

February 23, 1997

Jeremiah 34-45

4's, 5's & K

3JER24PK

We Must Change to God's Righteous Ways!

Materials I Need:

Memory Work:

The Prophet - *Jeremiah*

The Principle - *We must change to God's righteous ways.*

The People - *Israelites living around Jerusalem*

God's Attribute - *God's righteousness does not change.*

Aim Questions:

1. Who was the prophet we have been learning about? (Jeremiah)
2. Why did the Israelites put Jeremiah in jail and a cistern? (They didn't want to hear him prophesy.)
3. Did Jeremiah ever stop telling God's true words? (No)
4. What happened to Jerusalem? (The Babylonians set fire to all the buildings and took the Israelites in chains to Babylon.)
5. Did God keep Jeremiah alive? (Yes. The Babylonians let him live in Mizpah with a few of the other Israelites to take care of the land.)
6. How many years would the Israelites be in Babylon before they could go home to their own lands and fields? (Seventy years)
7. Are you asking God to help you change to His righteous ways?

 Hook:

The "Prophet" Center: (3JER24PKGF1) Let the children color the picture of Jeremiah and cut out his face. Build a cistern, a cylinder-shaped structure, out of play dough. Raise and lower Jeremiah over the play cistern. Tell the children to listen carefully to the Bible Adventure to hear what will happen to the prophet. Jeremiah was sad when the Israelites didn't listen to God, but God was always with Jeremiah. Talk about specific times Jeremiah was sad and specific times God gave him help or encouragement.

Bible Adventure Preview Center: (3JER24PKGF2) Ask the Children's Department to tape the GF2 pictures onto the pins in the plastic bowling set that is available at the Children's Office. There is a plastic bowling ball available, too, but you may want to request a larger ball so that knocking down the pins is easier for the young children. Before playing the game on class day, have the children identify the pictures on the pins. Read the words below the pictures; have the children repeat the words to you. In today's Bible Adventure, God will have to punish as He said He would. Many of the Israelites would not change to God's right ways.

The "Place" Center: The children can pretend to build Jerusalem again with blocks and Duplos. Add Babylon if interest continues. Put King Nebuchadnezzar's picture near Babylon and King Zedekiah's picture near Jerusalem. Put Jeremiah in Jerusalem, too. Add Babylonian soldiers and their tents around Jerusalem, keeping food from coming into the city.



Jerusalem Siege Craft Center: (3JER24PKGF3 & 3JER24PKGF4) Let the children glue Babylonian tents all around the walls of Jerusalem. Draw Babylonian soldiers by them. Draw food outside the city, but none going in. Talk about how hungry the Israelites were getting. They should have stopped worshipping idols.



Memory Game: Allow the children to look at different kinds of weapons (play knife, stick, match, rock, play ax and paper chain) Let them look for one minute. Then cover up the weapons and see how many they remember that they saw. Talk about how the weapons might be used. Listen for these weapons in the Bible Adventure today.



“Chain Gang”: Ask the Children's Department to cut strips of scrap paper about 1 1/2" wide and 8 1/2" long. Let the children make paper chains by stapling strips in an interlocked pattern. Tell the children that they will be hearing about chains in the Bible Adventure. Write the child's name on his or her chain. Use the paper chains for a Took activity.



Transition Idea: Pretty soon the Israelites are going to be taking a trip to Babylon. As the children march in a circle and you sing “Jerusalem Walls” to the tune of “London Bridges,” have two teachers catch several children. They get to share the names of places where their families have taken trips. Then they can go find a chair in the circle.

Jerusalem walls are falling down, falling down, falling down.

Jerusalem walls are falling down; God's words come true.



Book:

Presentation Ideas -



Go to the library and find an audio tape of sound effects that relate to the story, (rocks falling, fire burning, wood chopping, etc.). Play the tape when you tell the story.



Have your Bible open on your lap. Use the pictures of the kings and prophets from previous lessons as you review. Take the pictures from your open Bible to show the children.



Request the large one-foot cardboard blocks from the Children's Department, to build a wall. Use a puppet in back of the wall to help tell the story. There are several large puppets available. You can choose from Jeremiah, King Zedekiah, or a Babylonian soldier.



Build a wall using small to medium-sized rocks you find outside. There are smooth rocks that you can purchase from a craft store, too. In telling the story, tear down the wall of rocks. As the wall comes down, hand rocks to the children in your class. If the rocks become a distraction, have the children place the rocks under their chairs. You will use the rocks in a Look activity.

