

Materials | Need

Memory Work:

The Prophet - *Jeremiah*

The Principle - *God keeps His promises to punish and forgive.*

The People - *Israelites living around Jerusalem*

God's Attribute - *God always keeps His promises*

Aim Questions:

1. Who was the sad prophet who wrote the book of Lamentations? (Jeremiah)
2. Why was Jeremiah crying out loud? (His friends were hungry and thirsty and the Babylonians had taken the Israelites away as slaves.)
3. Why did God let the Babylonians take the Israelites as slaves? (The Israelites did not listen to God and change to His right ways.)
4. Does God always keep His promise? (Yes) Did God promise to punish the Israelites if they closed their ears to Jeremiah's true words? (Yes) Does sin make everything sad? (Yes)
5. Did God promise to take care of the obedient Israelites in Babylon? (Yes, God was faithful every day to help the Israelites who loved Him.)
6. How long would it be before the Israelites could go back to their own fields? (Seventy years)

Hook:



**"Prophet" Center: (3LAM26PKGF6)** First, review last weeks lesson by asking what sad thing happened to the city of Jerusalem. The Israelites disobeyed God and the Babylonian soldiers tore down the walls. Let the child draw the sad face onto the picture of the prophet Jeremiah. Sing "God Kept Saying" or "Jeremiah Was a Prophet" as the children finish coloring the rest of the picture.



**"Jerusalem" Center: (3LAM26PKGF7)** Have the children surround a large drawing of Jerusalem. (This drawing can be a simple sketch drawn on butcher paper, similar to the GF7 picture of the Jerusalem hill.) Place pictures or actual items around Jerusalem that fit with today's lesson, such as wheat, fire, swords, chains, musical instruments, ballet shoes, children, soldiers, etc. Ask the children to either leave the items by Jerusalem or take them away, depending on what is appropriate. For instance, take away the wheat because the fields have been ruined. Take the children, musical instruments and dancing shoes away because there was no more music or dancing in Jerusalem. All the children and adults have been taken to Babylon in chains. As the child leaves, or moves an item to Babylon, the entire class can moan and groan. The children might say, "Sin always makes us sad!" Everything is spoken and done in slow motion because there is no joy in Jerusalem. Ask the children if they moan and complain when they are hungry. Ask them if they moan and cry when they are punished. The Israelites moaned and complained when they were punished by God, but He was keeping His promise. They didn't listen to His prophet, Jeremiah, who told them to change to God's right ways. God always keeps His promises. After moaning for a while, each child could describe something that might make them moan if it were taken away. Examples might be TV, dinner every night, warm blankets, etc.

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**“People” Center:** The Israelites who used to live in Jerusalem had been taken to Babylon. A few of the Israelites, Johanan and his men, ran away to Egypt. Sing the “Lamentations” as you slowly walk to “Babylon.” The children will follow you the first time through the song. Designate another child to be the leader who slowly continues walking to Babylon, singing the song again. When you reach Babylon, say “Seventy long years!” or count by tens to seventy. Then sing the second verse of the “Lamentations” song as the children pretend to build houses in Babylon, plant and harvest crops, and cook their meals. God will take care of His people in Babylon, as He promised. God kept His promise to punish the idol-loving Israelites and He will keep His promise to bring back the ones who love Him.

**“Who Is God?” Center:** In today’s lesson, we want to reinforce the idea that God always keeps His promise to punish us when we refuse to listen to Him and He keeps His promise to forgive us if we change to His right ways. When the children come into the classroom today, give them a name tag that says, “God Always Keeps His Promises!” Make a promise to the children as you give them their name tag. Promise the children that if they do their best at cooperating for the whole morning, they will receive a surprise at the end of class. The surprise can be anything, from a happy face sticker on their name tag to a “promise penny” taped to their name tag. Throughout the morning, point out the cooperative things the children are doing. Tell them you are pleased with their attitudes, but don’t mention the reward coming at the end of class. If you see a child who is not cooperating at any time during the morning, tell that child clearly and succinctly what behavior you expect. Then set a timer for two minutes to serve as a warning. Give the child the two minutes to comply with your expectations or else he or she will have to be separated from the rest of the children. While the timer is ticking, a “Jeremiah” could say, “God keeps His promise to punish and forgive us.” If at the end of two minutes, the child has been cooperative, he or she will be “forgiven” and can stay with the rest of the class. If at the end of the two minutes, the child did not change to obey the class rule, he or she will kindly but firmly be separated from class activities for ten minutes. Emphasize the fact that God gives us many warnings, but He punishes people who will not obey. He is quick to forgive if we change to His right ways.

**Idols Center: (3LAM26PKGF4 & 3LAM26PKGF5)** Cut the idols apart and tape each one to a wooden block. (The blocks bin is available at the Children’s Table.) Set up the blocks on the large map that has been suggested throughout the prophets’ study. You may do this activity without the large map by simply designating Samaria, Jerusalem, Egypt and Babylon on the floor or table, along with their appropriate symbols. (See 3LAM26ECGF4) See if the children can remember and place the idols in the appropriate locations. (Goddess Diana at Samaria, Baal at Jerusalem, and Queen of Heaven at Egypt. King Nebuchadnezzar could be put at Babylon because he was worshipped as a god.) When the idols have been placed in the right spot, mix them up again and let the children try to put them back in the right locations. Talk about the prophets who prophesied to those places--Amos and Hosea to Samaria, Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah and Jeremiah to Jerusalem. For an extra activity, play “bowling” with the idol blocks. Bring a ball and let the kids knock down the idols. God kept His promise to knock down the idols in Samaria and Jerusalem.

