

# 'Big Story' prophecy



### Bible verses:

Jeremiah 1:4-19

God calls Jeremiah



### Aim:

To understand the role of a prophet

### Today's fruit:

Faithfulness



Faithfulness is shown by God to an uncertain Jeremiah. This young man wasn't sure if he was up to the job of a prophet, but God reassured him and promised to give him the right words to say.

**In today's session we meet Jeremiah, called by God for a very specific task.**

God needed Jeremiah to be a prophet to deliver bad news to his people. Understandably, Jeremiah was afraid, but God showed his faithfulness and promised to be with him every step of the way.

### Each child will need:

- *Memory verse* wristband
- Pens/pencils and paper
- Resources to make a photo frame - see Action it
- To bring a photo of themselves for the photo frame (optional). Be aware that the photo may be cut depending on the frame chosen
- *Explore It ideas* handout

### You will need:

- Today's fruit sign: *Faithfulness*
- Flipchart paper and pens (optional)
- *Books of the Bible tick list* (optional)



## Start it

### Say:

Over the next month we will be exploring different parts of the Bible. To get your brains – and bodies – going, we’re going to start with a Bible quiz.

This game requires the children to move to either side of the room to show their answer.

## Video

***Joust in time church game*** by Children’s Ministry Deals (3:47)

### Say:

Our memory verse will help us to remember that whether we’re learning about the prophets, exploring history, or reading poetry, every word is inspired by God.

Give each member of the group a memory verse wristband and share the verse together.

## Memory verse

**‘All Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching how to live correctly.’**

(2 Timothy 3:16 ICB)

## Sing it

The following song will be used three times this month, to encourage the children to learn as many books of the Bible as they can.

Before sharing the song, ask the children to say which books of the Bible they already know. You may want to list these on a flipchart and see how many they get out of 66. There is an optional *Books of the Bible Tick List* to help you. Depending on the confidence of your group, you can either do this individually or together. You may wish to keep a note of the results as this activity will be repeated in the final session.



## Song

**‘Books of the Bible’ song and lyrics** by Mary Rice Hopkins (0:16–4:02)

## Tell it

### **Say:**

This month we are looking at the Bible as one big story. Around 20 per cent of The Big Story is helped along by people chosen by God to speak up for him about the present and the future.

### **Ask:**

Have you ever had to tell someone some news that they did not want to hear? What did it feel like? How did they react?

### **Say:**

God's prophets often had to tell the people things they did not want to hear. We're going to find out more about them in this clip.

Give each member of the group paper and a pencil and ask them to jot down three fascinating facts about prophets as they watch the clip. When the clip has finished, share the facts together.

## Video

*God's Story: Prophets* by Crossroads Kids' Club (3:46)

## Discuss

Discuss with the group what a prophet is. The clip describes prophets as people who heard from God and shared what he had to say. Clarify any misunderstanding around the idea that prophets were fortune-tellers or that they could tell the future.

### **Say:**

Now that we understand what a prophet is, we're going to dive into the Old Testament and learn more about the prophet Jeremiah. The book of Jeremiah is found in the Old Testament and tells many of the things Jeremiah said and did during his life. It was written by a man called Baruch who worked as a scribe for Jeremiah.

### **Read:**

**'The Lord spoke these words to me:**

**"Before I made you in your mother's womb, I chose you.**

**Before you were born, I set you apart for a special work.**

**I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."**

**'Then I said, "But Lord God, I don't know how to speak. I am only a boy."**

(Jeremiah 1:4-6 ICB)

### **Ask:**

- How did Jeremiah feel about the work God had asked him to do?
- In what ways do you understand his worry about being too young?

**Say:**

In this translation of the Bible, it says that Jeremiah was a boy, but many people who know lots about the Bible think that he would have been a young man. Either way, this was a huge responsibility for him to take on.

**Read:**

**‘But the Lord said to me, “Don’t say, ‘I am only a boy.’ You must go everywhere that I send you. You must say everything I tell you to say. Don’t be afraid of anyone, because I am with you. I will protect you,” says the Lord.**

**‘Then the Lord reached out with his hand and touched my mouth. He said to me, “See, I am putting my words in your mouth. Today I have put you in charge of nations and kingdoms. You will pull up and tear down, destroy and overthrow. You will build up and plant.”’**

(Jeremiah 1:7-10 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

- How did God respond to Jeremiah? How do you think it made him feel?
- What promise did God give to Jeremiah?

**Say:**

God promised to give Jeremiah the right words to say, but it must have been nerve-racking for this young man. It sounds nice to build up and plant, to create and grow new things. But Jeremiah would also have to pull up and tear down, to destroy all that his people loved and valued.

**Read:**

**‘The Lord spoke this word to me: “Jeremiah, what do you see?”**

**‘I answered the Lord and said, “I see a stick of almond wood.”**

**‘The Lord said to me, “You have seen correctly! And I am watching to make sure my words come true.”**

**‘The Lord spoke his word to me again: “Jeremiah, what do you see?”**

**‘I answered the Lord and said, “I see a pot of boiling water. It is tipping over from the north!”’**

(Jeremiah 1:11-13 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

What do you think these visions meant?

**Say:**

The almond tree was the first tree to blossom and produce fruit. It was often known as the ‘awake tree’. God was saying that he was watching carefully and that his words for the people would come to pass soon.

The boiling pot is a little more obvious. Disaster was on its way from the north and Jeremiah was the one who had to tell the people it was coming.

