



10

God Warns Judah

Key Theme

- God alone is to be worshipped.

Key Passages

- Jeremiah 2:5–7, 4:1, 4:6, 5:19

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe why God was angry with Judah.
- Describe God's judgment on Judah.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will use the signs posted on the walls to complete their Memory Verse Review Sheets. They will match the numbers on their sheets with the numbers on the signs and fill in the missing words. They will then read and/or recite the verse to the class or to each other.



Activity 1: God Warns Judah Class Notes

Students will fill out the God Warns Judah Class Notes as you study the lesson. Pass out the class notes before you begin to teach. Put the class notes posters up as you progress through the lesson.



Studying God's Word

God was angry with the people of Judah because of their many years of idolatry. Just like He judged Israel, God would judge the people of Judah by sending a nation from the north to capture them and destroy their land.



Activity 2: Prophet Match-Up

In this version of the game Concentration, students will turn cards over and try to match the prophets they studied.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print one Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Print the eight Memory Verse Review Signs from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Tape the Memory Verse Review Signs to the walls around the room.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student
- Eight Memory Verse Review Signs
- Masking tape



GOD WARNS JUDAH CLASS NOTES

- Print one God Warns Judah Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- Print one set of the four God Warns Judah Class Notes Posters from the Resource DVD-ROM. You will post them on the board as the lesson progresses.

- God Warns Judah Class Notes for each student
- God Warns Judah Class Notes Answer Key
- Four God Warns Judah Class Notes Posters
- Pencils
- Poster putty or tape



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Map of the Middle East from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Map of the Middle East



PROPHET MATCH-UP

- Print and cut out two each of the six Prophet Match-Up Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for each team. Keep the Prophet Match-Up Teacher Guide for your use.

- One set of 12 Prophet Match-Up Cards for each team
- Prophet Match-Up Teacher Guide



Memory Verse

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

Jeremiah is often referred to as the “weeping prophet” because of the nature of his ministry, and the label fits. Jeremiah primarily prophesied in the Southern Kingdom of Judah during the final decades of that kingdom. The 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom had been carried away, and the region was repopulated with Gentiles who intermarried with the Jews left behind. In the South, there was a series of good and bad kings.

Jeremiah was one of the prophets God sent to warn Judah, and his messages began during the reign of Josiah (Jeremiah 1:2, 3:6). Josiah was the sixteenth king of Judah and was one of the best kings. He was working to rid Judah of idol worship, turning them back to worshipping the one true God (2 Kings 22–23). Jeremiah was not the first prophet to be sent to Judah; Micah, Isaiah, Joel, Obadiah, and others preceded him, and he was a contemporary of Daniel, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. God sent warnings to Judah through all of these men. Judah had periods of restoration, like the period when Isaiah was prophesying under King Hezekiah, but they were constantly backsliding just as Israel had done (Jeremiah 3:6–10). Jeremiah gave the final warnings of the coming destruction to Judah. He called for repentance and for the people to turn back to God. Because of their unfaithfulness to God, Judah was described as an adulterous wife, just like her sister Israel.

For their adulterous idolatry, God pronounced through Jeremiah that a lion from the north would come and lay siege to their city (Jeremiah 4:5–8). Judah was to be wiped out for their continual wickedness, despite the short periods of correct worship (2 Kings 23:26). Jeremiah foretold the coming destruction of Judah and Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians. This destruction would come in three phases. We’ll get to that in the next lesson.

Because he was constantly and harshly warning the kings of coming judgment and calling them to repentance, Jeremiah was persecuted. During his ministry, Jeremiah faced death threats (Jeremiah 11:18–23, 26:8), was beaten and placed in stocks (20:2), had his writings burned (36:23–26), was thrown into a miry dungeon (38:6), was carried away captive in chains (40:1), and faced many other trials.

Frankly, it is all a little depressing. But the judgment he was proclaiming was deserved as Judah had persisted in following after false gods rather than the

God who had delivered them from Egypt and established them in the Promised Land. God judged the people of Judah, and He warned them that because they had forsaken Him and served foreign gods, they would be taken hostage and serve foreigners in another land (Jeremiah 5:19). As bleak as that future appeared, God also gave the people the message that they would not be completely wiped out, but a remnant would turn back to God and cry for relief (Jeremiah 5:18). God made it clear that the captivity described in Jeremiah chapter 5 would only last 70 years (Jeremiah 25:12).

In spite of all the warnings and proclamations of coming disaster, there was also a foreshadowing of eternal hope. Jeremiah spoke of the days when the Lord would raise to David a Branch of righteousness—a King who would reign and prosper. He would be called “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:5–6). This was a foreshadowing of the coming Messiah.

