

=THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 24

Jeremiah

Objects to have:

The new sign: JEREMIAH

The Crying Prophet

A picture of someone praying or of praying hands

Some old rags

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Review the books of the Bible thus far. Inform the children that Jeremiah is the name of the new book, and the name of a man—a preacher.)

(Hold up the picture of someone praying or of the praying hands.) This is the way some people hold their hands when they talk to God. We keep our hands still while we talk to God so that we won't be doing anything else while we are praying. We close our eyes when we talk to God so that we won't see anything to take our thoughts from Him. We bow our heads because we are going to talk to the King of kings.

Now, we want God to hear us when we pray. But, God hears only those who trust Him. If we trust Him, we can ask Him for things; we can ask Him to be with us and to help us. We also want to tell Him how wonderful He is and thank Him for all He does for us from day to day. It is great that we get to talk with our Heavenly Father! Jeremiah knew how wonderful it was to talk with God and to have God talk with Him.

Telling the story:

Jeremiah was like Isaiah; Jeremiah was a preacher. God commanded Jeremiah to tell the people things that God wanted them to know. God commanded Jeremiah to tell the people that they needed to admit that they were sinners. Most of the time the people did not want to listen to Jeremiah. That made Jeremiah very sad. Jeremiah is called the Weeping Prophet; we could call him the Crying Prophet.

God said to Jeremiah one day, "Listen, Jeremiah. I have something urgent and very important to tell you. My people need to know that their enemy is coming! Go, tell them!" The enemy army was the people who were called the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah went right away to talk to the king of Judah, "Oh, King, the Chaldean army is coming. King, you will think that there is no danger from this army when they get here, because an army from another country will come to fight the Chaldeans. It's the Egyptians who will come to fight the Chaldeans. The Egyptians will wound many of the Chaldeans, and they will kill a lot of them. You will think that the Chaldeans are leaving our country, but they will not leave."

The king listened to Jeremiah. He believed what Jeremiah was saying. Jeremiah said, "King, I advise you to fight with the Chaldeans, not against them. Remember, do not think that they will leave our country. God has spoken this to me. I am telling it to you."

Some of the men who worked with the king heard what Jeremiah said; they did not like Jeremiah, and they did not want the king to listen to Jeremiah. Children, a lot of people do not like what the man of God tells them. That is wrong! They should believe the man of God—God's preacher.

When Jeremiah went home after talking with the king, these men who worked with the king talked to the king. They said, “O, King, don’t believe Jeremiah. We think that he is a traitor. He wants us to join the Chaldeans. We think you should throw Jeremiah into prison. He is a traitor to our country.”

The king listened to those men! The king thought, “I do not always like what Jeremiah preaches. Jeremiah is always preaching against sin, and I don’t like that! I think that I will have Jeremiah put in prison.” And that’s what happened. Jeremiah was put into prison because someone did not like what he preached, and he was preaching what God told him to preach!

It was a dark, dark room—a dungeon—where Jeremiah was thrown. What a bad place to be! Jeremiah did not like it, but he kept on trusting God. Jeremiah prayed, asking God to help him.

Then one day someone went to the king and said, “Jeremiah is not a bad man. He should not be in prison. King, I think you ought to release Jeremiah from prison.” The king listened to this person and decided to release Jeremiah from prison. Then the king had to go away from his own city. What a happy day it was for Jeremiah when he was out of prison!

While the king was gone from Jerusalem, the Chaldean army did come marching toward Jerusalem. The Egyptian army came, too. The Egyptians fought the Chaldeans. It looked like the Egyptians had won over the Chaldeans, but Jeremiah said to the people, “Do not be fooled. God said that you should fight on the side of the Chaldeans.”

Well, someone had heard what Jeremiah said. That person said, “Let us throw Jeremiah into prison again. He definitely is a traitor.”

Someone else said, “You can’t throw Jeremiah into prison. The king is not here. We cannot do anything like that without the king telling us to do it.” But they did not listen to this warning; Jeremiah was thrown into prison. He was thrown down into a dungeon again.

The floor in the dungeon was not nice like this floor; it was a muddy clay floor in the dungeon. Jeremiah’s feet went down into the muddy clay as he was thrown into this prison. It was dark down there, and it was wet down there. It was cold down there, too. What a terrible place for Jeremiah to be! Poor Jeremiah! But God knew what was going on!

Well, a friend of Jeremiah’s heard the news; he heard that Jeremiah was thrown into the dungeon in the prison. This friend decided to go find the king. He traveled a long ways to another city. He found the king. He said, “O, King, you need to know something. You need to know that Jeremiah was thrown into the dungeon in the prison.”

The king said, “I command you to get Jeremiah out of prison. I will be coming right back.” Jeremiah’s friend promised that he would get Jeremiah out of prison—out of the dark, cold, wet dungeon.

Away Jeremiah’s friend hurried, back to Jerusalem where Jeremiah was in the dungeon. This friend got 30 men to help him. He said, “Come on, men. Jeremiah is in the dungeon. Let’s get him out.”

One of the men said, “Okay. Get some rope.” They got some rope.

Then one of the men said, “We need some rags, too.” (Pick up your rags.) “Now, we have everything. Let’s go get poor Jeremiah up out of that terrible place.”

They hurried to the prison. They went into the building. They hurried to the hole in the floor. They lay flat down on the floor, with their faces down, to throw the rope down to Jeremiah. “Jeremiah! Catch these rags.” They threw down the rags. “Put these rags under your arms. That way the rope won’t cut into you. Catch this rope. Tie it under your arms, over the rags, and across your chest.” Jeremiah was so glad to hear his friends at

the hole in the ceiling of the dungeon! He followed their instructions; he caught the rags, and he caught the rope. He tied the rope around himself, putting the rags under the rope.

“Okay, friends; I’m ready.”

“Jeremiah, are you sure that the rope is tight? Are the rags in place? We want to be sure to get you out of there, but we don’t want to hurt you,” called his friends to him.

Jeremiah said that he had the rope tied under his arms, and the padding under the rope. “Now we will lift you up, Jeremiah.” The men all took hold of some rope; they started to pull. They pulled and pulled and pulled. Soon Jeremiah’s feet were above the muddy floor. He was being lifted out of the dirty, filthy dungeon. He was being pulled little by little, closer and closer to the hole through which he had been thrown into the dungeon. Then his hands and arms could touch the floor above. The men kept pulling; then they lifted Jeremiah out. He was out of that horrible place! How wonderful the daylight looked to Jeremiah!

Jeremiah was allowed to go to a room where he took off his filthy clothes. He took a nice, warm bath. It felt so good then to put on clean clothes. Some food was brought to him. How good the food must have tasted! Jeremiah was praising the Lord; he was out of that horrible dungeon.

God will always be with us, too, if we trust Him. Sometimes people have to go through hard times, but our Heavenly Father knows all about that. Jeremiah 33:3 says, “Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” God is saying those words.

Sad to say, the Chaldeans came and burned all the city of Jerusalem. The king had not listened to the man of God, and he had not done what the man of God Jeremiah had told him to do. The Chaldeans killed the king. They took other people captive. They took Jeremiah captive, too, but God kept His promise and looked out for Jeremiah. Jeremiah soon was set free and was able to go live where he wanted to live.

Jeremiah was a man of God—a preacher—and the people were supposed to listen to him when he spoke God’s Word. Our preacher is a man of God. What he tells us as he preaches is absolutely what God wants him to tell us. We should believe what he preaches to us, and trust his preaching. The king and the men who worked with him did not believe Jeremiah, and look what happened to them!

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Jeremiah 33:3, “Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”