

Session 1

The prophet Jeremiah

Children experience that our purpose on earth is to live by God's will

Scripture: Jeremiah 18:1-10

Supplies:

- Household items like an egg-lifter, grater, nail clipper, scissors, bread knife, screwdriver, etc.
- Video of a potter in action
- Real clay
- Copies of the colouring picture



Welcome

Unpack the common household items on the table. Lift them one by one and let the children guess what they're for.

Divide the group into smaller groups of 4 or 5. One of the members stands in the middle. This member is the mannequin that can be placed in any position by their group members. The groups show off their "mannequin" to each other. Give each child a chance to be the mannequin.



Worship

Settle down ritual: Let the children close their eyes. Let them look at the dark and light patterns inside their eyelids. After 10 counts say in a quiet voice: "God's light shines over all of us, whether it's dark or light in our lives. Ask God to show you the dark things in your life and to help you get rid of them." Wait a few more seconds and then close with "Amen."



Word

Who can remember what a prophet is? And who can remember which prophet we learned about last? Today we're going to learn about another prophet. He was very young when God called him and gave him his mission.

Jeremiah was born into a religious family in Judea. His father was a priest. They lived in a small town near Jerusalem. When Jeremiah was born, God's people didn't live close to Him. Almost everyone, from the king to the slaves, were worshipping false gods. They even did it inside God's temple!

When Jeremiah was 20 years old, God spoke to him and said: "I knew you even before you were born, and I planned that you would speak on My behalf."

Jeremiah was scared. "Oh Lord! I can't really do that. I'm much too young!" Jeremiah didn't think that anyone would listen to him.

God told Jeremiah: "I am with you. If I say you must go, then you must go and say exactly what I tell you to say. Don't be afraid of anyone. I am with you and will protect you." Then God reached out and touched Jeremiah's lips. He said: "I have put My words in your mouth."

God gave Jeremiah strength, encouragement and wisdom. He reminded everyone that God loves them and wants to help them, but no one would listen – not even the king or any of the priests.

Jeremiah reminded the people that because the Northern kingdom didn't listen to God, the enemy defeated them and exiled them. It is now almost 100 years later, and the Southern kingdom keeps forgetting God. Even when they could see that the enemy was on the way, they kept on doing the wrong thing.

The more Jeremiah warned them, the angrier they became. They hurt Jeremiah a few times and threw him in jail. Even in such difficult times, Jeremiah remained faithful to God and his Word. Through it all God protected him just as He promised.

God was so upset with the people who kept ignoring Jeremiah, that He told him: "Stop praying for these people. I'm not going to listen to them when they call."

One of the examples God gave Jeremiah to explain to the people what was going to happen, is the example of the potter and the clay. Let's see what God showed Jeremiah.

(Show the video)

All these warnings didn't help.

The Babylonian army conquered Jerusalem and Judea. They broke down their walls and destroyed their buildings. God promised them that they would be captive for 70 years, and afterwards He would take them to the Promised Land. This is also what we saw with the potter. When the clay didn't form right, he started from scratch on something new. God wanted to do the same. He promised that it would be well with His people again. After the 70 years in Babylon, they would come back home and start over again. His love for his children would never stop.

One of the most famous promises in Jeremiah is: "I'm planning good things for you. I want it to go well with you. You will ask things of Me and I will listen. If you really love Me, I will take care of you." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder how this story makes you feel
2. I wonder what you would do if you were Jeremiah
3. I wonder how Jeremiah felt when the people wouldn't listen to him



Working and Playing

- Give each child a piece of real clay to play with. Let them close their eyes and pray that we will trust God to shape us, just like we can shape the clay.
- They can make a clay pot with their clay to take home.
- Colouring picture of pot and hands. Children can write or draw their own prayers on the pot.

Closing prayer to end the session

"God chooses you to help people who are struggling, no matter who you are. Go now, don't be afraid. God is with you."

