

# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



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### DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? NAAMAN COMPLAINS

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#### 2 Kings 5:1-16 Naaman is healed

Naaman was a very important man serving the King of Aram. Despite all his wealth and power, Naaman was not happy as he struggled with a severe skin disease. He went for help from the prophet Elisha but did not get the grand welcome he thought he deserved!

Each child will need:

→ Pens/pencils and a sheet of A4 paper

You will need:

→ A copy of the alphabet (optional) – see Start It section

→ A copy of the memory verse to display for the children

## Start It

🗨 **Say:** We are going to start our session today with a memory game to get our brains working. Many of you will have played the game I went to the shop, and I bought ... where you have to remember where each person adds an item to the list. We are going to play a different version of this game.

Ask the children to sit in a circle and to start with the line 'I went on an adventure, and I saw ...' To make the game more challenging, each item needs to start with the next letter of the alphabet. You may want to display a copy of the alphabet in the centre for children who need a memory aid.

Example:

→ 'I went on an adventure, and I saw an aeroplane.'

→ 'I went on an adventure, and I saw an aeroplane and a bunch of bananas.'

→ 'I went on an adventure, and I saw an aeroplane, a bunch of bananas and a catapult.'

### Memory verse

🗨 **Say:** Now that we've got your brains working, we are going to look at our memory verse for this month. In our *Explore It* sessions we will learn about Bible characters who were asked to follow God's way of thinking. Some did what God asked straight away, and others purposefully did the opposite. Our Bible verse reminds us how the way we think impacts everything that we do. Let's have a look at the memory verse together.

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

🗨 **Say:** Over the next month you will get lots of opportunities to learn this verse, and by Session Five you will know it off by heart.

If possible, display the memory verse in the room where you meet so you can come back to it each session.

## Sing It

- **Say:** Our memory verse for this month reminds us that following God should lead us to think differently from people who do not follow him. Today's song should start you on your journey to learning the verse by heart. Please note that the song adapts the first line to 'Don't live [any longer] the way this world lives.'

'Romans 12:2' (memory verse song) by Hillsong Kids (2 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG_w)

- **Say:** We will come back to this song again in Sessions Three and Five to see how you are getting on with the memory verse.

## Tell It

### Ask:

- ➔ Do you think Mo Salah has to wait in line to buy the latest pair of trainers?
- ➔ How about Taylor Swift – do you think she struggles to get her favourite table in a restaurant?

Ask the children to explain their answers.

- **Say:** Often famous people are treated differently because of who they are. Sometimes if

no one recognises them they may say, 'Do you know who I am?' They then either have the embarrassment of the waiter saying, 'I haven't got a clue,' or experience the very best treatment the hotel can offer.

- **Say:** Our Bible character today was used to being treated with a lot of respect. His name was Naaman, and he was the right-hand man to the King of Aram, an enemy of the nation of Israel. He was a very powerful and strong man, but he had a skin disease called leprosy which could not be cured.

### Read:

**'Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man to his master. He had much honour because the Lord had used him to give victory to Aram. He was a mighty and brave man. But he had a harmful skin disease.'**

**'The Arameans had gone out to steal from the Israelites. And they had taken a little girl as a captive from Israel. This little girl served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "I wish that my master would meet the prophet who lives in Samaria. He would heal Naaman of his disease.'"**

— (2 Kings 5:1-3 ICB)

- **Say:** The little girl had been captured and taken away from her home and yet she still wanted to help Naaman.

**Ask:** Why do you think she wanted to do that?

- **Say:** The little girl knew that God would want her to point Naaman in the direction of the prophet Elisha so that he could learn more about God.

### Read:

**'Naaman went to the king. He told him what the girl from Israel had said. The king of Aram said, "Go now. And I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left and took about 375 kilograms of silver. He also took about 75 kilograms of gold and ten changes of clothes with him. He brought the letter to the king of Israel. It read, "I am sending my servant Naaman to you. I'm sending him so you can heal him of his skin disease.'"**

**'The king of Israel read the letter. Then he tore his clothes to show how upset he was. He said, "I'm not God! I can't kill and make alive again! Why does this man send someone with a harmful skin disease for me to heal? You can see that the king of Aram is trying to start trouble with me!'"**

— (2 Kings 5:4-7 ICB)

🗨️ **Say:** If you added up all the money a person earned in a year and then multiplied it by 600, then that would be around the amount that Naaman took with him to pay for a chance to meet Elisha! Naaman was used to getting what he wanted and was willing to pay whatever he needed to if it meant he would be cured. He was confident that if he took lots of money then that would help him to jump the queue to see Elisha. The king of Israel was not so confident about Naaman's healing.

**Ask:** Why do you think the king of Israel was so upset?

🗨️ **Say:** The king of Israel thought the king of Aram was playing a trick on him knowing that there was no way that he could heal Naaman. But God had other plans.