**Sad Sounds Center:** Make a tape recording of the children laughing. Begin by recording your own laugh and playing it back. Encourage other children to listen to their own laughs. Have a good time with this activity. Then, record the children’s voices as they pretend to cry. Encourage each child to take a turn. Listen to the tape, trying to pick out who was crying. Talk about what makes people cry. We are sad when we are hurt or when we have done something wrong that deserves to be punished. Talk about what we do when we hear someone crying. We feel sad, too, and we go to help them. There is crying in our Bible Adventure today. Can anyone guess why? Listen and find out who is crying and why.

**“Paper Chains for Slavery” Center:** If you did not make paper chains in any of the Jeremiah lessons, the children might enjoy making them today. The children staple cardstock strips together to make paper chains. Ask the Children’s Department to cut strips of scrap paper about 1 1/2” by 8 1/2” long. As the children work on their chains, sing the “Lamentations” song. Another variation would be to make string or twine chains by tying knots rather than stapling. The children could wear the chains around their wrists as they go to “Babylon,” the circle of chairs set up for the Bible Adventure.



## Book:

### Presentation Ideas -

- Let the children sit through the Bible Adventure with their paper chains on their wrists. It will give them a sense of how restricted the Israelites were feeling as they went as slaves to Babylon.
- Bring a fancy container full of inexpensive jewelry that looks expensive. Bring a chipped clay pot into which you can put Jeremiah's deed to his field. The Babylonians took away all the precious jewels from Jerusalem, but God will bring the Israelites back after seventy years. The clay pot reminded Jeremiah that the deed to his field would still be there after seventy years.
- (**3LAM26PKG1 & 3JER24PKG7 review picture**) Show the picture of Jerusalem burning and the picture of the devastated field. Crops were not planted for seventy years while the Israelites were slaves in Babylon.
- Show the child-sized wooden yoke that represents hard work in a foreign land as slaves. Put the pictures of King Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon on the yoke.
- Whenever you say the word "sad," the children can pretend to cry or wipe tears from their eyes. You will have to give clear clues if you want the children to participate in this way.

### Bible Adventure -

**Review:** The Israelites living around Jerusalem finally got the punishment that Jeremiah had been warning them about. Who remembers what the Israelites were doing that was disobedient? Yes, they were worshipping idols rather than God, coveting or wanting what other people had, stealing and taking things that weren't theirs to have, thinking only of themselves, and not telling the truth. What was the punishment for their disobedience? Yes, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, who took them back home to be their slaves. A few Israelites stayed to be slaves in the fields around Jerusalem but they were disobedient again and ran away to Egypt.

The book in the Bible that we are learning about today is called Lamentations. (*Sing the "Lamentations" song.*) Lamentations was written by God's prophet, Jeremiah, soon after the destruction of Jerusalem. (Show the picture of the devastated field.) To lament is to show your sorrow or sadness which is why the book is called Lamentations. Jeremiah is sad about Israel's sins. God was sad, too. Jeremiah could not keep the tears from flowing down his cheeks. He looked around him and everything was ruined, just like the rotten linen belt. (Show the belt.) The temple was burned down and no one celebrated happy feasts or met with God there. All the people were gone to Egypt or Babylon. The roads were empty. The wall around the city was knocked down, as were the gates. The elders, who used to talk about business plans at the city gate, were gone, taken to Babylon. The young men who used to play their musical instruments were gone. There was no music. The joy was gone from the city.

Jerusalem used to be powerful, ruling over all the surrounding cities. Jerusalem was the "queen" city. People from all nations knew about the Israelites' God who did great things in nature. They knew that Israel's God was all powerful. The Israelites had been like a shining, bright light for God. Now it was like they were covered with black soot. You could not even recognize them. They were covered with their dirty sins. Their sins were like a heavy yoke around their necks. They had no strength. The Israelites were bound with chains and taken as slaves to Babylon. They were suffering the consequences of their sins.

Have you ever been told to not touch the hot stove because you would get burned, but you did it anyway? What happened? You suffered the consequences. It was very hot and you got burned, just as you were promised. Maybe you were told that if you crossed the street one more time, you would have to give up TV time. You were being like the Israelites--stubborn. They had been told to worship God only, but they worshipped idols anyway, and the punishment came. They were taken to Babylon and Jerusalem was destroyed.

People made fun of the Israelites. Edomites would ride by Jerusalem on their donkeys and look at the ruins of what used to be the palace and the temple. They would laugh and say, "Ha! Is this the city that used to be called the 'joy of the earth'? Is this the city that used to be called the 'queen' of the cities? Where is her music now? Where is her joy now? Ha! Her God didn't help her!" The Edomites were glad that Jerusalem was ruined. People from Egypt would walk by, shake their heads, laugh and clap at the

Israelites. They made fun of them. They said, “Ha! Ha! You thought you were so great! Now look at you! You are nothing!”

Jeremiah heard these words and he remembered how he had warned and warned the people, but they didn't listen. They continued to be proud and selfish, worshipping idols, coveting, stealing and lying. Jeremiah hung his head down and cried.

Even though Jeremiah had tears of sadness, he had hope in the Lord God. He had a reason to smile. He had hope knowing that God is our Helper. He remembered when he was sinking in the cistern and prayed to God, asking for His help, and God sent help that got him out of the muddy hole. If you are in the dark or lost from your parents, God is the same Helper for you if you ask Him.

Jeremiah also had hope because he knew that God always keeps His promises. Jeremiah said, “God has also told me that He will keep His promise to bring the “good fig” Israelites back to Jerusalem.” Their punishment would end. God would keep His promise to bring them back to Jerusalem in seventy years. Jeremiah remembered the field he had bought from his cousin. The receipt deed was still in the clay pot waiting for him. In seventy years the Israelites would again be back in the land around Jerusalem. Jeremiah said, “God will be faithful to take care of me every day. He loves me and will keep His promise to be with me. I will wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.”

Jeremiah said, “I should not complain about what has happened to Jerusalem because I know God kept His promise to make things just and right.” Do you ever complain when you are punished? Is that right to do? No, God gives you parents to know what is best for you. They are helping you be obedient so you won't have hard consequences like the Israelites did.

