



Authorised Mess — JEREMIAH

Your details

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Church: St Andrew's Church, Crewe

Bible book	Jeremiah
Theme of session	Wacky warnings! God warns us about things which are not safe to do. Do we listen? Sometimes God wants us to warn others. Are we brave enough?
Notes	<i>The Children's Bible in 365 Stories</i> (Lion Hudson, 2001) is a good resource, even for adults who are not familiar with the book of Jeremiah. Chapters 195 to 201 give a good overview of the ministry of Jeremiah.

Session details

Categories of activities to get a mix	Activity name	Instructions	Resources needed	Reason for doing this activity
Younger participants	Mix it!	Make chocolate cornflake crispies working in groups.	Chocolate, cornflakes, syrup or honey, butter or margarine. Scales, bowls, baking sheets, cake cases. A basic recipe can be found at: http://www.netmums.com/food/Chocolate_Cornflake_Cakes.2641/ .	God doesn't want us to be scratchy and hard like the cornflakes, but warm and gentle like the melted chocolate.



Authorised Mess — JEREMIAH

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Older participants	Sign it!	Find different ways of getting a warning message to someone without spoken words—for example, miming/British Sign Language/pictures. Who can make the weirdest warning sign? (WARNING: FALLING ELEPHANTS!)	White card, red paint, black paint, templates for silhouettes. For a guide to phrases in British Sign Language, see http://www.britishsignlanguage.com/phrases/ —it shows them slowly with video clips. See Jeremiah 1 in Chapter 195 of the Lion book.	God wanted Jeremiah to warn his people that worshipping things other than God and living in a way that didn't please God would lead to big problems for the people, but Jeremiah said he was too young and too scared. God made Jeremiah strong and courageous, and showed him what to say in symbols.
Word-based	Scroll it!	Make a scroll by attaching the tubes to two edges of the paper. Glue the verse from Jeremiah to the scroll. Roll the two edges of the scroll into the centre.	Doweling, tinfoil tubes. Old looking paper—for example, brown parcel paper or crumpled paper dipped in tea and dried out and torn (or burnt safely!) around the edges. Printed verse from Jeremiah 29:11. See Jeremiah 36 in Chapter 197 of the Lion book.	God told Jeremiah, with his friend Baruch's help, to write down everything that God had told him. The King Jehoiakim didn't like all the warnings. He wanted to do things his way, so he had the scroll cut up and burnt. God told Jeremiah and Baruch to write it all out again.



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Food-based	Smash it!	Get people to smash up the biscuits and feel the squidge of the marshmallows as they make rocky road crunch bars.	Butter, chocolate, syrup, Rich Tea biscuits, mini marshmallows, icing sugar. Scales, saucepans, bowls, baking tins, containers. A good recipe for rocky road crunch bars can be found at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/rockyroadcrunchbars_87104 . See Jeremiah 19 in Chapter 196 of the Lion book.	God's people had become cruel and hard hearted, and had turned away from God. They had become like a hard clay pot which is easily broken. Jeremiah demonstrated this by smashing a pot in the rubbish dump. God wants us to be gentle and giving, listening to him, like a marshmallow, not a rich tea biscuit!



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Opens up great art	Mould it!	Use air drying clay and tools to make a pot—such as a thumb pot or coil pot. Get people to think about how they are treating the clay. Do they need to be firm or soft? Are there bits of dirt that need to be picked out? How do they join bits together? How do they mend the cracks?	Air drying clay, clay tools, mats. See Jeremiah 18 in Chapter 196 of the Lion book.	God sent Jeremiah to a potter's house, where he saw how the potter treated the clay—kneading it, shaping it, restarting it when it went wrong—to make beautiful pots. God wants to help us in shaping our lives. Sometimes we go wrong, but if we say sorry and allow God to guide us, we will become a beautiful creation of God's.
Quiet	Piece it!	Make a mosaic of a beautiful pot from a picture using the broken mosaic pieces. This could be done in small groups or as a large group, depending on the time available.	Broken mosaic pieces (can be purchased from craft shops), bases for setting the tiles into. See Jeremiah 19 in Chapter 196 of the Lion book. http://www.lovethissite.com/crackedpot/ tells the story of a cracked pot.	In Jeremiah 19, God speaks of breaking a pot so small that it could not be mended, but we know that God helps us to start again, no matter how broken we have been, and sometimes God can use our 'cracks' to bless others.