Bible Adventure -

Review: (Review Jeremiah with the series of pictures: Jeremiah, King Jehoiakim and the boiling pot, King Jehoiachin, the linen belt and fig baskets, King Zedekiah, the yoke, and a picture of a field.) What was God telling the Israelites living around Jerusalem with these pictures? Change to God's righteous ways or the Babylonian soldiers will take the city away. The captain of King Zedekiah's guard was upset with Jeremiah's prophecies, the words of God that he was sharing. The captain arrested him and threw him in a dark and dirty dungeon prison for a long time so he would quit talking. (37:16)

Later, King Zedekiah began to wonder if Jeremiah had changed his words at all so the king had him brought to the palace. Jeremiah was not afraid to tell King Zedekiah God's true words. Jeremiah said again, “The Babylonians who are trying to get through the walls will come in and burn the city of Jerusalem. They will take you as a prisoner. God's words don't change.” Then Jeremiah asked a favor of the king, “Please don't send me back to the dungeon or I will die there.” It was God's plan to keep Jeremiah alive, so King Zedekiah brought Jeremiah to the palace and made him a prisoner in the courtyard of the guard. During this time, Jeremiah's words never changed because they were God's words and God never changes. God just wants us to change to His right ways that never change.

While Jeremiah was prisoner at the king's courtyard, he kept saying, "Give yourselves up to the Babylonians and you will live. If you keep fighting, you will die." Some of the Jerusalem officials didn't want him to keep talking like that. They went to King Zedekiah and said, "Jeremiah keeps saying these bad things. Can we put him in a cistern where no one can hear him?" King Zedekiah gave in and said, "You may do as you want with Jeremiah." So they put Jeremiah in a cistern. A cistern is a storage tank for water. It might be a very deep hole in the ground or a hole dug out of a large rock. When a cistern didn't have water in it, it was used as a prison. This particular cistern was probably old and had mud in the bottom. Jeremiah sank down into the mud and stayed there. It was dark, cold and smelly. Do you think Jeremiah was afraid? Who do you think Jeremiah talked to when he was afraid or confused?

When one of the officials of Jerusalem heard what had happened to Jeremiah, he was upset that Jeremiah would die in the cistern. He went to King Zedekiah as fast as his legs would carry him. Half out of breath, he said, "If you leave Jeremiah in the cistern, he will die. I don't think that's right. May I bring him out?" King Zedekiah gave in again and said, "You may do as you want with Jeremiah." So the official gathered together thirty men to help him. He found some rags and old worn out clothes. They soon found the cistern and, looking over the edge into the dark hole, they yelled, "Jeremiah, here are some rags to put under your arms. They will help pad the ropes so they don't hurt your arms. Next, put the ropes under your arms so we can pull you out." With a quiet smile on his face, Jeremiah did just as they asked. Then slowly they pulled him out. Daylight! He could see daylight and smell good air and soon his wrinkled skin would feel dry again. The men took him to the palace courtyard, cleaned him up and fed him. The one true, righteous, never changing God took care of Jeremiah. He takes care of you, too.

The Babylonians had been camped outside the Jerusalem walls for over a year, trying to get in. (*Hold up the ax and rock.*) Some of the Babylonian soldiers tried to chop down the gate with axes. The Israelites threw big rocks down from the wall to keep them away. Finally, as God had said, the Babylonians soldiers broke through the wall. More and more soldiers went running into the city. Finally, after a lot of fighting, the Babylonian leaders sat down at the gate of the city to take charge. King Zedekiah knew God's words were coming true so he tried to sneak out of the city. At night, when no one was looking, he took his family and other Jerusalem leaders and slipped through the garden, away from the city. When the Babylonian soldiers found out, they rode after the king's group as fast as their horses would go. They caught up to them and killed all of King Zedekiah's sons and officials. They bound King Zedekiah's arms with metal chains to take him to Babylon. Israel hadn't changed to God's right ways and so punishment came.

Meanwhile, the Babylonian soldiers inside Jerusalem were setting fire to all the houses. It was noisy and sparks were flying as they burned down the king's palace and the Lord's temple. It sounded like a huge crash of rocks as they broke down all the city walls. The Babylonians took all the Israelites as prisoners except a few poor people who would stay and take care of the crops and fields. King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to his army commander, "Find Jeremiah and take care of him. Don't hurt him. Let him live wherever he wants." The Babylonian commander found Jeremiah in chains along with the rest of the people in the palace. The commander said to Jeremiah, "Your God has kept His word. He said this would happen if you didn't obey Him and now it has happened. Now I am letting you go free. You may come to Babylon and we will take care of you there or you can go to Mizpah and stay with the Israelites who were left there to plant and harvest the crops." The commander gave Jeremiah food and a gift and Jeremiah went to stay at Mizpah.

