KINGS AND PROPHETS

ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN LG

LESSON 6

JEREMIAH AND THE SCROLL

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Respond 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 fi e.
WORD OF WONDER: Be still, and know that I am God. I will be honored among the nations. I will be honored in the earth. The LORD who rules over all is with us. The God of Jacob is like a fort to us. —Psalm 46:10–11

- PRESERVICE
  - OPTION 1 Interactive Game: Gorilla, Cat, Armadillo
  - OPTION 2 STEM Activity: Reactions!
- Welcome Question: What is the best news you've ever gotten?
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Closer, Over & Over
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- In Awe of God's Wonder
- Responding in Worship: Holy
- Blessing Your Kids



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 Respond to Him
SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 36
WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 46:10–11

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).

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Respond to Him
SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 36
WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 46:10–11

Series Bumper and Countdown Videos

Choose between the Kings and Prophets Series Bumper Video and Countdown Videos to introduce the kids to the series.

Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Before kids arrive, display the Jeremiah Welcome Question Slide the following question on a whiteboard: "What is the best news you've ever gotten?" Set out paper and coloring utensils.



As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome kids by name. Show them the Welcome Question. Encourage kids to share with one another the best news they've ever gotten. If they'd like, kids can draw a picture of their reactions to receiving this news. If you have younger kids, be sure to read the question for them.

At your start time ...

Enthusiastically welcome all of the kids! Call on several kids to share their answers to the Welcome Question: **What is the best news you've ever gotten?**

Getting good news is awesome! But today we're going to hear a story about a king who got some bad news, and he didn't have a very good response.

OPTION 1 Interactive Game: Gorilla, Cat, Armadillo

For this game, the leader will need to be able to curl up into a ball shape on the ground (like an armadillo!). If needed, recruit an agile youth or adult ahead of time to lead the game.



Display the Gorilla, Cat, Armadillo Slide and gather the kids. **We're going to play a fun game called Gorilla, Cat, Armadillo. All of these animals respond in a certain way when they feel threatened. Let's see if you can copy me as we pretend to be these animals.**

Let's pretend we're gorillas. When gorillas are angry, they beat their chest like this. Model beating your chest. **Let's see you try!** Let kids follow your example.

Now let's pretend we're angry cats. Make a hissing sound and use your hand like a paw to scratch the air, then pause for kids to mimic your sounds and actions. **Yikes!**

What about an armadillo? Armadillos roll into a ball to protect themselves when they feel threatened. Let me see you roll yourselves into a ball. Pause for kids to roll into balls. Then invite them to sit up again. **Great!**

For our game today, we're going to turn around so that our backs are facing each other. I'll count to three. When I get to three, we'll turn around and respond like the animal of our choice—with our fists on our chest like a gorilla, our hand out like the paw of a cat, or our body in a ball like an armadillo.

If your pose matches mine, then you're out and must sit down. We'll play several rounds until we have a winner. Invite all the kids to stand up and turn their backs to you as you turn your back to them. Begin the game and play until just one kid is left standing—the winner!



Display the Jeremiah Wonder Truth Slide. **Just like the animals in our game, we each respond differently to the events that happen in our lives. A long time ago, a king in the land of Judah didn't respond to God the right way. We can choose to respond differently. Today's Wonder Truth is GOD INVITES US TO RESPOND TO HIM.**

Make It Inclusive: If you or any kids have limited mobility, play the game sitting down by modifying the armadillo action: Bow your head and pull your arms tightly around your body like you're giving yourself a hug. Then have everyone spin around while seated.

OPTION 2 STEM Activity: Reactions!

SUPPLIES: clear, shatter-proof jars (3); table; milk; water; pepper; liquid dish soap; medicine dropper; pitchers (2, optional)

Allergy Caution: This activity includes possible food allergens!

Ahead of time, set three clear, shatter-proof jars on a table at the front of the room. Next to the jars, set containers of milk, water, and pepper. (The milk and water can be in original packages/bottles or in pitchers.) Also set out the dish soap and medicine dropper.

Leader Tip: This STEM activity works with all group sizes! If your group is small, involve all the kids as lab assistants. With your group is very large, project a live video feed of the science experiment on a screen or set up multiple lab stations and invite leaders to do the activity with small groups at each one.



Display the Reactions! Slide and gather the kids near the table at the front. **I have a science experiment set up and need your help with it!** Invite three kids to come to the front as lab assistants. **First, we need to fill our jars with the liquids.**

Invite one lab assistant to carefully pour milk into one of the jars, filling it about ¾ full.

Invite one lab assistant to carefully pour water into one of the jars, filling it about ¾ full

Invite one lab assistant to carefully pour water into one of the jars, filling it about ¾ full. Then have them shake a generous amount of pepper on top of the water—pepper flakes should be visible across the entire surface.