**Read:**

**'The Lord said to me, "Disaster will come from the north. It will happen to all the people who live in this country. In a short time I will call all of the people in the northern kingdoms," said the Lord.**

**'Those kings will come and set up their thrones  
near the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem.**

**They will attack the city walls around Jerusalem.**

**They will attack all the cities in Judah.**

**And I will announce my judgements against my people.**

**I will do this because of their evil in turning away from me.**

**They offered sacrifices to other gods.**

**And they worshipped idols they had made with their own hands.'**

(Jeremiah 1:14-16 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

- Why do you think God was saying this to his people?
- What had they been up to that made him so angry?

**Say:**

God told Jeremiah to get ready as the people wouldn't like what he had to say.

**Read:**

**"Jeremiah, get ready. Stand up and speak to the people. Tell them everything I tell you to say. Don't be afraid of the people. If you are afraid of them, I will give you good reason to be afraid of them. Today I am going to make you a strong city, an iron pillar, a bronze wall. You will be able to stand against everyone in the land: Judah's kings, officers, priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you. But they will not defeat you. This is because I am with you, and I will save you!" says the Lord.'**

(Jeremiah 1:17-19 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

- What did God say Jeremiah would have to face?
- What did he say the people would do?
- How did God want Jeremiah to react to the people?

**Say:**

Jeremiah knew that he would have to deal with a bunch of angry people, but he wasn't alone. God promised to be with him.

Display the *Faithfulness* sign.

**Ask:**

What do we mean when we say that someone is faithful?

**Say:**

If we describe someone as faithful, then it means we can trust them and rely on them to be there for us. Our fruit for today is faithfulness. Through the help of God's Holy Spirit, we can be the kind of person that can be trusted and relied upon.

## Action it

**Say:**

In our story Jeremiah was concerned that he was too young to speak out for God. In response God said these words:

**Read:**

**'But the Lord said to me, "Don't say, 'I am only a boy.' You must go everywhere that I send you. You must say everything I tell you to say. Don't be afraid of anyone, because I am with you. I will protect you," says the Lord.'**

(Jeremiah 1:7-8 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

What is it about being young that might make us doubt our ability to change things?

**Say:**

God's call is the same for you today. Even though you are young, you have an important part to play in this world. You need not be afraid speaking out for God, as he is with you and will protect you.

**Ask:**

On 1 June it is International Children's Day. Why do you think it is important to have a day with a focus on children?

## Photo frame

Explain to the children that they will create a photo frame that they can add their picture to. If they already have a photo, this will help with making the correct size of frame. This frame will remind them that God is with them, and they need not be afraid. Several options are provided below on how to make the frame. Whichever frame you choose, the children need to write the key words of Jeremiah 1:7-8 on the frame.

## Suggested photo frame craft

- **Kids Craft: DIY Cardboard Photo Frame** by MBR Education Group (1:20) Needs cardboard, glue, string and decorations, eg pom-poms
- **Super Easy Paper Photo frame for kids** by Mana Creative Corner (3:48) Needs coloured card or patterned paper/card, pens and glue
- **Baker Ross: Wooden Photo Frame Blanks** – different shapes  
Needs decorations, eg paint, pom-poms, glitter, glue

## Pray it

The children will have an opportunity to recap the story from today and place themselves in Jeremiah's position. Watch the clip together and ask the children to imagine that God is calling them.

## Video

**God visits Jeremiah** by Superbook (1:29)

Remind the children that each one of us is called by God. Even before they were born, they were precious to God, and he had good purposes for their lives. Encourage them to talk about how it feels to know this. Just as God promised Jeremiah that he would be faithful to him, God is there for each one of us.

As part of a time of reflection, encourage the children to write prayers about their future choices, thanking God for his faithfulness. If they feel comfortable, then they can share the prayers with each other. The song below can be used as part of the reflection time or sung together to bring the session to a close.

## Video

**You are faithful** by Orange Kids Music video by Deer Run Kids (2:52)

## Explore it

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



*Explore It* is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

## 'Big Story' prophecy

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



### Bible verses:

Jeremiah 1:4-19  
God calls Jeremiah



### Aim:

To understand the role of a prophet



### Today's fruit:

Faithfulness



## Discover

Watch the clip to discover more about the prophet Jeremiah.

**Jeremiah** by PursueGOD Kids



## Challenge

In this week's session we tried to remember as many books of the Bible as possible. Challenge the people at home to write down as many Bible books as they can and see who can remember the most. You can check if you've missed any by singing the 'Books of the Bible Song' together.



## Song for the week

'Books of the Bible' song and lyrics by Mary Rice Hopkins



## Memory verse

'All Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching how to live correctly.'

(2 Timothy 3:16 ICB)



# 'Big Story' prophecy

**Bible verses:**

Jeremiah 1:4-19  
God calls Jeremiah

**Aim:**

To hear about  
Jeremiah the prophet

**Today's fruit:**

Faithfulness



## Memory verse

'All Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching how to live correctly.'

(2 Timothy 3:16 *ICB*)



## Start it

Do you like doing new things? Or is it a bit scary? Or is it both? Today we're going to find out about Jeremiah, who was afraid when God asked him to do something new.



## Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of Jeremiah 1:4-19.

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- Jeremiah was afraid. When do we feel afraid?
- What might help us when we feel afraid?
- What is your favourite story? The Bible is full of them.
- The almond tree was the 'awake tree'. What in nature helps you to feel awake?

For example, paddling in the sea or running in the park?

- What special jobs does God want us to do today? Caring for others, telling them that we love them perhaps?



## Sing It

'If I were a butterfly' (lyrics and music)

'The butterfly song' by Brian Howard, uploaded by Unreached Corners (3:09)

'Wonderful Lord' (official video) by Doug Horley (3:13)



## Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- From a tiny seed, pretend you are the almond tree waking up into blossom and growing.
- Mime actions for starting a day: waking up and stretching, brushing your teeth, eating breakfast ...
- Pretend you are afraid, then pretend you are calm; can you show it in your face and your body?