



SESSION 2 of 4

Jeremiah

MEETING AIM

To encourage the children that they are never too young to be called by God.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Jeremiah 1:1-10

BACKGROUND

Israel and Judah have turned away from God for some time. Because of their poor choices, they have ended up in situations that are way outside God's plans for them. God is willing to let his people choose not to follow him, but they will reap the consequences of this. The northern kingdom of Israel has already fallen to the Assyrians, while the southern kingdom of Judah has so far managed to avoid being completely defeated, mostly with evil kings in charge. In 2 Kings 22-23 we get a flash of hope with King Josiah, who follows God. It's at this point – 13 years into Josiah's reign – that Jeremiah first appears on the scene.

5 CIRCLE TIME

As you begin the session, invite the children to sit together in a circle and pass round a simple object. Ask the child who has the object to talk about what they would like to be or do when they are grown up. Sometimes it's helpful to have a sand timer so that you have enough time for each person to share if they want to. Children who don't want to say anything can just pass on the object. Pray and thank God for all the ideas shared.

5 INTRO ACTIVITY

You will need: a recording of the song 'When I grow up' from the musical *Matilda* and the means to play it

Give everyone a piece of paper and something to draw with, and as they listen to the song ask them to draw the things the children say they are going to do when they grow up.

Say that sometimes we think we can't do anything important until we're grown up, but in today's story someone quite young was given an enormous job to do.

10 BIBLE STORY

You will need: a baby scan picture (ideally a 3D one where you can see lots of detail); envelopes with slips of paper saying the following things (one in each envelope): "You are not too young", "Go and say what I say", "Don't be afraid", "I will go with you" and "I will rescue you".

Gather the children and make sure you have all the props. Then tell this story.

Last time we talked about Isaiah. He was a prophet: someone who passed on God's messages. Today we're going to meet another prophet and hear how God called him to do that job. This prophet's name was Jeremiah, and he was born about 70 years after Isaiah had died.

We think that Jeremiah was a teenager in this story, maybe somewhere between 13 and 16. So he wasn't a child, but he wasn't really a grown-up either.

Show the children the baby scan picture. Ask them what they think. It's amazing that we can see what a baby looks like before it's even born! God spoke to Jeremiah and said he'd had his eye on him since before he was born. God said that even before he was in his mum's tummy he decided that Jeremiah would do a special job for him. Jeremiah would pass God's messages on to the people.

Jeremiah was a bit worried about this special job. He told God that he couldn't possibly do it. He was still just a child. But God had news for Jeremiah. He told him five very important things. *Give out the envelopes and let the children open them in order. If they are able to read the words, let them. If not, you can read them and get the children to repeat the words.*

These were five pretty amazing things for God, but he wasn't finished yet. Next he touched Jeremiah's mouth. *Get everyone to touch their mouth.*

God said that he was putting his words in Jeremiah's mouth so that he would know what to say. God told him those words would be really powerful and cause amazing things to happen.

5 CHATTING TOGETHER

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- Why didn't Jeremiah think he could do the job God had given him?
- When are you old enough to do something important?
- Which of the five things God said do you think Jeremiah liked the most?
- What sort of word do you think God put in Jeremiah's mouth?
- How do you think Jeremiah felt at the end of this meeting with God?

10 CREATIVE RESPONSE

You will need: ready-mixed biscuit dough or pastry; rolling pins; alphabet cutters; baking sheets; access to a kitchen or bags to take uncooked biscuits home with instructions to bake

In the story, God touched Jeremiah's mouth and said he would put his words in it. Show the children how to cut out letters from the dough or pastry. As you work, chat more about the story and what the children think of it. Have they ever heard God speak to them?

Bake the biscuits or pastry at 180°C (160°C for a fan oven) for about ten minutes or until golden brown. (Or send children home with their uncooked shapes and instructions of how to bake.)

5 PRAYER

Help the children offer themselves to God as they are. You could use the following prayer and get them to fill in the blanks for themselves:

"Father God, thank you that I can [*play, run, be a friend, learn at school*]. Help me do that for you. Thank you that I don't have to wait to be grown up to be used by you. Amen."

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is a mum, church planter and choir nut. She pioneers The Voice Project Scotland, a missional expression inviting children and their families to find their voices and enter into community through song.

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