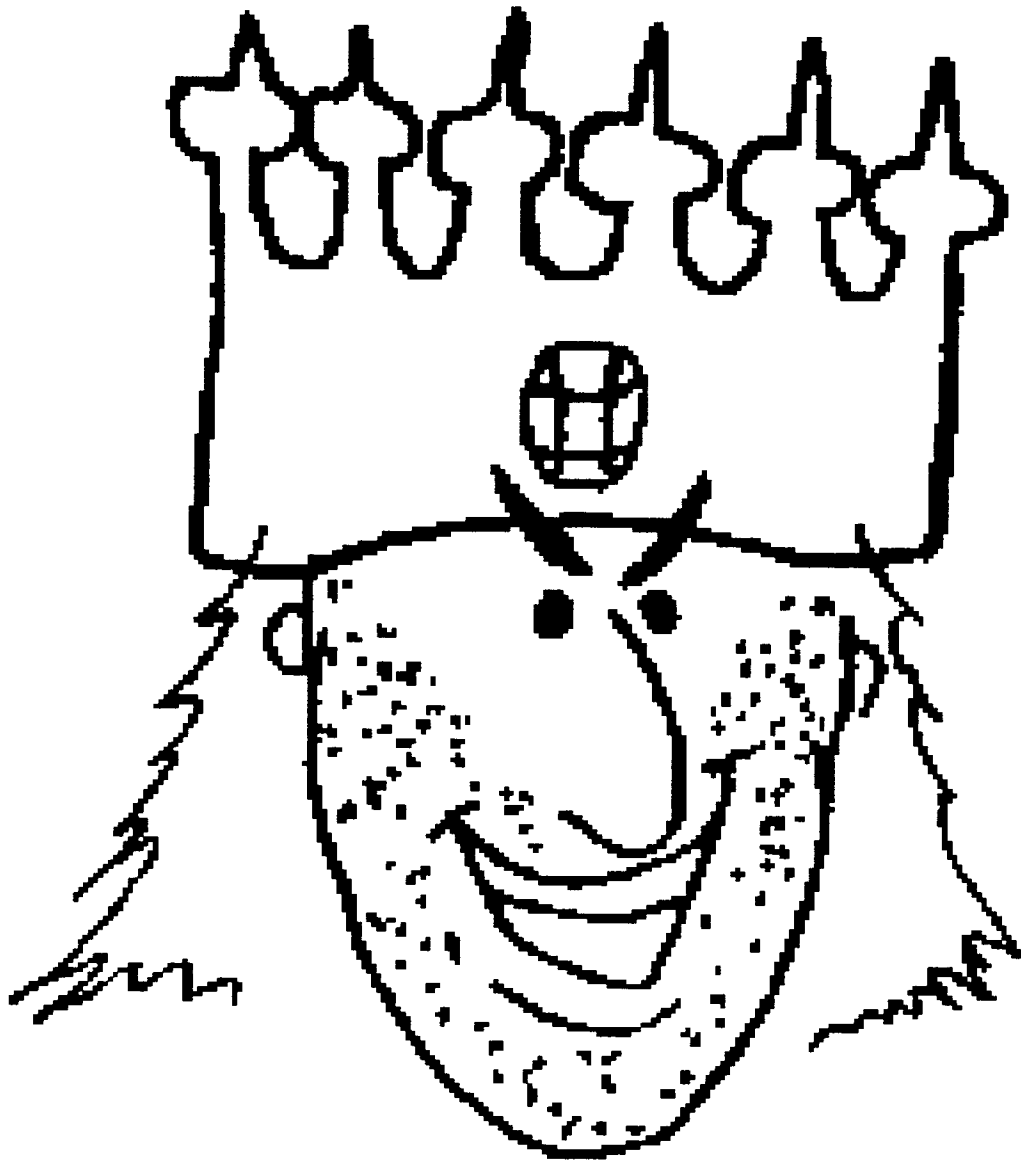


3JER21JRGF3

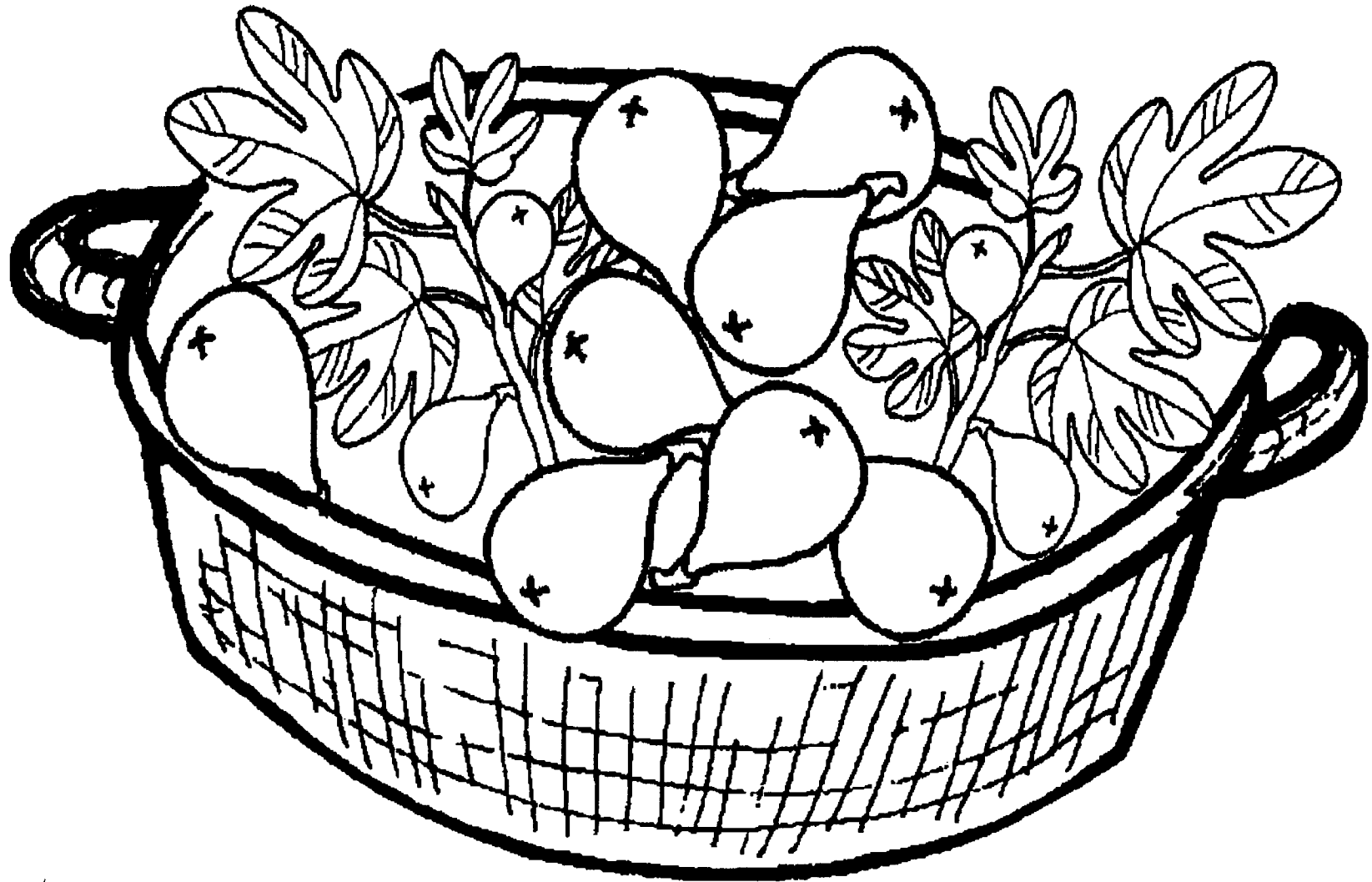
King Jeholachin would not change to God's righteous ways.



**King Zedekiah
would not listen to Jeremiah's warning!**



3JER21JR.GF4



3JER21JR.GF5



3JER21JRGF6

PICK THE PROPHET

#1 Will Jehovah God save us from Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon?

#2 Should we stay in Jerusalem and fight?

#3 What should we do to save our lives?

