



God Punishes Judah

2 Kings 21–25



LESSON GOAL

Students will fear God, who hates and punishes all sin.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Describe Manasseh's wickedness.
- Explain why God was going to punish Judah.
- List the main events of the three Babylonian invasions.
- Analyze the significance of Jehoiachin's release from prison.

KEY VERSE

"And the LORD said, 'I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, "My name shall be there"' (2 Kings 23:27).

APPLICATION

- Hate sin as God does.
- Repent of your sin, and ask for God's forgiveness.
- Trust that Christ took the punishment of repentant sinners.
- Rejoice that God is faithful to His promises.

Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Jerusalem’s Judgment Announced (2 Kings 21:1–18)

Although Manasseh had been alive to see God answer his father Hezekiah’s prayer for deliverance from Assyria, he did not follow his father’s example. Instead, Manasseh “did evil in the sight of the LORD” (2 Kings 21:2). Unlike his father, who had destroyed the high places and idols in Judah (2 Kings 18:4), Manasseh rebuilt the high places; worshiped Baal, Asherah, and the heavenly bodies; placed altars to false gods in the Lord’s temple; sacrificed his children; and engaged in occultism (2 Kings 21:3–6). Manasseh’s litany of wickedness even included placing an idol in the temple of the Lord (21:7). Under Manasseh’s leadership, the people of Judah did “more evil than the nations which the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel” (21:9). Manasseh not only harmed the people spiritually by leading them into idolatry (21:11,16), but he also oppressed them physically. The wicked king had shed so much innocent blood that the text figuratively says that “he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another” (21:16). The Israelites were even more wicked than the Canaanites who had once been in the land (21:10–11).

Because of Manasseh’s wickedness (21:11), the Lord pronounced judgment upon Judah: “Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle” (21:12). Just as the northern kingdom of Israel (represented by King Ahab and the capital of Samaria) had been punished when they failed to meet God’s standard (21:13), Judah was also going to be punished. The Lord announced that He would forsake the remnant of Israel and allow Judah’s enemies to have victory over them (21:14–15). Even when Manasseh’s grandson Josiah instituted reforms and cleansed the temple (2 Kings 22–23), the Lord declared again that He would bring calamity upon Jerusalem. The Lord said, “I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ‘My name shall be there’” (23:27). The Lord would no longer let the rebellion of His people go unpunished.

First Babylonian Invasion (2 Kings 24:1–4)

While Assyria remained the dominant power in the Middle East during the reigns of Manasseh and his son Amon, Babylon slowly rose to power during the reign of Josiah (640–609 B.C.). In the last year of Josiah’s reign, Babylon finally conquered Assyria. Josiah died in battle while trying to prevent the Egyptians from helping the Assyrians (2 Kings 23:28–30). Although Judah was under Egyptian control for a short time (22:31–37), Babylon defeated Egypt in 605 B.C. and then turned its attention to Judah.

Josiah’s son Jehoiakim was quickly shown the power of the Babylonians. Nebuchadnezzar, son of King Nabopolassar, came to Jerusalem in 605 B.C.

Jehoiakim was “bound in bronze fetters” by the crown prince “to carry him off to Babylon” (2 Chron. 36:6). Daniel 1:2 says, “The LORD gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God.” While the temple items clearly were brought to Babylon along with “some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles” (Dan. 1:3), the text is unclear as to whether Jehoiakim actually made the journey. Perhaps he was allowed to stay in Judah. Within three years, Jehoiakim attempted to rebel against Babylon (602 B.C.). The Lord punished Judah by sending Babylonian troops (Chaldeans), as well as Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites “against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets” (2 Kings 24:2). Because of the sins of Manasseh, Judah found itself in opposition to the Creator of the universe (24:3–4). Neither diplomacy nor rebellion would rescue Judah from God’s powerful judgment.

Second Babylonian Invasion (2 Kings 24:8–16)

The judgment of Jerusalem had only just begun. In 598 B.C., Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah or Coniah) reigned after the death of his father, Jehoiakim. Although Jehoiachin reigned only three months, his reign was characterized by doing what was evil in the Lord’s sight, just as his father had done (2 Kings 24:8–9). In 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, who had become king of Babylon in 605 B.C., besieged the city of Jerusalem (24:10). Jehoiachin, the royal house, and the officers surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar (24:12). The Babylonians plundered the temple and royal treasuries and destroyed the golden items in the temple (24:13). The author of Kings specifies that Nebuchadnezzar did this “as the LORD had said,” lest the reader think that Nebuchadnezzar was stronger than Israel’s God. Along with the treasure, the king also brought back to Babylon with 10,000 captives, including the king and his family, the captains, the mighty men of valor, and even the craftsmen and smiths (24:14–16). Anyone who was “strong and fit for war” was taken to Babylon (24:16). Only the “poorest people of the land” remained (24:15). Without leaders or army, Nebuchadnezzar hoped that Judah would be unable to revolt again. (During this invasion, Ezekiel was taken captive [Ezek. 1:1–3], while the prophet Jeremiah remained.)

