

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah



### Session Snapshot

**Narrative Passage:** 2 Kings 17:1-6; 2 Chronicles 36:11-21

**Gospel Focus:** Romans 5:6-11

#### Student Takeaways:

- Students will understand that Israel and Judah were finally punished for their rebellion.
- Students will grasp the fact that, through Jesus' death on the cross, we escape the punishment we rightfully deserve for our sins.
- Students will articulate what the right response is when faced with the truth that Jesus has saved them from God's righteous wrath.



### Overview

This week marks a major event in your weekly look at the big-picture story of the Bible. Israel prospered under the leadership of kings Saul, David, and Solomon. For over 100 years the people were united. But then after the death of Solomon, things started falling apart. A divided kingdom, evil kings, and people disobedient to God all led to destruction for both kingdoms. God's wrath was slow to come, but the sin of His people could no longer be ignored. His punishment would continue to be poured out all the way to the Jews being ruled by the Romans. But a long-promised Savior would bring salvation from God's wrath forever.



### Teacher Prep Video

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your *Thread* lesson 23 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 23, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.



### Bible Background

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you'll be studying.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson we encourage teachers to help students know who wrote a particular book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **Why teach context?** Grasping the big-picture view of God's story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they're studying.

#### 1 & 2 Kings

**Author:** Ancient Jewish history has Jeremiah as the author of 1 Kings and 2 Kings. However, this view has never been widely supported by scholars. It's best to view the books as a collection of writings with no known author.

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah

**Time frame:** 1 Kings and 2 Kings are extremely difficult to date because it's a collection of writings that could have been written and edited in stages.

**Purpose:** 1 Kings and 2 Kings tell the stories of the kings of Israel. These books speak of the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of kings and the impact that a godly leader can have on God's people.

### 1 & 2 Chronicles

**Author:** We don't know for sure who the writer of 1 and 2 Chronicles is. Scholars point toward Ezra who lived in the latter half of fifth century BC. However, some assert that Nehemiah was an author.

**Time frame:** 1 and 2 Chronicles has traditionally been hard to date. We know it was written after the exile from the Babylonians, around 1000 BC. It's likely written in mid 400 BC.

**Purpose:** In some sense 1 and 2 Chronicles is a worship manual for the people of Israel returning after the exile. Specifically it focuses on the Southern Kingdom, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. It helped the exiles understand what real worship looked like, while also bringing unity and direction to the people.

### Romans

**Author:** Paul is the author of Romans.

**Time frame:** Romans was probably written from Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.

**Purpose:** Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive theological teaching on salvation and other implications of following Christ, Paul wrote Romans to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, it was essential that a level playing field be given to all Believers. This is what Paul was advocating for in Romans.



## Lesson Plan

### The Lesson Plan contains four elements:

- An introductory activity called Getting Started designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- A section entitled The Story featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- A special emphasis entitled The Thread where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- An application-focused segment called Wrapping Up helping teenagers ask the question, "How am I impacted by what I learned today"?

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah

### Getting Started

- **Goal:** To help your students start thinking about the concept of punishment for wrong doings.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

**FIRST**, begin by explaining to your students that we all know there are laws we are expected to follow. In the United States, different cities and states have different laws from other ones. Also, different countries all over the world have different laws from each other. Some laws make total sense. And then there are some head-scratchers. Read the following list of laws and ask the students to think about which ones make sense, and which ones seem a little out there.

- **Feeding birds in Trafalgar Square in London can result in a \$1,000 fine.**
- **In Indiana you can face 6 months to three years in jail for stealing something as inexpensive as a hot dog.**
- **You can be sentenced to life in prison in America for attempting to cause an explosion, endangering the safety of airline or train passengers, and hijacking a ship, as well as murder, armed robbery, and kidnapping.**
- **In Singapore vandalism can cost you 8 strokes with a cane, which often leaves permanent scars.**
- **A woman can be arrested in Saudi Arabia for driving a car without her husband's permission. A man caught stealing can have his hand cut off.**
- **In Cuba a farmer that slaughters his cattle without government permission can spend 4-10 years in jail.**

**THEN**, ask something like:

- **Did any of those seem a little weird to you? Which ones?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **Did some of them make sense? Which ones?**
  - Answers will vary.

**FINALLY**, explain to your students that we're going to be talking a lot about punishment in this this lesson. Say something like:

- **We live in a world of laws. While some of those laws may seem ridiculous, breaking them will result in some type of punishment. In today's lesson we will see the ultimate punishment unleashed: the wrath of God. We'll also learn about what's been done on our behalf so we don't have to experience that ultimate punishment.**

Transition to The Story.

