

Use Week of:

## Unit 14 • Session 3

# Israel Taken Captive

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

2 Kings 17

### STORY POINT:

Israel ignored God's prophets  
and was captured.

### KEY PASSAGE:

2 Peter 3:9

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why should we obey God? We should  
obey God because He made us, He loves  
us, and His plans are good.



**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
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Additional resources are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject](http://MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject).

## LEADER Bible Study

God's people had a history of disobeying God. Sin separated them from God. But man was created to know and love God, and God was working out a plan to bring His children back to Himself. Like any good father, God knows that disobedience needs to be punished. "For the LORD disciplines the one he loves, just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights" (Prov. 3:12).

After the tribes of Israel split into the Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom, God sent prophets to both kingdoms to warn the people to turn from their sins and obey God. Over the course of 200 years, the prophets Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea spoke to Israel and warned them of the consequences of their idolatry. They called for Israel to repent and turn back to God. But Israel did not listen.

God had been very patient with the Israelites. He had helped them in times of trouble and delayed their punishment because He is gracious and compassionate. (See 2 Kings 13:23.) But God knew His people would not love Him with all their hearts.

Finally, God had had enough. Evil King Hoshea ruled over Israel, and God allowed Israel's enemies to send the people into exile. The king of Assyria attacked Israel and laid siege to Samaria. Assyria captured Samaria and forced the people to leave the city. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed and the people were scattered, just as God had said it would be. (See 1 Kings 14:15.)

Israel's exile was God's judgment on their sin, but God was not finished working among His people. God was still working out His plan to keep His covenant promises. As you teach, point kids to Jesus, the answer to God's promises. We too disobey God, but Jesus took God's judgment for our sin upon Himself. Jesus changes our hearts, brings us into God's presence, and keeps us there.

# The BIBLE Story

## Israel Taken Captive

*2 Kings 17*

**God had done so many good things for the Israelites.** He had rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and had taken care of them in a new land. He made a covenant with them and promised to be their God. **Even though God loved them like a father, the**

**Israelites forgot about God.** They acted in the same way as the nations who did not know and love God. **They worshiped things that were not God, and they did exactly what God told them not to do.**

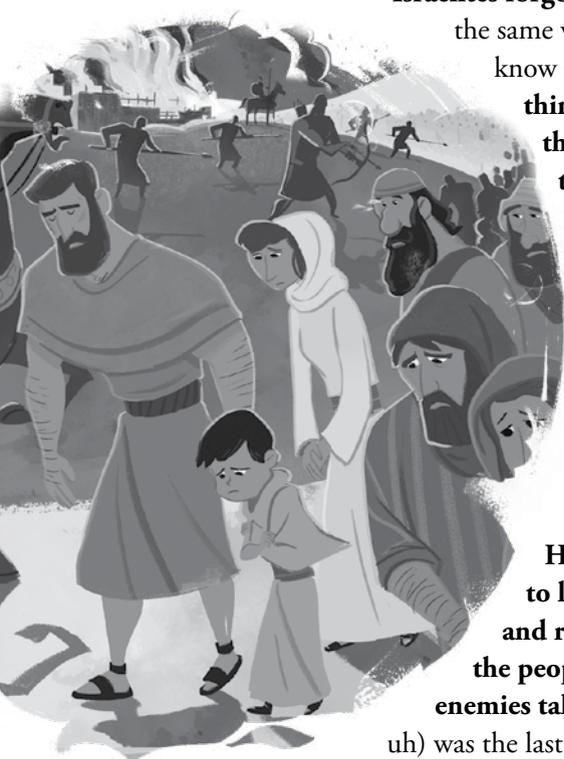
**So God sent prophets to warn the people to stop doing evil things.** Did Israel listen? No. **The prophets said bad things would happen if they did not obey God. Did Israel obey? No. In fact, they sinned even more!**

**God finally had enough. He loved His people too much to let them continue in their sin and rebellion. So God punished the people of Israel by letting their enemies take over.** Hoshea (hoh SHEE

uh) was the last king of Israel, the Northern Kingdom. King Hoshea did evil things like the kings

before him.