Thank the lab assistants and have them return to their seats. **Now that we have three jars filled with three different substances, we'll put drops of dish soap into each and see how they react!** Hold up the dish soap for kids to see. **But before we do, let's make our hypotheses, or predictions.**

As you ask kids for their predictions, some may already know what's going to happen—and that's OK!

Point to the jar filled with milk: **How do you think the milk will react to the dish soap?** Invite kids to share their ideas.

Point to the jar filled with water: **How do you think the water will react to the dish soap?** Invite kids to share their ideas.

Point to the jar filled with water with pepper on the surface: **How do you think the pepper in this jar will react to the dish soap?** Invite kids to share their ideas.

Then with the kids watching, use the medicine dropper to put several drops of liquid dish soap into each jar, one at a time. (Or call up a new lab assistant to drop in the dish soap!) Encourage kids to pay close attention to how each substance reacts—welcome their ideas and excited responses!

Offer kids a brief scientific explanation for each reaction:

In the milk, the soap swirls and moves quickly because milk has tiny bits of fat in it, and dish soap likes to grab fat. When the soap touches the milk, it pulls the little pieces of fat, and everything moves around.

In the pepper water, the pepper moves away quickly because as the soap moves across the surface of the water, it pushes the pepper to the edges.

In the plain water, not much happens at all because water doesn't have anything—like fat pieces or floating pepper —for the soap to grab onto or to push.

In this activity, each substance reacted, or responded, differently to the dish soap. Display the Jeremiah Wonder Truth Slide. **In today's story, we'll learn about a king in the land of Judah who didn't respond well to God's words. However, we can choose to respond differently! Our Wonder Truth today is GOD INVITES US TO RESPOND TO HIM.**



Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

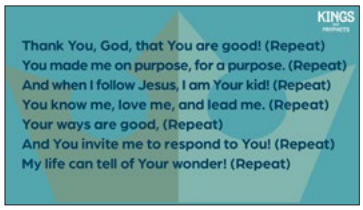
After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Declaring God's Wonder

Display the Jeremiah Declaration Slide. Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.



Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

Your ways are good, (Kids repeat.)

And You invite me to respond to You! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)

Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, thank You for caring about each one of us. We're grateful that You offer forgiveness and give us the chance to respond to You. We invite Your Holy Spirit to show us where we need Your help. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

God loves us and offers forgiveness for our sin—the wrong things we do. God invites us to respond to Him! Let's worship Him now through music!

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

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Display the Jeremiah Title Slide.



Explain to kids that today's story comes straight from the Bible, God's holy Word. Encourage your volunteers to help kids find the book of Jeremiah in their Bibles. Invite kids to open to chapter 36.

Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll experience more of the story!

Watch the God's Big Story Video

Leader Tip: *For Younger Kids.* The read-aloud verses from today's passage skip around some. Invite younger kids to put a finger on Jeremiah 36 and leave it there as they listen carefully to the verses.

LESSON 6 JEREMIAH AND THE SCROLL
EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: cardstock, scissors (prep only), glue or tape, small trash can, red and orange tissue paper, small table or stand, kid-safe scissors (1 pair), newspaper page or sheet of paper rolled like a scroll
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Experience It! Cue Cards, Crown Sheet (3)



Ahead of time, print the Experience It! Cue Cards onto cardstock and cut out the four cue cards. Make three paper crowns by printing three copies of the Crown Sheet onto cardstock, cutting out the pieces, and attaching the bands to the crowns with glue or tape.

Next, fill a small trash can with red and orange tissue paper to look like a fire. On a small table, place a pair of kid-safe scissors, three paper crowns, and a newspaper page or sheet of paper rolled into a scroll.

When kids first arrive, recruit four kid volunteers who are confident readers—one to act the part of Baruch and three who can act out the part of King Jehoiakim. Each kid will be given a different response to act out. (Consider inviting four preteens to play these parts—it's a great leadership opportunity for them!) Give each of these four kids one Experience It! Cue Card to read over ahead of time. They can keep their cue cards and glance at them as needed during the Experience It! story. Explain to the volunteers that when you point to them during the story, they'll say the bolded words on their card and act according to the instructions in italics.



Gather the kids to begin the story. **As you listen to today's part of God's big story, you'll get to guess how it will end, which means you'll need to listen super carefully! I think this story may surprise you.**

After God's people split into the two nations of Israel and Judah, they continued to disobey God. None of Israel's kings served God, and only a few of Judah's kings did. Long before this, God had told the people He would allow their enemies to take their land if they continued to disobey Him.

