

# Mosaic God is here

SAMPLE



SERIES

1

SERIES INTRODUCTION

# JEREMIAH THE PROPHET

*The lordship and foreknowledge of God are explored through key experiences in the life of his prophet, Jeremiah.*

## BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR YOU

**Jeremiah lived and worked in the years before the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC.**

These were difficult years for Judah. Apart from the brief respite during the reign of Josiah (2 Kings 22,23), the kings were weak and self-serving. The Babylonian armies were at the door, social order was crumbling, the economic situation deteriorating, justice perverted and God ignored. We might feel that there are certain parallels with our own times. In calling the people back to God and warning of dire consequences if they did not change, Jeremiah faced constant opposition; the burning of the scroll (Jeremiah 36:20-26)

and being placed in the cistern or well (Jeremiah 38:1-13) are two examples.

But his determination remained strong. He knew that God was in control, as the story of the potter shows (Jeremiah 18:1-12). And as the world fell apart around him he pointed to hope for the future (Jeremiah 31:1-6), not just by speaking of a return from exile but by buying a field (Jeremiah 32:1-15). In the face of our own circumstances, how do we give practical recognition to the fact that God is in control of world events and our own lives? In the face of political and economic uncertainties, how do we show a strong hope for the future, knowing that God is the King of kings?

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## For your small group with a wide age range

Through the story of Jeremiah, this series demonstrates that God is Lord and knows everything – about us and about the past, present and future. That is why it is right to trust him, even when being a Christian seems hard. Within your small group, there may be a wide range of experience and maturity. Some will trust God easily and readily, while others are finding the way difficult.

Try to encourage everyone to follow Jeremiah's example of honesty, courage and hope. If particular activities are too hard for some, encourage others in the group to support them, for instance by writing or reading for them.

## Resources for ministry

*Bitesize Bible Songs* and *Bitesize Bible Songs 2* are audio CD collections of chart-sound songs featuring Bible verses for children to memorise. (Songs are also available as mp3 files, as albums or single tracks.) With catchy music and mini-activities to provide creative and fun ways of applying the verses into everyday life, these songs will help get God's word stuck in your heads!

## Highlights from *LightLive*

Go to the 'Search *LightLive*' tab at [www.lightlive.org](http://www.lightlive.org) and enter this session's Bible reference to find:

- 'Audio Bible story': a regular mp3 download for 3-7s
- 'Learn and remember': a PowerPoint of a Bible verse to learn, for 5-11s (see also page 35)
- 'Presentation': an activity with animation for 11-14s



SERIES 1 JEREMIAH THE PROPHET

## SESSION 1

# In the potter's shop



### Bible:

Jeremiah 18:1-12

**Aim:** To realise that God knows everything and wants us to change

## CORE PROGRAMME

For 3 to 14s

### Bible story - All change

20 minutes

**Why:** to realise that God knows everything and wants us to change

**With:** SU Bible Timeline or the Big Bible Storybook Timeline (optional, see page 96 for details)

#### 1 Acting

Look at the *Timeline* (or an illustrated Bible) together. Give the children a few minutes to see if they can identify someone who changed their life and turned to God. Then ask them to act it out for the group so that they can guess who it is. (If they need help you could start by acting out Saul on the road to Damascus.)

#### 2 All change game

Explain to the children that you are going to read a story and they have to listen very carefully. Invite each child to find a partner, asking one to go to one end of the room, while the other stands opposite

them. Explain that when they hear the word 'change' or 'changed' both children must run to the other side of the room, giving their partner a 'high five' (a hand slap in the air!) as they run past them. As they pass, they shout, 'All change!'

Read the account here, remembering to pause while the children exchange places. If there's an odd child out, invite that child to join another pair and run with them. If you have no room to run about, you could ask them to swap chairs or jump up instead.

'Hello, this is Jeremiah. I am a prophet and God gives me special messages to pass on to people. The other day God told me to go to the pottery. He said that when I got there he would tell me what to say to the people. So I went there and saw the potter making clay pots on his pottery wheel. I noticed that whenever the clay would not take the shape he wanted, he would **change** his mind and form it into some other shape. I saw him **change** his mind over and over again. Each time the clay **changed** shape, he formed another pot. He was very clever. As the potter **changed** his clay, God showed me what he wanted to say.