At this time, the people of Assyria and the people of Israel did not get along. Assyria's army was bigger and stronger than Israel's army,



so King Hoshea paid the king of Assyria to leave Israel alone. But Hoshea had to do whatever the king of Assyria told him to do. Instead of asking God to help His people, Hoshea secretly asked the king of Egypt to protect Israel from Assyria. Now that Hoshea had a deal with Egypt, he stopped giving money to the king of Assyria.

**One day, the king of Assyria and his army attacked Israel. King Hoshea was thrown into prison. The Assyrian army surrounded the city of Samaria, the capital of Israel.** Samaria had a strong wall around the city. For three years, the Assyrians attacked the city. They did not let anyone bring supplies into the city.

**Finally, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and forced the people to leave their homes.** He bound them together with ropes and hooks, and **he made them walk hundreds of miles to Assyria. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed.**

*Christ Connection: When the Israelites disobeyed God again and again, God punished them by removing them from His presence. We disobey God, but Jesus took the punishment for our sin upon Himself. Jesus brings us into God's presence and keeps us there.*

## **Bible Storytelling Tips**

- **Display art:** Display the Bible story picture and refer to it as you tell the story.
- **Make lists:** As you tell the story, invite a volunteer to list the good things God did for Israel and the wrong things Israel did against God.

# INTRODUCE the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Israel Taken Captive

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** 2 Kings 17

**STORY POINT:** Israel ignored God's prophets and was captured.

**KEY PASSAGE:** 2 Peter 3:9

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why should we obey God? We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.

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## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to think of a time they faced consequences for their actions. Were they sorry for their actions or just sorry they got caught? How can consequences be helpful?

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Tribes of Israel" activity page,
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete "Tribes of Israel" on the activity page. Guide kids to fill in the missing vowels in the names of the tribes that made up the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Then invite kids to color in the tribes on the map.

**SAY** • When the nation of Israel was divided, ten of the tribes formed the Northern Kingdom of Israel and two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) formed the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Today's story is about something terrible that happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We'll find out what it was and if Judah learned from Israel's mistakes.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

### OPTION 1: Human knot

Instruct kids to stand shoulder-to-shoulder in a circle, facing inward. Instruct everyone to hold out his or her right hand and take the hand of someone else in the circle. Then instruct everyone to hold out his or her left hand and take another hand. Make sure kids aren't holding hands with someone directly beside them.

Challenge kids to work together to figure out how to untangle the human knot without letting go of hands.

**SAY** • You were in quite the mess! Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible about God's people who were in another type of mess: they were tangled up in their own sin. We'll find out what happened.

### OPTION 2: Hot/cold game

Choose one kid to be *It*. Hold up a small object such as lip balm, an eraser, or crayon for everyone to see. Instruct *It* to stand facing a wall and close his eyes. Hide the object somewhere in the room. Then invite *It* to begin seeking the object. Encourage the rest of the class to guide *It* by saying "cold" if he is far from the object or "hot" if he is near it.

• small object (lip balm, eraser, crayon, or so forth)

As *It* moves, kids should say "hotter" or "colder" to guide his direction. Kids may also use descriptions such as "freezing" or "burning up" to indicate proximity to the hidden object. Play until *It* finds the hidden object. Ask *It* to talk about the importance of listening to the clues.

**SAY** • Long ago, God sent prophets to God's people to warn them about punishment for sin. Do you think the people listened to the prophets or ignored them?

## Transition to teach the story

# TEACH the Story



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## Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire  
• Bible

*[Leader enters wearing a knit cap, waders or an apron, and an orange raincoat or jacket. He or she also carries a Bible.]*

**LEADER** • Welcome to the docks of Port Gnome! I'm

Captain [*your last name*]. It's good to see you again.

If you weren't here last week, it's nice to meet you!

The mariners and I had a really rough week. We were glad to miss the big storm that was predicted to hit this area, but we had a visit from the Department of Marine Fisheries. They had some bad news for me.

Apparently our commercial fishing vessel registration expired two years ago! We're supposed to renew our registration every year, but I guess it just slipped my mind. So we got a ticket and had to dock the boat. Plus we have to pay a fine for operating without a proper registration.

But that's fair. Sometimes we have to face the consequences for doing wrong things—whether we're

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

completely aware of the wrong or not. [*Hold up the Bible.*] In the Bible story I want to share with you today, prophets had warned the people of Israel over and over that they were sinning against God, but the Israelites ignored the prophets. The time had finally come for them to face the consequences of their sin.

### Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • As we hear today's Bible story, keep our big picture question in mind: ***Why should we obey God?*** Do you remember the answer? [*Allow kids to respond.*] ***Why should we obey God? We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.***

### Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. · Giant Timeline

**LEADER** • Were God's people, the Israelites, good at obeying Him? (*No.*) Did God give up on them? (*No.*) God sent prophets to warn His people that He would punish their sin if they did not turn back to Him.

Last week we heard about the prophet Hosea. God used Hosea's life to teach Israel a lesson. We learned that **God is faithful to His people even when they do not love Him.** Does that mean people can keep sinning against God with no consequences?

As we're about to hear, God loves His people too much to allow them to keep sinning. Today's Bible story happened about 50 years after the story of Hosea (hoh ZAY uh) when the kingdom of Israel was ruled by an evil king named Hoshea (hoh SHEE uh).

- Bibles
- "Israel Taken Captive" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 17. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Israel Taken Captive."

### **LEADER • Israel ignored God's prophets and was**

**captured.** The Israelites were supposed to be different from other nations. God had saved them from Egypt and told them how to be holy like He is holy. The Israelites were supposed to love and follow God. They weren't supposed to worship idols. But that is exactly what the Northern Kingdom did.

The people made idols to worship, worshiped idols of all kinds, and followed the customs of the nations around them. God sent prophets to warn the people, but the people further refused to follow God.

This pattern happened over and over again. Like any good father, God knows that disobedience needs to be disciplined. [See *Prov. 3:12*.] Finally, the Northern Kingdom paid the price of their sin. God allowed them to be defeated by Assyria.

The Assyrians were known for being very mean. To keep the people they defeated from trying to fight again, they divided them up and scattered them, sending them to live in new places far away from their homes.

## **Christ connection**

**LEADER •** When the Israelites disobeyed God again and again, God punished them by removing them from His presence. We disobey God, but Jesus took the punishment for our sin upon Himself. Jesus brings us into God's presence and keeps us there. Because

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 115 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

of Jesus, we can be close to God. We can know and love Him.

### Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 14, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about why parents give kids rules. Guide them to discuss how discipline can be for their good.

• “Unit 14, Session 3” questions from kids video



### Missions moment (3 minutes)

Stand in front of kids and hold your arms out to the sides. Invite kids to imagine they are in a boat. When you lean to one side, they should lean too. When you lean the other side, they should do the same. Lean from side to side as if on a boat rocking in the waves. Guide kids into “calm water” as you share about Bill Wallace.

**LEADER** • Bill Wallace was a missionary doctor who served in China many years ago. One day when the country was at war, it became too dangerous to keep patients at the hospital. Dr. Wallace and other staff members carefully carried the patients to a boat to get them to safety. Even when he was on the boat, the doctor kept right on treating the patients. Dr. Wallace was faithful to God. God wants us to be faithful to Him.

### Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together 2 Peter 3:9.

• Key Passage Poster  
• “The Lord Does Not Delay” song

**LEADER** • In today’s Bible story, we heard how **Israel ignored God’s prophets and was captured.** The Israelites had disobeyed God again and again, but God did not punish them right away. Over the course of 200 years after God’s people split into two

kingdoms, the prophets Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea spoke to Israel and warned them of the consequences of their idolatry.

God is patient, but He loves His people too much to leave them in their sin. Let's sing the words of our key passage.

Lead boys and girls in singing "The Lord Does Not Delay."

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" song

Open your Bible and read aloud Psalm 37:27-29.

**LEADER** • We heard in our story today that **Israel ignored God's prophets and was captured.** The Bible says the Lord loves justice (Isa. 61:8); He wants to make wrong things right and do what is for His glory and our good. He loves His people too much to allow them to live in rebellion against Him. Let's sing. Sing together "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing."

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Lord God, thank You for Your Word. We see in today's Bible story that You are patient. Like a good father, You discipline the disobedient. You love Your people too much to let them keep living in sin. Open our eyes and ears to receive Your instruction.

Thank You for Jesus, who always obeyed perfectly. Because of Him, You will never send Your people away. Those who love You have a home with You forever! You are so good. We love You. Amen.