But the people didn't listen. They kept worshiping false gods and ignoring God's commands. Jehoiakim (jih-HOY-uh-kim)**, the king of Judah, built fancy palaces and cared little for the people in his land who were poor and in need. God was displeased with this. He didn't want to punish the people of Judah—He wanted to forgive and help them walk in His way again. So God invited the king and temple leaders to respond to Him and to choose to do the right thing. God did this by sending prophets, His messengers, to warn them of the disaster that was coming.**

One of the prophets God sent to Judah was a man named Jeremiah. Jeremiah had a tough job. God would speak to him, and then he would share God's message with others. God asked Jeremiah to do lots of odd things to try to get the people's attention. For example, he might take a beautiful pot and smash it to say, "This is what is going to happen to us if you don't obey God!" Jeremiah told the truth, but the people didn't want to listen.

One day, while Jehoiakim was king, God told Jeremiah to make a scroll. Maybe the people would turn around and start walking with God again if they heard about the punishment that was coming. God was giving the people, and especially the king, another chance. God was inviting them to respond to Him and ask for forgiveness. Jeremiah obeyed God.

Jeremiah had his friend, Baruch (buh-ROOK)**, go to the temple to read the scroll to all the people there. He hoped they would hear the words and follow God again. The leaders in the temple seemed to be listening, and the king's officials had Baruch come and ead the scroll to them as well. They became fearful when they heard about the punishment God said was coming—He planned to destroy the land. They knew that they had to tell the king.**
Will our volunteer playing Baruch come and join me? When Baruch joins you, give him the newspaper or rolled paper to act as a scroll.

King Jehoiakim had not been following God. But now he was going to hear the words of God from Jeremiah's scroll—God was inviting King Jehoiakim to respond to Him and obey Him.

Before we continue our story, will our three King Jehoiakims join me? Give each King Jehoiakim a paper crown to wear. **Let's imagine that these three are King Jehoiakim. Each one is going to respond differently to hearing the words of God that Baruch reads from Jeremiah's scroll.**

Now tell me, what kind of news was Baruch reading to the king, good or bad? Give kids a chance to respond. **That's right! It was bad news … but with hope: Disaster was coming if the king and the people of Judah didn't change their ways. But God still loved them and was giving them a chance to respond to Him.**

How do you think the king responded when Baruch shared the news? Point to Baruch, who can then say the words on his cue card while acting very seriously: "Listen to God's Word for you. He plans on bringing trouble on you. Turn from your evil ways, and He will forgive your sins."

Now let's take a look at three different King Jehoiakims. Did the real King Jehoiakim respond like King #1? Point to King #1, who will act truly sorry and say, "I'm sorry."

Or did he respond like King #2? Point to King #2, who will act confused, scratch his head, and say, "Huh?"

Or did he respond like King #3? Point to King #3, who will take the paper from Baruch, cut it, and throw it into the fire (trash can with red and orange tissue paper). Wow! That was quite the response!

I'll point to each king. When I do, I invite you to do the action I describe if you think this king's response was like the actual King Jehoiakim's response. Do you think King Jehoiakim was sorry? Point to King #1. **If so, jump up and say, "Sorry!"** Give kids a chance to respond.

Do you think King Jehoiakim was confused? Point to King #2. **If so, jump up and say, "Huh?"** Give kids a chance to respond.

Or do you think King Jehoiakim was disrespectful and showed he didn't care? Point to King #3. **If so, jump up and cross your arms across your chest, and don't say a thing!** Give kids a chance to respond.

Those who jumped up for King #3 were right!
It was cold outside, so King Jehoiakim was sitting inside, in front of a warm fire. As the king's official read him the scroll, the king started cutting it apart, piece by piece, and burning it in the fire. He did this until he had burned up the entire scroll.

God had given Jeremiah His words, telling the king what would happen if he continued to disobey. But instead of responding to God's invitation and turning toward Him, King Jehoiakim burned up God's words. He obviously was not interested in listening at all!

Thank you to our volunteers, who can return to their seats. Let's give them a hand! Lead kids in a round of applause.

God told Jeremiah to write His words on another scroll—King Jehoiakim would never be able to stop God. God is in charge!

God gave His people so many chances to respond to Him. He wanted the leaders to just turn around, stop doing evil and unjust things, and start following Him. He sent the prophets to try to get the people to listen. God has great compassion for His people, but He takes sin—the wrong things we say and do—seriously. God gives us opportunities to stop sinning and follow Him; He invites us to respond to Him!

Connecting the Wonder Truth



Display the Jeremiah Wonder Truth Slide.

Our Wonder Truth today is GOD INVITES US TO RESPOND TO HIM. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

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, telling people that "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15 NIV)**. We have the opportunity to follow Jesus and believe the good news too!**

In Awe of God's Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God's story.

What amazed you most about this story from the Bible? Give kids time to reflect on this story. Feel free to share your thoughts as well!

How do you think you would've responded if Baruch shared God's words with you? Allow kids time to contemplate this question and thank the kids for sharing their honest thoughts.

Responding in Worship



SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson. ***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.

WORSHIP VIDEO: Holy

Blessing Your Kids

Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: You are deeply loved by God, always and no matter what! May you obey Him this week as He delights in you!

Blessing Your Kids

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