The Lord had said to Jeremiah, "I am the Lord over all. I am letting the Babylonians take the city because the people would not change to my right ways. They will be taken to Babylon, but I will bring them back after seventy years. I will change their hearts so they will want to do the right and just things. One day, in the future, the Savior will come to earth. His name is the Lord Our Righteousness." He is our righteousness. He helps us want to obey and do the right and just things.

Prayer: Dear loving God, thank You for keeping Your word and always knowing and doing what is right. Thank You for never changing. Thank You for giving me the Bible with Your words in it for me. Please help me to always obey Your word. Help me to change to Your right ways. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Look:

“Painting the wall of Jerusalem” Craft Center: Let the children paint the letter “J” on the rocks you gave to them during the Bible Adventure. Have the children explore the texture and strength of the rock before you let them paint. The “J” is the first letter in Jerusalem. The wall around Jerusalem was strong, but God said the disobedient Israelites would be punished. The wall came down! God's right ways never change.

Jeremiah Review Book Center: (3JER24PKGF5 & 3JER24PKGF6) Help the children color and put together the little books. Staple the pages in order, and then read the book to the children when the class is finished with the project. Let the children try “reading” them to you, too.

Captive Israelites Activity Paper: (3JER24PKGF7) First let the children color the picture of the Israelites being taken to Babylon. Then use glue or double-stick tape to adhere red cellophane to the flames in the background. Attach pieces of cloth to the Israelites clothing in the picture. Cut holes in the cloth. The holes may be used to remind the children of the rotten figs. Let the children tear sheets of construction paper into pieces and glue or tape these to the wall on the picture. Everything happened just as God said it would. The city was destroyed and the Israelites would not be used as God had intended.

Touch & Feel Center: Make a dark tunnel using an empty refrigerator box, or make a dark tent using a blanket and some chairs. Place Styrofoam chips at the bottom of the box or on the floor under the blanket, and place a child volunteer in the box. This will add texture to the “experience” in the cistern. Tell the story in the darkened room. Have an adult helper make pounding sounds on the outside of the box or tent.

Red Rover Game Center: Have the children's workers make copies of all the pictures you used in today's Bible Adventure. You should have used pictures of Kings Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin; Jeremiah and now King Zedekiah. Request several copies of each so that every child can hold a picture. Then divide the class into two teams. Have the teams stand in two lines parallel to each other. Team one says, “Red Rover, Red Rover send Jehoiakim (or one of the other characters) right over!” All the children on team two who are holding pictures of King Jehoiakim, drop the pictures and run to team one's line. Play the game again having team two call out, “Red Rover, Red Rover” using a name that hasn't been called. Don't forget to have the running team drop their pictures. After all have had a turn to play, ask the children to pick up a new picture to hold and play the game over. Use this game to review the names of the characters we have studied in Jeremiah.

Missionary Center: (3JER24PKGF8) Use the GF8 picture to remind the children of what we can do as a church to encourage and help our missionaries. God encouraged and helped Jeremiah. Read the words on the paper and pantomime each. Show the poster that has the picture of your class missionary. Have the class say the name of your missionary. Pray for your missionary.

Rhythm Center: Using rhythm sticks to tap the beat, sing the song “God Kept Saying” or review songs from former lessons.

Snack Center: Serve whole graham crackers to the children. Hold up one cracker. The squares of the cookie look like a wall. Have the children pretend to be Babylonian soldiers and break the wall into four pieces. Show them how to break the cracker. It will take only two simple breaks to make four pieces. Tell them to stop breaking. They get to start eating now. God said punishment would come to the disobedient Israelites, and it did!

Songs:

God Kept Saying (Tune: “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”)
God kept saying, “Change your ways!”
We don't want to change.
God sent prophets, “Change your ways!”
We refuse to change!
With an idol here and an idol there, (lie, covet, stealing)
Here an idol, there an idol, everywhere an idol (idol).
God said, “Change to righteous ways!”

Listen to what I say.”

(Second Verse)

God kept saying, “Change your ways!”

I want to obey.

God sent prophets, “Change your ways!”

I want to obey.

With a good word here and a good word there,

Here a word, there a word, everywhere a good word.

God said, “Change to righteous ways!”

Please help me obey.



Took:



KNOW & DO: We know the Israelites were punished because they did not listen and change to God's right ways. We do want to listen to God's Word. Use the puppets or some other presentation prop to review the facts of the story. Let the children hold the prop and tell what they remember from the story. You may have to give short statements and have the children repeat after you. Pray for God's Word to touch even these young hearts. He is faithful!



