

# Choosing Life

May 17, 2020—Lesson 12

**Background Scripture:** Jeremiah 21 • **Lesson Scripture:** Jeremiah 21:8-14

**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)

**Faith Block:** I choose to serve God!

**Lesson Objective:** The children will begin to understand the importance of treating others justly in everyday life.

**Materials Needed:** *Picture Lesson Cards*, Bible, a rug, crayons, markers, line-art coloring pictures related to today’s lesson, pictures of people showing different emotions, pictures of people making good choices and/or bad choices, blocks, books, other toddler toys, (**optional:** Pax the Penguin; Younger Children’s Resource Kit [lesson 12 materials]).

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## A BEGINNING BLOCK

✂ Prior to class, secure pictures of people showing different emotions (including a face that shows sadness [Jeremiah] and one that shows anger [God]), and pictures of people making good choices and bad choices.

**Welcome:** Greet the parents as they bring their children into the room. Engage any children who arrive early—with blocks, books, and other toddler toys—in order to maintain their attention. Gather the children and help them settle down when you are ready to begin class.

**Opening Worship and Activity:** Tell the children that it is prayer time. Let them know that prayer time is when we talk to God. Tell the children to bow their heads and close their eyes, and then lead them in prayer.

Have the children sit down at the classroom table or let them sit on an area rug on the floor.

**Say:** Jeremiah was sad when he saw the people disobeying God. (*Show the picture of the sad person.*) God created us to have emotions.

Show the children the pictures depicting people expressing other emotions. Let the children name each feeling.

Prepare the class for the Bible story.

## B BIBLE STORY BLOCK

**The Bible Story:** Hold up the lesson 12 Picture Lesson Card for all the children to see. Point to the images and see if the children can name the artwork shown. Assist as needed.

**Say:** The Israelites did not obey, so God punished them.

Read or tell the Bible story to the children and review it with them afterward.

## Choosing Life

God sent Jeremiah with a message for the people. He said that the Israelites still had time to choose to obey and honor God. They could change their bad ways or continue to do wrong.

The Israelites were going to be attacked by the Babylonians. Jerusalem would be destroyed. Jeremiah explained that those who stayed in the city would die. But those persons who went with the Babylonians would live. Jeremiah told the king to do what was fair and right each morning.

God is *just* (fair). He will not allow evil to go on forever. The people would be punished for their *evil* (bad) ways.

## C STACKS OF FUN

**A Read-aloud Poem:** Refer to the lesson 12 Bible Story Application (*page 68*) and teach the children the read-aloud poem “The Judgment of God.”

☺ **Words from Pax the Penguin:** Present Pax to the class. (See the *Early Elementary* teacher book, *pages 35–36*, for suggestions on how to present Pax.) The script for Pax appears below.

**Pax:** Hello, girls and boys! In today’s story, how did God feel when the Israelites made bad choices? (*Pause for responses.*) Yes, God was angry. Now, let’s thank God for helping us make good choices. Repeat after me: “Thank You, God (*pause*), for helping us make good choices.” Good job, boys and girls.

Let Pax wave good-bye and/or hug the children.

## D CLOSING BLOCK

Review the lesson with the children by emphasizing parts of the Bible story. Or retell the Bible story, using the Picture Lesson Card. Have the children repeat the Faith Block after you. Afterward, say the prayer on the Picture Lesson Card. Distribute the Picture Lesson Cards to parents/guardians when they arrive to pick up their children.

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**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)

**Faith Block:** God helps me make good choices!

**Lesson Objective:** The children will hear that God gave Jeremiah a warning to keep God’s people safe.

**Materials Needed:** *Preschool* student books, Bibles, star-shaped stickers, pencils, crayons or coloring pencils, markers, (optional: Pax the Penguin; Younger Children’s Resource Kit [lesson 12 materials]).

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## A BEGINNING BLOCK

✂ Prior to class, clear a space in the center of the classroom for ease of movement.

**Welcome:** Greet the children and parents with a warm and inviting smile. Thank the parents for bringing their children to class and tell the children how glad you are to see them.

**Opening Worship and Activity:** After the students are seated, open the session with prayer. Then collect the children’s offerings. Briefly tell the children that today they will hear about a warning that helped God’s people choose life.

Lead the class to play the game “Red Light, Green Light”—but instead of running, you may have the children march, wiggle, or jump in place. (Example: Tell the children that when you say, “Green light,” you want them to march in place. When you say “Red light,” they should stop doing the action.)