**Read:**

**'Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes. So he sent a message to the king. It said, "Why have you become so upset that you tore your clothes? Let Naaman come to me. Then he will know there is a prophet in Israel!" So Naaman went with his horses and chariots to Elisha's house. And he stood outside the door.**

**'Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman. The messenger said, "Go and wash in the Jordan River seven times. Then your skin will be healed, and you will be clean."**

**'Naaman became angry and left. He said, "I thought Elisha would surely come out and stand before me. I thought he would call on the name of the Lord his God. I thought he would wave his hand over the place and heal the disease! Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, are better than all the waters of Israel! Why can't I wash in them and become clean?" So Naaman went away very angry.'**

— (2 Kings 5:8-12 *ICB*)

🗨️ **Say:** This is the moment where we can imagine Naaman shouting, 'Do you know who I am?'

**Ask:** Why do you think Naaman was so cross?

🗨️ **Say:** Naaman had turned up with the finest horses, carriages and lots of money and Elisha had not even appeared at the front door. He sent a messenger to tell Naaman to go and have a wash! No wonder Naaman was complaining so much.

## Video

🗨️ **Say:** Let's find out how the story ends. In the clip we'll join two time travellers and their robot friend as they join Naaman at the side of the water. Let's see what happens.

*Naaman healed of leprosy* by Superbook (3 mins 14 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrUZX8gTOqQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrUZX8gTOqQ)

**Ask:**

➔ How do you think Naaman felt when he came out of the water and discovered he was healed?

➔ Do you think it helped him to believe in God? Why?

🗨️ **Say:** Even though Naaman discovered more about God, he still had a lot to learn.

**Read:**

**'Naaman and all his group came back to Elisha. He stood before Elisha and said, "Look. I now know there is no God in all the earth except in Israel! Now please accept a gift from me."**

**'But Elisha said, "I serve the Lord. As surely as the Lord lives, I won't accept anything." Naaman urged him to take the gift, but he refused.'**

— (2 Kings 5:15-16 *ICB*)

🗨️ **Say:** Elisha did not want any of Naaman's money. It was enough that Naaman started to believe in God and follow him.

## Action It

Give each child a sheet of A4 paper and ask them to fold it in half along the longer edge. Then ask them to fold it twice more, the other way. When they open up the paper, they should have eight boxes on their sheets. In the first two boxes on the left ask them to write, in big letters, 'Complaints to Blessings'.

🗨️ **Say:** In our story today Naaman was complaining because God did not answer his request in the way he expected. If we are honest, sometimes we tend to notice what God has not done for us, instead of noticing what he has done. Today we are going to spend some time changing our complaints to blessings.

Give the children time to think about the things they tend to complain about. You can collect ideas together as a group or they can create their ideas individually. In each box on their sheet they can write one of their complaints and see if they can switch perspective to see a blessing. They can also draw a picture to go with each one.

For example, for Naaman:

### **Complaint**

*Elisha can't even be bothered to come out and speak to me.*

### **Blessing**

*Elisha was home when I visited and was willing to help me.*

🗨️ **Say:** Sometimes we are so busy complaining that things are not quite the way that we would like them to be that we miss God's blessing.

**Ask:** How does what we have learned today link with our memory verse?

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

## Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** As we go into this week let's try to turn our complaints upside down and search for our blessings. For a final time of quiet and prayers together we are going to watch children from all around the world singing 'The blessing'.

### **Video**

'The Blessing (kids)' – featuring kids from different nations by Allstars Kids Club (4 mins 37 secs)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiWZXLsdE9w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiWZXLsdE9w)

🗨️ **Say:**

**'May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May the Lord show you his kindness.  
May he have mercy on you.  
May the Lord watch over you  
and give you peace.'  
Amen.**

— (Numbers 6:24-26 *ICB*)

## Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It Ideas for children and families.

# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

OCTOBER  
SESSION 01

### DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? NAAMAN COMPLAINS

 2 Kings 5:1-16 Naaman is healed

## FOR ME

## TOGETHER



### Pray

Think of seven people that you would like to pray for regularly. Every time you have a wash, shower or bath this week remember the seven people and pray for them.



### Memorise

Challenge someone at home to learn this month's memory verse with you. Make a poster to stick up at home and keep checking in with each other to see if you can remember the verse.



### Song for the week

'Romans 12:2' (memory verse song) by Hillsong Kids (2 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG_w)



### Memory verse

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 NIRV)

### KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

*Kids Alive!* The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!





'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'

– Romans 8:14



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# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



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### DO I HAVE TO? JONAH COMPLAINS

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**📖 Jonah 1:1-3, 15-17; 2:7-9; 3:4-5,10; 4:1-11 God calls and Jonah runs**

Jonah was a prophet whose main job was to share with the people important messages from God. When God asked Jonah to take his message to Nineveh – an enemy city – he did everything he could to avoid doing it. He complained to God saying, ‘Do I have to?’ and God said ‘Yes!’ Today’s session follows Jonah’s story as he struggled to do what God asked him to do.

