

# JEREMIAH

All Activity Sheets

## KEY WORDS

SOVEREIGN SOVEREIGNTY

## BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Jeremiah 18:1-2

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students understand the significance of the sovereignty of God and know that he permits them to choose, but they're responsible for their choices

## MEMORY VERSE

"Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you" (Jeremiah 7:23b, NIV\*).

## PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

"Oh, that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears!" (Jeremiah 9:1a).

The prophet Jeremiah had a special character. The Old Testament tells us more about the personality of this prophet than about any other. In many of the verses of his book, he describes himself as the "weeping prophet." One of the most important is 9:1. One of the prophet's great sorrows was to see the fall of his people. His task was to announce the fall and destruction of the nation. What sadder task could a prophet carry out?

The public ministry of Jeremiah coincided with the final days of the kingdom of Judah. During the reign of the last kings, the prophet begged them to repent to save the nation and reverse their fall. Jeremiah, his eyes full of tears, watched as Jerusalem was destroyed and Judah was taken captive in the year 587 BC.

### The Potter's Prophecy

Inspired by the Lord, Jeremiah paid a visit to the potter's house to see how he worked. "But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him" (18:4). This story was the

heart of the message that God wanted Jeremiah to announce.

What was the center or focus of the message? Some say that the pot is a symbol of hope. When the clay loses its shape in the hands of the potter, he gives it the shape that he desires. In the same way, God would work with Israel, giving it a new form, leaving it perfect without failures, until it truly reflected God's purpose.

Others say that the pot story shows God's total control. He does what he wants with people, without them being able to say anything. From this perspective, the potter's message is a message of judgment.

This illustration of the potter's work reflects the sovereignty of God. It is a story of the interactive relationship between God and his people. The action of not destroying the potter's vessel, to remake it again, shows us that God can change his mind in the face of a catastrophe or positive situation, depending on how the nation acts.

## **BIBLICAL COMMENTARY**

Think of all the utensils we use to drink: glass, china, aluminum, pewter, tin, and plastic cups. They're all different vessels. They look and feel different because various materials are used to make them. But even so, they all fulfill the same function: they allow us to hold them and drink a variety of liquids.

The story of the potter and the work wheel reminds us that as Christians we're unique and different. But still, we have something in common: we receive and give the love of Christ. God, our Potter, designed us to carry out his mission. The problem arises when we allow things other than those he had planned for us to shape our lives.

These days, there are different influences that shape and transform the lives of our preadolescents. They're pushed and pulled in different directions. What are the influences that will succeed and shape their lives? This question raises the most important topic of our lesson today. Pray that the tender hearts and minds of the students will be sensitive to the patient hands of the Master Potter, who wishes to mold them into vessels worthy of being used for his kingdom.

## **INTRODUCE THE LESSON**

### **Actions have consequences**

Write on the board: "Small Decisions" and "Big Decisions." Separate them with a vertical line. Say: "Every day we all make decisions. Some are small and have no significance. Others are important and will have consequences over time. Ask the students to mention small decisions they made last week, and also big decisions they recently made. Write them on the board. After writing each one, talk to them about the importance of those decisions. There will undoubtedly be decisions that would seem to have no importance now but will ultimately have serious consequences. For example: eating chocolates or drinking carbonated beverages in excess. It is possible that today's decision will not have major importance today, but in the future may cause health problems, such as tooth decay, obesity, or diabetes.

Explain to the preadolescents that all decisions have some kind of consequence. Today's story shows us what happened to a people for deciding not to obey God. Disobedience brings serious consequences, not only in this life but for eternity.

## **TEACH THE LESSON**

### **Newspaper "The Prophecy"**

Read to the group the article in which Jeremiah gives a report, entitled "The Prophecy" in Student Activity Sheet #372. Or, ask a volunteer to read it.

My name is Jeremiah. I'm the guest writer for today's Gazette. I have a very interesting story to tell.

The other day, God told me, "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message."

I was a bit confused, but I always try to do what God asks me to do, and I realized that the only way to get answers was to go to the potter's house to hear what God wanted to tell me. So I went down to the potter's house and saw him working at the wheel. But the clay pot that he was working on was marred/deformed, so he formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.

Then God began to speak to me. He said, "Can't I do with you, Israel, as this potter does? Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel. If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if

that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and doesn't obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it."

"Now therefore say to the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, 'This is what the Lord says: Look! I'm preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions."

Please tell them this, Jeremiah, although they may not listen to you. They will continue to do the wrong thing, but warn them about this, anyway.

Then I left the potter's house, and I understood God's message to me. Stay tuned and read next week's Gazette where I'll explain a little more about God's message to Israel.