**Prayer:** Dear God, You let the Israelites have what they deserved so they would turn to You for help. You are our Savior, too. Help me do what is just and right. In Jesus' name, Amen.



### Look:




**“Before and After” Craft Center: (3LAM26PKGF8, 3LAM26PKGF1 & 3LAM26PKGF5)** Let the children decorate a “before” and “after” picture of Jerusalem. On the “before” picture, the children will decorate the king's fancy palace with glitter and sequins. Draw “stick” children laughing and playing in the streets. People can be playing musical instruments. Don't forget to glue several GF5 idols on the picture because they were all over Jerusalem. On the GF4 “after” picture, there is nothing but smoke and ruins. The children could tear small bits of brown and gray construction paper and glue them to the area around Israel. Encourage each child to say, “God kept His promise to punish the Israelites who would not listen and obey.” Sing the song “Listen and Obey” or “God Kept Saying” from the Song section of the lesson.




**“Before and After” Game:** Before the game begins, remind the children of the sins the Israelites were doing in Jerusalem. The game begins when the children hop, skip, or play musical instruments around the room. When the teacher points to a child, all the children freeze in their positions. The child must name a sin that the Israelites were doing, such as worshipping idols, wanting something that didn't belong to them, stealing, or lying. The child may need a little prompting. Then the child must fall down, pretending to moan or cry. Continue with the game, keeping the action moving quickly, for about 5 minutes or until all the children are moaning on the floor.



**“God Keeps His Promises” Book: (3LAM26PKGF2)** Ask the Children's Department to cut the GF2 pictures apart on the lines. Ask them to cut one piece of construction paper per child into six 4” x 4-112” squares. The children can glue the pictures to the construction paper and staple them together to form a little book. Let the children “read” their books. The first page is the large number seventy. “God kept His promise to keep the Israelites safe in Babylon for seventy years.” Page two is the picture of the fields full of weeds. “God kept His promise to take away the Israelites' fields for seventy years. They are full of weeds because the Israelites couldn't take care of their land.” Continue with the rest of the pictures, saying, “God kept His promise to bring the Israelites back to their own fields, and, God kept His promise to give the Israelites land for good crops and sheep.”


 **“Sad, Sad, Happy” Game:** Play a game called “Sad, Sad, Happy” in a similar way you play “Duck, Duck, Goose.” The “goose” is Jeremiah who goes around the outside of the circle, saying, “sad, sad, sad.” When he touches a child and says “happy,” the child who has been touched chases him all the way back to Jerusalem, to his own “field.”


 **Bean Bag Toss:** Tape 8 1/2” x 11” sized papers on the floor. Write “Promise Keeper” on one or two of the papers. The children can toss a bean bag, trying to hit one that says “Promise Keeper.” The children get to share a way that God was a promise keeper in the Bible Adventure today.


 **Jeremiah Finger Play**

Jeremiah, he was sad	(Frown and make pretend tears down cheeks)
because the Israelites were so bad.	(Sad face with a thumbs down)
Babylonians destroyed the city.	(Hands moved horizontally)
They took the slaves, what a pity!	(Sad face and one hand pulling the other)
But Jeremiah was also glad.	(Smile and point to corners of mouth)
Things weren't going oh, so bad!	(Wiggle and be happy!)
Since God was the Helper and Promise Keeper,	(Clasp hands)
Jeremiah didn't have to be a weeper.	(Smile)

**Songs:**

 **Lamentations** (Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)  
Lamentations! Lamentations! Now we're sad! Now we're sad!  
We are being punished. We are being punished.  
We were bad. Now we're sad.  
(Second Verse)  
Lamentations! Lamentations! We were bad! Now we're sad!  
God will bring us back. We'll get back on track.  
We'll do right! We'll be glad!

 **Listen and Obey** (Tune: “Trust and Obey”)  
Listen and obey,  
It's God's only way.  
To be happy like Jesus, (Incorporate the children's names here also)  
We must listen and obey.

 **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!”  
“I'll help you obey.”



**Took:**



**KNOW and DO:** We know that God always keeps His promise to punish people who refuse to listen to or obey His “class” Rules of Life. Talk about your class rules of cooperation. Ask the children, “How did I as the teacher give you a warning today that you were not cooperating with the class rules? I set the timer for two minutes. (Set the timer again) That warned you that I would keep my promise to separate you from the fun class activities we were doing. Did anyone test me to see if I would keep my promise?” (If no one in your class needed a warning, affirm them for listening and obeying your class rules. If one or two children needed the timer as a warning, affirm them for heeding the warning and changing to the class ways. If a child needed to be separated from the class before changing to the class ways, let the children know that that was what was happening to the Israelites.) The Israelites needed to be separated from Jerusalem so they could learn that God was keeping His promise. In Babylon, the Israelites would find out that God keeps His promise to punish, but He also keeps His promise to forgive them and bring them back to their own land after seventy years.