Each child will need:

→ Pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

→ Bible extract sheet

## Start It

Play a game of opposites: the children are to do the opposite of what you ask them to. Choose from the list below and shout out an instruction. Depending how competitive you would like it to be, then you could ask children who do not do the opposite to sit out until you have a winner or be judges with you as the game continues.

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Touch your elbows together                     | 6. Clap quickly            |
| 2. Keep your mouth closed                         | 7. Pat your right shoulder |
| 3. Sing ‘Twinkle, twinkle, little star’ backwards | 8. Stand up                |
| 4. Touch your right ear                           | 9. Kneel on your left knee |
| 5. Count down from ten to one                     | 10. Hop on your left leg   |

🗨 **Say:** In our story today, our Bible character decides that he is going to do the opposite of what God asked him to do.

## Sing It

🗨 **Say:** Our song for today takes us deep into the ocean ready for today’s Bible story.

‘Deep, deep, deep’ by Tiny Trees Tunes (2 mins 7 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZhwagxWzOc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZhwagxWzOc)

## Tell It

🗨 **Say:** Last session we met Naaman who went to the prophet Elisha to be healed. Naaman arrived with his grand carriages and entourage, but Elisha did not even come to the front door. We imagined Naaman asking, ‘Do you know who I am?’ He complained because God didn’t answer his prayer in the way he expected.

🗨 **Say:** This week we are meeting Jonah, who complained for a different reason. When God asked him to obey, Jonah said, ‘Do I have to?’

### Ask:

- What are the kinds of tasks that, when you are asked to do them, make you say, 'Do I have to?'
- How does it make you feel when you are asked to do something you really do not want to do?
- How do you normally react?

### Video

🗨 **Say:** Our story today is found in the Old Testament of the Bible. Let's watch the clip to find out what happened.

*Jonah and the fish* by Saddleback Kids (2 mins 58 secs)

<https://youtu.be/WOSadLyqshg>

🗨 **Say:** Jonah was a prophet, which meant that it was his job to tell people what God wanted him to say. God asked him to go to the city of Nineveh to talk to the people who lived there and tell them what they were doing wrong.

**Ask:** Why do you think Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh?

🗨 **Say:** Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Kingdom and Jonah did not like the people who lived there because they were enemies. He thought they behaved so badly that they did not deserve God's forgiveness.

### Ask:

- Do you think that was a good enough reason for Jonah to say no to God?
- If so, why?

🗨 **Say:** While Jonah was on the boat, the storm grew and the sailors woke him and asked him to pray to God to calm the waters. God gave Jonah the chance to do the right thing. Jonah could have asked the boat to turn back and go to Nineveh.

**Ask:** What did Jonah do instead?

🗨 **Say:** Jonah preferred to be thrown into the sea rather than do what God had asked him to do. While he was in the belly of the fish, Jonah said a special prayer that we will look at in our prayer time later. After he prayed, Jonah eventually agreed to do what God asked him to do. He went to Nineveh and talked to the people.

**Ask:** What happened next?

🗨 **Say:** The people of Nineveh turned away from their bad behaviour, God forgave them all and they all lived happily ever after, including Jonah. Oh, wait, is that really what happened?

Read Jonah 4:1-11 (ICB) using the Bible extract sheet. The words of God and Jonah are shown in different colours so that you can ask for volunteers to play the two parts.

**Ask:** Why do you think Jonah was so angry?

🗨 **Say:** Jonah struggled to understand that God loves everyone. He even loves the people that we don't like very much and those we think don't deserve God's love. Everyone deserves God's love and there is no one you have ever met that is not loved deeply by God.

## Action It

🗨 **Say:** Today you are going to get the chance to create your own Jonah song. To give you some ideas, watch the clip below and see how the story is told through song.

### Video

'Jonah's song' by Saddleback Kids (2 mins 21 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlvuWMqAPTQ>

The children can choose any part of the story to focus on, but the aim of the activity is to share the main lessons we can learn from Jonah's experience. The lyrics could focus on forgiving others, or that God loves us even when we don't do what he's asked us to do, or could focus on how important it is to follow God's instructions.

Just as William Booth might have done, the children can choose a well-known tune and create new words to it. You will know the songs that are familiar to your children, but to keep it simple you could use the tune of a song you use regularly at church or something like 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star'.

The children could create their own song in smaller groups or you could create one as a large group. Once the children have completed their songs, they can perform them for each other.

**Ask:** What one thing have you learned from Jonah's story?

## Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** Deep in the belly of the fish Jonah cried out to God.