We can live in this same hope as we face periods of conflict or brokenness in our lives, families, country, and world. Like Judah in Jeremiah’s time, we live in a world cursed because of our sin, our idolatry, our unrepentant hearts. The hope Jeremiah spoke of is the same for us. Jesus Christ will come to restore all things one day. He will restore this broken creation. Jesus Christ offers a plan of redemption for sinners through His life, death, and Resurrection that can assure those who repent and believe a place with Him in eternity. This is our blessed Redeemer. This is our blessed hope.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

As we look at the opening passage of Jeremiah, we have a clear time frame for the ministry of Jeremiah. He was a young man when God first called him to be a prophet to the nations (Jeremiah 1:1–8), probably in his twenties, and possibly as old as 90 when he died. He began prophesying in 630 BC, the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah (Jeremiah 25:3), and the closing passages recount the release of Jehoiachin in 562 BC—indicating a span of 68 years of ministry. Unlike most of the prophets, Jeremiah was alive to actually see his prophecies of Jerusalem’s destruction come to fulfillment, living through those horrid days when kings were captured and the city and Temple were burned and leveled. We will see as we continue our lessons that Jeremiah’s role to Judah was not finished. His influence would continue into the 70 years of captivity that he had prophesied.

We have looked at some very specific prophecies from both Isaiah (last week) and Jeremiah. The statements they made were proclaiming in very particular detail what would happen in the future. Many people doubt that these statements are actually prophecies of the future. Rather, they say that an editor added those things back into the text after they had already happened. They doubt that the prophets really received messages from God and recorded what He told them. They doubt the absolute truthfulness and authority of the Bible.

As you face skeptics who want to attack the authority and authenticity of God's Word—whether inside or outside the church—remember, the Word of God speaks for itself. Show your friends where God's Word speaks specifically about the topic you are discussing. This way, those you are talking with will be forced to combat the words you show them in the Bible. Most skeptics are quick to deny man's opinions but will find it more difficult to deny the Bible and the very words it contains.

We can cling to the truth proclaimed in Scripture. There we find the knowledge of who God is, what He has done for us in Christ, and how He works in us through the Holy Spirit. As we study God's Word, we trust that the God of the universe is speaking and that we have the privilege of receiving His words. We must heed the warnings, obey the commands, and trust in

the promises, knowing that we are submitting to the Creator of the universe who has graciously saved us from our sinful selves and adopted us into His family.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Almighty Lord, you alone deserve all my worship. I was grieved when I read your Word in Jeremiah and saw how you pleaded with your people to return to you. You longed for them to remember you. Why were they so cold to you after all you had done for them? Didn't their fathers and grandfathers teach them about you? Lord, that could be me. Sometimes I go my own way, and I forget about you. I'm not always faithful to tell the next generation about you. Thank you for opening my eyes to the importance of remembering who you are and all you've done throughout history and in my life. Thank you for this chance to tell the next generation all about you. Help me to be faithful to teach the Word. Quicken the hearts of the children to believe.

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete their Memory Verse Review Sheets by matching the numbers on their sheets with the same numbers on the wall signs to find the missing words. They will then read and/or recite the verse to the class or to each other.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



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.



God Warns Judah Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God Warns Judah Class Notes for each student
- Four God Warns Judah Class Notes Posters
- God Warns Judah Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils
- Poster putty or tape

INSTRUCTIONS

Print out one set of four posters. Print the class notes for each student. Pass the notes out at the beginning of class. Put each of the posters on the board as you teach the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Don't fill

in anything until we get to it. I'll let you know when.

After filling out each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we study today and fill in our class notes, we will see that the Lord used His prophet Jeremiah to warn God's people in Judah that God was angry with them because of their idolatry, and He would judge them.



Studying God's Word

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

READ THE WORD

Refer to Lesson Theme Posters and History of Israel Poster. We are moving ahead in history today—over 100 years! Last time we talked about Isaiah and his prophecies to Judah about the coming Messiah. Today, we will talk about another prophet, Jeremiah. God used Jeremiah to speak to the people in Judah and to warn them. You see, the people in Judah were disobeying God and worshipping false gods. They had turned their backs on the true God.

