Teach Grow Sow

Lower Elementary

Jeremiah

Checklist

- ❑ Clay or modeling dough

Introduction:

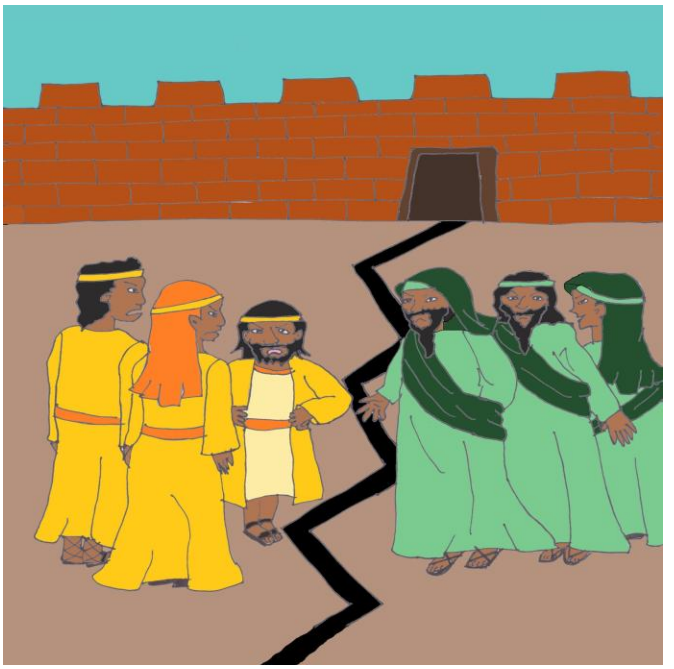
Have everyone share how old they are and something they will be able to do when they are a certain age. (I am six, when I'm seven, I'll be allowed to stay up a half hour later. I'm five, next summer I'll get to take off my training wheels.)

There are plenty of things you're not old enough to do yet. What about serving God? Are you too young to do that?

There are always ways you can serve God, no matter how young you are. You can tell others how much you love Jesus. You can show by the way you live that God is important to you.

Just like you, Jeremiah was very young when God called to him. Anyone can serve God at any age.

The Israelites had now been divided into two countries for over a hundred years. They had both had good and bad kings, but unfortunately, there had been more bad kings than good kings. Many of the people followed whatever their leaders did.



Israel in the north was taken over by the Assyrians. The people of Judah believed they were better than their relatives from the Northern Kingdom. God would surely never allow what happened to them to happen to those living in Judah, where God's temple was!
But they needed to be warned. God called Jeremiah to preach when he was just a youth-possibly even a teenager.



“Give this message to the people of Judah,” God said. “Change your ways and start living right, if you want to keep living in your own country. Don’t fool yourselves into thinking that because My temple is here in Jerusalem you will always have my protection, no matter what you do."



You need to be fair and honest with each other. I have seen how you take advantage of immigrants, orphans, and widows. You have killed innocent people and worship other gods. But if you stop doing these things, I will let you stay in the land I gave to your ancestors and enjoy a long life."



“Yes, I have a special place to be worshiped in Jerusalem, and yes, I have given special blessings to the family of Abraham. I used you Israelites to remove people from this land who had done unspeakable things. But if those people turn to Me and put their trust in Me, I want my people to teach them how to worship Me, so that those nations can be My people, too. My love is for the whole world.”



The people heard Jeremiah's message from God, but many continued to ignore him. So God told Jeremiah to bring them to the pottery shop and teach them a lesson with a demonstration. At the pottery shop, Jeremiah pointed to the potter. "Do you see how he chooses what shape to make the clay on his pottery wheel? It is up to him. If it doesn't come out right, he rolls it up in a ball and starts all over again. God is like this potter. And all of you are like the clay. He is the One who will choose to make our nation strong and safe or allow it to be taken over by our neighbors. If God's people start disobeying Him and doing evil things, He will stop protecting them."



Jeremiah called for Baruch to help him write down all God's warnings on a long scroll and sent him to read it out loud to all the people in the temple.



