LESSON 6

JEREMIAH AND THE SCROLL

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Listen to Him
SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 36
GOD'S BIG STORY: God gives the prophet Jeremiah a warning for King Jehoiakim and the people of Judah, calling them to turn from their wicked ways and be forgiven, but the king ignores the message, cuts up the scroll, and burns it in the fire.
WORD OF WONDER: Be still, and know that I am God. —Psalm 46:10a

- Play Stations:
  - Scroll Play
  - Listening
  - Jeremiah and the Scroll Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Who made the sound?
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder: Psalm 46:10a
- God's Big Story Video
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Closer, Over & Over
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing
- Circle Time: Listen for Directions
- Craft: Scrolls
- Game: Do This, Do That



SCAN FOR THIS WEEK'S VIDEO!

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Listen to Him
SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 36
WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 46:10a

As I read the story of God's message to the people of Judah and King Jehoiakim, I felt little in common with a man who had such blatant contempt for God's Word.

Read Jeremiah 36 for this unusual account.

How could someone treat the Word of God with such disrespect? How could the king be so bold as to ignore the words delivered directly to him?

However, as I meditated on this story for a few days, I felt a whisper in my own thoughts asking, "When have you tossed aside God's Word to you?"

I ignore God's command to rest, deciding that my to-do list is more important than His instruction for me. I rehash sins that God has already forgiven and rob myself of His peace. As God's Spirit works in me, I am constantly made aware of my own attempt to cut off the parts of His Word that I don't like.

And yet, God's plan to forgive Judah's wrongdoing (if they turned from their sin) is the same promise to me. He only asks that I respond. The question then becomes: Do I have faith to approach my Father once again after I've stared ahead, unmoved by His words?

Thank God that His invitation still stands. May He soften my heart so that I would always respond to His grace.

—Jennifer V. Davis
English Teacher and former Children's Ministry Director
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?
Jeremiah was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah right before the fall of Babylon. His ministry began during the reign of King Josiah, who tried to rid the land of idols. But the people of Judah didn't accept his message or God's Word.

WHAT?
Jeremiah received many messages from the Lord, reminding the people of the words of God, the Holy One of Israel. The prophecy in this passage was meant to warn Judah of the coming judgment so they would turn back to God.

WHERE?
Jeremiah had his scribe read the message in the temple. This same temple would soon be destroyed because God's people had been sinful for so long. The book of Deuteronomy contains a warning to Israel that if they ignored God's Word, He would allow other nations to conquer them.

WHEN?
This would have taken place in 605 BC, which was right before Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon began to take captives from Judah to Babylon. In 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar would completely destroy Jerusalem and the temple, and God's people would be exiles in Babylon for 70 years.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:
Jeremiah's calling was to share the word of the Lord and warn people to turn back to Him. Jesus would later do the same thing, calling people to Himself: "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15 NIV).

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: paper (several sheets), audiobook on digital device (music player or audio Bible app on a phone), coloring utensils
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Jeremiah and the Scroll Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Scroll Play

Set up: Before kids arrive, roll up several sheets of paper to look like scrolls. Place these, along with several unrolled sheets of paper, on a table.

Play: Allow kids to explore the scrolls. Let them unroll the scrolls and then try to roll them back up. They could also try to use the sheets of paper to roll their own scrolls.

Leader Tip: For added fun, place some play dough out for kids to practice rolling it up like a scroll.

Play Station: Listening

Set up: Set out an audiobook on a digital device, such as a music player or an audio Bible app on a phone.

Play: Allow kids to listen to the audiobook or Bible. Ask them to repeat what they heard. If available, play a variety of styles of audio for the kids to listen to.

Play Station: Jeremiah and the Scroll Coloring Sheet

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheets and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a scroll or a letter.

Curiosity Activity: Who Made the Sound?