Third Babylonian Invasion (2 Kings 25:1–21)

Having taken Jehoiachin with him back to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar chose Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, to be king over Judah. Defying common sense, the wicked Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. Like all of the preceding events, Zedekiah’s revolt was permitted by the Lord. The Lord’s sovereign hand was directing the nations so that He would “finally cast [Israel] out from His presence” (2 Kings 24:20).

In 588 B.C., the final Babylonian invasion occurred. Nebuchadnezzar returned with all his army and laid siege to the walls (2 Kings 25:1). For two and a half years, Jerusalem was besieged by the Babylonian horde (25:2). The food supply diminished slowly until none was left (25:3). When the walls of the city were finally broken through, Zedekiah and his soldiers tried to escape. After the king and his sons were captured, Zedekiah’s sons were killed before his eyes, and then the king’s eyes were put out so that the death of his sons would be the last thing he ever saw (25:7). Zedekiah was then taken to Babylon.

With the walls broken and the resistance quenched, Nebuchadnezzar commanded the systematic destruction of Jerusalem. First, the temple, the king’s palace, and all the “houses of the great” were destroyed by fire (25:9). The walls around the city were then broken down (25:10). Next, the rest of the population were led away captive (25:11). Only the poorest were allowed to stay, in order to

work the land (25:12). The Babylonians also destroyed the bronze pillars, the bronze sea, and the carts in order to transport the bronze back to Babylon. All the utensils and pots, as well as anything made of gold and silver, were likewise taken away (25:13–17). Finally, the rest of the city’s officials were taken to Nebuchadnezzar and executed (25:18–21). With Jerusalem ruined, the temple demolished, and the population decimated, the Lord finished his judgment upon Judah: “Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land” (25:21).

Hope for the Davidic Dynasty (2 Kings 25:27–30)

The story of the Lord’s dealing with Israel does not end with the exile of Judah into Babylon. Moses had long ago prophesied that the Lord not only would exile Israel but also would return them to the land after they repented (Deut. 30:1–6). In 1 Kings 8:46–53, Solomon prayed that when Israel had been taken captive because of their sin, God would hear them after they confessed and returned to Him. Solomon asked the Lord to forgive them based on Israel’s being the Lord’s people and the Lord’s inheritance (v.51,53). While His people were in exile, the Lord gave them hope that they would see His future kindness and proof that He had not forgotten the Davidic covenant. In 561 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar’s successor, Evil-Merodach, released from prison Jehoiachin (who had been in captivity 37 years) and gave him honor surpassing that given to any of the kings in Babylon (2 Kings 25:27–28). Jehoiachin ate before the Babylonian king the rest of his life. The same Lord who had directed the destruction of Jerusalem was directing affairs in Babylon. As Jews throughout the Babylonian empire heard about the releasing and honoring of the Davidic descendant Jehoiachin, they could be encouraged that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had not forgotten the people whom He had rescued from Egypt. Even after fierce judgment, the Lord still had a plan for Israel.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

What was King Hezekiah known for?

King Hezekiah was known as a man who did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He trusted the Lord and faithfully obeyed His Word.

What was Assyria doing to Israel?

Assyria came to attack King Hezekiah and Judah, as they had many other nations. When they came to the city, the Assyrians began to mock Judah and God.

What did Hezekiah do when Assyria mocked God and threatened Judah?

Hezekiah trusted God and looked to Him for Israel’s safety. He asked that God would be glorified by delivering His people so that all the nations would know that the Lord is God.

What happened to the Assyrians?

God punished the Assyrians for their wickedness. During the night, 185,000 Assyrian soldiers were killed throughout the camp. Years later, while worshipping false gods, Sennacherib, the leader of the Assyrians, was killed by his sons.

Did God keep His promises?

Yes. God kept His promise to protect Hezekiah and Israel from the Assyrians and to glorify His name.



Envision Invasion

Not all students will grasp the concept of invasion. It often involves stealing and yet is more than just stealing. It involves an unlawful entry into one's space and an infringement of one's rights and privileges. Ask the students whether they have some space at home that is theirs—a place where they keep their special toys or where they can play uninterrupted. How do they feel when siblings invade their space and privacy? This could be further demonstrated when the class breaks up into groups to play games or do a craft. Some "invaders" could be appointed to go into each group and carry off some of the crafts or members of the group. Today's lesson will teach us about some God-appointed invaders.