**'When my life had almost gone,  
I remembered the Lord.  
Lord, I prayed to you.  
And you heard my prayers in your Holy Temple.  
People who worship useless idols  
give up their loyalty to you.  
Lord, I will praise and thank you  
while I give sacrifices to you.  
I will make promises to you.  
And I will do what I promise.  
Salvation comes from the Lord!'**

— (Jonah 2:7-9 ICB)

🗨️ **Say:** Even when Jonah was at his lowest point, God was with him, loving him and wanting the best for him.

🗨️ **Say:** God wants us to do what he asks us to do. He loves us even when we act like Jonah and ignore his requests, but he also wants us to think differently and follow him.

**Ask:** Can I have a volunteer to share our memory verse?

See how many of the children can remember the memory verse and then share the prayer together.

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 NIRV)

🗨️ **Say:**

**Dear God,  
Help us to do what you have asked us to do. Help us to look at the way you forgive, and forgive others. We want our way of thinking to change, Lord, so that we can live our lives for you and help those around us discover more about you. Thank you that you love us so much, even when we have a Jonah moment!  
Be with us this week as we live our lives for you.  
Amen.**

## Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It Ideas for children and families.

# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

OCTOBER  
SESSION 02

### DO I HAVE TO? JONAH COMPLAINS

📖 Jonah 1:1-3, 15-17; 2:7-9; 3:4-5,10; 4:1-11 God calls and Jonah runs

## FOR ME

## TOGETHER



### Forgive

This clip is all about two brothers who learn how to forgive.

What does this clip teach you about the importance of forgiveness?

Is there anyone that you need to forgive? Why don't you give it a try?

*Brothers learn forgiveness with Legos* by Lifetree Kids

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-Y\\_Vk2u0Zw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-Y_Vk2u0Zw)



### Create

Watch the Bible Minecraft version of the story of Jonah and the fish. Team up with one of your Minecraft friends or family to create a world for a Bible story of your choice.

*Jonah and the fish* by Bible Minecraft

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0k7YXfJNV4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0k7YXfJNV4)



### Song for the week

'Deep, deep, deep' by Tiny Trees Tunes

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZhwagxWzOc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZhwagxWzOc)



### Memory verse

**'Don't live the way this world lives.**

**Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

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## Bible Extract

‘But Jonah was very unhappy that God did not destroy the city. He was angry. He complained to the Lord and said,

“I knew this would happen. I knew it when I was still in my own country. It is why I quickly ran away to Tarshish. I knew that you are a God who is kind and shows mercy. You don’t become angry quickly. You have great love. I knew you would rather forgive than punish them. So now I ask you, Lord, please kill me. It is better for me to die than to live.”

‘Then the Lord said,

“Do you think it is right for you to be angry?”

‘Jonah went out and sat down east of the city. There he made a shelter for himself. And he sat there in the shade. He was waiting to see what would happen to the city. The Lord made a plant grow quickly up over Jonah. This made a cool place for him to sit. And it helped him to be more comfortable. Jonah was very pleased to have the plant for shade. The next day the sun rose. And God sent a worm to attack the plant. Then the plant died.

‘When the sun was high in the sky, God sent a hot east wind to blow. The sun became very hot on Jonah’s head. And he became very weak. He wished he were dead. Jonah said,

“It is better for me to die than to live.”

‘But God said this to Jonah:

“Do you think it is right for you to be angry because of the plant?”

Jonah answered,

“It is right for me to be angry! I will stay angry until I die!”

And the Lord said,

“You showed concern for that plant. But you did not plant it or make it grow. It appeared in the night, and the next day it died. Then surely I can show concern for the great city Nineveh. There are many animals in that city. And there are more than 120,000 people living there. Those people simply do not know right from wrong!”

# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



### DO WE HAVE TO LISTEN TO HIM? COMPLAINTS ABOUT JEREMIAH

#### Jeremiah 18:1-6,18 The potter and the clay

Just like Jonah, Jeremiah had an important message to share with God's people. Unlike Jonah, Jeremiah listened carefully to God's word and shared it with the people. But the people did not want to listen, and our story today finds them complaining about Jeremiah's message.

Each child will need:

- a block of air-dry clay (you can buy larger amounts for less at online educational sites)
- plastics knives and forks to use with the clay
- an apron or an old T-shirt

You will need:

- resources to create a space for quiet reflection, eg cushions ... (optional)

## Start It

Today's activity is slightly different as the aim is to get the children to fire up their imaginations ready for their activity in the Action It section. Watch the clip together and discuss which ideas they like the most and which they think are the most creative. The clip is nine minutes long but can be cut short if required.

### Video

*30 artists taking pottery to the next level* by Insider (9 mins 8 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2APU5ob9Og](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2APU5ob9Og)

- **Say:** In our session today we will be thinking about clay and the way it can be shaped and remoulded. Try and keep in your mind all the wonderful creations you have seen when we come to our Bible story later in the session.