SUPPLIES: shaker or maraca, various objects that don't make sound (such as blocks or empty Easter eggs)

What part of our body do we use for listening? Allow kids to respond. **That's right! We use our ears to listen. Let's pretend to put on our listening ears for this activity.** Pretend to put on listening ears with the kids. **I'm going to call a few kids to come up and put their hands behind their backs. I'll give each person an object to hold. Only one kid will have something that makes noise. Everyone up front will shake (or pretend to shake) their objects behind their backs, and the rest of you will have to use your listening ears to determine who really has something that's making a sound.**

Call a few kids to come up front. Invite them to put their hands behind their backs. Quietly give one person a shaker or maraca (or Easter egg with dried beans in it) and tell the kids to hold their hands very still until you say it's time to shake. Give objects that don't make noise (such as blocks or empty Easter eggs) to the other kids. When they all have their objects, tell the kids to shake their hands behind their backs. Let the other kids listen and try to guess who is holding the object that makes noise. Play a few rounds with a different person holding the shaker each time.

Make It Inclusive: If you have kids with hearing impairments, make sure to emphasize that listening doesn't always happen with our ears. We can listen through other senses, such as our eyes.

Great job using your listening ears to guess the sounds. In today's God's big story, we'll hear about someone who didn't want to listen to God. Do you think that was a good idea? Allow the kids to respond. **No! God is happy when we listen to Him. We'll learn today that God invites us to listen to Him.**

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, toy musical instruments (1 per kid), empty Easter eggs (optional), rice or dried beans (optional), masking tape (optional)

WORD OF WONDER

Be still, and know that I am God.

—Psalm 46:10a

Our Word of Wonder for the Kings and Prophets series is from Psalm 46:10a. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together. Open a Bible to Psalm 46:10a and practice the verse with the kids.



Ahead of time, set out toy musical instruments. Determine whether you have enough instruments for each kid to have one. If not, fill empty Easter eggs with rice or dried beans and tape them shut to make shakers.

Allergy Caution: If you make noise shakers, be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity.

You're doing a great job learning our Word of Wonder. Let's play a game where you get to practice our Word of Wonder even more. The Word of Wonder tells us to be still. We can listen to God and hear Him when we're still. Let's practice making noise and listening. Hand out a musical instrument or shaker to each kid. Encourage kids to hold them quietly until you're ready to begin the game.

We're going to play a game with these instruments. When I say, "Go," you're going to play your instrument, but you have to use your listening ears as well. You can listen for me to say, "Be still!" When you hear me say, "Be still," you should freeze and stop making noise and shout the rest of

our Word of Wonder as loudly as you can: "and know that I am God."

Play the game as time permits, allowing kids to play their instruments and make noise. Stop periodically to say, "Be still," and have the kids respond with the rest of the Word of Wonder.

You did a great job using your listening ears and finishing our Word of Wonder.

Encourage the kids to say the verse and do the motions with you.

- **BE STILL,—***Open your palms, facing down. Move your palms downward at the same time.*
- **AND KNOW—***Point to your head.*
- **THAT I AM GOD.—***Point up.*
- **PSALM 46:10a—***Hold your hands open in front of you, as if opening a book.*

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

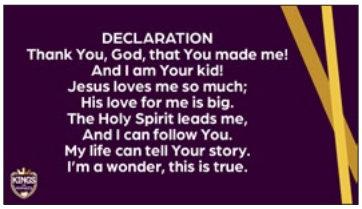
- **Why do you think it's important for us to be still and to be quiet as we listen?**
- **What might God want to say to us when we're still and listening?**

VIEW THE GOD'S BIG STORY VIDEO
Watch the God's Big Story Video as kids eat their snacks!



Declaring God's Wonder

Show the Early Childhood Declaration Slide and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.



Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Make prayer hands, then point up and then to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we've been using our listening ears all morning. Now we ask that You help us use our listening ears to hear what You have to say to us today. Help us listen and hear from You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

Today we'll learn about how God invites us to listen to Him. When we're worshiping today, listen closely to the music and words and see if God helps you know or feel anything about Him.