Exile

As God's chosen people, Israel enjoyed a number of special rights and privileges. Many of these were closely connected to the land that God promised to give them. The exile was God's removal of these privileges as a form of discipline upon the nation. The students can relate to this in the form of "time out" when they have been talking or disobeying instructions. The exile was time out of the Promised Land and time out of God's blessings.



The Fear of the Lord

Ask the students to name some things they are afraid of (spiders, the dark, getting lost, thunder and lightning, dogs, fire, etc.). What makes them afraid of these things? Is it because they are not accustomed to them or because they may be hurt by them? Fear can make us too scared to go near something or touch it. It can make us hide away and cry. But fear can also help us treat things with the proper respect (for example, not playing with fire, or making sure we stay near mom at the grocery store). Do you know that God wants us to fear Him? God does not want us to run away from Him and cry, but to remember His great holiness and power and to treat Him with the proper respect when we come to Him. And people who do not love God should be afraid that He will punish them for their sins.



Provoked to Anger

Ask the students what makes them angry. What makes them angry is what "provokes" them to anger. Normally when people get angry, they do so for selfish reasons, and they try to take revenge on whoever harmed them. What do they think provokes God to anger? The sinfulness of people makes God angry. However, God doesn't express His anger in selfish temper tantrums. Rather, God responds to sin by disciplining sinners. He disciplines His children so that we can share in His holiness (Heb. 4:5–11). This might provide a good time to discuss biblical discipline and how it is applied in the classroom, at school, and at home. Discipline is not carried out for revenge or to make the offending person pay back for what he has done. Discipline is a deterrent to help the sinner to stop sinning and to start obeying God. Discipline is the most loving thing a good God can do.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read portions of 2 Kings 21–25.

Introduction

Have your parents ever warned you not to do something wrong, or else there would be a punishment? Maybe you chose to continue to sin, and your parents kept their promise and disciplined you. The nation of Israel was much like a child who continues to be disobedient. God made a promise that there would be a consequence for their sin, and they continued to rebel. Because of their rebellion, God kept His promise and disciplined Israel by allowing another nation to capture them and take them away to another country.



Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: Did Manasseh follow his father’s example?

Answer: No; Manasseh “did evil in the sight of the LORD” (2 Kings 21:2). Unlike his father, who had destroyed the high places and idols in Judah, Manasseh rebuilt the high places; worshiped Baal, Asherah, and the heavenly bodies; placed altars to false gods in the Lord’s temple; sacrificed his children; and engaged in occultism.

LOQ: What happened under Manasseh’s leadership?

Answer: Under Manasseh’s leadership, the people of Judah did “more evil than the nations which the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel” (21:9). Manasseh not only harmed the people spiritually by leading them into idolatry, but he also oppressed them physically. The wicked king that shed so much innocent blood that the text figuratively says that “he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another” (21:16). The Israelites were even more wicked than the Canaanites who had once been in the land.

LOQ: What was God’s response to Manasseh’s wickedness?

Answer: Because of Manasseh’s wickedness, the Lord pronounced judgment upon Judah: “I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ‘My name shall be there’” (23:27). The Lord would no longer let the rebellion of His people go unpunished.

LOQ: When Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem in 605 B.C., what happened to Jehoiakim?

Answer: Jehoiakim was “bound in bronze fetters” by the crown prince “to carry him off to Babylon” (2 Chron. 36:6). Daniel 1:2 says, “The LORD gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God.”

LOQ: Did Jehoiakim submit to Babylon?

Answer: Within three years, Jehoiakim attempted to rebel against Babylon (in 602 B.C.). The Lord punished Judah by sending Babylonian troops (Chaldeans), as well as Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites “against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets” (2 Kings 24:2). Because of the sins of Manasseh, Judah found itself in opposition to the Creator of the universe (24:3–4). Neither diplomacy nor rebellion would rescue Judah from God’s powerful judgment.

LOQ: Who reigned after Jehoiakim?

Answer: Jehoiachin reigned after the death of his father, Jehoiakim. Although Jehoiachin reigned only three months, his reign was characterized by doing what was evil in the Lord’s sight, just as his father had done.

LOQ: What happened during Jehoiachin’s reign?

Answer: In 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, who had become king of Babylon in 605 B.C., besieged the city of Jerusalem. Jehoiachin, the royal house, and the officers surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar. The Babylonians plundered the temple and royal treasuries and destroyed the golden items in the temple. Along with the treasure, the king took back to Babylon with 10,000 captives, including the king and his family, the captains, the mighty men of valor, and even the craftsmen and smiths. Anyone who was “strong and fit for war” was taken to Babylon (24:16). Only the “poorest people of the land” remained (24:14).

