



4

God Preserves His Word

Key Themes

- The Old Testament is God's Word.
- God has preserved His Word.

Key Passages

- Luke 24:25–27; Jeremiah 36:1–4; 36:21–23, 36:27–28

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify one way God has shown that He has preserved His Word.
- Describe how Jesus affirms the authority of the Old Testament.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 15

Students will arrange the Books of the New Testament cards in order.



Studying God's Word

page 5

God has protected His Word for thousands of years and He will be faithful to continue to do so.



Activity 1: Books of the Old Testament

page 7

Students will learn how to pronounce the names of the books of the Old Testament.



Activity 2: Make a Scroll

page 10

Students will make a scroll with the memory verse inside.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- If you did not do this previously, print and cut out the Books of the New Testament cards from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 2, for every 3–5 students. Store in envelopes or other container.

- Books of the New Testament cards—one set for every 3–5 students, in envelopes



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Print (on colored cardstock) and cut out one set of the Books of the Old Testament cards from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Print one Books of the OT pronunciation guide for your use.

- Books of the Old Testament cards
- Books of the OT pronunciation guide



MAKE A SCROLL

- Print and cut out one Make a Scroll template from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. (This would look nice on a beige color or parchment color paper.)

- Make a Scroll template for each student
- Craft sticks, two per student
- Glue sticks
- Ribbon cut into 8 inch strips, to tie around the scroll, one per student



Memory Verse

Psalm 19:7–9 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare your heart and mind, study these passages: Luke 24:13–27; 2 Chronicles 34:14–32; Jeremiah 36.

The Old Testament begins God's Word—the history of the universe. It contains 39 books and tells us about ancient Israel and God's promise of the Messiah. This precious history has been revealed and preserved for us since the beginning of time.

One dramatic biblical episode of God preserving His word begins in 2 Chronicles 34 during King Josiah's reign over Judah near the beginning of the seventh century BC. Josiah began a period of reformation in Judah. The people before him had completely turned away from God. But Josiah did what was right in the sight of the Lord and walked in His ways (2 Chronicles 34:2). The house of the Lord had been desecrated and Josiah commanded that it be repaired (2 Chronicles 34:8). It was during this restoration of the temple that Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses (2 Chronicles 34:14). When Josiah heard the Word of the Lord read he was convicted of the idolatry and sin in the land. He tore his clothes in repentance (2 Chronicles 34:19). Because of Josiah's tender heart and humble spirit before God when he heard the words, God's judgment was withheld from Judah for the time (2 Chronicles 34:27–28).

However, when Josiah's son Jehoiakim became king, the people once again turned their backs on God and His Word. This is when the Word of the Lord came to the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 36:1) and he was instructed by the Lord to write the words of judgment against Israel and Judah and all the nations (Jeremiah 36:2). Jeremiah dictated God's Word as Baruch wrote the scroll (Jeremiah 36:4). When the scroll was finished and read to King Jehoiakim, he was not afraid, repentant, or humble before the Lord as his father had been (Jeremiah 36:24). Instead, he purposed to destroy the Word of God by casting the scroll into the fire after only a small portion of it had been read (Jeremiah 36:22–23).

But was King Jehoiakim able to destroy God's Word even with fire? No. God will always preserve His Word and did so then. He called Jeremiah again and instructed that yet another scroll be written. Jeremiah took the scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe who wrote on it. It contained all the words (and more) of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire (Jeremiah 36:32).

God has always been and will always be faithful to

preserve His Word. In the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8).

And in the words of the psalmist, "The entirety of Your Word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever" (Psalm 119:160).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

You may encounter people who don't necessarily feel that the Old Testament is significant to today's culture. It is, however, the Word of God. And God has taken great strides to preserve it in order to reveal His truth and plan of redemption completely.

As we study our Lord's life recorded in the New Testament, we see one who relied on the truth and promises of the Old Testament. Indeed, Jesus placed such a high value on the inspired Word of God that even He—the very Son of God, the Messiah—willingly submitted Himself to its authority while on earth. He relied on it to resist the temptations of Satan (Matthew 4), and He read from it when He taught in the synagogues. In fact, He was reading from the Old Testament book of Isaiah when He proclaimed that He was the Messiah who fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy (Luke 4:16–21).

On the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13), after His Resurrection, the Lord admonished his companions to believe the prophets (Luke 24:25). And as they walked, Jesus taught them from the Scriptures, beginning at the writings of Moses and all through the Prophets, the things concerning Him—that He was the one sent to redeem Israel (Luke 24:21). Jesus Christ studied, taught, obeyed, and lived the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Because He held them in such high regard, we should as well.