### **Dismiss to apply the story**

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# APPLY the Story



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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Posters
- scissors
- paper bags

Before the session, make copies of the key passage poster. Cut each poster into several strips to make a puzzle. Keep each set in a separate bag.

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 2 Peter 3:9. Then form groups of two or three kids and distribute the poster puzzles for kids to assemble. When a group finishes, they should read the key passage together.

**SAY** • God is so patient. He would be right to punish our sin right away. We see in today's Bible story that instead of immediately punishing the sin of Israel, He sent prophets to warn them to turn back to God. But **Israel ignored God's prophets and was captured.** Remember our key passage as you pray for unbelievers and share the gospel. God desires for everyone to know and love Him!

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- "Kings of Israel and Judah" printable
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to 2 Kings 17. Direct kids' attention to the lists of kings from the "Kings of Israel and Judah" printable. Keep the lists in view for the remainder of the volume (through the

story of Ezekiel). Remind kids that the last king of Israel was Hoshea. Remove the arrow indicating a reigning king.

**SAY** • God allowed the Assyrians to take over Israel, and the Assyrians destroyed the city of Samaria. [*Point to Samaria (F4) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map.*] The people of Israel were taken to Assyria and scattered throughout the land. The Northern Kingdom was destroyed.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Kings 17:7,13-14. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why did God allow the Assyrians to capture Israel? Did God give up on His people? *Help kids understand that Israel's exile was God's judgment on their sin, but God was not finished working among His people. God was still working out His plan to keep His covenant promises through the people of Judah.*  
(Option: Choose a kid to read Deut. 29:24-28.)
2. How is God good for disciplining His people? *Guide kids to recognize that a good father does not let his children continue in disobedience. Discipline guides and trains a person in the right way to live. Point out that God's discipline is proof of His love for us. God knows the best way to live and wants us to have life in Him*  
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 3:12.)
3. How did God punish our sin? *Lead kids to discuss that the right punishment for sin is death. Instead of punishing us, God sent His Son. Jesus took the punishment we deserve. He died on the cross for our sin and rose again so we can have forgiveness and life with God forever.*  
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 3:18.)

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

## LOW PREP

- bottled water
- shoe with laces
- button-down shirt
- index cards
- pencils or markers

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

- “Daily Calendar” printable
- scissors
- hole punches
- 1-inch binder rings
- heavyweight paper
- markers

### Activity choice (10 minutes)



#### OPTION 1: Up for the challenge

Challenge kids to complete some simple tasks that will be harder because they can only use one hand. Ask for volunteers to try to open a water bottle, tie a shoe, or button a shirt using just one hand. Give time for them to discuss the difficulty of these activities. If your group is not too large, give everyone a chance to complete one of the tasks.

**SAY** • As Christians, we might have to do some things that seem hard or even impossible, just like Dr. Wallace had to keep treating patients on a boat when they had to leave the hospital. We can trust in God and obey Him.

Distribute index cards and ask kids to write down or draw a picture of one thing they can do to be obedient to God this week, even if it seems hard. Encourage them to think of ways that they can tell someone else about Jesus. Ask them to take the card home as a reminder that God wants us to tell others about Him.

#### OPTION 2: Mini calendar

Give each kid a daily calendar page. Instruct kids to cut apart the squares for each day of the month, arrange them in order, punch a hole in the corner of each card, and use a binder ring to keep them together. Kids may write in or draw icons for upcoming events or activities in the next month.

Challenge kids to find and read each Bible reference on its assigned day for the next month. Kids may remove the previous day from the ring each morning, or they can move it to the back and reuse the calendar each month.

**SAY** • In today's Bible story, the time came for the Northern Kingdom to face the consequences of their sin.

Every day we have the choice of whether or not to follow God. When you update your calendar each morning, pray for God to help you follow Him during the day. Thank Him for Jesus, who brings us into God's family forever.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

### **Journal and prayer (5 minutes)**

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

• pencils  
• Journal Page  
• "Captivity Quiz" activity page,  
1 per kid

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, confessing that like the people of Israel, we often ignore instruction or choose to disobey. Thank God for loving us so much that instead of sending us away, He sent His Son into the world to bring us back to Him.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Captivity Quiz" on the activity page. Kids should check the box to answer each question or statement. Encourage them to look up the Scripture references to check their answers.

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.