Remember, God used the prophets Micah and Isaiah to tell of the coming Messiah. *Refer to Lessons 8 and 9 Lesson Theme Posters.* But God also used His prophets to warn the people about their sin against God. Today we will read about another prophet, Jeremiah. God sent Jeremiah to Judah. The people in Judah would not listen or obey God. They loved their sin. God sent Jeremiah as a final warning. Jeremiah told the people to turn away from their sin and turn back to God. Jeremiah knew if they did not obey, God would send another nation to destroy them. We will be looking in the Bible today to see why God was so angry with Judah. What were they doing? And what would God do as judgment? What was the warning God gave Judah through Jeremiah? *Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster.*

Turn to Jeremiah 2:5. Let's read this verse and see what God's Word has to say about Judah. *Read Jeremiah 2:5 aloud. Emphasize the answers to the questions below.*

Jeremiah 2:5

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? First, who is speaking in this verse? *Re-read the verse if necessary. The Lord.*

Yes. Now remember, the role of the prophet was to speak for the Lord. So, when Jeremiah came to the people and said, "Thus says the Lord," the people knew that God had given Jeremiah a special message to share with them.

? Who had the people gone far away from? *The Lord.*

? What were the people following? *Idols.*

? What had they become? *Idolaters.*

? What does that mean, "they followed idols and became idolaters"? Do you know? *Allow discussion.*

An idol is a false god. In fact, an idol can be anything in our lives that we love more than God. The people in Judah had gone away from God and had turned to idols. When someone does that, we call them an idolater.

► Re-read the verses or portions of the verses as necessary to help the students hear the answers directly from the biblical text.

The people of Judah were idolaters because they were worshipping false gods, idols—not the one true God.

- ? Look at #1 on your class notes. This guy is worshipping an idol. What word will complete that sentence? Use the word bank at the top of your page if you need help. *Idols*. And will someone read it for the class? *Assign a reader*.

I'll put #1 up on the board. Jeremiah was warning the people of Judah. He told them to stop worshipping idols! *Put up Poster #1*.

The people had forgotten about the Lord and what He had done for them. This next passage tells us about one thing in particular that God had done for the people—but they had forgotten it. Listen carefully. It has to do with Moses, the Red Sea parting, and a great army! I think you'll get it. *Read Jeremiah 2:6–7 emphasizing "brought us up out of the land of Egypt."*

- ? Did you hear it? What was it God had done for the people? *Brought them out of Egypt, led them through the wilderness*.

Yes! The people had forgotten all that the Lord had done for them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt—out of the slavery they had been in for hundreds of years. God had protected them and led them through the wilderness, through deserts and pits, through drought and death. *Refer to Egypt on the Map of the Middle East*.

- ? Where was God leading His people as they travelled through the deserts? Listen again to Jeremiah 2:7. *Re-read Jeremiah 2:7a. Allow discussion*.

- ? God brought the people to a special land—a land with fruit, goodness, milk, and honey! It was the land God had promised to Abraham a long, long time before. What was it called? *The Promised Land. Canaan. Refer to the Map of the Middle East. Point out Egypt and Judah on the map*.

- ? Now look at #2 on your class notes. What else did Jeremiah tell the people they had done to make God angry? What word will finish that sentence? *Forgot*. Fill in the word "forgot."

- ? Who can read this poster for us? *Put up Poster #2. Assign a reader*.

Discover the Truth

Refer to the first two posters on the board. The people had forgotten the wonderful things the Lord had done for them. God had led His people out of slavery in Egypt; He brought them safely through the wilderness and into the Promised Land. But now, many years later, they were turning against Him and were worshipping false gods. This is what made God angry. God does not like to share His glory. God wants His people to obey Him and worship Him alone. Judah was not doing this. God called His prophet Jeremiah to go to Judah and warn them about His anger.



Jeremiah 2:6–7

- Use the Map of the Middle East as a visual aid throughout this lesson to help students realize that this event is real history and that Judah was a real place.

READ THE WORD

What would happen? The people had turned away from God and forgotten all that God had done for them. God was angry. But, He would not give up on the people yet. He sent Jeremiah with another message. Listen carefully and tell me what this message from God was. *Read Jeremiah 4:1 emphasizing "return" and "shall not be moved."*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What did the Lord want the people to do? *Jeremiah 4:1. Return to Him.*
God wanted the people to come back to Him and worship Him alone! God told them to put away their abominations. He was talking about the idols. God hated them. And God told the people to get rid of them. If they would listen, God would not judge them.
- ? Look at #3 on your class notes. What words will finish that sentence?
Return, away. Complete #3.
- ? *Put Poster #3 on the board.* Jeremiah told the people to return to God and turn away from their idols. And will someone read this poster for us? *Assign a reader.*

Discover the Truth

God loved His people. And He warned them again. If they would put away the idols and turn back to Him, they would not be punished. God wanted His people to give Him the praise and glory He alone deserves. God is the Creator of all things and the only true God. He does not want His people to worship anything else but Him—He is the only one who deserves our worship.