Jeremiah Review Path: (3JER24PKGF9) Use the Jeremiah path to review the different pictures in the Jeremiah lessons. The pictures we have studied so far are: the boiling pot, the new and ruined linen belts, the good and bad figs, the broken yoke, and Jeremiah's field. Today, add the sticker of Babylon. Have the children repeat the phrase, “Babylon soldiers.”



Box of Surprises Review: (3JER24PKGF2) Use the GF2 pictures to review the Bible Adventure. Tie the review pictures to a long length of string, evenly spaced from each other. Place the string with the attached pictures in a container of some kind. Let the children pull the string slowly out of the container. When a picture is pulled out with the string, stop and review how the picture was used in today's Bible story.



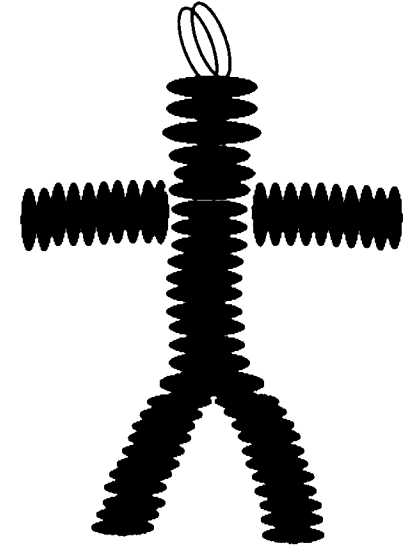
Silly Statue Review Activity: Play music and have the children pretend to be a character in today's story. They can choose to be running Israelites, strong soldiers, preaching Jeremiah, or any of the characters in the story. They may choose to act out a portion of the story. No words should be spoken; bodies only move to the music. When the music stops, they freeze in the shape they were in. Start moving the bodies when the music starts again.



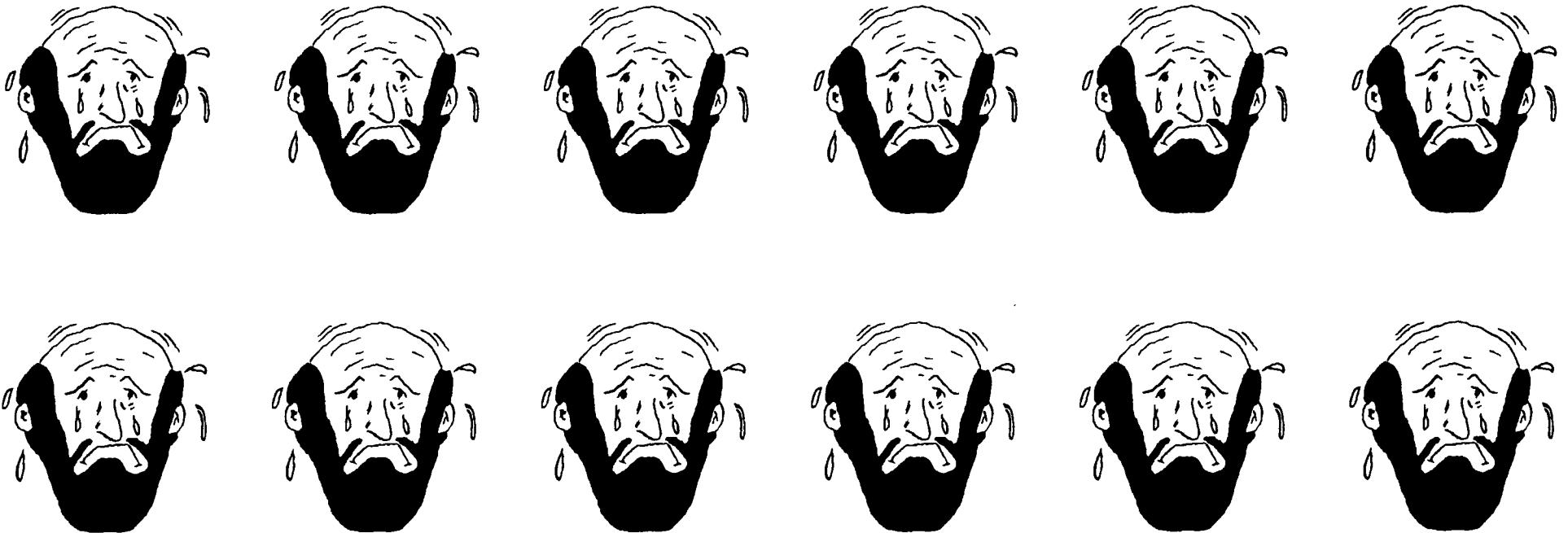
Chain Review: When a child answers an Aim Question, give the children a picture to glue or tape on their chain. These pictures represent the answers to the questions. Use a small picture of Jeremiah, a picture of Jeremiah in jail, a picture of Jerusalem burning, with Israelites being taken as prisoners, and the number seventy. Be sure and ask the children how they might need to change this week to God's righteous ways. Teacher, give a personal example of your own need to change in a specific area.