We do well to remember His words to Satan during His temptation, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:4).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

God has preserved His Word for thousands of years. And He has been gracious to leave historical evidence that confirms the Bible. We know that the ancient Hebrews relied on Scripture. They recognized the inspiration of certain texts and depended on them for wisdom.

The five books of Moses, beginning with Genesis, were written around 1500 BC and chronicle the history of the earth over the previous 2,500 years. After that, the remaining books were written by prophets

and scribes. These holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19–21). The words were recorded on scrolls and carefully transmitted through the generations with painstaking diligence to ensure their accuracy. The final record from the Old Testament prophets came at the hand of Malachi. His prophecy of the coming Prophet (Malachi 3–4) begins a period of 400 years of silence before John the Baptist proclaimed the arrival of Christ.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered at Qumran in 1947, gave rise to additional confirmation of these ancient texts. This finding presented Old Testament manuscripts dated as early as 150 BC. These manuscripts were written nearly 1,000 years before other manuscripts already discovered, and proved to be the same as those previously found.

For example, a copy of the book of Isaiah was part of the findings at Qumran dated about 150 BC. Prior to this, the oldest dated manuscript of the book of Isaiah was around AD 980. Yet when these two copies of Isaiah were compared they were found to be 95 percent accurate to the Hebrew Bible.

This evidence of ancient Old Testament Hebrew texts together with the astounding number—more than 24,000—of partial and complete manuscript copies of the New Testament give us solid historical background to the reliability of the Bible. Biblical scholars have

agreed that the number of manuscripts supporting the Bible provide unparalleled authentication of the original documents. In fact, the Bible has more documentation to verify it than any other book of antiquity that is commonly accepted.

For those of us with faith to believe, these findings serve as confirmation that we worship a mighty God who does not change. He speaks to us through the consistently preserved Scriptures so we can know Him, His character, His purpose, and His plan to redeem a people to Himself for all eternity.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Father, please enable me to give the Bible the same honor and authority over my life that it had over Christ's life and ministry. I know that you gave me your Word so that I could be complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work. Please help me prepare for this class so that the students will be moved to honor your Word. Develop in them a passion that will lead them to a spirit of humility and obedience toward the Scriptures. Thank you for faithfully preserving your Word from all attacks.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- Provide envelopes containing Books of the New Testament cards for groups of 3–5 students. Students are to place the books in the proper order. They can use the Books of the Bible poster or their own Bibles to confirm the right order.

Read the names of the books aloud together.

This activity will be repeated throughout the quarter.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Wouldn't it be interesting to hear from one of the men God inspired to write the Bible? Well, we're going to do that very thing today.

As we study today, we are going to see that the Old Testament is God's Word, and that God has used amazing ways to preserve, or take care of, His Word. First we're going to see that Jesus Christ Himself believed that the Old Testament was God's Word—He knew it, studied it, and taught from it.

The passage we are going to read first comes from Luke 24. This happened after Jesus's Resurrection. He was still on earth and making Himself known to His disciples. Jesus approached two men who were walking along the road away from Jerusalem. Jesus saw that they were very unhappy so He asked them why. They didn't recognize Jesus. As they walked, the men told Jesus about what had happened in Jerusalem—that the man they had hoped would one day redeem Israel—the Messiah—had been killed. They told Jesus about the Crucifixion, the burial, and the Resurrection. Of course, Jesus already knew all these things, but He was silent as He listened to them. That sets the stage. Let's read how Jesus answered these men. *Have children turn to Luke 24:25–27. Read the verses or assign children to read.*

Luke 24:25–27

EXAMINE THE WORD



Expound:
interpret,
explain, or
teach

Observe the Text

- ? What did Jesus think of these men? What did Jesus call them? Look in Luke 24:25. *He called them foolish.*
- ? Why did He think they were foolish? That is also in verse 25. *They were slow of heart to believe the truth.*

That's right. Jesus was telling them they were foolish because they didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah. They didn't believe what the Scriptures said about Him. If they had read the Scriptures and believed them, they would have seen that even though Jesus was put to death, He was the Messiah.

- ? So what did Jesus begin to do? It is in verse 27. *Allow for answers.*

Do you see the word "expound" in this verse? That is a big word! It means to interpret, explain, or teach. Jesus was teaching these men.

- ? What was Jesus teaching these men? It says he "expounded to them in all the . . ." what? *The Scriptures.*

Scripture is another word for the Bible.

This verse says that Jesus taught the men beginning at the writings of Moses and all through the Prophets. He was teaching the Scriptures. He was explaining that the Scriptures were true—the Scriptures were talking about Jesus!

Discover the Truth

Look here at the Books of the Bible poster. All of these books are part of the Old Testament. These are the same books—the Scriptures—that Jesus taught from. Jesus knew that all of these books were God's Word.