Play songs from the Closer, Over & Over and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible, and what do I see? *(Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)*

God's big story, waiting for me! *(Point to yourself.)*
Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Jeremiah in the Bible.
Read the God's Big Story Script provided. You can show the Bible Story Picture to give kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Fire Sound Effect

Ahead of time, cue the Fire Sound Effect.

It's time to *li*sten to today's part of God's big story. Every time I say the word "listen," cup your hands around your ears like this. Demonstrate cupping your hands around your ears.

A long time ago, God's people, the Israelites, asked God for a king. King Saul was the first king of Israel. David was the next king. Then David's son, Solomon, became king. King Solomon built a temple for God. The *temple* was a big, beautiful building where people came to worship God. Later, a king named Ahab tried to get the people to worship fake Gods.

A man named Elijah was a messenger of God. Elijah <u>listened</u> (hands at ears) **to God and showed the people that God is the one true God.**

There were lots of bad kings who didn't follow God or worship Him. The bad kings told the people to worship the fake gods. That happened over and over. One king named Josiah told the people to follow God and worship Him. They <u>listened</u> (hands at ears) **to Josiah for a while. Then God's people forgot about God again.**

After Josiah, his son, Jehoiakim (jih-HOY-uh-kim**, became king. He was another bad king. God's people forgot about Him again. God sent prophets, or messengers, to listen** (hands at ears **to God remind Jehoiakim and God's people of the truth.**

Jeremiah was one of these messengers. Jeremiah told people over and over again that they needed to listen (hands at ears **to God. They ignored him. They didn't listen** (hands at ears **to the messages. Jeremiah decided to try something new to get the people's attention. He grabbed a pot, and he smashed it in front of everyone and told them, "This is what will happen to you if you don't listen** (hands at ears **to God!" Do you think that got their attention and caused them to listen** (hands at ears **to God? No! The people did not listen.** Hands at ears.

God had another message for Jeremiah to deliver to the people. God told Jeremiah to put the message on a scroll for the people. A *scroll* is like a book. Jeremiah got help from a friend, Baruch (buh-ROOK**, who wrote the message from God on the scroll. Baruch brought the message to King Jehoiakim. Jeremiah hoped that the king would finally hear God's message, listen** (hands at ears **to God, and choose to follow God.**

It was cold that night. King Jehoiakim sat by the fire while he listened (hands at ears **to God's message being read from the scroll.** Play Fire Sound Effect. **Instead of obeying, the king cut the scroll into pieces and put the pieces in the fire. The fire burned up the entire scroll!** Play Fire Sound Effect. **It was clear that King Jehoiakim was not going to listen** (hands at ears) **to God.**

Jeremiah and his friend wrote God's message on another scroll. The king might have thought that he was destroying God's message when he burned it, but nothing can stop God. God didn't give up on His people. God kept sending them prophets with messages to tell them to stop sinning and to worship Him instead. God gave them opportunities to listen (hands at ears) **to Him. We can listen** (hands at ears) **to Him too. God wants us to follow Him and to live for Him!**

Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask kids the following question to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:
Our Wonder Truth today is GOD INVITES US TO LISTEN TO HIM. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

God asked Jeremiah to share God's words and warn people to turn back to Him. Many years later, Jesus did the same thing, telling people that "The kingdom of God has come near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15 NIV**. We can follow Jesus and believe the good news too.**

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them and thank God for helping them listen to Him. Invite them to put their hands to their ears during the prayer to remind them to listen to God.

God, thank You for helping us be still and listen to You. Thank You for speaking to us and inviting us to listen to You. Help us listen to You and hear from You this week. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you always remember that you are loved by God. He always wants what is best for you, and He wants us to listen to Him. As you go out this week, may He speak to you in the quiet and in the loud.

Circle Time: Listen for Directions

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only)
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Listen Sheet



Ahead of time, print one copy of the Listen Sheet, cut apart the questions, and hide them around the room. Make sure to remember where you hide them.

Gather the kids together in a circle.