'This is God's message: "I have power over you, just as a potter has power over clay. I am going

to destroy you and your country because you have **changed** from your good ways into bad ways. But if you decide to **change** back to your good ways, I will **change** my mind, and not destroy you. If I promise to make you strong, but then you **change** and start doing bad things again, I will **change** my mind and not help you. I have decided to strike you and your country with disaster, and I won't **change** my mind unless you stop doing bad things and start loving me again! You need to **change** your ways and start living good lives. But I know you won't listen. You might as well answer, 'We don't care what you say. We are not going to **change**. We have made plans to do very bad things, and we are going to be stubborn and do what we want!'"

#### 3 Counting

Read the story a second time, challenging the children to count how many times you say 'change' or 'changed'. (*There are 12.*)

#### 4 Reflect

Say that the people were reminded so many times in the story to 'change' their ways. Ask the children what they think God was trying to tell his people. God knows everything and is always giving us opportunities to change. Pray together and ask God to help us to listen to him, and put right the things in our lives that he

wants us to change.  
CORE PROGRAMME CONTINUED

PHOTOCOPIABLE PART  
For use with **Play dough**

**Play dough**

**10 minutes**

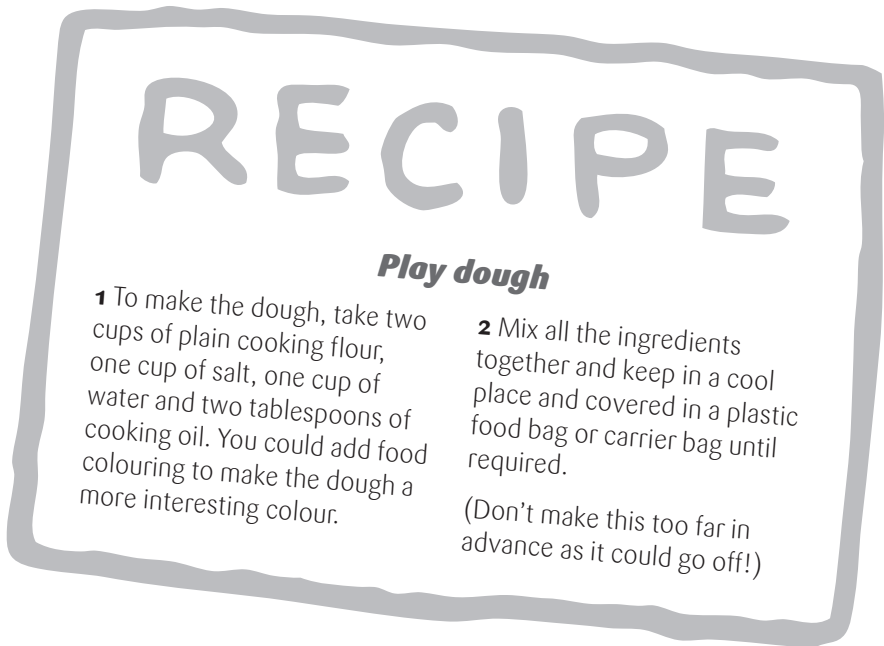
**Why:** to ask God to show us where we need to change

**With:** recipe for play dough

**1** Be aware of allergies before you start. Sit in a circle and hold up a blob of play dough. Ask the children what they have learned about God today. Pass the blob around and ask each child to change its shape. (With a large group, have several pieces of dough going round.)

**2** While they are doing this, ask the children how we know what changes to make in our lives. Explain that as we listen to God and talk to him and read the Bible, God will show us things that we need to change in our lives that will help us to love him more.

**3** Pass round more dough, so everyone is holding some. Ask the children to pray silently as they continue to mould, shape and change the play dough.



**Praise shout**

**5 - 10 minutes**

**Why:** to praise God for knowing all about us and still loving us

**With:** 'Shout it out' sheets from page 9 (optional)

**1** Explain that in the story of Jeremiah we see that God is like the potter who knows all about everything that he makes. He knows everything about them and he still loves them.

**2** Invite the children to use their own ideas to fill in the gaps on a copy of the 'Shout it out' sheet (page 9). Alternatively, challenge them to complete the sentence: 'You know [idea] and you still love us.'

**3** Use their ideas in a praise shout.

**Caller:** You know everything about us and you still love us.

**All:** We praise you, God!

**Caller:** You know [idea] and you still love us.

**All:** We praise you, God!

Encourage the children to take turns to be the 'caller', and keep going until they run out of ideas.

**Identity game**

**5 - 10 minutes**

**Why:** to remember that God knows all about us

**1** Ask the children each to think of and write down (with help for early learners) one thing that the rest of the group doesn't know about them.