Now take a look at our timeline for a minute. Jesus was teaching about the Scriptures written by Moses. That would be beginning in Genesis. And he taught all the way through to the prophets, all the way through to Malachi, who wrote the last book of the Old Testament. *Show the time frame of the Old Testament on the Seven C's Timeline.*

- ? Do you think Jesus had a Bible like ours? *Yes/No.*

He did not have a Bible like ours. He had writings or scrolls that had the Scriptures written on them. That is what He learned from. He learned from the same writings that we have in our Bibles in the Old Testament. They were all written before Jesus was born. It's just that they weren't put into a book like our Bibles yet. *Refer to the Books of the Bible poster and/or show the children the Old Testament in your Bible.*





Books of the Old Testament

MATERIALS

- One set of Books of the Bible Old Testament cards
- Books of the OT pronunciation guide

INSTRUCTIONS

Let's learn some more about the books of the Old Testament. We know that Jesus learned from them and He taught from them. Let's have some fun trying to pronounce the books. Some of them are pretty hard to say!

Shuffle and hand out the Books of the Old Testament cards to the children. The children will place the cards they received in front of them. Refer to the Books of the Bible poster as you call out the names of the Old Testament books. Use the pronunciation guide if you're not sure of the correct pronunciation.

As you say the name of an Old Testament book, the student with that card will stand and repeat the name of the book. Then have the entire class repeat the name of the book. Go through all the books of the Old Testament in order, having the child who has that card stand and repeat it after you.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Very good! Now I want you all to read off all the Old Testament books together. Refer to the Books of the Bible poster as the children try to recite the books. Give them help as they need it for some of the more difficult names.

The Old Testament is part of the inspired Word of God. It is good to know the names and the order of the books. It will help you as you learn more and more about the Bible and how important it is!



READ THE WORD

Now we're going to read and study the Old Testament ourselves. Jesus believed the Old Testament was God's Word. And this account will show us how God has amazingly preserved His Word.

? Do you know what preserves means? Allow for discussion.

It means to keep safe, or protect something, to make something last.

? We are going to read from the book of Jeremiah. Who can find Jeremiah on the Books of the Bible poster? It is in the Old Testament. Have a student find Jeremiah on the Books of the Bible poster.

There was a man named Jehoiakim. He was the king of Judah at the time. The people were very sinful. They did not respect God. They did not want to obey Him, love Him, or worship Him. That is not good news!

So God raised up a prophet, Jeremiah, to warn the people. Can you turn to Jeremiah 36 in your Bibles? Remember to use your Table of Contents to find the page number. Jeremiah is in the Old Testament at the beginning of the Bible. Help children find Jeremiah 36.

Listen carefully while I read Jeremiah 36:1-4.

Preserve:
keep safe,
protect, make
something last

Jeremiah 36:1-4

I'm going to ask some questions—and we are going to see what God wants us to know.

EXAMINE THE WORD

- ? Do you remember the Observe questions we learned last week? *Refer to the Bible Study poster. Who, what, where, when, why.*

Observe the Text

- ? Who was the king at this time? I mentioned him earlier. It is a pretty hard name. *Reread verse 1 if the children can't get it. King Jehoiakim.*

- ? Good! Who did the Lord's Word come to? *Reread verse 1 again. Jeremiah.*

So we have two names that start with J—Jehoiakim the king, and Jeremiah the prophet.

- ? What did God command Jeremiah to do in verse 2? *Reread beginning of verse 2. To write on a scroll the things God had spoken against Israel, Judah, and all the nations.*

Good! God wanted Jeremiah to write down all the things that Israel had done wrong and what God was going to do to punish them. God was hoping that when Israel read these things, the people would decide to obey God instead of disobeying Him.

This was God's way of saying "Remember what happens when you disobey!"

The Old Testament is full of messages God gave His prophets in order to help the people. God spoke through the prophets. They spoke and wrote just what God wanted them to. Their job was to warn God's people that they better obey Him or He would have to punish them.

Now there is another person in verse 4. His name is Baruch.

- ? What did Jeremiah ask Baruch to do? You can find this answer in verse 4. *If they can't get the answer, reread the verse for them. Write down on a scroll the words the Lord gave to Jeremiah.*

God wanted Jeremiah to write down some things, so Jeremiah asked Baruch to write them down.