### The Story

- **Goal:** For students to understand that Israel and Judah were finally punished for their rebellion..
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

**FIRST** explain today's lesson is a continuation of what they learned last couple of weeks about the Prophets and the divided kingdoms of Israel. If you'd like, use the "Connecting The Dots" section below for review and/or to fill in the gaps between the last lesson and this one.

#### Connecting The Dots

As you teach The Thread, there will naturally be some gaps in the story. This is an optional way for you to fill in some of the gaps between the last lesson you taught and this one. Use it as a way to review and/or to connect the dots to the events

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah

surrounding the passage.

- **Even before Solomon died there were jealousies and issues between the twelve tribes of Israel. Some of the issues were because of the forced labor imposed by Solomon.**
- **After the death of Solomon it took approximately 209 years for Israel to fall, and then 136 years later Judah was captured.**
- **Both kingdoms were ruled by a succession of kings who mostly did evil in the sight of the Lord. The evil usually took the form of worshipping false gods, and not leading the people to acknowledge the true God.**

**THEN**, ask the students to find 2 Kings Chapter 17 in their Bibles or devices. You can use the Bible Background to give your students a better understanding of the book. Take a few moments to help the students get a picture in their minds about what was happening historically during the times of today's lesson. Remind them that after Solomon died, the country split into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Tell them this first passage deals with what was going on in the northern kingdom of Israel.

Read or have a student read 2 Kings 17:1-6. Ask the students something like:

- **Why was King Hoshea put in prison?**
  - o Answer: Assyria had already defeated Israel, and Hoshea had to pay an annual tribute or tax to them. To get free from this, Hoshea conspired with the king of Egypt. The Assyrian king found out and put King Hoshea in prison.
- **What happened to the northern Kingdom of Israel?**
  - o Answer: After three years of Assyrian attack, the country fell and the people were exiled to Assyria. Some of the people were allowed to stay in Israel for political reasons and some fled to Judah.

Explain that it took almost 200 years after the death of Solomon for the kingdom of Israel to fall. Let them know that of the 19 kings that followed Solomon, none of them did what was good in the sight of the Lord. Also, explain that later in 2 Kings 17, God poured out His wrath on Israel by allowing Assyria to capture them because they worshipped other gods, built shrines for themselves, took on the practices of the pagans, didn't listen to prophets sent by God, and rejecting God's laws and commands.

**THEN**, ask the students to turn to 2 Chronicles 36. While they're turning there, explain to them that you're going to see if the story was any different in the southern kingdom of Judah. Tell them that this took place around 135 years after the fall of Israel. Read or have a student read verses 2 Chronicles 36:11-13. Ask something like:

- **How was King Zedekiah described?**
  - o Answer: He did evil in the sight of God, would not listen to prophets God sent, and refused to turn to God.
- **Do these things sound familiar? What do they remind you of?**
  - o Answer: They remind us of what happened to Israel. Help the students grasp the fact that the people of Judah learned nothing from the fall of Israel because the pattern of disobeying God continued.

**NEXT**, explain to the students that the southern kingdom of Judah had 20 kings after Solomon, and only eight of them actually did what was good in the sight of the Lord. Read or have a student read 2 Chronicles 36:14-16. Ask something like:

- **What do you think when you hear this passage read? What goes through your mind?**
  - o Answers will vary. Most of probably cringe a little bit when we hear passages like this, and wonder how

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah

the people could have been so hardened.

- **What was said about the Lord and His response that jumped out to you?**
  - o Answers will vary. It distinctly said that in the midst of all of this, the Lord still had compassion on them.
- **What pushed the Lord to the point of punishing them?**
  - o Answer: He had compassion on them and repeatedly tried to get them to turn back to Him. Their continued refusal to turn to the Lord pushed Him to exercise His wrath.

**THEN**, read or have a student read 2 Chronicles 36:17-21. Ask something like:

- **So, what did Judah's punishment look like? Was it just a small slap on the wrist?**
  - o Answer: No, it wasn't a minor punishment at all. It was severe. Many people were killed, the city and temple were ransacked, and survivors were taken into exile to Babylon.
- **What did both kingdoms, Israel and Judah, have in common?**
  - o Answer: They both had kings that did evil in the sight of the Lord and led them astray. They both openly turned away from the Lord and followed after other gods.
- **Just so we're clear, what did the rebellion of both kingdoms lead to?**
  - o Answer: In both cases it led to severe punishment from the Lord.