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Really messy	Carry it!	Sort people into teams to play the game of carrying water in the plastic cups from a water butt at one end of a course to a bucket at the other end. The team with the most water in their bucket at the end wins. This could be done as a relay race. For an added dimension, hang the leaky cups from the ends of a pole, which is carried across the shoulders like a cattle yoke.	Plastic cups with lots of holes in, water containers, buckets. A waterproof area, possibly outside! See Jeremiah 27–28 in Chapter 198 of the Lion book.	In Jeremiah 2:13, God says the people have dug out for themselves water tanks (cisterns) which can hold no water, because of the way that they live. The added dimension of carrying the cups on a yoke explores how Jeremiah said that, for a time, God's people carrying the yoke of slavery should just trust in God, and not fight back. God was still being faithful to the promise to restore the people. This is a very tricky message, and should not lead to children thinking that bullying can be ignored or tolerated. There are better ways of dealing with bullying than fighting back.



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Really very messy indeed	Stuck in it!	People need to identify the different objects in a bucket of sloppy mud before they pull them out. Note: if the mud is too watery, lighter or air-filled objects will not sink.	Ingredients for making mud—there are recipes on the Internet for mud pies, often involving grated soap, loo roll and warm water. Buckets, objects to hide in the mud, paper towels. See Jeremiah 38 in Chapter 200 of the Lion book.	Jeremiah's faithfulness to proclaiming God's warnings did not make him popular, but he kept on standing up for God's word. Then, to keep him quiet, some men put Jeremiah down a muddy well where he got stuck. But God sent some friends to lift Jeremiah out with rope and rags.

Celebration suggestion

Song ideas

- ✿ 'All scripture' from Dave Godfrey CD *Dependence Day*. For details, see http://www.omegazone.org.uk/shop/i_love_ya.htm.
- ✿ 'Be bold, be strong' by Morris Chapman.
- ✿ 'Audience of one' from Dave Godfrey CD *Holy Washing Machine*. For details, see http://www.omegazone.org.uk/shop/i_love_ya.htm.

Start with some children pretending to have a game of football and the referee continually calling out warnings and penalties. A couple of the players dream together about what it would be like not to have a referee. They expect it would be wonderful, but find in their dream that it would be disastrous with people being hurt and not knowing where the goals were and if the ball went in or not. Without rules and the referee, the game would be terrible. When they end their dreaming, they decide it is better to have a referee, even if you don't like what they say sometimes.



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If your group likes drama, you could perform a sketch about a mum telling her son/daughter to get out of bed for football, but they say that no one likes them, no one listens anyway and they wouldn't be missed. The punch line is that they have to go because they are the referee!

God wanted Jeremiah to be a little like a referee in a game of football—to warn God's people about how they were behaving (you could perhaps look at the warning signs). They didn't care about God anymore and prayed to pretend gods who couldn't help them. Jeremiah was scared and didn't think he could help, but God helped Jeremiah be strong.

Song: 'Be bold, be strong'.

Prayer: Please God, help people who are scared of anything to know you are with them helping them.

But when Jeremiah warned the people, they got angry with him and put him out of the way down a well in the mud—look at the mud play zone.

Song: 'Audience of one'.

Prayer: Please God, help people stand up for you and what is right in their schools, homes or at work.

God wants to help us be the best we can be, like a clay pot, but we need to allow God to help us, and not be hard and stubborn, like a shattered pot or broken biscuits (you could perhaps look at the mosaic and rocky road crunch bars).

God asked Jeremiah and his friend Baruch to write all the warnings and teachings down, and these are in the Bible (maybe look at the scrolls)

Song: 'All scripture'.

Prayer: Please God, help us to hear you helping us in the Bible.



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Meal suggestion

- ✿ Bangers and mash—sausages stuck in the mash like Jeremiah's feet in the mud. Brown sauce could add to the muddy effect!
- ✿ Chocolate cornflake crispies and rocky road crunch bars (made in the activities).

Faith in Homes suggestion

Cut out a card shape of a water pot and cut it up into shattered pieces like a jigsaw. Take all the pieces home, and every time you do what you are asked to or listen to a warning, put a piece of the pot back together. See if you can fix the whole pot during the week.