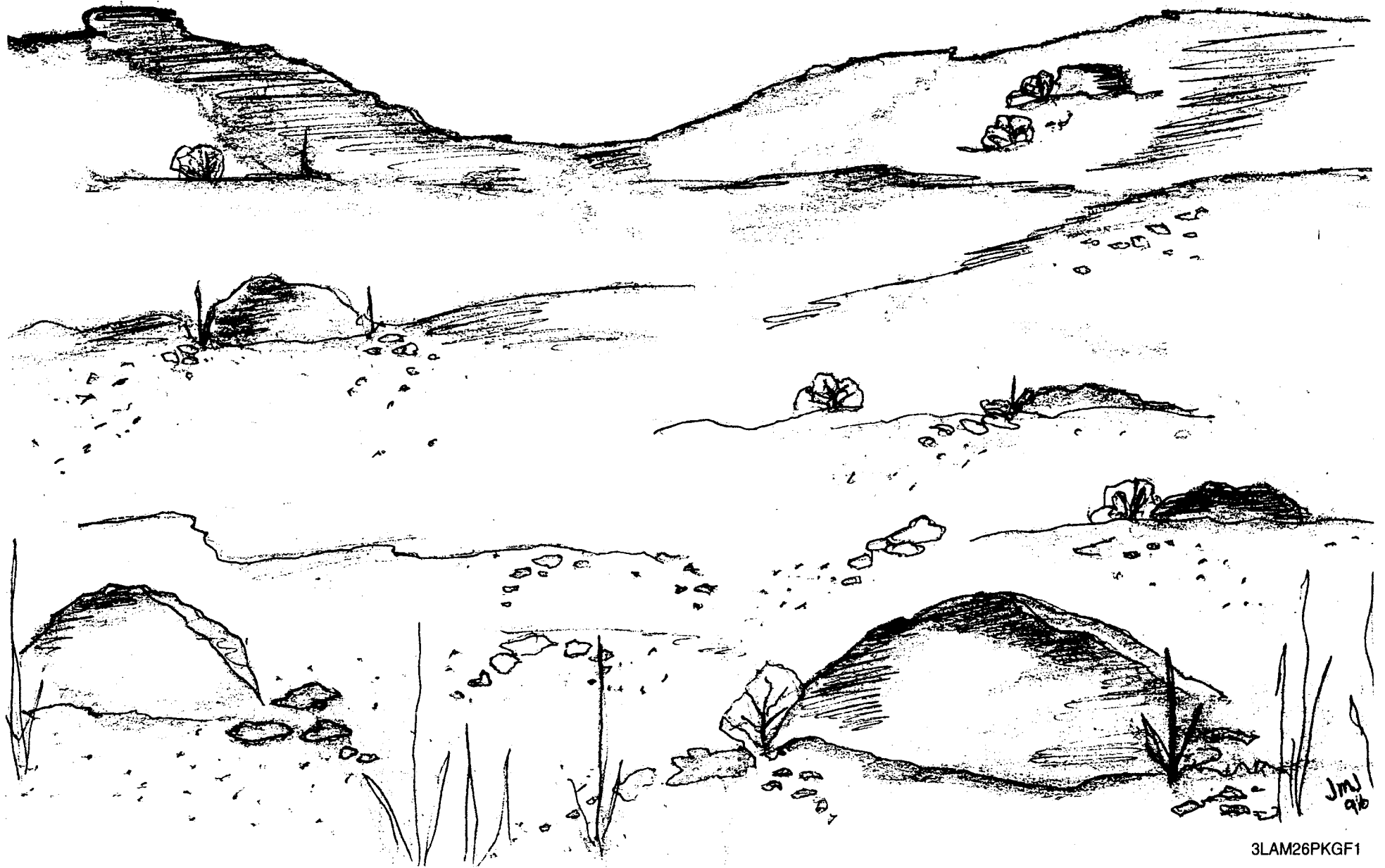
**Bag of Love:** (3LAM26PKG2) Cut apart the GF2 pictures and add pictures of fire, chains and Babylon from the 3JER23PKG3 Jeremiah lessons. Put them all in a “love bag.” One child reaches in and chooses a picture without looking. The child tells what is happening in the picture or what the picture has to do with what has been happening to the Israelites in Jerusalem. After each description, ask the children, “Did God love the Israelites when the Babylonians took them away from Jerusalem? Do your parents love you when they discipline you? Yes, God loved the Israelites and your parents love you enough to stop you from doing things that hurt you.” Talk about how it hurts to be punished, but also, how afterwards, we have a more thankful attitude. The Israelites were going to develop a thankful, loving spirit toward God.



**“Mouth for Keeping Promises” Center:** (3LAM26PKG3) Make a necklace out of a mouth that says, “I Promise to Keep My Word.” Talk about promises your parents make to you. How do you feel when they keep their promises? How do you feel when they don’t keep their promises? God always keeps His promise to punish us when we need it and forgive us when we want to obey Him. Ask the children if any of them remembers the promise you made to them at the beginning of the morning. “I promised to give you a little surprise if you cooperated all morning. I am wearing my ‘I promise to keep my word’ necklace because God wants me to be like Him. Here is the little surprise I promised to give you today.” Tape a “Promise Penny” to the name tags the children have been wearing all morning. When they see the penny, they will remember that God always keeps His promises and He wants them to keep their promises, too.



**“Bad Fig” Attitudes and Actions:** Allow children to pick pieces of paper out of the “bad figs” basket. On the side of the basket might be pictures of some of the “bad fig” Israelites who were punished but never changed their attitudes. Include the faces of King Jehoiakim, King Jehoiachin, King Zedekiah, Ishmael, and Johanan from the Jeremiah lessons. On the papers inside the basket are present-day situations that list acts of disobedience. Examples might be ignoring Dad when he asks you to come help with a project, throwing clothes on the floor when told to put them on the hook, playing at a house down the street that you have been told not to, crossing the street when told not to, taking money out of your brother’s bank, lying about who started the fight, etc. Talk about what we feel like inside when we do wrong. Talk about what would be right things to do. Let the children write their names or draw a picture of themselves to put in the “good fig” basket you have brought with you. Put your name in first, telling the children that you want to be an obedient “good fig” child of God. Talk about something you will change this week because you know that it is what God wants you to do.



JM  
9/8

# 70

## Years in Babylon



The fields will be full of weeds.



Israelites will buy their own fields.



The fields will be full of grain.