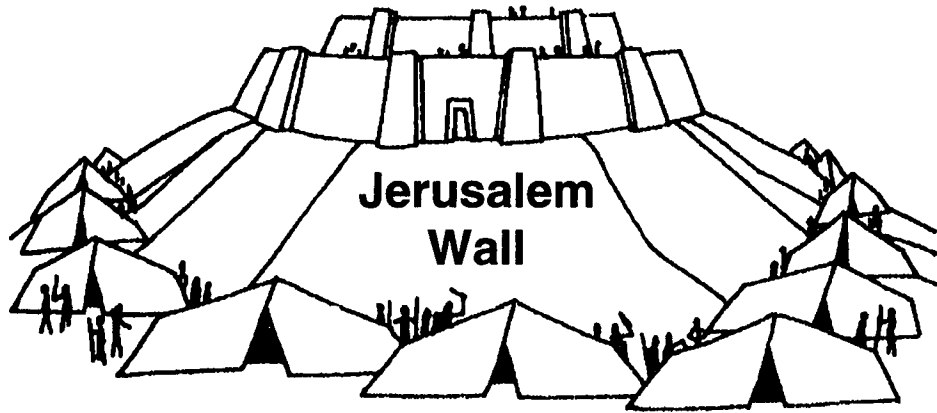
Button Boy Jeremiah

To make Jeremiah out of buttons, you will need heavy-duty elastic thread (available at fabric stores and most department stores). Cut two 20-inch lengths of elastic thread. Holding the two pieces together, fold them in half and tie an overhand knot in the folded end to create a 1-inch loop. (When the Jeremiah boy is finished, you can use the loop to lower him down into the cistern.) Choose 3 buttons for Jeremiah's hat. String the hat buttons onto the elastic by dividing the four strands into pairs and threading each of the pairs through a separate button hole. Add the widest of the buttons last to create a hat brim. Next, add three medium-sized buttons for Jeremiah's head, followed by a couple of slightly wider ones for a shirt collar. For each arm, cut a 6-inch piece of elastic. Thread the ends of the elastic through two different holes of a single button. Slide the button to the center of the strand. String on ten more buttons to form a stack. Knot the elastic just above the top button. To attach both arms to the body, tie the thread ends around the four elastic strands below Jeremiah's collar. Then add nine new buttons below the collar to create Jeremiah's torso. Knot the elastic below the torso and, again, divide the strands into two sets. For each leg, string a dozen or so buttons onto each set of threads, using slightly larger ones at the bottom of Jeremiah's foot. Finally, knot the elastic ends below the feet and trim off any excess.

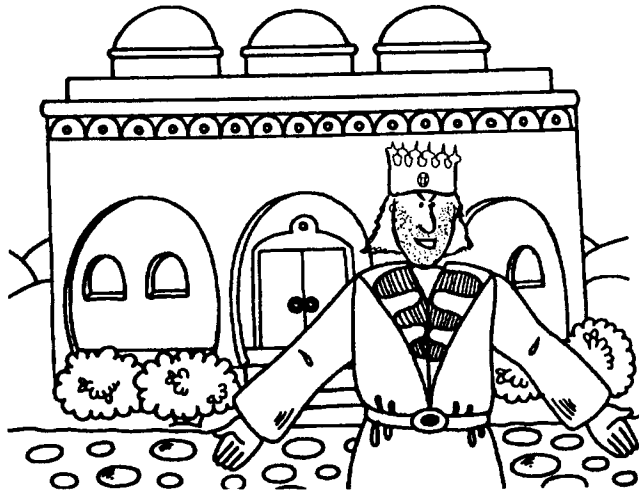


If you don't have enough buttons, make a pipe cleaner Jeremiah by folding one pipe cleaner in half, making a head out of the folded end. Twist the wires around each other at the neck and again at the lower part of the body. Fold the ends of the rest of the pipe cleaners to make feet on the legs. Twist the ends of another pipe cleaner into circles to make hands. Find the center of the pipe cleaner and twist it around the first pipe cleaner to make arms. Tape a Jeremiah face to the pipe cleaner head and lower him into a toilet paper tube "cistern."