## Sing It

- **Say:** By now you should be well on your way to remembering our memory verse for this month.

**Ask:** Is anyone feeling brave enough to have a go at sharing it?

- **Say:** Let's sing the song we used in our first session together and this should help us to remember Romans 12:2. (Please remember that the song adapts the first line to 'Don't live [any longer] the way this world lives.'

'Romans 12:2' (memory verse song) by Hillsong Kids (2 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEomG\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEomG_w)

# Tell It

🗨️ **Say:** Before we read our Scripture for today, we need to watch a very important clip to help us understand it. You have already seen lots of clay creations today, but this clip shows us how a pot is actually made.

## Video

'How to make a pottery bowl in under 3 minutes!' by *The Great Pottery Throw Down* (2 mins 17 secs)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pUN9bLmHMc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pUN9bLmHMc)

### Ask:

- ➔ Have any of you made a pot on a potter's wheel before?
- ➔ Was it difficult?
- ➔ If you have not tried it, do you think you would be able to make a pot like the man in the clip?
- ➔ If not, why not?

🗨️ **Say:** Our Bible story today is set in the Old Testament and our main character is Jeremiah the prophet.

🗨️ **Say:** Prophets had a special job that they did for God.

**Ask:** What was this special job? (If you're struggling to remember, then think back to the story of Jonah, who wasn't very good at his job!)

🗨️ **Say:** A prophet's job was to tell people what God wanted them to hear. They would share important messages from God about the way the people were living their lives.

### Read:

**'This is the word the Lord spoke to Jeremiah: "Go down to the potter's house. I will give you my message there." So I went down to the potter's house. I saw him working at the potter's wheel. He was making a pot from clay. But something went wrong with it. So the potter used that clay to make another pot. He used his hands to shape the pot the way that he wanted it to be.**

**'Then the Lord spoke his word to me: "Family of Israel, can't I do the same thing with you?" says the Lord. "You are like the clay in the potter's hands."**

— (Jeremiah 18:1-6 *ICB*)

### Ask:

- ➔ What do you think God meant when he described the people as clay in his hands?
- ➔ How do you know that the people had not been doing what God asked of them?

🗨️ **Say:** Jeremiah's message from God made it clear to the people that they needed to be reshaped and remoulded. They were not listening to what God had to say and it was time for God to make some changes.

### Ask:

- ➔ In what ways do you think God wanted to reshape the people of Israel?
- ➔ In what ways do you think God wants to reshape us?
- ➔ Do you think the people listened to Jeremiah's message from God?
- ➔ How do you think they reacted?

🗨️ **Say:** In Jeremiah 18:18 we find out how the people of Israel responded to God's warning about their poor behaviour.

### Read:

**'Then the people said, "Come, let's make plans against Jeremiah. Surely the teaching of the law by the priest will not be lost. And the advice from the wise men will still be with us. We will still have the words of the prophets. So let's ruin him by telling lies about him! We won't pay attention to anything he says."**

— (Jeremiah 18:18 *ICB*)

**Ask:** As you think about the people's response to God's message, what kind of behaviour do you think needed to be changed in the people of Israel?

🗨 **Say:** The people did not want to listen to Jeremiah and they spread lies about him. Just like Jonah in our last session, they were willing to do whatever it took to avoid doing what God wanted them to do.

🗨 **Say:** Sadly, the people of Israel continued to ignore God and the city of Jerusalem was taken over by King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. We will learn more about what happened next in our next two sessions.

🗨 **Say:** As followers of God we need to be willing to listen when God wants to reshape and remould us, just like clay on a potter's wheel.

## Action It

🗨 **Say:** In our story today, the people of Israel were compared to clay in the potter's hand.

**Ask:** Who do you think is the potter in the story?

🗨 **Say:** You are going to get the chance to make your own creation today using clay. As you create, think of all the ways God shapes us and moulds us to be more like him.

### Clay creations

For this activity you will need air-dry clay for the group. The aim of the activity is for the children to experience creating their own masterpiece with clay.

Give the children the opportunity to experience creating something from their own imagination. They can remould, restart and experience what Jeremiah meant when he said that the people of Israel were like clay in God's hands.

**Ask:** In what ways are we like clay being moulded and shaped by God's hands?

## Pray It

🗨 **Say:** Today's session has been very busy with lots of activity. Now that we have all tidied up, we are going to spend some time thinking about everything we have discovered about God today.

Create a time of reflection for the children to rest on God. Depending on your space and facilities, they can lay quietly on the floor or sit with their eyes closed. Use the video below to play the song 'The potter's hand'. If the children become restless then you may want to fade out the music before it ends. Once the music has finished, bring the session to a close with prayer.