(This Bible story is found in Jeremiah 18.)

At the end of the reading, ask these questions:

Why did Jeremiah go to the potter's house? (God asked him to.)

What did Jeremiah see when he came to the potter's house? (The potter working on a vessel, which then broke in his hands; he then crushed it and started making a new one.)

What did God say he would do to Israel? (If they did not obey, he would force them to start again, just as the potter had done with the pot.)

Why would God do that to them? (Because they were sinners and did not want to obey Him. God loved them so much that He wanted to correct what was wrong.)

What did God tell Jeremiah that he should pass on to the people of Israel? (I will allow a disaster to happen to you; therefore, turn from your evil ways.")

What would be the people's response? (God said they would not listen.)

With this in mind, what do you think happened to the Israelites? (God punished them, Jerusalem was destroyed, and most of the people were taken captive to Babylon.)

Why do you think God wanted the Israelites to obey Him? (God loves everyone and wants the best for us.)

The Israelites continued behaving in an evil way and were still bad towards each other. And over time, they came to destroy themselves. That's why God put a stop to their evil. This allowed those who had remained faithful to God to begin again.

## CONNECT THE LESSON

### What would you do if you were king?

Ask the what they would do if they had total control of the world. Some of them could be: "feed the hungry," "heal the sick," "make sure everyone has a nice place to live," etc. Discuss their answers as a group.

Say: "Today we'll talk about someone who has total control of the world. Let's see why God is so important."

### Think about it!

Ask the students to respond to these "Think about it as the potter" questions:

1. How is God like the Potter?
2. How does it feel to be a potter?
3. How did you react when you had to destroy your creation?
4. Why did some of you decide not to break your creations/pots?

### The potter (answers)

How is God like the Potter? (God and the potter are creators; both have power and authority over their creation; both seek to mold their creation to be excellent vessels.)

How does it feel to be a potter? (Powerful when making the vessel; sad if you must destroy it.)

How did you react when you had to destroy your creation? (I have the power to do it, I can do it; but it makes me very sad because I love the vessel that I created.)

Ask the students to respond to these “Think about it as the clay/ mud” questions:

1. How are we like the clay/mud.
2. How are we different from the clay?
3. How was Israel like the clay?
4. In what ways can we let God, our Potter, mold us and shape us like clay?

### **The clay (answers)**

How are we like the clay? (We were both created; we’re led by the supreme God; we’re moldable.)

How are we different from the clay? (We can choose to obey or disobey God; we can decide how we’ll finish.)

How was Israel like the clay? (They were disobedient to God, that’s why he was ready to destroy those who disobeyed, and those who did good could begin again.)

Ask: “In what ways can we obey God, our Potter? (We can obey his Word; communicate with him through prayer; worship him and do his will.)

## **PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE**

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Write the memory verse on the board and repeat it with the students several times.

Before the session, write the memory verse on cards, each word separately. Hide them in different places in the room. To start this activity, ask the students to find the cards. When they have found them, tell them to stand next to each other with their card so that the verse is formed correctly. Then ask them to say it by heart. For those who know it, allow them to leave the room first at the end of the lesson.

## **WRAP-UP**

### **Pray**

It is possible that the students have been touched by today’s lesson. If there are some who have not yet accepted Jesus as their Savior, this is the opportunity for them to give their hearts to Jesus and confess their sins. Say: “God wants us to love him and let him be the Lord of our lives. Maybe some of you have never given your life to him, and you would like to do it today for the first time. Others may wish to dedicate their lives to the Lord.”

Find someone to take these students to a separate place to pray, or you can do so while an assistant stays with the rest of the group. Allow a moment to pray silently. Then guide them to make a confession prayer. It can be: “Lord, mold our lives, just as the potter molded his vessel. Remove the rough edges that do not allow us to be useful vessels for you. Please forgive our sins, mold our lives in such a way that we’re useful vessels. For your honor and glory, Amen.”

### **Encourage**

This session can be special for everyone. Ask the parents or relatives who came with your preadolescents to come forward and say the memory verse with their child. If possible prepare cookies and drinks or some other local snack to celebrate that the students invited the family to say the verse together.

If you prepared Bibles or New Testaments to give to parents or relatives, this is a good time to do so. Congratulate the parents who came. Say that the whole group is happy to meet them. Invite them to return when they wish and also give an invitation with the schedule of services. If possible, introduce them to the pastor and other leaders.

### **Invite**

You chose an excellent way to meet parents and do evangelism. Congratulations, repeat it as many times as you think best during the year. Say something interesting about the next session to encourage the group to attend.