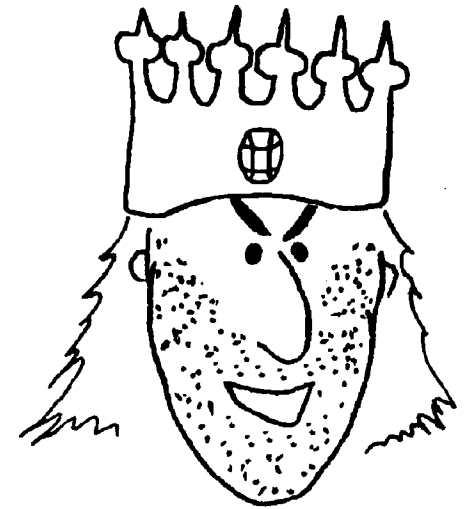
**Jerusalem
Wall**



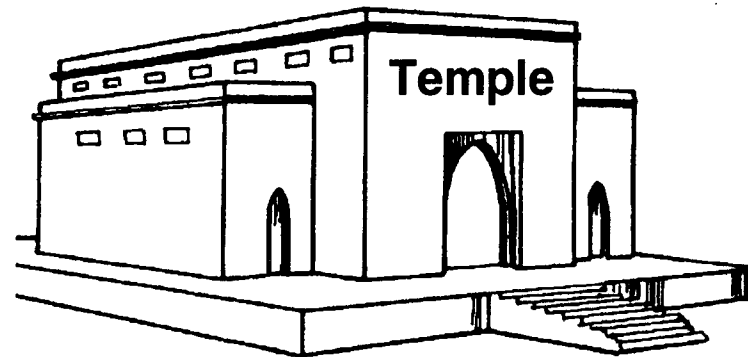
King Zedekiah's Palace



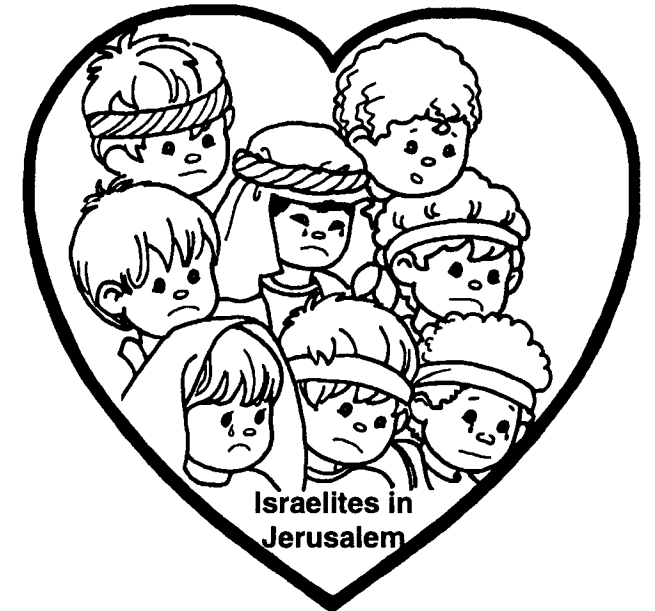
Idol Baal



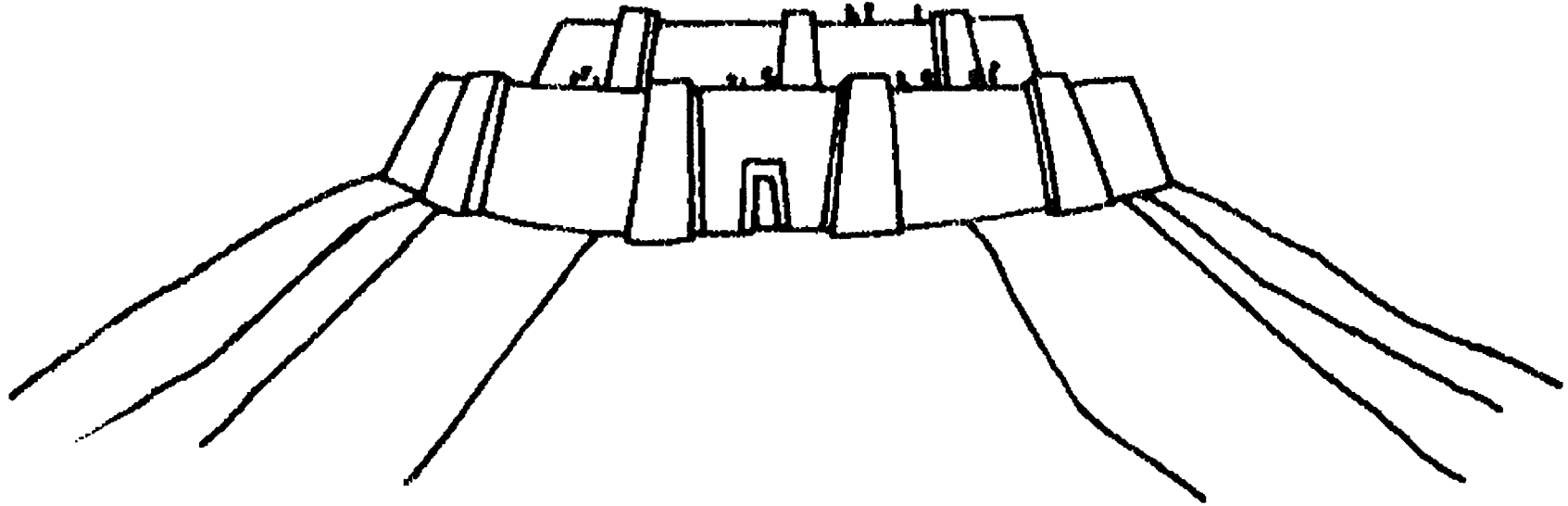
King Zedekiah



Temple

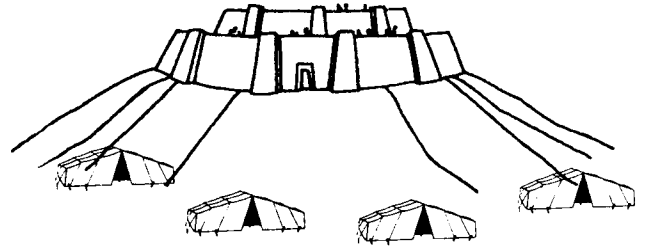


**Israelites in
Jerusalem**



The Babylonian soldiers camped outside the walls of Jerusalem.