LOQ: Since Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin back to Babylon, who was to rule Judah?

Answer: Nebuchadnezzar chose Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, to be king over Judah. The wicked Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. The Lord’s sovereign hand was directing the nations so that He would “finally cast [Israel] out from His presence” (2 Kings 24:20).

LOQ: Was Judah destroyed?

Answer: In 588 B.C., the final Babylonian invasion occurred. Nebuchadnezzar returned with all his army and laid siege to Jerusalem. For two and a half years, the city was besieged by the Babylonian horde. The food supply diminished slowly until none was left.

LOQ: What happened to Zedekiah?

Answer: When the walls of the city were finally broken through, Zedekiah and his soldiers tried to escape. After the king and his sons were captured, Zedekiah’s sons were killed before his eyes, and then the king was put out so that the death of his sons would be the last thing he ever saw. Zedekiah was then taken to Babylon.

LOQ: What happened to Jerusalem?

Answer: Nebuchadnezzar commanded the systematic destruction of Jerusalem. First the temple, then the king's palace, and then all the "houses of the great" were destroyed by fire (25:9). The walls around the city were then broken down. Next, the rest of the population were led away captive. Only the poorest were allowed to stay, in order to work the land. With Jerusalem ruined, the temple demolished, and the population decimated, the Lord finished His judgment upon Judah: "Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land" (25:21).

LOQ: What was the Lord going to do with Israel?

Answer: Moses had long ago prophesied that the Lord not only would exile Israel, but also would return them to the land after they repented (Deut. 30:1–6). In 1 Kings 8:46–53, Solomon prayed that when Israel had been taken captive because of their sin, God would hear them after they confessed and returned to Him. Solomon asked the Lord to forgive them based on Israel being His people and His inheritance (8:51, 53). While they were in exile, the Lord gave His people hope that they would see His future kindness and proof that He had not forgotten the Davidic covenant.

Summary

Israel had been disobedient to the commands of the Lord. The Lord had been patient and merciful not to give them what they deserved, but now they would reap the consequences of their actions. Beginning under the leadership of Manasseh, the Lord would begin His punishment of Judah. Their destruction this time would be devastating. After a series of three invasions, all of Judah, except for a small, poor remnant, was taken away to Babylon in captivity. Even though Judah's fate seemed hopeless, God had promised to return Israel to their land after they repented. The Lord would be faithful, as He had in the past, to keep His promises.

Application

Israel had sinned against God, and God hates sin. Israel had rejected God's commands and chosen to worship false gods. Although Israel had repented of their idolatry in the past, they had gone back to their sinful ways under the leadership of new sinful kings. God promised that there would be a consequence for their sin. Believers should observe Israel's wrong choices and check for idolatry in their own lives. The believer's desire should be a right relationship with God through repentance from sin and a desire for God's forgiveness. God also promised that He would return the nation of Israel to their land once they repented. God desires repentance from His children and a right relationship with them. True forgiveness of sin can come only through faith in Jesus Christ's propitiation for sin on the cross.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



Of the World vs. In the World

Choose three students to participate in a skit. One will be “in the world” but not “of the world.” The other two students will be “of the world.” They should talk about loving wrong movies, listening to music that is not edifying, and doing sinful things. One of these two students should say that he is a Christian and that God accepts his lifestyle because He loves him. The student who is “in the world” but not “of the world” should tell the other two that God does love them but hates their sin, and that if they were truly saved, their lives would reflect it. He can tell them that God does not tolerate sin and that all sin will be punished. He also can tell them that Jesus took the punishment for his sin and that they, too, can be saved.



Punishment

Ask the students why there is punishment for sin. Ask them what they think the world would be like if there were no punishment. Because God loves His children, He disciplines them. For believers, God’s discipline comes in the form of fatherly correction. He disciplines believers in order to bring them back to obedience and reliance on Him. For unbelievers, however, the consequence for sin will be eternal punishment. They might go their entire lives without receiving divine punishment, but when they die, they will receive eternal punishment. In today’s lesson, God corrects Israel and Manasseh for returning to their sinful ways. He punishes them by exiling them to Babylon. This is how God showed fatherly correction to His chosen nation Israel. He desired their obedience.



Do You Hear the Word of God?