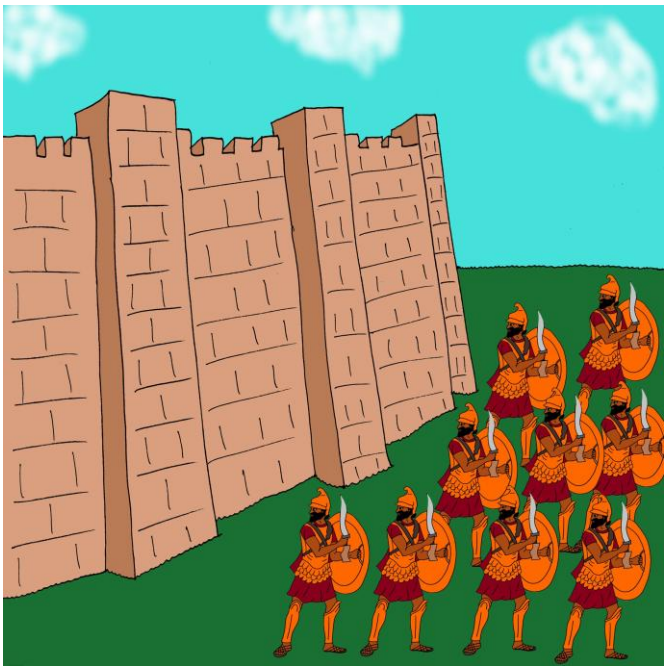
After Baruch read these words, the king's officials brought the scroll to king Jehoiakim and told Baruch to go into hiding with Jeremiah, because they knew the king would be angry when he read what Jeremiah had written from God.



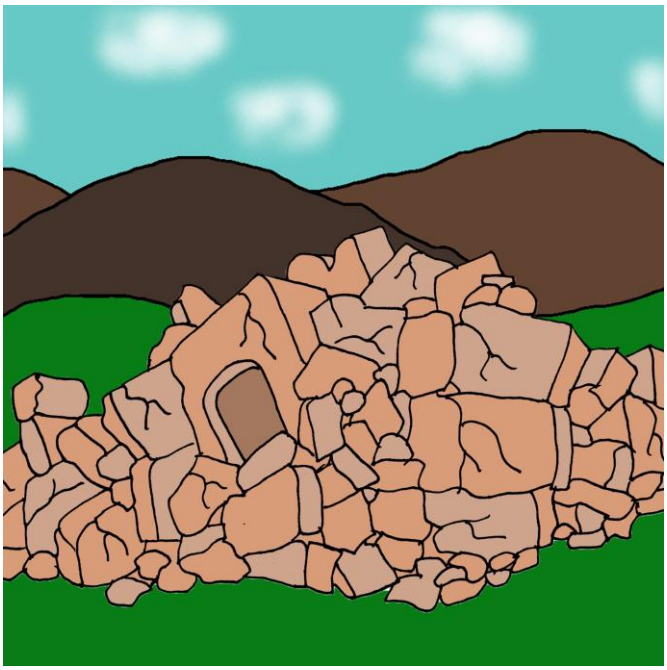
One of the officials, Jehudi, read the scroll to king Jehoiakim as he sat next to his fireplace. The king was so furious with what he heard, that every few lines, he would cut off a piece of the scroll and throw it into the fireplace. He had no interest in changing how he lived his life and didn't believe that anything bad could happen to his kingdom.



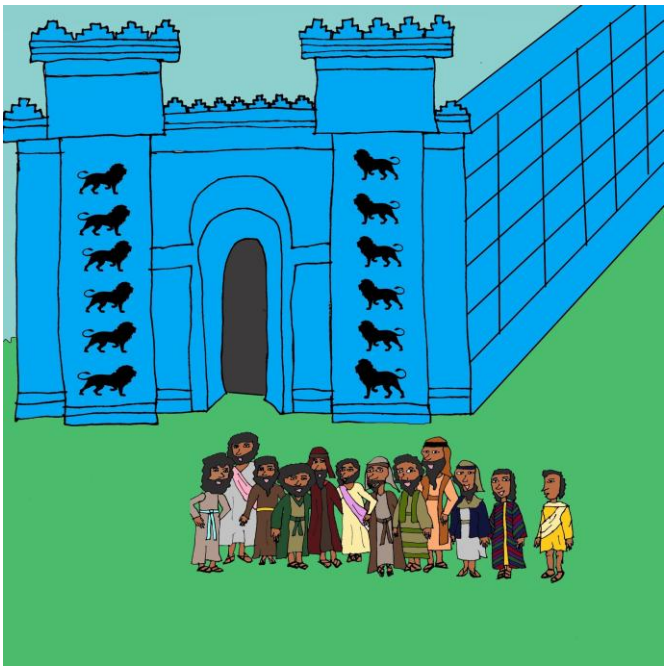
But King Jehoiakim was so wrong! King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon sent his troops to surround Jerusalem for a year and a half. Cities back then were surrounded by walls. It kept invaders out, but it also kept the people in. They couldn't get food from the farms outside and they couldn't run away. They were trapped.