When King Jehoiakim heard about the scroll, he asked to see it. He demanded that someone read it to him. Let's read what happened next! Follow in your Bibles. I'm going to read verses 21–23. *Give the children time to find the verses then read verses 21–23.*

- ? Where did this take place? *In the king's winter house. Jeremiah 36:22.*

- ? How was King Jehoiakim keeping warm? It's in verse 22. *He had a fire going in the fireplace.*

- ? What did the king do when the scroll was read to him? *He cut the scroll with his knife and threw it in the fire! Jeremiah 36:23.*



Jeremiah 36:21–23

- ? King Jehoiakim really didn't like what God had said, did he? But did that change God's Word just because he didn't like it? *No!*

Suppose your teacher sends home a note that says you are not doing well in math at school because you are not trying or paying attention. You see the note and get angry and afraid of what is going to happen next. So you tear the letter up. That is what Jehoiakim did. But he got angry and burned more than a teacher's note; he burned God's words!

If you tore up the note from the teacher, would that change the fact that you were not doing well in math? Do you think that would keep your parents from finding out the truth? Of course not. They would find out—and I'm thinking you would be in even more trouble.

In the same way, burning God's Word will not change anything it says!

I'm going to read Jeremiah 36, verses 27 and 28. Listen to see if you can tell me what happened after the king burned God's Word. *Read verses.*

Jeremiah 36:27-28

- ? What came to Jeremiah again? *The Word of the Lord came to him again. Jeremiah 36:27.*
That's right. The king could not destroy God's Words.
- ? What did God tell Jeremiah to do? *To take another scroll and write all of God's words again. Jeremiah 36:28.*

That's right. God wasn't worried that the scroll was burned. He just had Jeremiah write it over again. God preserves His Word and not even a king can destroy it.

Discover the Truth

- ? Why do you think King Jehoiakim took God's Word and threw it into the fire? *Allow children to answer.*

King Jehoiakim was a sinful man. God's Word was showing him just how sinful he was. And God's Word was telling him that God would punish him for his sin one day. The king became angry with God and didn't want any part of it! So he tried to just destroy God's Word!

- ? But we know that God preserves His Word. Who remembers what preserves means? *To keep it safe and protect it so it can never be destroyed.*

That's right. God has always protected His Word, the Bible, so it could never be destroyed—even by evil kings who try to burn it up! *Show the Lesson Theme poster.*

This is just one example of a time when someone tried to destroy God's Word. There have been different times in history when wicked rulers thought they could get rid of the Bible. They have gathered up Bibles and thrown them in the fire. They have punished people for owning a Bible. And yet, the Bible is still with us today because God protects His Word.





Make a Scroll

MATERIALS

- Make a Scroll template for each student
- Two craft sticks per student
- Glue sticks or glue
- Piece of ribbon about 8 inches long for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

Give each child two craft sticks and the verse paper. Children will glue each end of the verse sheet to the craft sticks and let it dry. Then roll each side up like a scroll. Tie the ribbon around the scroll to hold it together.

When the Old Testament was written, it was not in a big book like we have today. Each book was hand written on a scroll and kept by the priests. Every time another

copy was made it had to be copied entirely by hand. This scroll we are making has our memory verse on it. You can use it to practice your verse this week.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

When Jehoiakim burned the scroll of God's Word he thought he was getting rid of the words from God. But God had Jeremiah make another copy. God will never let His Word be destroyed. He keeps, protects, and preserves it. When you open your scroll to study your verse, remember that even if something happens to your scroll, God's Word is eternal!



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Today we read in the New Testament that Jesus Himself studied and taught from the Old Testament. The Old Testament is the part of the Bible written before Jesus's birth. *Refer to Books of the Bible poster.*

Even after He rose from the dead, Jesus continued to teach His disciples from the Bible. Because Jesus believed it, we must believe it, too.

And we know that God's Word cannot be destroyed. We heard today how it couldn't be destroyed by an evil king even though he tried to burn it up.

God just called on Jeremiah to write it down again. God's Word cannot be destroyed! He has preserved it for thousands of years and no one will be able to destroy it or get rid of it.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Well, we know that God's Word cannot be destroyed, not even by evil King Jehoiakim who tried to burn it up! And we know that God is more powerful than any king.

We also know that Jesus believed all of the Old Testament. In fact, that is what He taught from. So, if someone tries to tell you that the Old Testament isn't true or isn't very important, you can tell him that if Jesus believed it, so do you! If Jesus was teaching from it—you can, too. If Jesus learned from it— you can learn, too!

You know, if it wasn't important, God wouldn't have protected it and kept it just the same all these thousands of years. The Old Testament is a very important part of God's Word.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Psalms 19:7–9 The Law of the Lord is perfect,
converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the
simple;
the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the
heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous
altogether.

If you have time, sing the Word of God song again. Help with how to sing it is on the Resource DVD-ROM for Lesson 2.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for the truth of His Word.
- Praise God that His Word is eternal.
- Pray we would all come to trust it, believe it, and obey it.