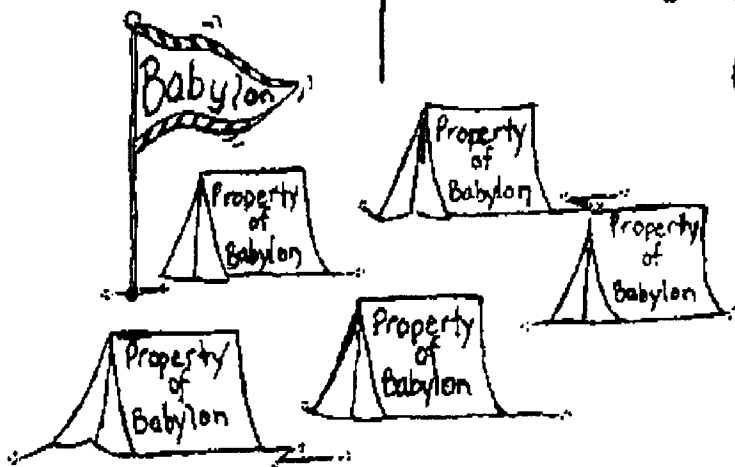
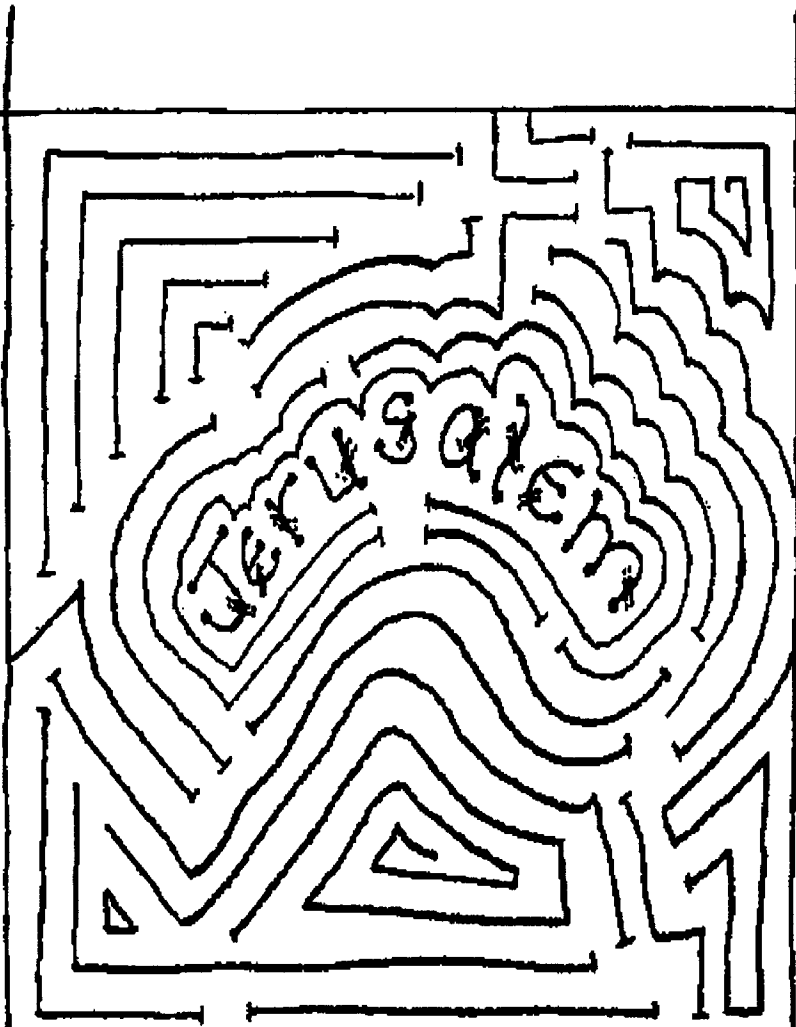
#4 What should we do in the temple?

#5 How does God speak to you?

#6 Who should we trust?