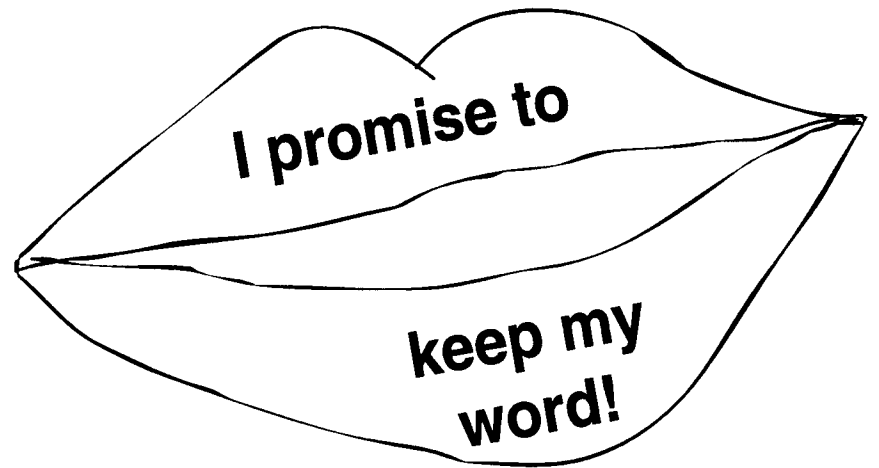
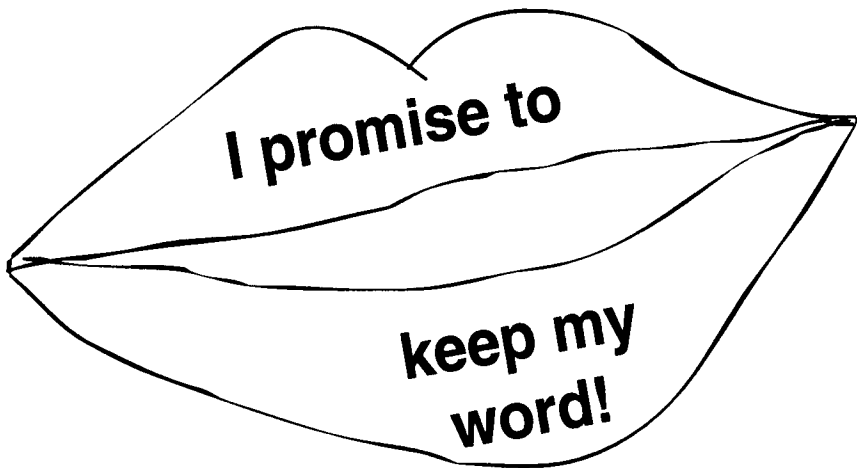
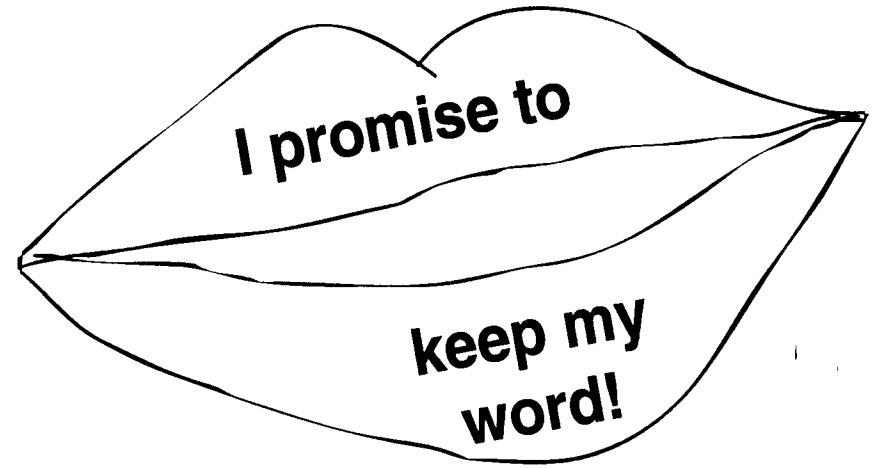
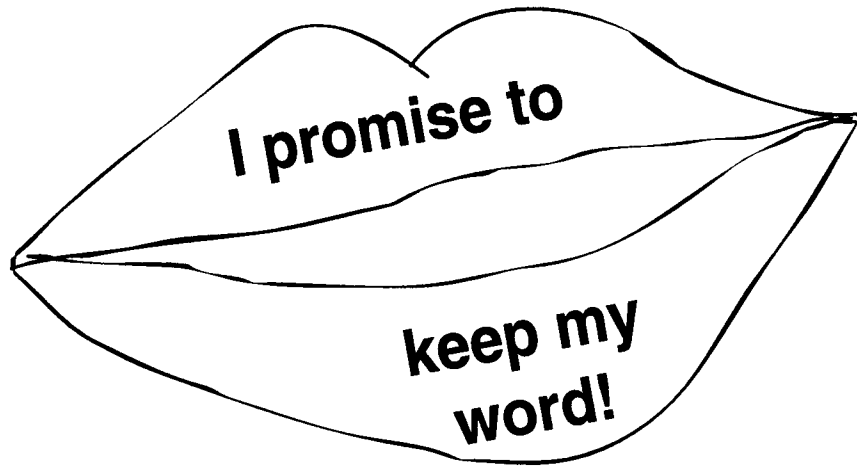
Crops will be harvested from the fields.