**2** Collect and shuffle the slips of paper, then read each one out loud and challenge the children to identify who it is about.

**3** Encourage the children to think of one person who knows most things about them. Does that person know everything about them? If not, who does?

**4** Say that in today's Bible verses they are going to discover that God knows everything about us.

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Sheet for use with **Praise shout**

# SHOUT IT OUT!

**Fill in the gaps with your own ideas.  
Then use this as a praise shout.**

**caller:** you know everything about us and you still love us.

SAMPLE

**All:** we praise you, god!

**caller:** you know .....

and you still love us.

**All:** we praise you, god!

**caller:** you know .....

and you still love us

**All:** we praise you, god!

**caller:** you know .....

and you still love us

**All:** we praise you, god!

**caller:** you know .....

and you still love us.

**All:** we praise you, god!

**caller:** you know .....

and you still love us.

**All:** we praise you, god!

## EXTENSION IDEAS

### Activities for younger children

#### Game

10 minutes

**Why:** to get to know Jeremiah

**With:** SU Bible Timeline or the Big Bible Storybook Timeline

- 1 Find where Jeremiah appears on the Timeline. Explain that Jeremiah keeps telling God's people in Jerusalem to change because they are always doing bad things, but they won't listen.
- 2 Choose one child to represent 'Jeremiah', and stand them facing the wall. Encourage the other children to pretend to be the people doing bad things, and stand with their backs turned to 'Jeremiah'. Ask 'Jeremiah' to turn around suddenly and shout, 'God says to change your ways.' Everyone freezes. Whoever 'Jeremiah' sees moving is out!

#### Bible story picture

5 - 10 minutes

**Why:** to realise that God wants us to be close to him

**With:** a copy of the picture on page 11 (printed on A4 paper) for each child or enlarged copies for group use, art and craft materials

- 1 You can use the picture as an introduction to the Bible story or to help you review the story together.
- 2 Ask the children to describe what they can see on the Bible story picture. What do they think the man sitting down is doing? (*Making pots.*) Use the words 'potter' and 'pottery' to help the children develop their understanding.
- 3 Introduce the other person in the picture as Jeremiah, one of God's friends and messengers. Say that God told Jeremiah to go and watch the potter making his pots.

### For older children

#### Matching activity

5 - 10 minutes

**Why:** to learn about prophets in the Bible

**With:** page 12, SU Bible Timeline or the Big Bible Storybook Timeline (optional, see page 96 for details)

- 1 Ask the children what they think a prophet does. Consider various answers and establish that a prophet is someone who passes on messages that God gives them.
- 2 Challenge the children to name some prophets. Encourage them to use their Bibles or the Bible Timeline. See who can find the most.
- 3 To discover some more about prophets, encourage the children to work in pairs or small groups to find the Bible verses from page 12. By doing this they should be able to link the verses with the prophets.

## THE LEARN AND REMEMBER VERSE

**'Even before I speak, you already know what I will say.'**

*Psalm 139:4*

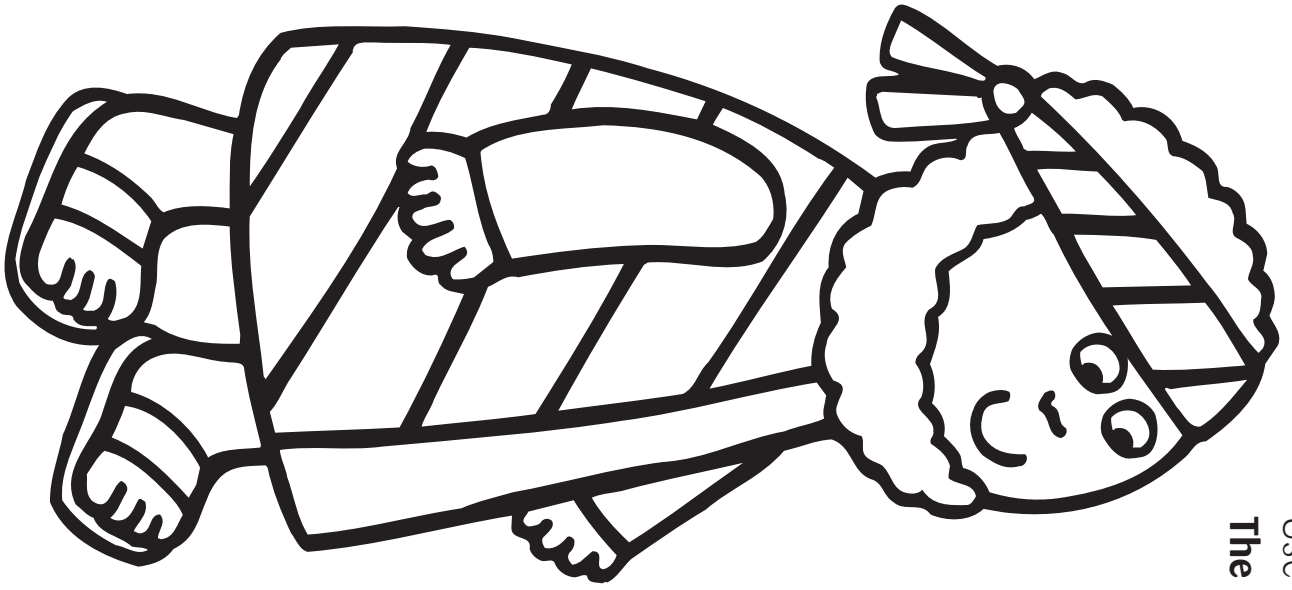
Play a game of Hangman with the verse. Leave a dash for each consonant and challenge the children to guess the words as a letter is revealed.

