

## The king cannot silence God's word

### Lesson Overview

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A scroll passes from Jeremiah to Baruch, from the temple to the officials, and finally to the king. Its journey reveals both God's merciful purpose in speaking and the seriousness of refusing His word.



#### Passage

Jeremiah 36:1–8, 20–32

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#### Focus statement

The LORD's true word cannot be cancelled by rejecting it, so we should hear His warning and turn to Him for mercy.

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#### Age-focused objective

Join and unroll a paper scroll to explain why the king's burning of the first scroll did not cancel God's word or remove his need to repent.

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#### Memory verse

 SCRIPTURE

For the word of the LORD is right,  
and all his work is trustworthy.

Psalms 33:4, CSB

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### Before learners arrive

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Read Teacher preparation and Jeremiah 36. Print Printable Resources single-sided at actual size: pages 1 and 3 for display, page 2 for each child, plus two adult copies for a completed sample and a loose demonstration set, and one Parent take-home per child. Have an open Bible, glue sticks, crayons, a tray and a scrap of paper for memory recall. An adult cuts both solid outside strip rectangles on page 2 before class.

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Make one sample: with captions upright, glue A's shaded JOIN area beneath B's left end, press flat and let it hold; roll both outer ends loosely inwards and reopen. Keep the second adult set and the children's two-strip sets separate. No rods, fire, knives or acted destruction are used. With your helper, practise the overlap and agree how to help joins hold while listening to the message children explain.

## How the lesson unfolds

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### Transition – 5 minutes

Recall Samuel's trustworthy message and meet Jeremiah and Baruch.



### Lesson – 20 minutes

Hear the merciful warning, the king's refusal and God's renewed word; practise Psalm 33:4.



### Application – 12 minutes

Join two strips, roll and reopen the scroll, and explain why rejecting truth cannot cancel it.



### Prayer – 8 minutes

Bring voluntary requests and pray for one another to receive God's truth and mercy.

## Transition – 5 minutes

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Recall that the LORD called Samuel, gave him a serious message and fulfilled His word. Explain that many years later He sent another prophet, Jeremiah. The setting is Jerusalem, and Jehoiakim is king of Judah. Hold up page 1 as you introduce the names slowly. Point to Jeremiah speaking and Baruch writing the scroll. Say, "Jeremiah spoke the message; Baruch wrote it. Listen to find out why the words had to be written again."

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

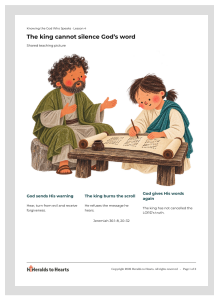
Our Bible has pages we turn. A scroll is opened by unrolling it. Today we will follow words written on a scroll. The most important question is not what the paper looks like. It is whether the people will receive the LORD's message.

## Lesson – 20 minutes

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**Interactive Bible teaching – 15 minutes.** Use the 15 minutes across the three connected points, giving the longer explanation the time it needs. Include the readings and questions; give children thinking time and hear more than the quickest answer.

## 1. God sends His warning with mercy



**Use Jeremiah and Baruch picture and sequence, page 1.** Point to the speaker and writer. Explain that these words come from the LORD, and listen for why He wanted the people to hear.

Hold the prepared scroll closed, then unroll it. Explain that God told Jeremiah to have His words written. Read why the LORD wanted the people to hear.

### READ ALOUD

“Perhaps when the house of Judah hears about all the disaster I am planning to bring on them, each one of them will turn from his evil way. Then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.”

Jeremiah 36:3, CSB

### SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

The people had done evil. God warned them that judgment was coming, and He called them to turn from their sin. Iniquity is another word for wrongdoing. God’s warning was an invitation to stop going the wrong way and receive forgiveness. Jeremiah spoke the words, and Baruch wrote them in ink. Jeremiah could not go into the temple, so Baruch went and read the scroll aloud. People who did not hold the scroll themselves could still hear its message.



#### **Ask**

Why did God have the warning written and read: only to frighten people, or to call them to turn? What did He offer?



#### **Listen for**

He called people to turn from their evil ways and receive forgiveness. His warning was truthful and merciful.

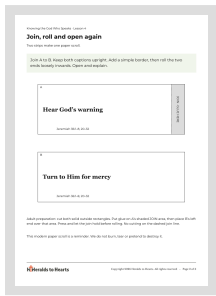


#### **If needed**

Return to verse 3 and explain mercy as kindness to sinners who cannot demand it. Then ask, “What could the people do when they heard the warning?” Listen for turning to God and seeking forgiveness, not merely feeling frightened.

God has brought His warning to the people. Now listen to how the king receives it.