- #1 answers false prophets:**
- Jeremiah
- a. God will save us. He's always saved us before, and he'll do it again. We have nothing to worry about (23:16)
 - b. As soon as we get into trouble, all we have to do is ask, and God will save us again like he always has.
 - c. No, He won't. God will use your own weapons against you. He himself will fight against you. He is very angry! (21:4,5,13 and 23:19,20)
- #2 answers false prophets:**
- Jeremiah
- a. Yes. No one will hurt you. (23:17)
 - b. You will be safe inside the walls of the city. You're so strong, who can beat you? (21:13)
 - Anyone who stays will either be killed, die from sickness, or starve to death. (21:9)
- #3 answers false prophets:**
- Jeremiah
- a. Just hope in God. You will have peace. (23:16,17)
 - b. God won't really let this happen. He will always give us another chance. Go out and surrender to the Babylonians. Then you will escape with your lives. You had plenty of chances to turn away from your sin. If you had, then none of this would be happening. Now, it's too late. (21:9 and 25:4-7)
- #4 answers false prophets:**
- Jeremiah
- a. The temple is where we keep our gods and where we worship them in different ways. We bring the offerings that each god wants, especially Baal and Jehovah.
 - b. All the gods care about is that we worship them the way they want us to inside the temple. Then we can go out and do whatever we want, and they never know! (23:11, 15,23,24, & 27)
 - God is punishing you because of the wicked things you do in the temple. Don't follow other gods and worship things your hands have made. Turn away from your evil ways. God sees what you're doing! (23:12 and 25:5,6)
- #5 answers false prophets:**
- Jeremiah.
- a. We have visions in our minds and dreams. We also repeat what other prophets are saying, (23:16,25,30)
 - b. Sometimes we receive an oracle from the Lord. An oracle is a prophesy given from the seat to worship divinity. This is not the same Hebrew word sometimes translated 'oracle' in 1 Kings 6 and elsewhere.
 - God talks to me. I get the words straight from his mouth. I stand in His presence and listen to Him speak. (23:18)
- #6 answers false prophets:**
- Jeremiah.
- a. Trust us prophets. Trust the king and your leaders (17:5)
 - b. Trust Jehovah, Baal, and all the other gods. (23:13)
 - Trust only in God! (17:7)

The Prophet is Jeremiah
The People are from Judah
The Prophecy-- Gods punishment... exile to Babylon!
The Principle-- Godliness goal, Popularity NO!



God offers a chance of escape to those who would leave the city & surrender to the Babylonian Raiders.

SKIP IT

Cross out every other letter starting with the one underlined. Write what is revealed on a separate sheet of paper.

GTOHTIESLILSIWTHOANTTTHHEEMLOOURNDTSAAIY
NSO:Y"ECRUTRHSEEHDILSLTAHNEDOENVEEWRHYO
WTHREURSET.SGIONTMEALNL,IWTHOONDTEHPPEEMN
ODUSNOTNAFILNETSHHAFTOJREHSIUSSSCTHRREINS
GTTIHSABNODRWNHTOHSEEHOLEDAMRATNTAUNRD
NTSHAWEWSAEYAFBRYOEMATRHNEELSOTRHDE.MHIE
NWGIWLALYBWEALSIAKGEAOBDUBSOHOIKN.TDHO
EYWOAUSLTIEKLEATNODRSE;AHDE?WTIHLELPPNROO
TPSHEEETPWRAOSSJPEERREIMTIYAWHHTEHNEIPTE
COOPMEEWSE.RHEEFWRIOLMLJDUDWDEALHLTIHNET
PHREOPPAHRECCHYESDWPALSAGCOEDS'OSFPTUHN
EIDSEHSMEERNNT,EIXNHAI SLAELTTOLBAANDDBWY
HLEORNETNHOEOPNREILNICYIEPSL.EBLUITSBGLOE
DSLSENDEISSSTGHOEAMLAPNOWPHUOLTARRUISTT
YSNIONLTDHOEYLOOURGDE,TWIHTO?SDEICDOTNHFII
SDWEONRCKEIOIUSTIENSHSII MW.IHLELWGIILVLEBI
ETLAITKREYASTNRDEGEPTLBAANCTKETDOBYOTU
HOENWTAHTAETRATLHMAOTSSTEDNODNSEONUWTII
DTOSNRTOHTISNBKYSTOHBEBUSBTBRAEDAOMY.OIU
TTDHOIENSKNSOOTTFHEIASRIW SHAELNOHTEHAATR
CDORMTEHSA,NIITSHLOEUAGVHETSGARREEEANLL
WEAAYVSEGSERGEIEVNE.OIFTFHCAHSLNOOYWPOHRY
RLILEBSUITNTAHYAETAIRSONFODTRHOOUYGSHPET
MANNKDLNEETYSEGREFTATIHLISSTDOOBNEEAFROF
LRKUSIOTK.B"