### Video

'The potter's hand' by Hillsong Worship (4 mins 16 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MQOhTbeCGA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MQOhTbeCGA)

## Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It Ideas for children and families.

# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

OCTOBER  
SESSION 03

### DO WE HAVE TO LISTEN TO HIM? COMPLAINTS ABOUT JEREMIAH

 Jeremiah 18:1-6,18 The potter and the clay

## FOR ME

## TOGETHER



### Create

Take home your clay creation, and once it has dried out completely you can continue creating and paint it!



### Watch

*The Great Pottery Throw Down* is a British TV series. Select an episode and watch with someone at home. As you watch the potters making their creations, think about everything we have learnt in today's Explore It! and share what you have discovered about God.



### Song for the week

'Romans 12:2' (memory verse song) by Hillsong Kids (2 mins)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG_w)



### Memory verse

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

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# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



### DOES ANYONE KNOW THE ANSWER? KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR COMPLAINS

#### Daniel 2:14-23,31-40 Nebuchadnezzar's dream

King Nebuchadnezzar could not sleep as he was troubled by an unpleasant dream. Despite asking all the wise men of the land, the king could not find out what his dream meant. He complained angrily to anyone who would listen and put the lives of Daniel and his friends in danger. In response, Daniel took his concerns to God and the dream's meaning was revealed.

Each child will need:

- a small piece of paper – see Start It section
- copies of *Kids Alive!* – these can be previous editions, or you can show them to the children online
- pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

- a small container or bag – see Start It section

### Start It

Ask the children to write down the funniest dream they have ever had. Emphasise with the children that this should be fun or unusual dreams rather than nightmares! Ask them to sum it up in one sentence and write it on a small piece of paper. Put all of the pieces of paper in a container and shake them up.

Ask the children to take turns to choose a piece of paper and act out the dream while the rest of the group guess what it is. Once they have guessed, then the person whose dream it is can share more about it if they wish. Keep going until all the dreams have been shared.

- **Say:** We have shared lots of our funny dreams, but in today's Bible story King Nebuchadnezzar's dream wasn't quite as much fun!

### Sing It

- **Say:** Today we will hear Daniel praying a prayer filled with praise to God. Our song for this week gives us a chance to praise God as well – while watching a very silly video!

'Praise ye the Lord hallelujah' (new version) by Listener Kids (1 min 40 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuODF9Kbgnw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuODF9Kbgnw)

### Tell It

- **Say:** Over the last three sessions we have discovered characters in the Bible that complained about their situations.

**Ask:** What did Naaman, Jonah and the people of Israel complain about?

🗨️ **Say:** Naaman complained when he felt he was not being treated with the respect he deserved. Jonah complained because he thought God was too merciful and forgiving to people he thought were wicked. The people of Israel complained when Jeremiah gave them the message that they needed to be remoulded and reshaped by God.

🗨️ **Say:** Today we meet a worried king who complained because he could not get a good night's sleep.

**Ask:**

➔ What are you like at sleeping?

➔ Do you fall asleep as soon as your head hits the pillow or does it take you a while to drift off?

🗨️ **Say:** In our story today, we meet a king who was struggling to get any sleep at all. His name was King Nebuchadnezzar.

**Ask:**

➔ Do you remember the name King Nebuchadnezzar from last week's session?

➔ What do you know about him?

🗨️ **Say:** King Nebuchadnezzar was the Babylonian king who successfully defeated the Israelites and took their young, healthy, intelligent men into captivity. One of these young men was Daniel and he is involved in our story today.

## Video

*Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar's dream* by Saddleback Kids (3 mins 7 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=psRWgA60Au0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psRWgA60Au0)

🗨️ **Say:** King Nebuchadnezzar was exhausted and frustrated as he could not get enough sleep. The bad dreams worried him and he did not know what to do about it.

**Ask:**

➔ Do you think it was fair for King Nebuchadnezzar to ask the wise men to interpret the dream without telling them what it was? Explain why.

➔ How did King Nebuchadnezzar react when the wise men could not interpret the dream?

➔ How do you think Daniel felt when he found out his life was in danger when he had not done anything wrong?

**Ask:** King Nebuchadnezzar was angry and frustrated. His complaints led to serious consequences for the wise men of Babylon. In what way do we need to be careful about the choices we make when we are angry and frustrated about something?

🗨️ **Say:** It would have been easy for Daniel to gather his friends together to sit and complain about King Nebuchadnezzar's actions. But he does something different instead.