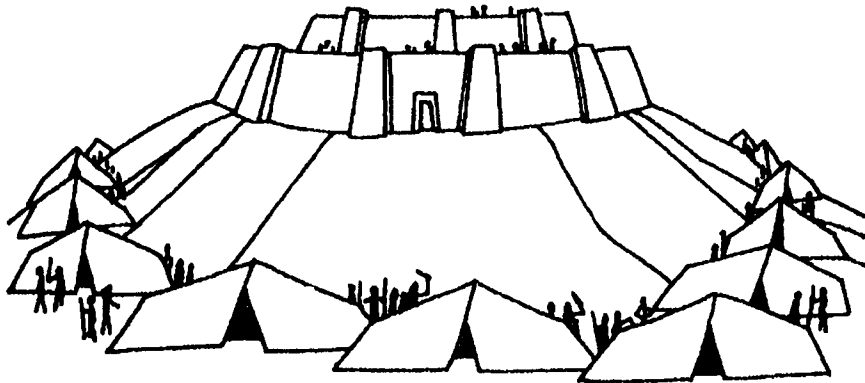
Jerusalem Siege Craft Center



Copy at least 6 tents per child.
The children will glue the tents to the 3JER24ECGF3 page.



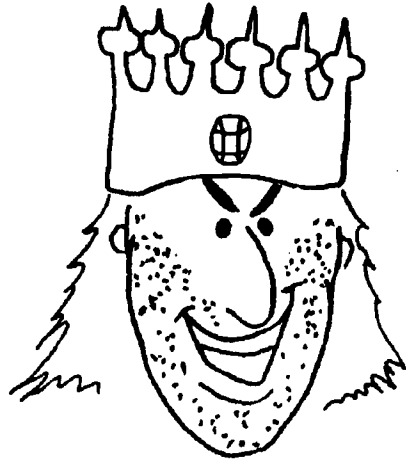
Jeremiah's Story



This is the wall
around Jerusalem.

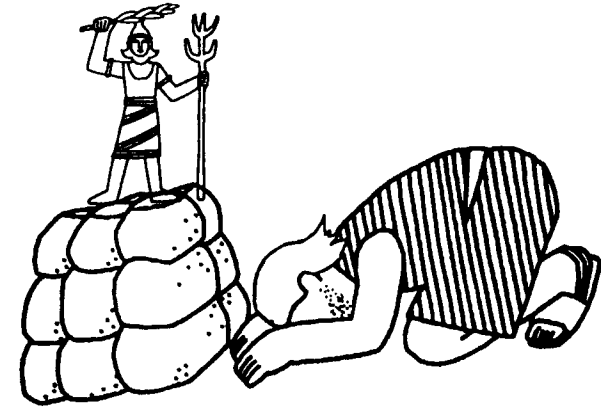


This is the prophet, inside the wall,
around Jerusalem.