## 2. The king rejects the words he hears



**Use Join, roll and open again scroll, page 2.** Hold your sample open so the children can see its writing. After the reading, close it gently without damage and ask whether hiding words changes their truth. The model is a reminder, not the original scroll.

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

The message reached the officials, who listened and were afraid. They said that the king must hear it too. At last a man named Jehudi read the scroll to King Jehoiakim. It was the cold season, and a fire burned in front of the king in his winter room. Listen to what the king did. We will hear the account without acting it out.

 READ ALOUD

<sup>23</sup> As soon as Jehudi would read three or four columns, Jehoiakim would cut the scroll with a scribe's knife and throw the columns into the fire in the hearth until the entire scroll was consumed by the fire in the hearth. <sup>24</sup> As they heard all these words, the king and all his servants did not become terrified or tear their clothes.

Jeremiah 36:23–24, CSB

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

The writing was arranged in columns, groups of lines beside one another. The king kept cutting away the part that had been read and putting it into the fire. Some officials begged him to stop, but he would not listen. Tearing their clothes would have shown distress. The king and his servants did not respond that way. Instead of turning from evil, he destroyed the scroll. But could burning the written words make God's warning untrue?



#### Ask

The king destroyed the scroll. Had he also made God's warning false? Explain the difference.



#### Listen for

The written object was destroyed; God's message was still true. Destroying or hiding words does not remove guilt.

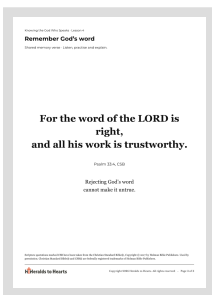


#### If needed

Gently reopen your page 2 sample. Say, "Closing this paper did not change what it says. The king's fire really destroyed his scroll, but it could not make God wrong." Then ask, "What could the king not cancel?" Accept the LORD's truth or authority.

The scroll has burned, but the LORD's message and authority remain. What will He do next?

### 3. The LORD has His word written again



**Use Remember God's word poster, page 3.** Point to "right" and "trustworthy". Listen for what the LORD did after the king rejected His message.

Explain that the king ordered Jeremiah and Baruch to be seized, but the LORD hid them. Read the instruction God gave after the burning.

#### READ ALOUD

"Take another scroll, and once again write on it the original words that were on the original scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah burned."

Jeremiah 36:28, CSB

#### READ ALOUD

Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch son of Neriah, the scribe, and he wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the scroll that Jehoiakim, Judah's king, had burned in the fire. And many other words like them were added.

Jeremiah 36:32, CSB

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

The LORD did not ask Jeremiah to make a message the king liked better. Baruch wrote the words again, and more words were added. God also announced judgment on the king. Burning the scroll had not removed his guilt or stopped the LORD's purpose. The first scroll really was destroyed; the new one carried God's message again. This does not mean that every Bible is safe from damage. It means that refusing God's truth cannot make it false.

 SAY (SUGGESTED WORDING):

We may never be kings, but we can still want to ignore what God says. When His Word shows our sin, we need mercy. Jeremiah also spoke of God's promise to forgive His people and remember their sin no more. Later Jesus said that the new covenant was established by His blood: God's promised saving relationship is secured through His death. Jesus is God's Son, who became truly human and lived without sin. He bore the punishment sinners deserve and rose again; His body was alive. Forgiveness is His gift, not payment for our work. We cannot undo our guilt by refusing to listen, or earn forgiveness by making a good scroll. We can turn to Jesus and trust Him to forgive and change us.

Invite children to ask God for help and to bring questions to you. Do not ask for public lists of wrongdoing or use the account to threaten children into a spoken response.



**Ask**

What did the second scroll show? When God's Word corrects us, what response do we need?



**Listen for**

God gave His true message again; the king had not cancelled it. We need to receive the warning, turn from sin and trust Jesus for mercy.



**If needed**

Point to "right" on page 3 and recall Baruch writing again. Explain repentance as turning from our wrong towards God. Then ask, "Would ignoring a wrong remove it? Where can sinners find forgiveness?" Let the child connect the need to Jesus.

## Remember with understanding — 5 minutes

Display page 3, "Remember God's word". Read the complete verse.

 READ ALOUD

For the word of the LORD is right,  
and all his work is trustworthy.

Psalms 33:4, CSB

Point to the first phrase, “For the word of the LORD is right”, and invite an echo. Explain that right means true and good. Point to “and all his work is trustworthy” and echo it; trustworthy means we can depend on Him. Say the whole verse and “Psalm 33:4”. Keep both phrases visible for the first practice; use the specified recall below next. Children can listen and point while others speak.



**Ask**

“Did the king’s dislike make the LORD’s word wrong?”



**Listen for**

No. God’s word remained right and trustworthy.