**Read:**

**'Arioch was the commander of the king's guards. He was going to put to death the wise men of Babylon. But Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and skill. Daniel asked, "Why did the king order such a terrible punishment?" Then Arioch explained everything to Daniel. When Daniel heard the story, he went to King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel asked him to give him some more time. Then he would tell the king what he had dreamed and what it meant.**

**'So Daniel went to his house. He explained the whole story to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah [also known as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego]. Daniel asked his friends to pray to the God of heaven. Daniel asked them to pray that God would show them mercy and help them understand this secret. Then Daniel and his friends would not be put to death with the other wise men of Babylon.**

**'During the night God explained the secret to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven. Daniel said:**

**'Praise God for ever and ever.**

**He has wisdom and power.**

**He changes the times and seasons of the year.**

**He takes away the power of kings.**

And he gives their power to new kings.  
He gives wisdom to people so they become wise.  
And he helps people learn and know things.  
He makes known secrets that are deep and hidden.  
He knows what is hidden in darkness,  
and light lives with him.  
I thank you and praise you, God of my ancestors.  
You have given me wisdom and power.  
You told me what we asked of you.  
You told us about the king's dream.”

— (Daniel 2:14-23 *ICB*)

#### Ask:

- How are King Nebuchadnezzar's and Daniel's reactions to a challenging problem different?
- How do they each react?
- What can we learn from Daniel when we are tempted to complain about a difficult situation?

● **Say:** It's OK to feel frustrated about things that happen in our everyday lives, but how we react is very important. King Nebuchadnezzar let his worries turn to complaints and lashed out at those around him. Daniel chose a different path. He took his worries and complaints to God who was there with him every step of the way.

## Action It

Every week in *Kids Alive!* there is a comic strip based around a story. Have a look at some of the previous editions with the children and talk about the different things they would need to include to create a comic strip. Their task today is to retell the part of the story told in Daniel 2:14-23. The story needs to focus on Daniel's choice to take his complaints to God rather than to lash out at those around him.

When the children have completed their comic strips, they can share them with the rest of the group. If you have a corps or church newsletter, perhaps they could be included in the next edition.

## Pray It

● **Say:** To bring our session to a close we are going to think about our memory verse for this month. Let's share it together.

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

**Ask:** What choices did Daniel make that helped him to live out these words of Romans 12:2?

Ask the children to share situations that they feel frustrated with at the moment. Remind them that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego spent time praying about their concerns together. Pray together as a group and point out to the children that their *Explore It For Me* activity this week is to pray for the other members of their *Explore It* group.

## Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

OCTOBER  
SESSION 04

### DOES ANYONE KNOW THE ANSWER? KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR COMPLAINS

 Daniel 2:14-23,31-40 Nebuchadnezzar's dream

## FOR ME

## TOGETHER



### Pray

At the end of this week's session you shared your worries and frustrations together. As a group you spent time praying about each situation. Take time each day to pray for each member of your Explore It group, including your leaders, and bring their concerns to God in prayer.



### Dream charades

This week you started off your *Explore It* session with a game of dream charades. Ask your family members to write down their silly or funny dreams – no nightmares allowed! Fold up the pieces of paper and put them in a container. Each player takes out a piece of paper and acts it out for everyone else to guess.



### Song for the week

'Praise ye the Lord hallelujah' (new version)  
by Listener Kids

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuODF9Kbgw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuODF9Kbgw)



### Memory verse

**'Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

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# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



### NO COMPLAINTS! – SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO

#### Daniel 3 The gold idol and the blazing furnace

In our final session we find three men who faithfully followed God even when they had plenty to complain about. King Nebuchadnezzar threatened them with the fiery furnace, but they chose to worship God no matter what.

Each child will need:

→ Resources to make a lantern or stained-glass window – see 'Action It' section

### Start It

● **Say:** Our starter for today will definitely get you up and moving. It gives us a sneak preview of the story we will be focusing on today. Don't worry about singing along, just see if you can follow the actions.

#### Video

'Shadrach, Meshach and Abendego' by Lutheran Church of Hope (2 mins 47 secs)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE1AFgt-TSQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE1AFgt-TSQ)

### Sing It

● **Say:** Here's our final chance to share our memory verse together.

Give the children an opportunity to share their memory verse and then sing the song together. Don't forget that the song adapts the first line to 'Don't live [any longer] the way this world lives.'

'Romans 12:2' (memory verse song) by Hillsong Kids (2 mins)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEeomG_w)

### Tell It

● **Say:** Our Bible story today focuses on three friends we have met before. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. In last week's story they spent time praying with Daniel when King Nebuchadnezzar threatened to have them all killed! Unfortunately, King Nebuchadnezzar continued to live his life in a way that did not honour God. Watch the clip to find out what happened.

#### Video

*The fiery furnace Bible story* by Kids on the Move (6 mins 37 secs)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=duyQTMKA4Wk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=duyQTMKA4Wk)

● **Say:** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were taken away from their home to a different country when Israel was defeated by King Nebuchadnezzar. Despite all that they faced, the three men continued to faithfully follow God.