This is the king who jailed the prophet, inside the wall, around Jerusalem.

Page 3



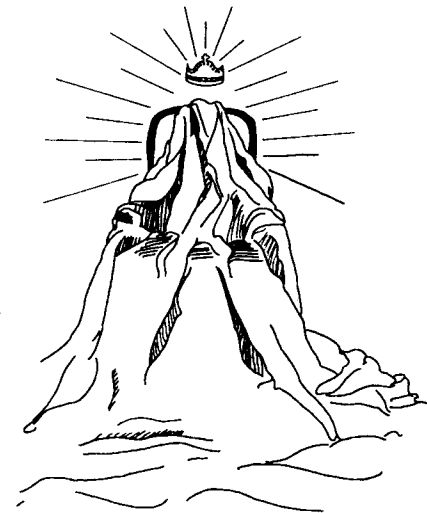
This is the king who disobeyed God, who jailed the prophet, inside the wall, around Jerusalem.

Page 4



These are the soldiers, who captured the king, who jailed the prophet, and they tore down the walls around Jerusalem.

Page 5



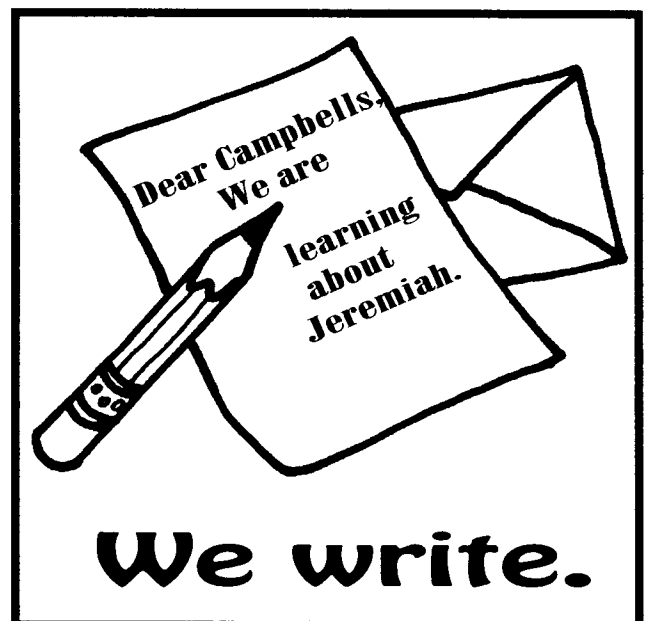
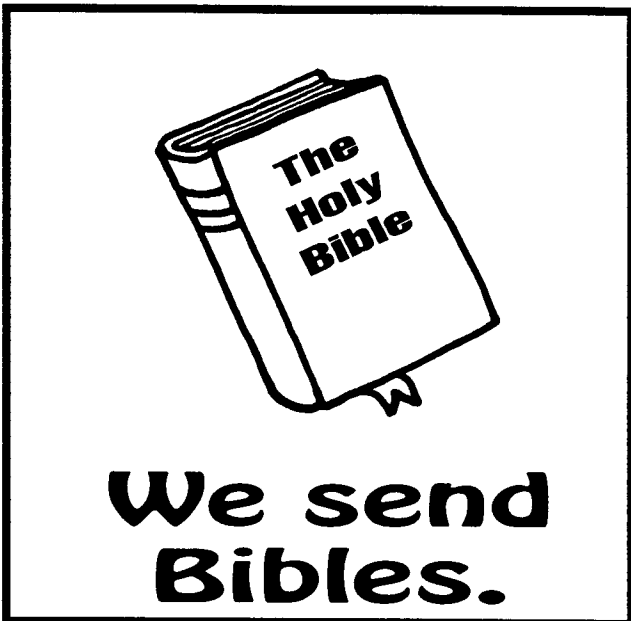
Here is our God, who thought of the plan, to send the soldiers, who captured the king, who jailed the prophet, and they tore down the wall around Jerusalem.

Page 6



The Babylonian soldiers took the Israelites as slaves to Babylon.
They burned down the Jerusalem walls, temple,
king's palace, and houses.

We love our missionaries!



Jeremiah's Review Path