Did the people in the story listen to God's message? Allow the kids to respond. **No! The king ignored God's message and tried to destroy it. The king might have thought that he was destroying God's message when he burned it, but nothing can stop God. God didn't give up on His people. God kept sending them prophets with messages to tell them to stop sinning and to worship Him instead. We can listen to Him too. God wants us to follow Him and to live for Him.**

We're going to play a game where you're going to use your listening ears to follow directions. I'll choose one person and give directions to find our first question. Listen carefully to what I say and follow my directions.

Guide the kid to one of the questions by giving him directions such as, "Take four big steps toward the door," or, "Turn toward the window and look under the table." Once he has found the question, have him bring it back to you. Then read it out loud to all the kids in the circle and encourage them to answer before moving on to the hunt for the next question.

Make It Inclusive: Some kids may have trouble sitting quietly or following directions. Be intentional to not insinuate that sitting quietly means "being good." Some kids may need fidget toys or may be active learners who need to move to learn and listen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who did God tell to share His message?** *(Jeremiah)*
- **What did King Jehoiakim do when he heard the words on the scroll?** *(He burned the scroll.)*
- **What was God trying to tell the people?** *(to stop sinning, listen to Him, and worship Him)*

- **Why do you think the king didn't want to listen to God?** *(Possible answers: He didn't like the message; He didn't believe it; He want to keep sinning.)*
- **How can we listen to God?** *(by listening to the Bible, praying, listening to godly leaders, being still in God's presence, etc.)*
- **Have you ever heard from God? If so, what did God say?**

Leader Tip: It's OK if kids don't know if they've heard from God or not. Explain that God can speak to us through worship, through a feeling in our hearts, through the Bible, through other believers, or even through the beauty of nature.

Just as God invited King Jehoiakim and the people to listen to Him, God invites us to listen to Him as well. When we pray, we're talking to God. But we can also listen to what He has to say. Let's listen and talk with God now in prayer.

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and to thank God for speaking to us and caring about us. God hears all our prayers!

Craft: Scrolls

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), paper (1 sheet per kid), straws (2 per kid), tape, pieces of yarn or ribbon (1 per kid), coloring utensils

Ahead of time, cut a piece of paper for each kid that is smaller than the straws you're using, so that the straws will stick out each end of the paper as handles for the scroll. Give each kid a piece of paper and two straws.



In today's story, the king didn't listen to God's words. God gave him many opportunities to hear the message, but the king and the people ignored God. Jeremiah even had the message written on a scroll more than once! We can remember this story and remember to listen to God and live for Him. We're going to make scrolls to remind us of what we learned today. First, lay your piece of paper flat on the table in front of you. Then tape a straw to each end. Demonstrate how to tape a straw to each end of the paper.

Now it's time to write on and decorate our scrolls. Allow kids to decorate their scrolls however they want. When they finish decorating, demonstrate how they can roll the paper around the straws to create a scroll. Help the kids tie a piece of yarn or ribbon around their scroll.

Now you have a scroll to take home to remind you that God invites us to listen to Him.

Leader Tip: If you have a younger group, prepare the scrolls ahead of time and just let the kids decorate the already-prepared scrolls.

Game: Do This, Do That

We're going to play another game that will require you to use your listening ears! I'm going to do an action that you can copy. But there's a catch! If I say, "Do this," then you copy me and do exactly what I'm doing. But if I say, "Do that," you freeze perfectly still and don't move.

Play a few rounds, saying, "Do this," or "Do that" before you do each action. Try to say, "Do this" at least three times before you say, "Do that," so the kids get into a rhythm of listening and doing what you say.

You could do actions such as:

- patting your head
- spinning around
- jumping up and down
- marching
- touching your toes
- clapping
- doing jumping jacks
- sitting down
- reaching up high
- doing arm circles
- touching your shoulders
- pretending to swim
- doing a silly dance

Make sure you say, "Do this" or "Do that" before you do the action. Encourage kids to listen carefully to what you say and to only copy the action if you say, "Do this."

If time allows, let kids take turns being the leaders and saying, "Do this" or "Do that."

You all did a great job using your listening ears to play the game! We can listen to others. Remember that God invites us to listen to Him as well.