Do this several times with each action you announce. (You may also allow volunteers to take turns being the one who gives the commands. Make sure they understand to use the same types of safe actions.) When you have completed the game, prepare the children for the Bible story.

## B BIBLE STORY BLOCK

**The Bible Story:** Say: Let’s listen carefully to the story to find out how the people learned what to do to stay safe from harm.

Read the Bible story to the children and review it with them afterward.

### Choosing Life

God told Jeremiah to tell the people to listen. Their city

would be attacked because they had disobeyed God. The Babylonians would be the attackers. Anyone staying would be killed. But those who got out would live.

God had decided not to save the city. He would destroy it. The king of Babylon would burn the city to the ground. Nothing would be left. The people thought that the city could never be destroyed. But it would happen because God said so.

God warned them. He told them to make the right choice if they wanted to live.

**Bible Story Application:** Refer to the lesson 12 Bible Story Application (*page 68*) and teach the children the read-aloud poem “The Judgment of God.”

☺ **Words from Pax the Penguin:** If you purchased Pax the Penguin, use the script printed in the *Early Elementary* teacher book for lesson 12 (*page 60*). See suggestions on how to present Pax on *pages 35–36* of this teacher book.

## C STACKS OF FUN

**Who Is Making the Right Choice?:** Have the children complete the activity. Work as a group and talk about what is happening in each picture. Once they are done, review the correct responses.

**Pictures to be circled:** children in choir; the boy reading with his mother; the boys sharing and playing well with each other

**Make the Right Choice to Live!:** Have the children color the Bible story picture. As they color, review the Bible story with them.

## D CLOSING BLOCK

Say the Key Verse, and let the children repeat it after you. Have the children repeat the Faith Block after you: “God helps me make good choices!” Then close the class session with prayer.

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**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)

**Faith Block:** I will do the right thing!

**Lesson Objective:** The children will commit to treating others justly in their everyday lives.

**Materials Needed:** *Early Elementary* student books, Bibles (NIV translation), pencils, crayons or coloring pencils, markers, masking or transparent tape, attendance chart, reward stickers, puzzles or coloring pages, sturdy white card stock, scissors, glitter glue, a hole puncher, yarn or ribbon, a praise and worship music CD, CD player, (**optional:** Pax the Penguin; Younger Children’s Resource Kit [lesson 12 materials]).

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## A BEGINNING BLOCK

✂ If you purchased Pax the Penguin, decide whether you or someone else will be the puppeteer. It is important that the children not see Pax placed on or taken off the puppeteer’s hand; this must be done discreetly and out of the children’s view.

### Welcome

Welcome the students and their parents or guardians. Take attendance, placing a sticker beside the name of each child (that is present) on the attendance chart. Engage early arrivers with activities until you are ready to begin class.

### Opening Worship and Activity

Lead the children in prayer. Then collect the children’s offerings.

**Say:** Raise your hand if you were fair and peaceful last week. (*Pause for action.*) Great job, boys and girls. Sometimes, we disobey God. Does God like it when we disobey Him? (*Pause for responses.*) No, God does not like us to *sin*, or do wrong. Let’s play a game of “Father, May I?” This game is played like “Mother, May I?” When “father” calls you, you cannot move until you ask, “Father, may I?” If “father” says “Yes,” you may move—but only the number of steps that “father” says to take. Whoever reaches “father” first wins the round.

As the teacher, you will be “father.” Lead the children in several rounds of the game. After the game, ask the children if it was hard to obey the father. Lead a brief discussion of the responses.

Prepare the children for the Bible story.

## B BIBLE STORY BLOCK

### The Bible Story

**Say:** Today’s Bible story is about a message from God shared by the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet for the people of Judah. God wanted the people of Judah to make a decision. Listen to find out what the choices were. At the end of the Bible story, stand up and say, “I choose life!”

Read the Bible story to the children; at the end of the story, pause slightly for the class to say, “I choose life!” Review the story with them afterward.

### Choosing Life

God loved the people of Judah. But He was angry about their disobedience. Jeremiah shared God’s message with them: “You can choose the way of life or death. The city will be destroyed. If you stay in the city, you will die. If you surrender to the enemy, you will be taken prisoner. But you will live.

“Listen up! There is something God wants you to do. Every morning, you must rescue people from their enemies. If you don’t, God will be very angry. You won’t get away with harming others. God will punish you. Listen and choose to live!”

### Bible Story Application

Refer to the lesson 12 Bible Story Application (*page 68*) and teach the children the read-aloud poem “The Judgment of God.”