When you have completed the verse, say it together several times to help them remember it.

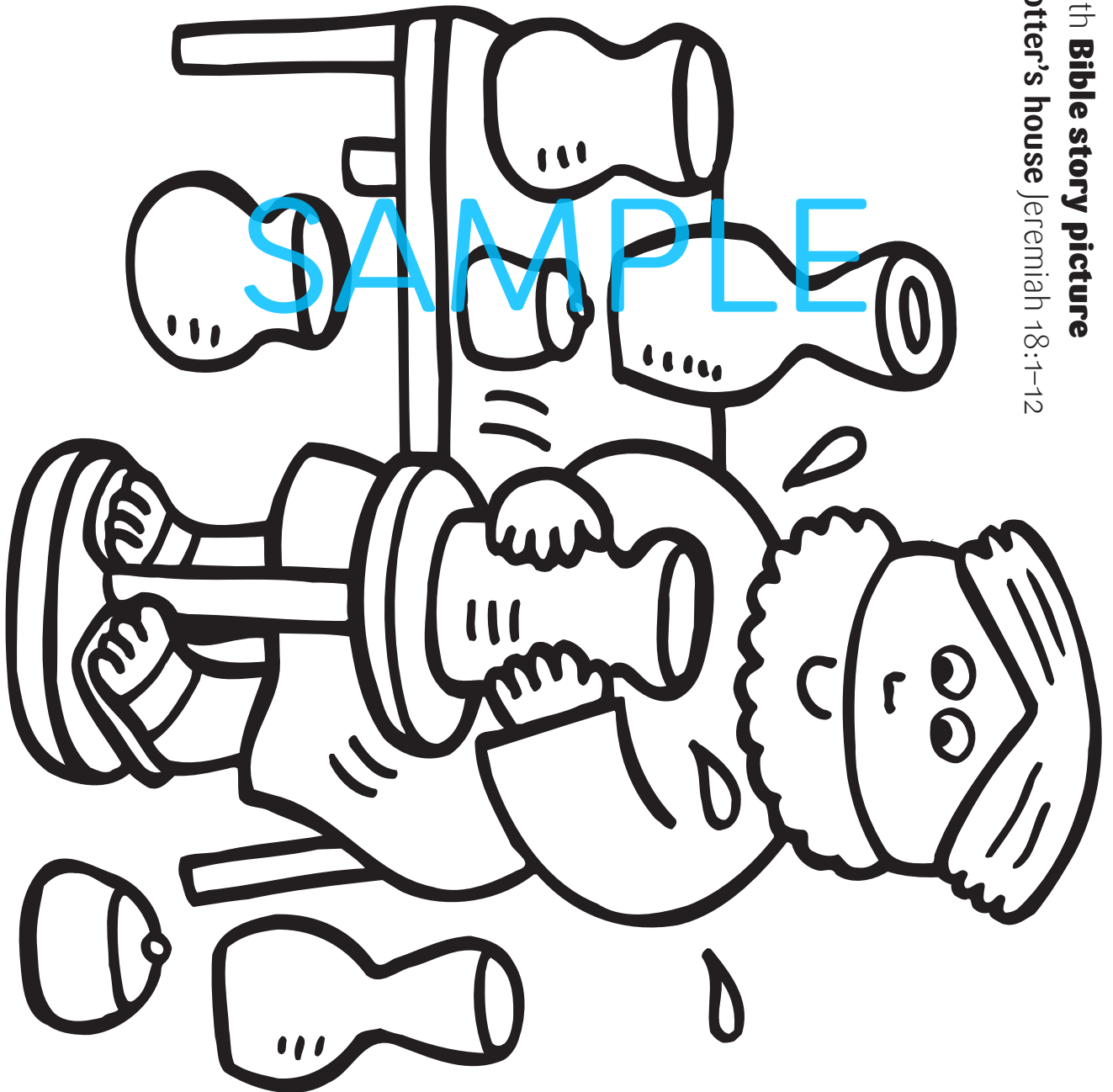
Find a poster for this Learn and remember verse on page 35.