Read Matthew 11:24 to the students, and explain that in this passage, Jesus is warning those people who hear the Word of God taught. He tells them that the day of judgment will be easier for the people of Sodom than it will be for the people who hear the Word of God and do not believe. Explain to the students that if they have been going to Sunday school, they have heard the Word of God and are like those people Jesus was talking to. Manasseh was the same way. He was able to see the miracles God had done for His father, Hezekiah. He probably even had heard and seen his father praying. Manasseh, though, chose not to follow God and followed idols instead. Because of his choices, he would be judged. Tell the students to pay attention to today’s lesson so to see what wrong things Manasseh did, learn from his disobedience, and choose to follow God.



Wipe the Dish

On a dry-erase board or a plastic plate, draw a cityscape of Jerusalem and the temple (squares with pillars). Read 2 Kings 21:1–15, describing Manasseh’s sins. Have a student or teacher make blots on the board or plate, all over the city, to represent the following sins of Manasseh: doing evil in the sight of the Lord; rebuilding the high places for idols; building altars for idols; worshipping idols;

building idol altars in God's temple; putting children through fire; practicing witchcraft and divination; consulting mediums and spiritualists; provoking God; seducing Israel to do evil. When you read about God's judgment and come to the section in verse 13 about how God would "wipe the dish," wipe the board or plate completely clean, erasing the blots for sin and the city/temple.



In Need of a Wash

At the beginning of the lesson, put up a map of Israel at the front of the classroom. Put some cutout people on it to represent the Israelites. Discuss some of the blessings that Israel enjoyed (fruit, wheat, temple, priests, water, etc.), and put some pictures of them on the map. As you teach, use a marker to make black dots on the map. These dots represent the land being blackened by Israel's sin. As you teach, you can also remove some of the blessings. The three exiles can be represented by removing some of the Israelites from the map three times. By the end of the lesson, you can explain that most of the Israelites had been carried out of the Promised Land, God's blessing had been forfeited, and the land had been blackened by sin. The land was badly in need of a wash!



Going, Going, Gone

You can begin the lesson by discussing some of the privileges that Israel enjoyed as God's special people (Jerusalem, the king, land, the priesthood, the Law, the temple, God's presence, abundant food, etc.). You can briefly revisit the blessings of Deuteronomy 28. Place objects representing these blessings (a crown, some dirt, a scepter, a Bible, a picture of the temple, some fruit, etc.) on a table at the front of the class. At the end of the lesson, explain that because of their sin, Israel lost more and more of their privileges until they finally lost the entire land.



The Fall of Jerusalem

Make a stack of blocks to represent the city of Jerusalem, and place them on a table in front of the students. With each invasion, remove a number of blocks from the tower. This depicts the removal of Israelites from the land at each invasion. After the final invasion, the whole country came crashing down!

Praise and Worship

ABCDEFGH (Jesus Died for You and Me)

Battle Hymn of the Republic

God Is So Good

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Oh, Be Careful

Rejoice in the Lord Always

Standing on the Promises

Trust and Obey

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



“Exile Pop-Up”

Materials: copies of the “Exile Pop-Up” craft page, white paper, scissors, glue, hole puncher, crayons, ten-inch pieces of string

Directions: Before class time, make a paper-man chain by folding an 11x 4.5-inch piece of paper lengthwise into an accordion shape. Trace the template on the craft page onto the strip, and cut out the shape. Unfold the accordion; it will make a chain of four paper men. Punch holes in the hands and feet. (Make enough chains so that every student will have one.) During class, give each student a paper-man chain, and have him draw faces on the men. Next, he should thread yarn through the holes. Then give each student a copy of the craft page, and have him cut out the large card, fold it in half, and glue one half of each end person to the inside. Students can also cut out the verse and glue it inside the card.



“God’s Judgment on Judah”

Materials: copies of the “God’s Judgment on Judah” base sheet on cardstock, double-sided copies of the two “Exile Cards” sheets, black paper rings large enough for students to wear on their wrists (about three inches in diameter), 12 black paper strips (about 4½ x ¾ inches) per student

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft pages, 12 black paper strips, and two paper rings. Have the students make a paper chain from the paper strips and then staple them together, placing the two larger rings on the end. They should cut out the circles on the base sheet and glue the end rings over the holes. (For younger students, you may want to precut the circles on the base sheet.) Then they can cut out the three exile cards, fold them in half, and glue them to the middle of the base sheet, forming flaps where the invasion number shows on top and the verse and description are on the inside.



“God Punishes Judah”

Use this work sheet to reinforce the key truths of today’s lesson. The work sheet is located at the back of the lesson.



Journal Page: “God Punishes Sin”

Give each student a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. The students can complete the page individually, in small groups, or at home.

Coloring Pages

Give each student copies of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.

