



**KEY VERSE:** “This is what the LORD says: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death.” (Jeremiah 21:8)

# Choosing Life

**Lesson Scripture:** [Jeremiah 21:8-14](#)

## God's Word

**8** “Furthermore, tell the people, ‘This is what the LORD says: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. **9** Whoever stays in this city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; they will escape with their lives. **10** I have determined to do this city harm and not good, declares the LORD. It will be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will destroy it with fire.’ **11** Moreover, say to the royal house of Judah, ‘Hear the word of the LORD. **12** This is what the LORD says to you, house of David: Administer justice every morning; rescue from the hand of the oppressor the one who has been robbed, or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done—burn with no one to quench it. **13** I am against you, Jerusalem, you who live above this valley on the rocky plateau, declares the LORD—you who say, “Who can come against us? Who can enter our refuge?” **14** I will punish you as your deeds deserve, declares the LORD. I will kindle a fire in your forests that will consume everything around you.’”

# Bible Story

## Choosing Life

### Jeremiah 21:8-14

In the Background Scripture for today, King Zedekiah asked the prophet Jeremiah for God's advice as the city faced invasion. The Lord sent Jeremiah with a message for the people of Jerusalem. Here is the response: "Tell all the people, this is what the LORD says: 'Take your choice of life or death! Everyone who stays in Jerusalem will die from war, famine, or disease, but those who leave and surrender to the Babylonians will live. They will escape with their lives because I have decided to bring disaster and not good upon this city. The city will be handed over to the king of Babylon, and he will destroy it with fire.'"

God also wanted Jeremiah to tell the house of David (His people) to show justice every day. They were to help those who have been robbed and rescue them from their oppressors. God warned His people, "If you fail to do this, my anger will burn like an unquenchable fire because of all your sins."

"I am against you, Jerusalem," God said. He said that the people sat on top of the mountain looking over the valley, believing they were safe from attack. They thought that their city could not be harmed. God said, "You boast, 'No one can touch us here and no one can break in.'" He said that He would punish the people for their sins. "I will light a fire in your forests that will burn up everything around you," God said.

## Good Choices

### (Part 1)

Jace and Robinson were always getting into trouble. They played tricks on their classmates—and once they even put bubble gum in the teacher's chair!

"Hey, man, I heard we have a substitute teacher today. What do you think we can do to make her leave?" Jace asked.

"After the last time, I think we should stop playing tricks on people. My parents didn't allow me to have my Nintendo Switch for a month," Robinson answered.

"Yeah, but you didn't miss it. We still hung out and had fun doing other stuff," Jace noted.

"That's true, but my dad said if I pulled any more stunts like the last one, he would ground me for a year," Robinson explained.



## Exploring the Story with Nicholas and Cornelius

Hello! Nicholas and Cornelius here. From today's Scripture lesson, it seems like Israel had to make a difficult choice: surrender or continue fighting. At first, it might not look like a choice at all. Jeremiah told them what God said to do. Their only hope was to surrender. Can you believe the king ignored Jeremiah's warning? Similarly, what do you think will happen with Robinson? Do you think he will follow Jace and ignore his father's warning?

## Good Choices

### (Part 2)

"Man, you know your dad was exaggerating. He won't ground you for a *whole* year. Besides, if we do everything just right, we won't get caught," Jace noted.

"I don't know, Jace . . . that's what you said last time. I'm trying to make better choices and treat people how I want to be treated," Robinson explained.

"People *have* been treating us a lot nicer since we stopped playing tricks on them," Jace admitted.

"I say we keep making good choices. Besides, I'm not so sure my dad was exaggerating," Robinson commented.

"Well, a year *is* a long time without your Nintendo Switch. Let's do something nice instead," Jace responded.

"We can help the substitute before class," Robinson suggested.

## Exploring the Story with Nicholas and Cornelius

Can you believe that the king ignored Jeremiah's warning and held out against the Babylonians for a year and a half! However, just like God said, he was defeated. He was sent as a captive to Babylon. I'm so glad that Robinson made a better choice. He believed his father would do just what he said. It looks like he and Jace are both making good choices. This week, I hope you decide to make good choices too.



## Story Timeline

Read the statements below. Then figure out the chronological order of the statements, putting a number next to each statement to mark the order of events according to today's Scripture text. The first one has been done for you.

- \_\_\_ A. God said surrender.
- \_\_\_ B. God was going to kindle a fire that would burn up everything.
- 1 C. King Zedekiah of Judah asked Jeremiah for God's advice about how to deal with the invasion.
- \_\_\_ D. God warned the house of David, telling them to be righteous and to punish robbers.
- \_\_\_ E. God said that He is going to fight on the side of the Babylonians against Judah.
- \_\_\_ F. God would destroy the people in Jerusalem.