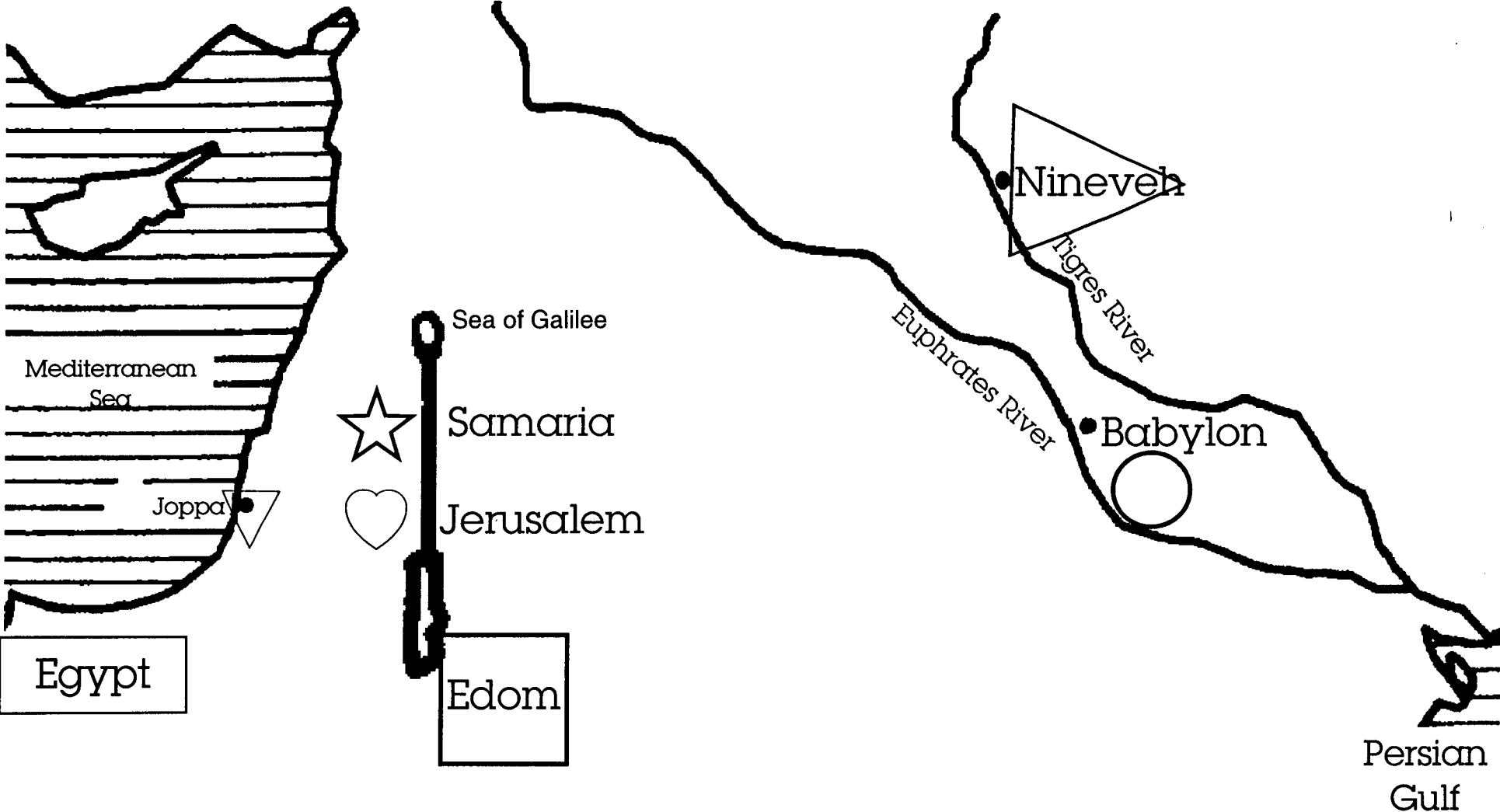
3LAM26PKG2

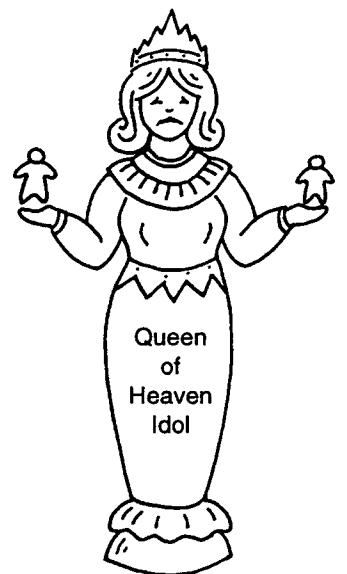
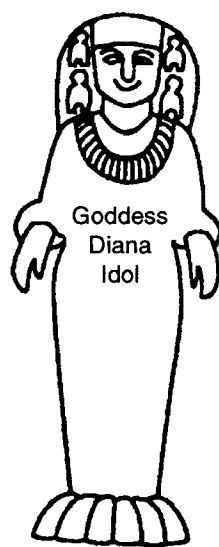
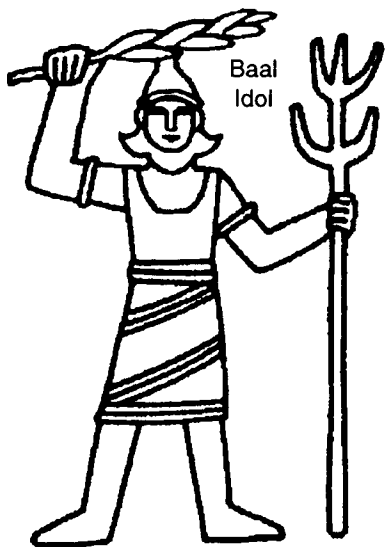
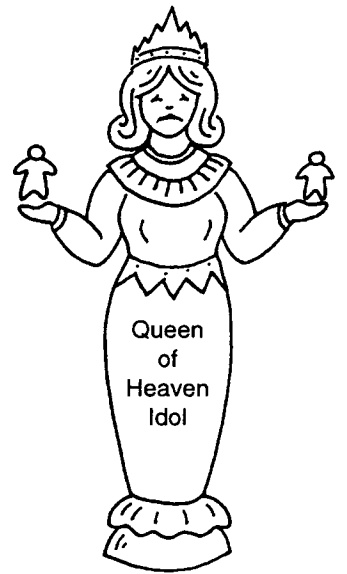
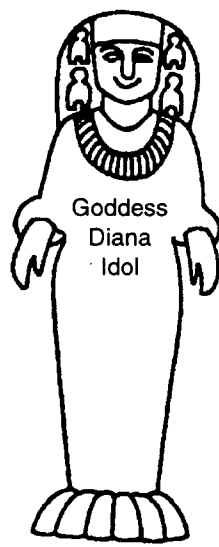
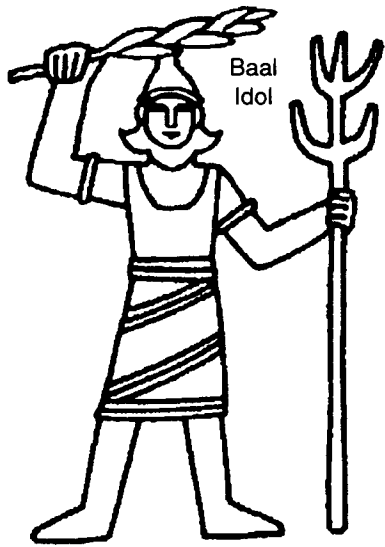