**FINALLY**, draw this part of the Bible study to a close by helping the students see that the old saying "history repeats itself" certainly applies here. In both the northern and southern kingdoms, the patterns of behavior were identical. The people, the priests, and the kings disobeyed God's laws and commands, worshipped false idols, and refused to listen to the warnings sent by God through prophets. The end result was also the same for both Israel and Judah: Israel was taken captive by Assyria around 740 BC, and Judah was captured by Babylon around 586 BC. Close by saying something like this:

- **God patiently waited for the children of Israel to change their evil ways. God kept His part of His covenant with Abraham. But hundreds of years later, the sin of the people eventually invoked God's wrath, which resulted in destruction, and the removal of the people from their ancestral home. How could this happen? God had been so faithful to deliver them from captivity, and to lead them to the Promised Land. Yet they turned their back on Him. The good news, however, is that God didn't leave His people to suffer the ultimate punishment they truly deserved.**

If students don't have any questions, transition into The Thread to see where we notice the connection of the Gospel to the big-picture narrative of Scripture.

## The Thread

**FIRST**, ask the students to turn to the book of Romans. While they are turning to the book remind them that Paul wrote Romans from Corinth around 56-57 AD. You can use the Bible Background section at the beginning of the lesson for more information on the book.

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah

**NEXT**, read or have a student read Romans 5:6-11. Ask something like:

- **How is our situation today different from what the people of Israel and Judah faced?**
  - o Answer: There was no escape for the Hebrew people from God's wrath. They were guilty before God, and had to pay the price for their wickedness. Paul says that we have been saved from God's wrath and judgment permanently because of Jesus' death on the cross.
- **This passage says we were God's enemies. Do you think that sounds a little overboard? Why or why not?**
  - o Answers will vary. Be sure to let the students know that it's not overboard. Even if we never thought of ourselves as God's enemy, the truth is we were in direct opposition to Him, thus we were His enemy.
- **So, what punishment do we deserve apart from Christ?**
  - o Answer: Apart from Christ, we deserve death and eternal separation from God.
- **What do you think the word justified mean is verse 9?**
  - o Answer: It means that, in Christ, we are declared right before God. Because of Christ's death on our behalf, He looks at us as if we never sinned.
- **What does it mean that we're reconciled to God?**
  - o Answers: We've already talked about the fact that we were once enemies of God. That means that there was hostility and division. Now, through Jesus, reconciliation and peace have come to the relationship.
- **So, through Christ, what do we get instead of the punishment we deserve?**
  - o Answer: We experience salvation!

**FINALLY**, if your students don't have any more questions, transition into the "Wrapping Up" section.

### Wrapping Up

- **Goal:** For students to be able to articulate what the right response is when faced with the truth that Jesus has saved them from God's righteous wrath.
- **Set-Up:** A scrap piece of paper and pen for every student.

**BEGIN** by asking something like:

- **At the beginning of the lesson we looked at some different laws from around the world. If you got caught trying to rob someone and got in trouble for it, what would your response be? Now, what if you were fined for feeding birds? What would your response be? Would your responses be similar in both cases?**
  - o Answer: No, our responses probably wouldn't be the same. If we got in trouble for robbing someone, we'd probably know that we were getting a just punishment. If we got in trouble for feeding birds, we would probably think it's a little overboard and ridiculous.
- **What's your response when faced with the truth that we all deserve death and eternal separation from God because of our rebellion from Him? Do you think that's overboard?**
  - o Answers will vary.
- **Now, what's your response to the truth that Jesus offers salvation from that punishment? Don't just give the right "church answer." How do you respond to that truth? What's your reaction?**
  - o Answers will vary. Try and get the students to have an honest discussion about this subject. Most of us take this truth for granted. Talk a little bit about why that's the case.

# The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

## Part 2: A People Rise. A People Fall. Lesson 23: The Destruction of Israel and Judah

- **Let's look beyond what our response normally is. How should we respond to it?**

- o Answer: The proper response is one of gratitude, love, adoration, and a desire to follow Jesus no matter the cost.

**THEN**, ask the students to take their piece of paper and write down what they feel like is the right response to the truth that Jesus has saved them from God's wrath. Let them know that they can write it in a sentence or two, or they can make a bullet list of a few words that come to mind. Give them time to write their responses down and say something like:

- **We've all been offered the most gracious gift of all time, the offer of salvation from God's wrath and the promise of eternal life with God. The thing is, most of us get bogged down in all the junk we deal with on a daily basis and we lose sight of this amazing gift. Take this piece of paper and put it in your Bibles or in your wallet or take it home and tape it to a mirror in your room. Just put it somewhere that you'll see it on a regular basis and remind yourself of the right response to God's gracious gift of salvation.**

Close your Bible study in prayer, perhaps including thanksgiving for what God has promised followers of Jesus about eternity.

- **If you've purchased the *Tracing The Thread* devotional journal, remind students that they'll be working through Week 23 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions, and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.**
- **If you'll be utilizing the digital devotions included in the *Thread* curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.**
- **Use the Social Media guide to stay in touch with students via text or Twitter, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.**

### We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).