READ THE WORD

But the people would not listen. God warned them. And the punishment was coming. What was God going to do? How would God punish His people for their disobedience and idolatry? Jeremiah wrote it all down. Jeremiah told the people what God was going to do to them. Listen carefully as I read. *Read Jeremiah 4:6 enthusiastically to help the students grasp the meaning.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Wow! This does not sound good for Judah.

Observe the Text

- ? Jeremiah said to take refuge, do not delay. What does that mean? *Allow discussion.*

The time had come for God's judgment. Jeremiah told the people to run for cover . . . and run quickly.

? What was coming to them? *Re-read Jeremiah 4:6. Disaster from the north, great destruction.*

? Hmm. What was the disaster and great destruction? What was he talking about? *Allow discussion.*

Disaster and destruction is very bad news. God was going to send another nation to Judah to destroy them. That nation was Babylon. God was sending Babylon because the people would not turn back to God! They would not listen to God's warning. Now they would be conquered. And the land would be destroyed by this enemy nation.

? Look at #4 on your class notes. What word goes in there? *Land. Complete #4.*

? Put Poster #4 on the board. Now can someone read this for me? *Assign a reader.*

We know why God sent this wicked nation to destroy Judah. But Jeremiah recorded it again in the Bible. Jeremiah spoke for God and told the people WHY this destruction was going to come to them. Listen carefully as I read. *Read Jeremiah 5:19 emphasizing "served foreign gods in your land."*

Jeremiah 5:19

? The verse tells us that the people will ask, "Why God?" And what will God tell them? Why was God's punishment finally coming on them? *They served other gods.*

? What were those other gods called? Do you remember? Look at #1 on your class notes. *Idols.*

That's right. The people would not turn away from their idols. They were worshipping false gods. They would not obey God. They had forgotten God. And God said that He would punish them. He would send the nation of Babylon to take over Judah. And the people left in Judah would be moved away from their homes to the nation of Babylon.

Discover the Truth

Jeremiah gave God's warning. The people had disobeyed God and turned away from Him over and over again. God told them to return to Him—but they would not. The people of Judah had forgotten the one true God.

Refer to the Map of the Middle East again and point out Babylon and Judah. And now God was going to punish them. He was going to send a nation—Babylon—a fierce nation, to come and destroy their land. The people would either be killed or taken out of Judah to be slaves. The great nation of Babylon would come from the north and destroy the little nation of Judah. Babylon would carry out God's punishment against the people.





Prophet Match-Up

MATERIALS

- One set of 12 (2 each of six) Prophet Match-Up Cards for each team
- Prophet Match-Up Teacher Guide

INSTRUCTIONS

Depending on the size of your class, you can divide the students into teams. You may just want to play the game at each table, if appropriate. Put the cards (2 sets of 6 cards) face down on the table. Students will try to match the prophets by turning two cards over at a time. Have someone read the names and text from each card as they turn them over and/or make matches. Use the

teacher guide to give more information about each prophet for review.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Refer to the *Role of the Prophets Poster*. Long ago, God used prophets to speak for Him. This was before God gave us the complete Bible. God used the prophets to give good news, bad news, to warn the people, to teach them, and to tell them about Jesus who would come as the Savior. Today, we heard that God sent His message of warning to Judah through the prophet Jeremiah.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God sent His prophet Jeremiah to the people of Judah. They had turned away from God. God had been very patient as they worshipped other gods—for hundreds of years. But their disobedience to God could not go on any longer. They would not return to God. They had turned to their false idols. They did not love God. They had forgotten what God had done for them. The time had come to punish them. Jeremiah's message to them was that God would send the nation of Babylon to destroy them and take them away from their homes.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

God is mighty. He is wonderful and loving. Our God is also kind and merciful. He is the Creator. Everything we have comes from Him. Yes, God is patient and good, and He wants what is best for us. But, since He is the

Creator and He is the one true God, He wanted the people of Judah to worship Him alone—no false gods or idols!

The God of Judah is the same God we worship today. And God still demands that we honor, glorify, worship, and obey Him alone. If we love anything more than God it's considered an idol.

? Can you think of anything that kids your age could love more than God?

Allow discussion. TV, friends, family, books, school, video games, shopping, clothes, looks, money, playing sports.

But God wants us to love Him with all of our heart, soul, and mind. That is the first and the greatest commandment. That means we are to love God more than our friends. We are to love God more than our sports and more than our TV shows. We are to love God more than our video games, our vacations, our money and our stuff—more than anything! He is the only God. He is the only one worthy of our praise and honor and worship.

Let's be careful to guard our hearts and minds so we don't get caught up in the worship of anything other than the one true God.



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



MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God because He is worthy of our worship.
- Thank God for His patience with us when we sin.
- Ask God to help us listen when the Holy Spirit corrects us.