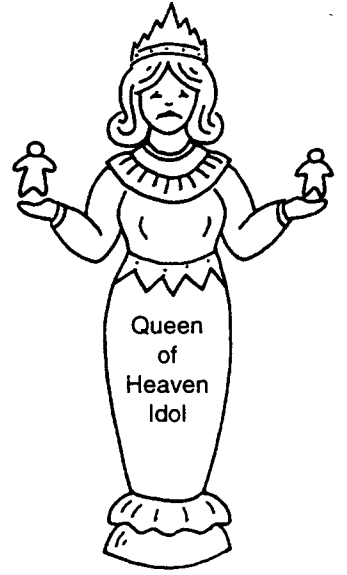
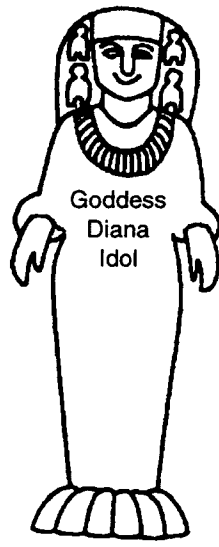
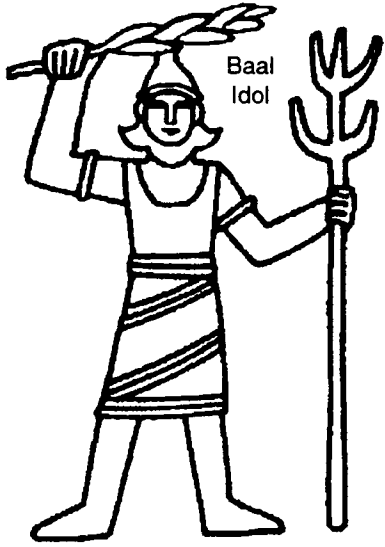
Shepherds will take care of their sheep.

# Mouth for Keeping Promises



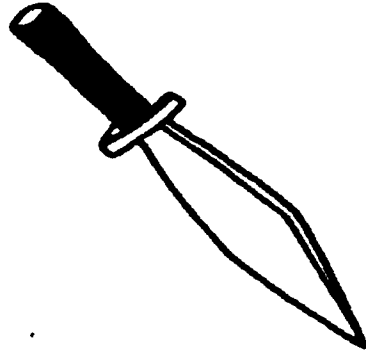
# Map of the Middle East during the time of the Prophets



