

Youth Teaching Resources

September 29, 2019



Season After Pentecost (June 16-November 24)

On the Road with Jesus

Luke 14:1-14 (RCL 1, 7-14) – “A Way to the Top”

Choices That Matter

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 – “Make the Right Choice!”

Jeremiah 4:11-28 (RCL 11-12, 22-28) – “Delay and You’ll Pay”

Jeremiah 8:18-9:3 (RCL 8:18-9:1) – “Go on and Grieve”

Jeremiah 32:1-15 (RCL 32:1-3a, 6-15) – “Never Give Up”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

Never Give Up

Jeremiah 32:1-15 (RCL 32:1-3a, 6-15)

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

PARENT PREP

There are days when it all seems so dark and desolate that our students need to just see a spark. What is it that you know gives your students hope? What is it that can be the spark for your student? If you don't know, take the time to figure it out. If you do know, make sure you are ready to implement this spark of hope. Sometimes it just takes a spark to change the darkness into light.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip “Feels Like Hope” from *Mad Max: Fury Road*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability, and then facilitate a discussion by using questions like the following:

- 1) Why is their situation so desperate?
- 2) What is the plan that gives them hope?
- 3) Why is she reluctant to buy into the plan?
- 4) How does hope change the mood of the group?
- 5) How does your faith portray hope?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Jeremiah 32:1-15. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony's commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Why is the city under siege?
- 2) Why is Jeremiah in such a bad situation?
- 3) Why does Jeremiah focus on what will happen after the defeat?
- 4) Why does Hanamel show up to save Jeremiah?
- 5) What does the purchase symbolize?
- 6) Why do people still care about this purchase so many years later?

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) How much did Jeremiah make the purchase for?
- 2) How were the scrolls secured and saved for so long?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": Why does Jeremiah 32 reflect actions from Jeremiah 37?

Transformation

Conclude your time together by leading the group through the spiritual practice of *Lectio Divina*. If you have not led a group through this practice, familiarize yourself with the practice before leading the group. As you lead the group through the practice, allow enough time in between readings for the students to hear what God is saying to them. After you have completed the practice, allow students to share what God revealed to them during the spiritual practice.

Close with a prayer thanking God for hope.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

The text—The Revised Common Lectionary text for the day is Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15, which obviously skips over several verses of text. These verses are integral to understanding the larger text, so we will study 32:1-15, along with some brief comments about the remainder of the chapter.

Siege warfare—One of the best-known examples of siege warfare in the ancient world is the Assyrian king Sennacherib’s defeat of Lachish – the second largest city in Judah – in 701 BCE. Sennacherib was so proud of his army’s accomplishment that he had illustrations of the battle carved in relief onto large gypsum panels that were used to decorate an entire room of his palace in Nineveh, near modern day Mosul, Iraq.

The panels, more than seven feet tall, were discovered by Austen Henry Layard during excavations in 1845-1847. They decorated a room (designated Room XXXVI) in the central part of Sennacherib’s southwest palace. Several of the panels were obtained by the British Museum on 1856, and remain there.

One panel, from a replica in the Israel Museum, shows archers advancing as two battering rams are pushed up stone ramps built against the city walls. Defenders of Lachish helplessly try to stop the attack with stones and torches. At the bottom, civilians flee through the gate as three men – probably city officials – are impaled on stakes.

Nebuchad-who?—You may have noticed that in some parts of Jeremiah (as in Ezekiel), the Babylonian king is called Nebuchadrezzar, while most biblical references (including a number in Jeremiah) spell the king’s name as Nebuchadnezzar.

Both are attempts to render the king’s Babylonian name into a Hebrew spelling. In Babylonian, his name was spelled *Nabu-kudurri-utser*, meaning “May (the god) Nabu protect my boundary stone.”

Nebuchadrezzar, then, is a bit closer to the Babylonian spelling, but in the lesson we will stick with the more familiar Nebuchadnezzar.

How many shekels?—Calibrated stones used as weights for measuring precious metal suggest that the shekel in ancient times was about 0.40 ounces, so 17 shekels of silver would be about seven ounces. At today’s prices, that would be worth about \$100.

For comparative purposes, David reportedly paid 50 shekels of silver for the threshing floor and oxen of Araunah (2 Samuel 24:24).

Digging Deeper *continued*

Saving scrolls—It was not uncommon for scrolls to be “filed” in earthenware jars for safekeeping. The preservation of the Dead Sea Scrolls – hidden in tall pottery jars for 1900 years before their discovery – attests to the effectiveness of the method, especially in a dry climate. The jars, on display at Qumran, were among those found in nearby caves.

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

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Why does Jeremiah 32 reflect actions from Jeremiah 37?

The book of Jeremiah is often confusing because it does not follow a careful chronological order, as most modern readers expect. The book, reportedly compiled by Jeremiah's friend and scribe Baruch, often arranges materials based on subject matter rather than chronology.

The first 24 chapters are prophecies against Judah and Jerusalem, but in no particular order, and many lack any real context that would indicate a date. Other collections focus on oracles against foreign nations (chapters 25, 46-51), episodes from Jeremiah's life (chapters 26-35), and historical narratives (chapters 36-45, 52).

Today's text is part of a hopeful section, often called "The Book of Consolation," found in chapters 30-33. The activities described in chapter 32, however, appear to reflect a narrative that isn't related until chapter 37. That chapter describes a time late in Zedekiah's reign, when a threat from Egypt had forced the Babylonians to temporarily lift their siege of Jerusalem.

Zedekiah sent messengers asking Jeremiah to pray for him (37:1-5), but Jeremiah's response was a clear prediction that the Babylonians would return and defeat the city, burning it to the ground (37:6-10).

While the siege was lifted, Jeremiah attempted to visit his hometown of Anathoth, a short distance northwest of Jerusalem. When he reached the gate, however, he was arrested and charged with trying to desert to the Babylonians (also called Chaldeans during this period). An official named Jonathan had him beaten and imprisoned in an underground cell (37:11-16).

Zedekiah summoned Jeremiah to be brought for a private audience and asked "Is there any word from the LORD?" Jeremiah replied that there was indeed: "You shall be handed over to the king of Babylon" (37:17).

Jeremiah then complained about his imprisonment and asked to be released from Jonathan's dungeon, whereupon the king remanded him to be held in the court of the guard and given a loaf of bread each day for as long as it lasted (37:18-21).

These actions appear to describe the situation we read about in today's text, even though it appears earlier, in chapter 32. This may confuse modern readers, but it helps to understand that ancient writers were not nearly as concerned with chronology as we are: Baruch's account is organized by subject matter, not by a timeline.