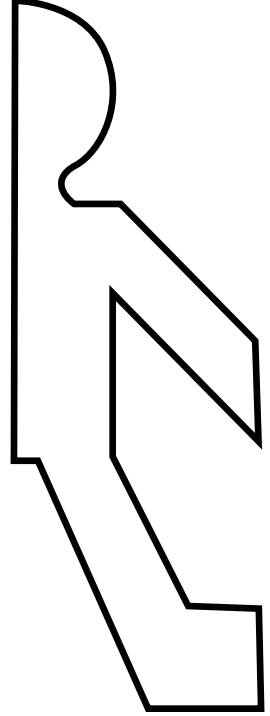


MEMORY VERSE

“And the LORD said, ‘I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, “My name shall be there”” (2 Kings 23:27).

Exile Pop-Up

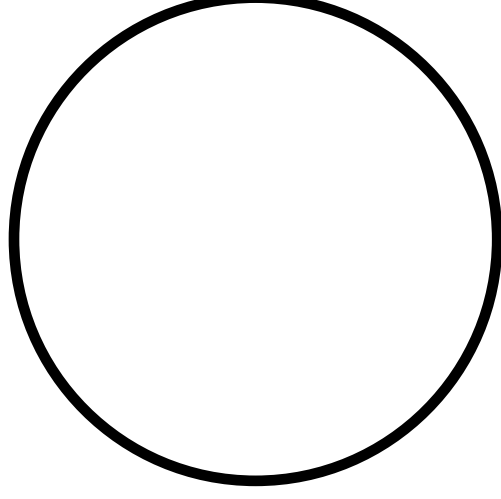
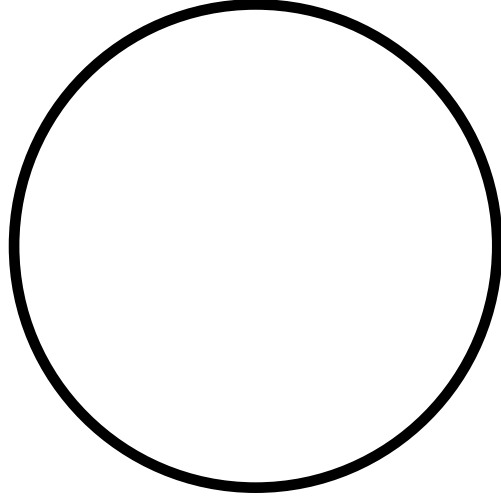
Because of
Israel's sin,
God punished
them, and they
were taken
from the land.



Paper Man
Chain Template

“Thus Judah was carried away
captive from its own land”
(2 Kings 25:21b).

God's Judgment on Judah



**“Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land”
(2 Kings 25:21b).**

God's Judgment on Judah

Exile Cards, Side 1

2 Kings 24:1-4

- King Jehoiakim bound
- A few Israelites taken away
- Temple items taken

2 Kings 24:8-16

- King Jehoiachin taken
- 10,000 Israelites taken
- Temple plundered

2 Kings 25:1-21

- Jerusalem besieged and destroyed
- King Zedekiah tortured
- All people in exile

2 Kings 24:1-4

- King Jehoiakim bound
- A few Israelites taken away
- Temple items taken

2 Kings 24:8-16

- King Jehoiachin taken
- 10,000 Israelites taken
- Temple plundered

2 Kings 25:1-21

- Jerusalem besieged and destroyed
- King Zedekiah tortured
- All people in exile

God's Judgment on Judah

Exile Cards, Side 2

1

First
Invasion

1

First
Invasion

2

Second
Invasion

2

Second
Invasion

3

Third
Invasion

3

Third
Invasion

God *Punishes* Judah



2 Kings 21–25

Name _____

- 1.** True or False: Manasseh did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. _____
- 2.** Manasseh _____ the high places his father, Hezekiah, had destroyed (2 Kings 21:3).
- 3.** Second Kings 21:14 tells us that the Lord was going to _____ Judah into the hands of their enemies.
- 4.** Who was king during the first Babylonian invasion? _____
- 5.** During the second invasion, all the valiant men of Judah were brought captive to _____ (2 Kings 24:16).
- 6.** True or False: Judah prevailed against Babylon the third time. _____
- 7.** The Lord delivered Judah into the Babylonian's hands because of their _____.

God Punishes Sin

“Nevertheless the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. And the LORD said, ‘I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, “My name shall be there”’” (2 Kings 23:26–27).

Do you know what “hard heart” means? It means that the conscience of a person is no longer tender or caring. That’s how God’s chosen people had become. They did not care about obeying Him or the consequences of their disobedience, nor did they feel guilty when they sinned. Their hearts had become so hard that God said they were more evil than the nations He had destroyed before them (2 Kings 21:9).