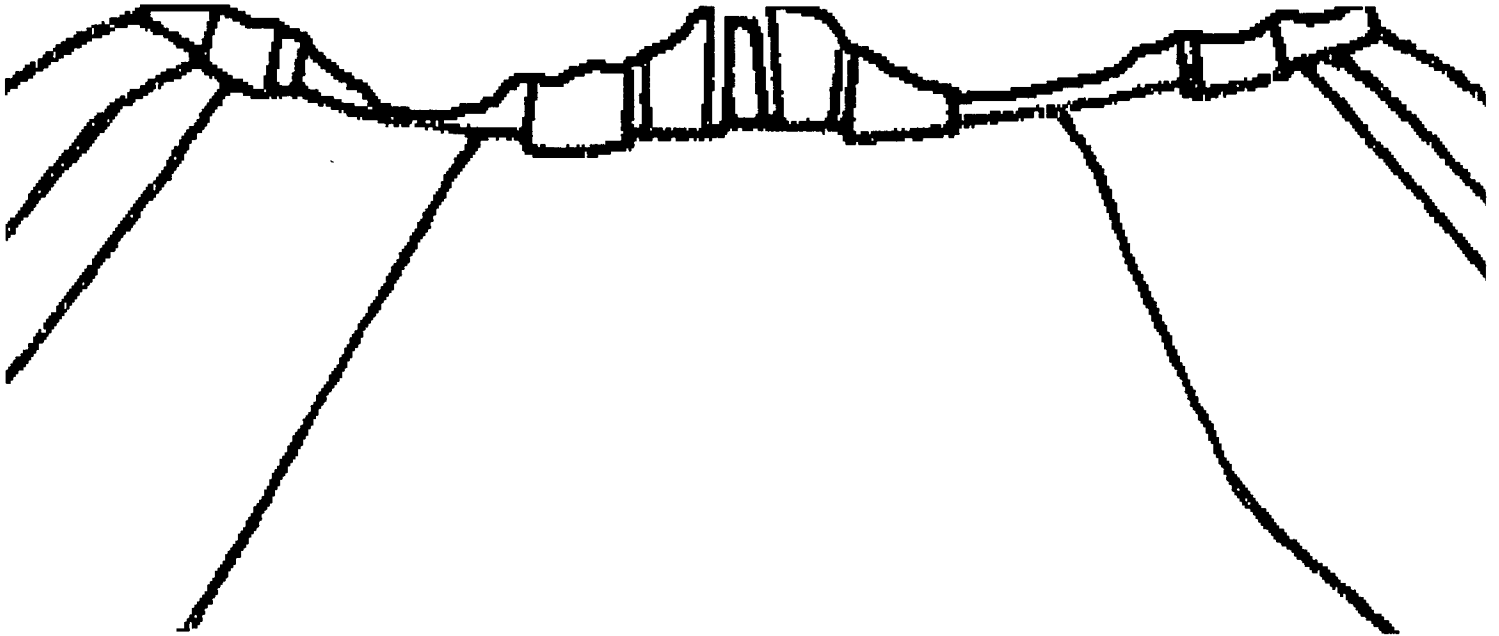




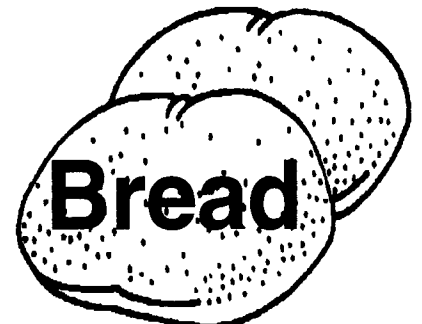
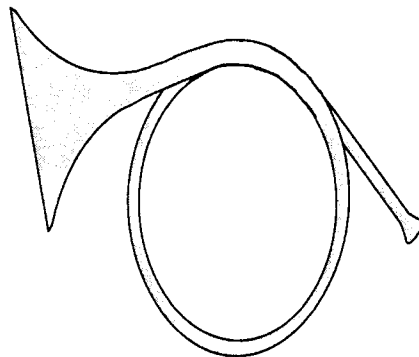
Jeremiah was sad because Jerusalem was destroyed, but he trusted God to keep His promise to bring the Israelites back to their own fields. Draw a sad face on Jeremiah.



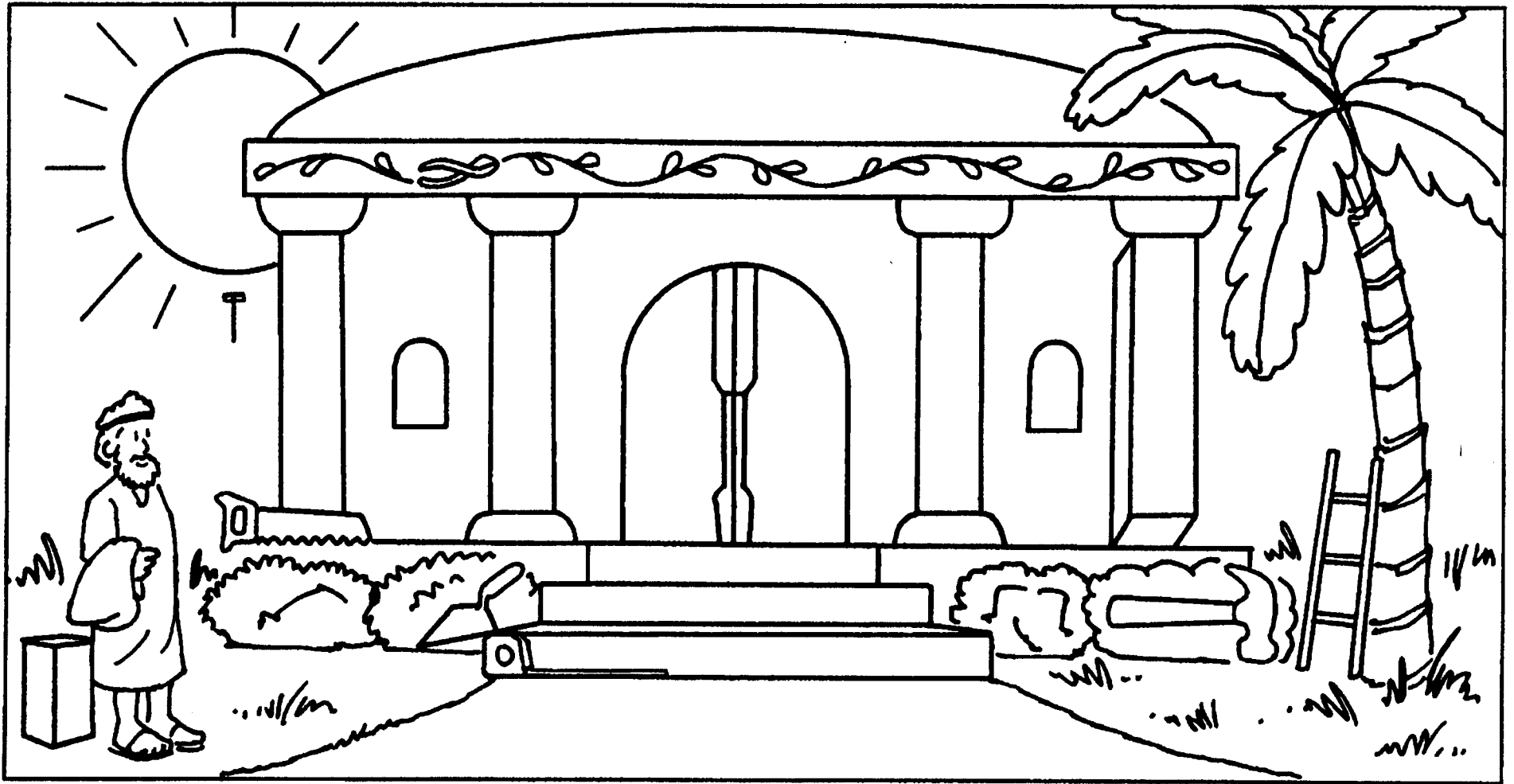
Add the above pictures to the burned city of Jerusalem.



Remove the pictures below from the Jerusalem hill.



3LAM26PKG7



**King Zedekiah was proud of his fancy palace.**

Find these building supplies hidden in the picture. Circle them.

