**FIRST STEPS TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Session 4 of 4

# Jeremiah

### MEETING AIM

To think about how God is always with us, and always at work.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Jeremiah 38:1-13

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

Jeremiah’s prophecies to his people had been met with rejection over and over again. He’d been imprisoned and banished and now his life was being threatened. God warned the Israelites through Jeremiah that they should leave their city or be killed by the Babylonians. Yet again, the people didn’t want to listen.

Yet, even when Jeremiah might have felt alone, God was with him and God was still looking out for him.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and ask the children: “When do you like to chat to God?” Thank God that he’s with you and ask him to help you learn more about him today.

### PLAY – 10 mins

**You will need:** 2 tbsp cocoa powder; 2 cups flour; 2 cups water; objects or toys to put in the ‘mud’; cover-up and clean-up equipment

Before the session, mix the ingredients together to make mud. Or, find another mud ‘recipe’ if you prefer, or use real mud!

Explain, in today’s story you’re going to hear about someone who ended up in squelchy mud. Even when he felt like he was alone in the mud, God was always with him. Encourage the children to play with the mud and join in with their play.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** a tall pot or cardboard tube; play figures to be Jeremiah, the king’s officials, the king and Ebed-Melek; string; two magnets

Before the session, attach one magnet to a piece of string and one to your Jeremiah figure.

Gather the children together and tell this story:

Jeremiah was a prophet. *Hold up your Jeremiah figure.* He went around telling people what God was saying. *‘Walk’ Jeremiah this way and that.* Because people didn’t always like this, lots of people hadn’t listened to him; he’d even been put in prison.

God told Jeremiah to tell the Israelites that anyone who stayed in the city will be destroyed. He said they would lose a battle to the Babylonians and the city would be captured. He did say they could leave and they would be safe but the people didn’t like it! *Invite the children to pretend to be the people not listening or liking what Jeremiah was saying.*

The king’s officials went to the king and said to him: “We should get rid of this man. He is not helping our people. We don’t want to listen to him!” *Act out the story with your figures.*

The king said: “OK, do whatever you want to do with him.”

So, they went and found Jeremiah and they threw him into a broken and empty well. There was no water, only mud. Jeremiah sunk down into the squelchy mud. *Throw your Jeremiah figure into your ‘well’. (You could even put some of your play mud from ‘Play’ in the bottom.)*

They left him there.

But Jeremiah wasn’t alone. God was with him.

A servant in the palace, called Ebed-Melek, heard about Jeremiah and went to the king, saying: “Please help Jeremiah. These men have been very unfair. Jeremiah is alone and there is no food for him.” *Act out the story with your Ebed-Melek and king figures.*

This king told Ebed-Melel to hurry and get Jeremiah out! He took with him 30 men and lots of rags and they used them to pull Jeremiah out and rescue him*. Use the magnet and string to ‘rescue’ Jeremiah. Invite each child to take a turn rescuing Jeremiah.*

Jeremiah was never alone. God was always with him. God is always at work.

We can always talk to God because he is always there. When Jeremiah was sinking in that squelchy mud, God was with him and God had a plan.

God is always doing stuff even when we can’t see what he’s doing.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the children these questions, making sure everyone has the chance to contribute:

* What was your favourite part of the story?
* How do you think Jeremiah felt in the well?
* What do you think God felt when the king’s officials put Jeremiah in the well?
* When do you feel most on your own? (Remind the children that however lonely they feel, God is there with them.)

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** large stickers with ‘God is always with me’ pre-written or printed on them; felt-tip pens or crayons

Share with the children how God is always with us, just as he was with Jeremiah in the well. Even when you don’t know what’s happening or you feel scared or alone, God is with us and he has a plan.

Give the children a sticker and invite them to decorate it. They can either wear it or take it away to stick somewhere at home. When they’re on your own they can look at their sticker and remember God is with them. They can chat to him and he listens.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

Invite all the children to share somewhere they will be this week and pray that they will know that God is with them. You could do this ‘popcorn’ prayer style with each child ‘popping’ up to say their place as you pray together:

“Thank you, God, that I can always talk to you. Thank you that you are always with me and you always have a plan. Please be with me when I go to…”

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