**If needed**

Point to “right” on the poster. Say, “The king changed the scroll, but he could not change God’s truth.”

**Try remembering:** Cover “and all his work is trustworthy” on page 3. Say the first phrase and invite the class to complete the verse with your help. Uncover it, read the whole verse and reference, then ask, “Did the king make God’s words wrong?” Invite a reason from the account.

## Application — 12 minutes

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Opening the joined scroll gives children a way to explain the warning and its merciful purpose. It does not show that a particular Bible is impossible to damage. You and your helper listen during making as well as the final explanation. Ask the question below while children work, hear children you have not yet heard, and offer help with the actual operation.

### Demonstrate and distribute — 2 minutes

**Show the join before distributing the pieces.** Lay strips A and B from page 2 in front of you with captions upright. Put glue only on A’s shaded JOIN area. Overlap the left end of B on that area and press. Read the two captions, then turn the joined strip over to show that it is one length. Add a few border marks, roll the two outer ends loosely inwards and unroll them again.

Give each child the two prepared strips and a glue stick. Read “Hear God’s warning” on A and “Turn to Him for mercy” on B.

### Make and explore — 7 minutes

1. Help the child put glue on the shaded JOIN area and place B’s left end over it. The shaded patch should disappear beneath the overlap, leaving both captions visible and upright.
2. While the join holds, children add a simple border or a small open-book reminder in the blank areas. Keep the caption words clear.
3. Show the rolling action again. Children roll both outside ends loosely towards the middle, leaving the join unstressed, then open the scroll to hear its captions read.

If a join lifts, press it together again and allow it to hold before rolling. Offer hand-over-hand help only with the child's agreement. The teacher may handle the join while the child decorates and opens the scroll. Do not tear, burn or pretend to destroy any piece.

While children work, ask this question and help them try the explanation again:



**Ask**

“Open your scroll. What happened after the king burned the first one?”



**Listen for**

The LORD told Jeremiah to take another scroll, and Baruch wrote His words again.



**If needed**

Touch the joined paper and read page 1's last panel, “God gives His words again”. Ask, “Had the king made God's message disappear?”

## Explain and respond — 2 minutes

Invite neighbours to take turns showing and explaining their work. Use your sample if work is unfinished. Give a child time to point and speak; you and your helper listen for the connection to Scripture.



**Ask**

“Point to the two captions. How should we respond when God shows us our sin?”



**Listen for**

Hear His warning, turn to Him and seek His mercy through Jesus.



**If needed**

Read each caption aloud. Say, “We cannot hide our sin from God. Jesus died and rose so sinners may be forgiven.”

## Clear materials — 1 minute

Place glue and crayons in the tray. Leave scrolls loosely open if the joins still need to hold; settle for prayer without squeezing or tearing them.

## Prayer — 8 minutes

We can speak honestly to God and listen while others pray. Children may pass, ask an adult to pray for them or listen. Speaking aloud is not a test of faith.

### Model a prayer — 1 minute

Offer this short prayer for the children to hear:

*LORD, Your word is true and good. Thank You for calling sinners to seek mercy. Forgive us through Jesus and help us receive Your correction, turn from wrong and trust You. Amen.*

## Hear voluntary requests — 2 minutes

Invite a few brief, voluntary thanks or requests. This is not a round in which everyone must speak. Children may ask for help to listen when corrected, understand Scripture or speak truth kindly. Do not ask for private wrongs, family details or another person's story. A child may simply pass.

## Pray for one another — 4 minutes

Invite short prayers for the requests freely shared. Give thinking time. Offer "Father, please help..." or "Thank You for..." when a child wants help beginning. No one must take a turn or repeat your words. You and your helper may pray for requests children would like you to carry; if nobody wishes to speak, pray gently for the shared concerns yourself, pausing between them.

## Close — 1 minute

Thank God that His word remains true and His mercy is found in Jesus. Send the work and Parent take-home page with each child; invite them to explain the picture to a parent or caregiver without requiring homework.

## After teaching

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Check the object/message distinction and whether mercy, rather than making or careful paper handling, answered the need. Accidental Bible damage must not be equated with Jehoiakim's deliberate refusal. Compare what you and your helper heard: what children explained without help, what needed prompting, and what needs teaching again. Keep brief anonymous notes of understanding and actual timings, without recording private disclosures. Finished work, accurate recitation and spoken prayer do not establish faith. If harm is disclosed, listen without investigating or promising secrecy and follow the church's actual safeguarding arrangements.

**At the next meeting:** Before showing the scroll ask, "What could the king destroy, and what could he not change?" Allow thinking time and then show the sequence. Recall the whole Psalm 33:4 before considering how Mary received Jesus' words.

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