### ☺ Words from Pax the Penguin

If you purchased Pax the Penguin, make preparations to

present him to the class. Create a distraction so that you or your assistant can discreetly bring out Pax. The script for Pax appears below.

**Pax:** Hello, everyone!

**Teacher (and Children):** Hello, Pax.

**Pax:** My parents had a family meeting with me last night.

**Teacher:** What happened during your family meeting?

**Pax:** They said they were very proud of me. I have been doing a good job of choosing to show kindness and love to my family and to other people as well. So, they are going to give me a chance to make more choices. Twice a month, I get to pick a family activity.

**Teacher:** Congratulations, Pax! Job well done. I'm sure you are excited. Boys and girls, let's congratulate Pax for making good choices! *(Pause for responses from the children.)*

**Pax:** Thank you! God wants all of us to make good choices every day. Stand and share one thing you will do today that is kind and fair to someone. *(Pause for action and responses, one person at a time.)* Good job, boys and girls, of choosing what is right and good! See you next week.

## **C** STACKS OF FUN **Who Is Making the Right Choice?**

Allow time for the children to look at each picture and decide whether the action is pleasing (smiley face) or displeasing (frowny face) to God. Assist as needed. When they are done, review the answers and discuss why they are the right answers.

**Faces to be circled:** (1) happy face; (2) frowny face; (3) happy face; (4) happy face

## **Make the Right Choice to Live!**

Have the children color the Bible story picture. As they color, review the Bible lesson with them.

## **Make a "Choose Life" Tree Poster**

Refer to the reproducible activity (page 76) and, using

sturdy white card stock, make a copy of the template for each child in your class. Distribute the templates and some decorating items to the children. Allow them time to color and decorate their posters. Once they are done with the decorating, cut out the poster and then use a hole puncher to punch a hole through each dotted circle. Then string a length of yarn or ribbon through the two holes and tie the ends into a knot. When finished, the children will have a poster to take home and hang somewhere in their home as a reminder of today's lesson.

## **D** CLOSING BLOCK

**Say:** In today's Bible story, we heard God's message from the prophet Jeremiah. God loved the people of Judah, but He was angry about something. What was God angry about? *(Pause for responses.)* Yes, God was angry because of the people's disobedience. So, God decided to destroy the city. But God did give them a chance to choose to live or die. God loves us, but He punishes sin and disobedience. Even today, God wants us to show fairness and kindness to everyone every day. So, choose to obey God and choose life!

Read the Key Verse to the children and ask them to repeat it. Have the children repeat the Faith Block after you; then prepare the students for the closing prayer.

**Pray:** Dear God, thank You for loving us and giving us a chance to choose life. Help us to show Your kindness and love to others every day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

As you wait for parents or caregivers to come for your students, here are some suggestions for things to do to keep the children occupied while they wait: (1) Have the children review their lesson leaflets, completing any unfinished activities. Make sure each child's name is written somewhere on his/her leaflet. (2) Allow the children to help clean up the classroom before leaving class. (3) Allow for quiet play time if you have a room with an activity area. (4) Offer crayons and coloring sheets or paper for the children to draw on or allow them to work on puzzles together.

# Reproducible Bible Story Applications

May 17, 2020

Lesson 12 : May 31, 2020

Lesson 14

## A READ-ALLOUD POEM

### The Judgment of God

Jeremiah said, “Listen, I have a message to say:  
Make a choice—choose right and serve God today.  
Know that God will judge,  
so do what is right:  
Help others and do not sin,  
or you will feel God’s might.  
God will punish those who choose to sin;  
Those who do not follow God will not win.”

May 24, 2020

Lesson 13

## A READ-ALLOUD POEM

### Follow God’s Commands

God gave Jeremiah a message to say:  
“Live by my commands each day—please obey.”  
God will be with us and help us along the way;  
We must follow God—  
He wants to care for us each day.

## A SING-ALONG

### God’s Love

*(Sing to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”)*

God loved Israel like a son,  
Like a son, like a son;  
God loved Israel like a son—  
Do good and obey God.

Israel called Him “God Most High,”  
“God Most High,” “God Most High”;  
Israel called Him “God Most High”—  
Do what is right always.

Make a choice to follow Him,  
Follow Him, follow Him;  
Make a choice to follow Him—  
Do right and live for God.

## Early Elementary Activities

### LESSON 12 EARLY ELEMENTARY Make a “Choose Life” Tree Poster

