

Bible Story 24: FALL OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

SCRIPTURE: 2 KINGS 17:1-2,5-7,12-15; 18:1-3; 19:20,32-36; 21:1-2,19-20;
22:1-2,5,8-9,12-13; 23:1-3,31-32,36-37; 24:8-9,10-14,19-20; 25:1-4,8-12

MEMORY VERSE: "TEACH ME YOUR WAY, O LORD, AND I WILL WALK IN YOUR TRUTH." PSALM 86:11 NIV

BIBLE STORY:

The Israelites were living in two different places called kingdoms. **Israel** was in the north and **Judah** was in the south. Sometimes they obeyed God's laws. Other times they did not obey. God gave many opportunities for the people to return to worship and serve Him. God sent prophets. These prophets were special people who God sent to preach His Word. The prophets told the people that God loved them and wanted His people to worship and serve Him.

Sadly the people who lived in the kingdom of **Israel** chose not to follow God and they worshiped idols. So God finally let the king of Assyria conquer the people in **Israel**. They were taken as prisoners a long distance away, to Assyria.

The other kingdom, **Judah**, had some good kings that obeyed God, such as King Hezekiah. Later Josiah became king of **Judah** when he was only eight years old. King Josiah always pleased God. He ordered men to reconstruct the Temple in Jerusalem. The workers found the book of the Laws of Moses hidden in the Temple. They gave it to the king, who united all the leaders and read the whole book. Everyone decided to obey all the laws and commandments of God. All the idols were destroyed. God was pleased. King Josiah served thirty years as king and served God with all his heart.

After King Josiah died, three more kings ruled **Judah**. Then sadly, the people in **Judah** rejected God. They did not want to worship and serve God. They worshiped idols. God let the enemy, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, conquer Jerusalem, the capital city of **Judah**. The people of **Judah** were taken away as prisoners to Babylon, a long distance away.

But there was hope. The prophet Jeremiah said that one day some of the people would one day return to Jerusalem and serve God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What do you like about the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main people in the story?
4. What problems did the people face?
5. How did the people face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

RETELL THE STORY:

Ask volunteers from the group to retell the story.