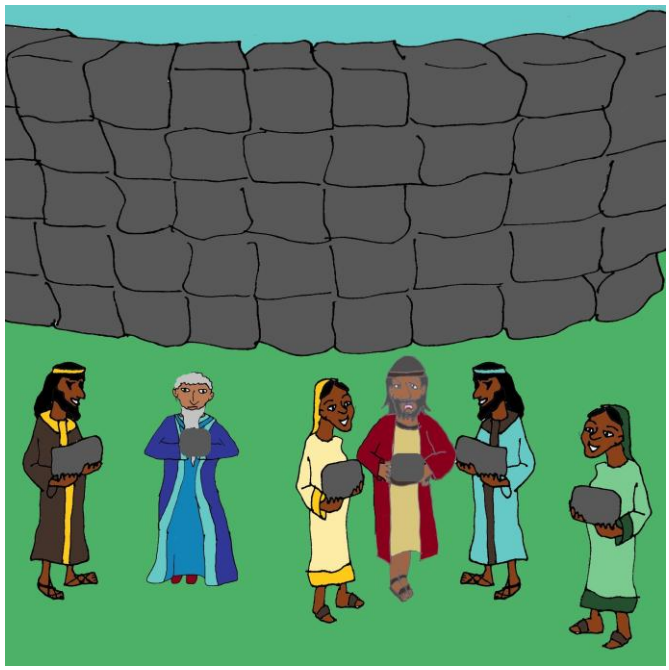
The Babylonian soldiers burned down the Lord's temple, the king's palace, and every important building in the city. They even burned down the houses. Then he ordered the Babylonian soldiers to break down the walls around Jerusalem.



The people of Judah were taken away by force. They were spread out all over the Babylonian Empire so that they couldn’t be together as one people. But God had not forgotten His people. He gave Jeremiah one more piece of bad news for them…but it came with a special promise. “You will be in Babylon for seventy years,” God declared. “Babylon will be the strongest nation and will rule over you."



“But after your punishment is over and you turn back to Me and ask for My help and truly worship Me with your whole heart, I will hear your prayers and bring you back to Jerusalem. For I have plans for you. Plans to help you and not to harm you. Plans that are filled with hope for your future.”



Closing Discussion:

Teach Grow Sow

Jeremiah was young when God called him to be a prophet. How old do you think he was? (let children have fun guessing-we don't know his exact age)
Jeremiah compared God and people to a potter and a piece of clay. Who is in charge of the clay? (the potter) Who gets shaped by the potter? (the clay)
How do you feel about letting God shape your life like a piece of clay? (for children who are bothered by this, remind them this also means having God's protection, having guidance in situations we don't know how to handle)
When Jeremiah warned people to stop disobeying God, what did they do? (ignore him)
What did the king do when he read Jeremiah's warning? (tear it up and throw it in the fire)
When God tells us what to do, should we ignore it, or should we obey? The people in Jerusalem ignored God's warning, and sent Jeremiah away, but he still obeyed God. We can't make other people obey God, we can only make sure that we are obeying Him.

Craft:

Make bowls of clay or modeling dough.

Closing Activity:

Go into an area where you have more room. Have children crouch down and pretend to be pieces of clay. Describe what the potter is doing with the clay (stretching it out, rolling it up, making a vase, making an animal, making a bowl). Have children act out each of these things as if they were the clay.

Jeremiah

Teach Grow Sow

Name:_____



Don't say you're too young," the Lord answered...I promise to be with you and keep you safe, so don't be afraid." ~ Jeremiah 1:7-8

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Craft

Teach Grow Sow

Materials: clay

- Children make bowl out of clay
- Discuss how each potter got to decide how to make their bowl. The bowls did not decide how they would be. God is our potter. We are His clay.

