

Bringing **The Story** Home- Ch. 17



THE KINGDOMS FALL

Bringing The Story Home is a tool for you to use with your family to connect with the weekly lessons taught in "The Story" curriculum. Feel free to use these activities in a way that fits your family life. Do what works with the time you have each week.

Timeless Truth: The Lord's Plan Always Comes Through

Bible Basis: Jeremiah 1:4–10, 2:21–28, 5:1–2, 13:17–19; 2 Chronicles 36:11–16; 2 Kings 25:1–12; Lamentations 1:1, 2:17, 3:21–26; 5:1 and 15–21; Ezekiel 1:1–2:7, 36:22–36

Key Verse: I say to myself, "The Lord is everything I will ever need. So I will put my hope in him."
—Lamentations 3:24

Parent Tips: Read the key point from the Sunday school lessons that relate to your children. Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table during the week. The Living Faith activity encourages your family to have fun drawing some of God's amazing creations. The Extra Mile looks at an all-star baseball player who ran from God to addiction but still lives in the grace that God provides.

Get The Point: God's people suffer because of their sin, but God still loves them. His love for me will never end.

Table Talk:

- **Have you ever done something that you were told not to? What happened?**
- **God told the people in Judah and Israel many times to not worship idols. He sent prophets who warned them about what would happen. So the people turned from their wicked ways and worshiped God, right? Wrong! What did the people really do?**
- **Do you like it when your parents warn you about your behavior?**
- **Do you usually change your behavior before you get in trouble?**
- **God's people got in big trouble. Do you think that was fair?**
- **We've all heard the saying, "Like father, like son." What are some ways that you're like your parents? (Parents, share about similarities with their parents.) Be sure to talk about some positive attributes and some negative.**
- **In this chapter of The Story, it's like the kings tried to be the opposite of their parents. It was "like father, not like son." It was good king, bad king, good king. . . . Why do you think that happened?**
- **Are there any things you're doing to be set apart from your parents?**
- **Why do some people work hard at not following the positive character qualities of their parents?**
- **How can you work to embrace the good and reject the bad from the role models in your life?**

Living Faith: God opened up the heavens and gave the prophet Ezekiel amazing visions. Gather your family around a table. Make sure to have an assortment of paper, crayons, colored pencils, and other drawing utensils. Read all of Ezekiel 1 out loud. When you're finished, take some time to draw the creatures that he described. You can even draw the scene with the heavenly sapphire throne and glowing metal figure (Ezekiel 1:26–28). Have fun critiquing each other's work. When you're finished, ask:

- **Is it possible to describe heavenly creatures or heaven with words?**
- **Why can't words do God justice?**
- **What do these creatures say about the creativity of God? Can't you just picture these creatures in a movie or comic book?**

- **These creatures are called cherubim. God specially made them for a purpose. Think about other things that God made that might look weird but have a special purpose. What about ears? star-nosed moles?**

When you've finished talking, read more about this scene in Ezekiel 10. Make any additions or changes to your illustrations that you want to. Hang the final products on the refrigerator for a week to remind your family of God's power and creativity.

Extra Mile: God's people knew the truth, but they turned their back on it and followed their own ways. But even as God judges his people, he looks to their redemption (see Ezekiel 36:22–36). God is a God of mercy and healing. For a personal, modern example of God's grace, watch the following video about Major League Baseball player Josh Hamilton at: <http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=ZYY6WNNX>

Texas Rangers outfielder Josh Hamilton became a Christian at age 18, and shortly after he was picked No. 1 in the Major League Baseball draft. In the minor leagues, he became addicted to drugs and alcohol and nearly lost everything: money, fame, a beautiful wife. After years of abuse, Josh started the road to recovery from addiction and began to focus on God again. At the 2008 All Star Game, Josh hit a record-breaking 28 home runs in one round of the homerun derby.

Watch Josh's story and then talk as a family about the similarities between his story and what happened to God's people.

- **What did Josh put his trust in?**
- **How is that like having an idol?**
- **How did Josh get the strength to battle his addiction?**
- **What does this say about God's character?**

Josh Hamilton still struggles with addiction. In fact, just this year he had a setback in his recovery and went back to drinking. He admitted his mistake and is once again working to stay sober and living for God.

- **Do you think God still loves Josh even after he made another mistake?**
- **At times, we all make mistakes, even when we know we shouldn't, but God still loves us.**
- **Read Romans 5:8**
- **What does that say about God's character? (This would be a great time to talk about the grace of God found in Jesus and that no matter what, Jesus still loves us.)**

Prayer Time: *Dear God, thank you so much for sending Jesus as our savior. Even though we continue to mess things up, you still love us with an amazing love. Help us as we struggle with sin. Forgive us when we give in to temptation, and remind us that your love never fades. In Jesus name we pray. AMEN.*