**Ask:** What did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego do every day that showed they followed God?

🗨️ **Say:** The people of Babylon did not believe in the same God as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

**Ask:**

➔ How do you think they felt, living in a place like Babylon that did not believe in God?

➔ Do you ever feel like that as a Christian today? If so, how?

🗨️ **Say:** King Nebuchadnezzar decided to build a huge golden statue of himself for the people to worship. On three different occasions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to worship the statue.

**Ask:** What was the king's punishment for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?

🗨️ **Say:** Despite the threat of being put into a fiery furnace – a giant burning oven – the three men were not afraid. Instead we read in Daniel 3:16-18 that they stood up to the king.

**Read:**

**'Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered the king. They said, "Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves to you. You can throw us into the blazing furnace. The God we serve is able to save us from the furnace and your power. If he does this, it is good. But even if God does not save us, we want you, our king, to know this: we will not serve your gods. We will not worship the gold statue you have set up."'**

— (Daniel 3:16-18 ICB)

🗨️ **Say:** Unlike the other Bible characters we have met this month, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to complain. They knew God was faithful and, whether they were saved from the fire or not, they promised to worship the one true God.

**Ask:** What does the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego teach us about how to follow God in challenging circumstances?

🗨️ **Say:** Just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we can be assured that God is with us in every fiery situation that we face. We just need to trust in him and remember what a faithful God we serve.

## Action It

🗨️ **Say:** Around this time of year we are often surrounded by scary things. The shops are full of Halloween posters, with dummies dressed up as zombies and witches, and cobwebs everywhere. For some people it can be quite frightening.

**Ask:** How do you feel when you walk into a shop and see all these things?

🗨️ **Say:** It can be a challenging time of year for Christians, as we may feel pressured to join in with a celebration that focuses on the darkness in our world. Unlike Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we don't face the threat of the fiery furnace, but we may feel uncomfortable with all that is happening around us at this time of year. Instead of joining in with the Halloween parties, many Christians across the world take part in an alternative celebration called 'All Hallows' Eve' or 'All Saints' Eve'.

**Ask:** Have you heard of this celebration before?

🗨️ **Say:** Let's watch the clip together and discover more about it.

## Video

*All Saints' Day* by Kids' Talk (2 mins 9 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRFgPCKx\\_6E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRFgPCKx_6E)

🗨️ **Say:** All Hallows' Eve and All Saints' Day celebrate the people we know who have faithfully followed God throughout their lives. They are the people like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who followed God when it was tempting to live the same way as everyone else.

## Lantern / Stained-glass window

For today's activity the children will make a lantern or stained-glass window to remind them of our memory verse for October. Options are listed below, but the main aim of the activity is to create something that is even more beautiful when the light shines through it. The Scripture reference Romans 12:2 can also be included on the children's creation. The ideas below are just for reference and you can adapt them depending on your craft skills and budget.

### Options:

- Baker Ross - Lantern Kits – [www.bakerross.co.uk/lanterns](http://www.bakerross.co.uk/lanterns)
- DIY Glowing Lanterns Project for Kids – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVmtVPIXPgE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVmtVPIXPgE)
- Easy Craft Ideas: How to make stained glass with tissue paper – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHax38AtEul](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHax38AtEul)

When the children have completed their lanterns, gather them together to share October's memory verse. This time together should move smoothly into the 'Pray It' section.

## Pray It

- **Say:** Our memory verse for this month reminds us to live differently, following the way that God chooses for our lives. When we choose to follow God, then his light shines out of each one of us. As you hold your creations, let's share together a song that reminds us about Jesus as the light that shines in the darkness of this world.

'Here I am to worship' by Kids' Praise Company (4 mins 22 secs)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4sZu1ouO9E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4sZu1ouO9E)

## Explore It

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# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

OCTOBER  
SESSION 05

## NO COMPLAINTS! – SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO

 Daniel 3 The gold idol and the blazing furnace

### FOR ME

### TOGETHER



#### Reflect

Watch the clip from this week's session that tell us all about All Saints' Day.

*All Saints' Day* by Kids' Talk

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRFgPCkx\\_6E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRFgPCkx_6E)

Spend some time thanking God for the people in your life, and throughout history, who have lived their lives faithfully following God.



#### Share

Now is the perfect time to share with the people at home everything you have discovered during your October *Explore It* sessions.

You can tell them about

- ➔ Naaman
- ➔ Jonah
- ➔ Jeremiah
- ➔ Daniel
- ➔ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Share your memory verse with them and show them your light-filled creation. Most importantly, you can live your life in a way that shows that the light of Jesus is shining within you.



#### Song for the week

'Romans 12:2' (memory verse song) by Hillsong Kids

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEomG\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuKnEomG_w)



#### Memory verse

**'Don't live the way this world lives.**

**Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'**

— (Romans 12:2 *NIRV*)

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