You could also use the song 'Even before I speak', on the *Bitesize Bible Songs 2* CD, available from Scripture Union.

SAMPLE



Use with **Bible story picture**  
**The potter's house Jeremiah 18:1-12**



For use with **Matching activity**

# Who's the prophet?

Read these Bible verses. (You can use the contents page to find the more unusual Bible books.) Each verse will help you draw a line between the statements below and the name of the prophet who said it.

- Isaiah 6:1
- Zachariah 5:1,2
- Daniel 2:19
- Ezekiel 37:1
- Nahum 1:1
- Jonah 1:1-3
- Amos 4:1

God told me to call some women 'fat cows'.

I am from Eklish and God gave me a message for the city of Nineveh.

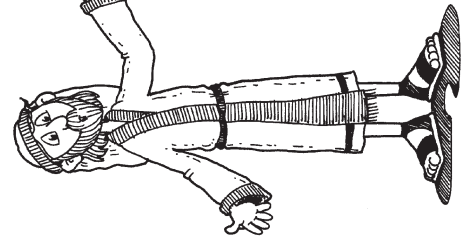
I had a vision of a king's dream.

I had a vision of a flying scroll.

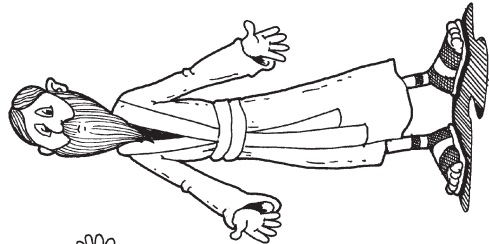
I had a vision of God on his throne.

I am from the valley of dry bones.

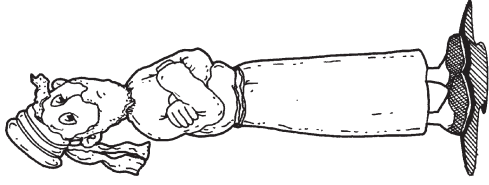
I ran away from God.



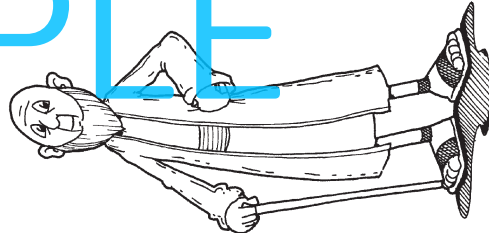
Ezekiel



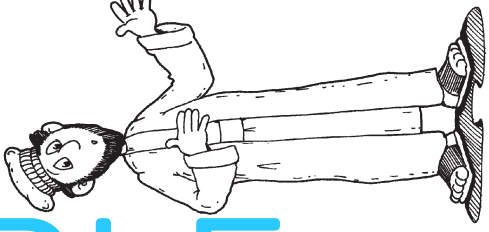
Jonah



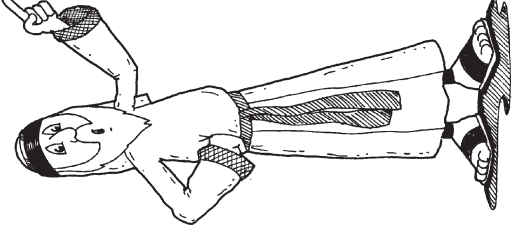
Nahum



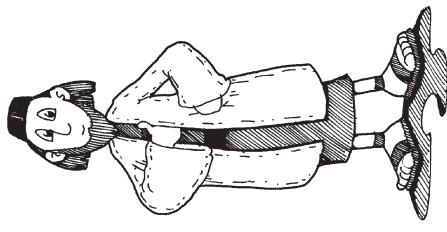
Amos



Zachariah



Isaiah



Daniel

SAMPLE