

## Our Mission:

To share Christ with the world  
and grow disciples for Jesus



## Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

### Background:

The prophets knew Josiah to be a great king due to his efforts to revive the covenant relationship with God. His son, Jehoiakim on the other hand was reviled by the prophets for his cavalier disdain for God. The king had tried to silence Jeremiah by placing him under house arrest. God, however, will not be thwarted by a mere king. Ultimately, God announces to the people of Judea what had previously been unimaginable, the destruction of the House of David.

### Theology Connection:

The people of Judah had come to believe in magical thinking. They had thought that God would always preserve Jerusalem and the Davidic dynasty from destruction no matter their actions. In this text we are reminded that at the heart of God's covenant is the call to do justice and employ mercy, reflecting the character of God. When the foundation for this covenant is compromised, then great will be its fall.

### Application:

We see in this text that God is not looking for mere shows of affection in our worship, but instead desires we act in accord with the covenant formed with us. We are blessed in order to be a blessing to others. We may love God, but such love is hollow without a corresponding love of neighbor. The intent of forgiveness is to move us toward repentance, but without a change of heart, like the king we too will suffer the natural consequences of our selfishness.

### **The Text: Jeremiah 36: 1-8, 21-23, 27-31**

<sup>1</sup>In the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord: <sup>2</sup>"Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you concerning Israel, Judah and all the other nations from the time I began speaking to you in the reign of Josiah till now. <sup>3</sup>Perhaps when the people of Judah hear about every disaster I plan to inflict on them, they will each turn from their wicked ways; then I will forgive their wickedness and their sin."

<sup>4</sup>So Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and while Jeremiah dictated all the words the Lord had spoken to him, Baruch wrote them on the scroll. <sup>5</sup>Then Jeremiah told Baruch, "I am restricted; I am not allowed to go to the Lord's temple. <sup>6</sup>So you go to the house of the Lord on a day of fasting and read to the people from the scroll the words of the Lord that you wrote as I dictated. Read them to all the people of Judah who come in from their towns. <sup>7</sup>Perhaps they will bring their petition before the Lord and will each turn from their wicked ways, for the anger and wrath pronounced against this people by the Lord are great."

<sup>8</sup>Baruch son of Neriah did everything Jeremiah the prophet told him to do; at the Lord's temple he read the words of the Lord from the scroll.

<sup>21</sup>The king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and Jehudi brought it from the room of Elishama the secretary and read it to the king and all the officials standing beside him. <sup>22</sup>It was the ninth month and the king was sitting in the winter apartment, with a fire burning in the firepot in front of him. <sup>23</sup>Whenever Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off with a scribe's knife and threw them into the firepot, until the entire scroll was burned in the fire.

<sup>27</sup>After the king burned the scroll containing the words that Baruch had written at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: <sup>28</sup>"Take another scroll and write on it all the words that were on the first scroll, which Jehoiakim king of Judah burned up.

<sup>29</sup>Also tell Jehoiakim king of Judah, 'This is what the Lord says: You burned that scroll and said, "Why did you write on it that the king of Babylon would certainly come and destroy this land and wipe from it both man and beast?"

<sup>30</sup>Therefore this is what the Lord says about Jehoiakim king of Judah: He will have no one to sit on the throne of David; his body will be thrown out and exposed to the heat by day and the frost by night.

<sup>31</sup>I will punish him and his children and his attendants for their wickedness; I will bring on them and those living in Jerusalem and the people of Judah every disaster I pronounced against them, because they have not listened.'"

## ADULT

Like many people, the king does not accept criticism willingly. Yet, Jeremiah, is more than a critic, as he offers an opportunity to turn over a new leaf. How do you respond to criticism? Has it ever helped you to see the error in your ways and make a needed change? What changes might God have in mind for you?

## YOUTH

Please read Jeremiah 36: 1-8, 21-23, 27-31

Once again, God addresses a crisis through a prophet. Can you think of another time God used someone to share his message with the people? Has God used you ever to share his message?

I challenge you to take some time this week to listen to God...Maybe he is sharing something with you that was meant for you to share with others...

Let us pray together:

Dear God, today we ask you to write your words on our hearts. Give us the strength to share those words with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## CHILDREN'S

Jeremiah continued to warn the people of Judah that their nation would be destroyed if they did not repent (say they were sorry and change their ways) and follow God. The Lord commanded Jeremiah to write these warnings on a scroll and read it to the people. Jeremiah dictated the words to his secretary, Baruch, and then told him to go to the temple and read it to the people. Eventually, the scroll was read to King Jehoiakim. He did not want to repent so he cut the scroll into pieces and threw the pieces into a fire. He wanted Baruch and Jeremiah arrested but the Lord kept them safely hidden. Jeremiah and Baruch wrote the scroll again and began preaching that the nation of Judah would be destroyed because the king and the people did not repent.

Think:

1. What did King Jehoiakim do with the scroll after he read it? (He tore it up and threw it in the fire)
2. After the King burned the scroll, what did Jeremiah do? (He wrote another one and began preaching from it)
3. What did you learn from this story?
4. Why is it important for us to obey God's commands?

Pray:

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for always taking care of us! Please help us to obey You, and live in a way that pleases You.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!