Even when God told them they would be judged, Israel kept worshipping idols. Even after God sent the Babylonians to invade them, they kept sinning. Even after Israel was taken captive, Judah kept sinning! They had very hard hearts! God finally judged them. They were taken away captive from their own land (2 King. 25:21).

What does this tell you about a hard heart?

What does it tell you about sin?

What does it tell you about the way God views sin?

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What does this tell you about a hard heart?

What does it tell you about sin?

What does it tell you about the way God views sin?

Just as glue or clay starts out soft but becomes hard, the hearts of the Israelites hardened over time. The Bible tells Christians to guard their hearts, and it also tells Christians not to harden their hearts.

What are some ways that a person hardens his heart?

How can you guard your heart?

If you spend time with the Lord, your heart will remain tender toward Him. You can choose to keep your heart tender toward God by talking to Him, confessing your sin, and reading His Word. How will you do that this week? Make a schedule in the space below to tell when you will spend time with the Lord this week.

Monday _____
Tuesday _____
Wednesday _____
Thursday _____
Friday _____
Saturday _____
Sunday _____

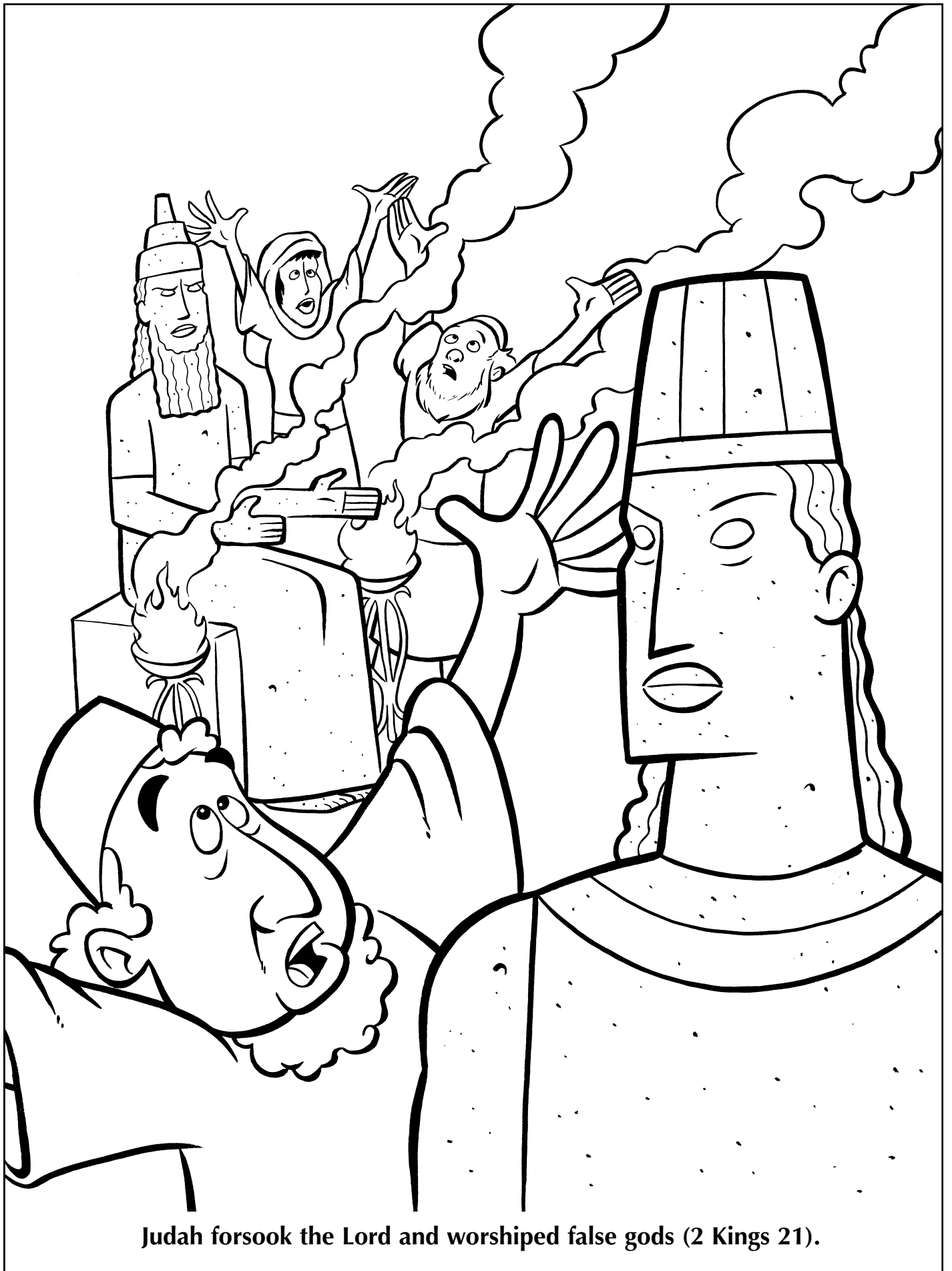
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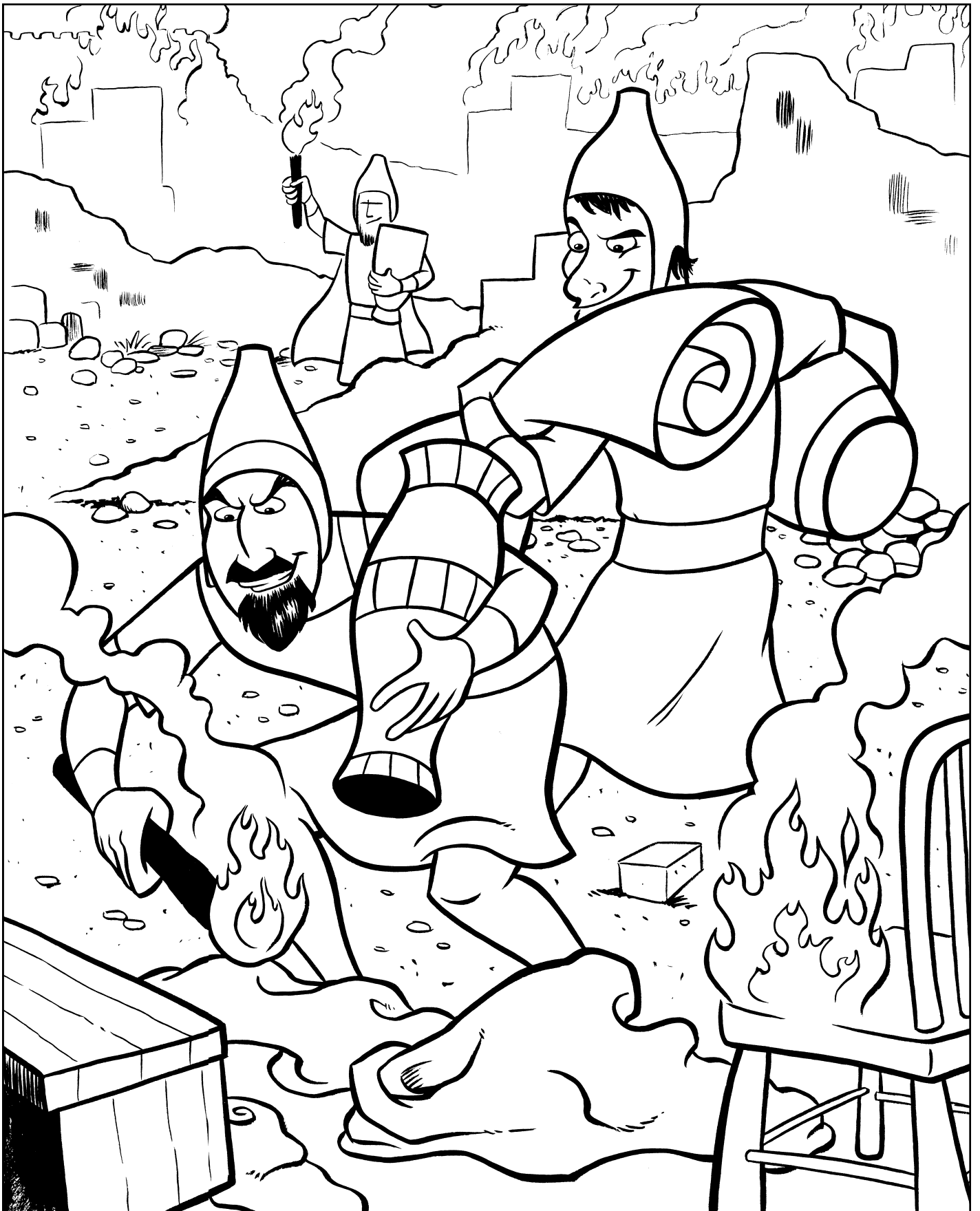
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Judah forsook the Lord and worshiped false gods (2 Kings 21).



Because of Judah's sin, God allowed Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, to attack Jerusalem. He burned the house of the Lord and carried away captive the rest of the people who remained in the city (2 Kings 25).

