
 **MUD MOOD.** Have all the Bible students shut their eyes to get into the mood for mud. Go around the room with a plastic container full of “mud”. Have each student place one of their hands in the container and guess what today’s lesson is about or get a small taste of what it must have been like for Jeremiah.

 **Mud Pie.** Ask the Bible students if they have ever made a mud pie when they were younger. What did it feel like? Was it edible. Okay, it was edible, but did it taste good? Have the students share what they think might go in a real mud pie they could eat. Guide them a bit. They would need a pie crust, chocolate pudding, cool whip, maybe nuts. Ask the students to give detailed instructions. Write them all down [Later in the week surprise them with a post card with a recipe for Mud Pie. Ask them how their week is going, etc.]

MOUNTAIN MAMA MUDSLIDE PIE

(A three-layer dessert, that is great for company)

First layer:

2 T. sugar

1 c. flour

1/3 c. margarine

1/2 c. chopped nuts

Mix first three ingredients like a pie crust. Add nuts. Press into bottom of a buttered 9 by 13 inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Cool.

Second layer:

1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened

1 c. powdered sugar

1 c. Cool Whip, thawed

Mix and spread on crust.


Third layer:

1 large pkg. instant choc. pudding

1 1/2 c. milk

1 c. Cool Whip


Mix and spread. Top with Cool Whip.


 **STUCK.** Place a GI Joe into a “mud” filled container. [Don’t say anything about it. Have it set out on a table for the Bible student to see.] For Jeremiah, being a prophet was dirty work, but he was God’s man for the job. Use this as a prop for the Bible Adventure.



Book:

Presentation Ideas -

 **RAGS/ROPES.** Bring in rags and ropes. Demonstrate with a student how Jeremiah was pulled out of the cistern. [What is a cistern? It is an underground storage tank for water--probably rain water.] Chapter 38 verse 6 says, “he sank down into the mud.” Imagine, it took 31 men to pull him to safety.

 **JOE IN A BUCKET.** Place a GI Joe in a bucket of mud-like substance. Bring in a small piece of cloth and a string. Throw the cloth in and tell “Joe” to place the cloth under his arms to protect him. Then, throw the rope down to pull him up. How many Bible students are in the room? Have them count off. Teachers join in the counting! How many of you would it have taken? Would you have to go find more help?

Bible Adventure -

Suppose God spoke to you and gave you a special message to deliver to the people in our city. Suppose it was a warning for them to change their sinful ways and turn back to God. And suppose, as would likely happen, some people would ignore you, laugh at you or even seek to harm you. Now suppose God asked you to keep on delivering that message for 40 years! Would you get discouraged? Would you give up and say, "Forget it, God, they are never going to listen!" That would be a very natural response, wouldn't it?

I've just described to you the life of Jeremiah, God's prophet to the people of Judah. For 40 years Jeremiah faithfully brought God's messages to the rebellious people of Judah. He began prophesying when Josiah was king. Josiah was the last righteous king of Judah. He honored God and during his reign

was responsible for destroying all the idols and tearing down all the altars the people had built to false gods. Jeremiah probably watched all this happen and rejoiced. (You can read all about Josiah doing this in 2 Chronicles chapter 34.) Unfortunately, Josiah's sons, Jehoikim and Zedekiah, who became kings after their father, were not the same kind of man as Josiah. Under their reigns, Judah became increasingly more evil and rebellious and in spite of all Jeremiah's warnings, continued in their rebellion. Now during the reign of King Zedekiah, the ax was finally going to fall.

If you'll remember from our last story, the Babylonians had surrounded Jerusalem and it was only a matter of time before the city fell into their hands. Jeremiah had repeatedly given God's message to Zedekiah and the people that the only way to survive was to surrender to the Babylonians. Some of the Jews had listened and surrendered to Babylon. Zedekiah and many others had not. They looked on those who had surrendered as traitors to Judah. They were proud, and still believed God would not let them fall. They resented Jeremiah when he told them it would happen.

Zedekiah did not totally dismiss Jeremiah, though. He seemed to recognize that Jeremiah was God's man, so he sent some of his officials to Jeremiah to ask him to pray for Jerusalem. Zedekiah may have thought there was hope for Judah because the Babylonian army had left Jerusalem to pursue the Egyptian army back to Egypt. But Jeremiah told Zedekiah not to have false hope. The Babylonian Army would return and attack the city, capture it, and burn it down.

Before the army returned, though, Jeremiah started to leave the city to go back to his hometown for a short time to claim some property there. But as he was leaving, the captain of the guard arrested him and accused him of deserting to the Babylonians. Even though Jeremiah told him it was not true, they beat him and threw him into a damp, dark dungeon. After a long time Zedekiah sent for him and asked if God had any new word for him. The message had not changed and Jeremiah repeated the same thing. Zedekiah would become a captive of the king of Babylon. Jeremiah asked the king not to send him back to the dungeon because he feared he would die there. So Zedekiah kept him prisoner in the courtyard of the guard.

From this prison Jeremiah was able to tell the people passing by that they needed to surrender to the Babylonians in order to survive. It was useless to try to fight because God had said He would hand the city over to the king of Babylon. Some of Zedekiah's officials heard Jeremiah and complained to Zedekiah. They said that Jeremiah was discouraging Judah's soldiers and the rest of the people left in the city with his message of surrender. Zedekiah allowed them to take Jeremiah and put him into a great cistern, a huge holding tank for water. The cistern did not have any water in it but it did have lots of mud on the bottom. The cistern was so deep they had to lower Jeremiah into it with ropes. When Jeremiah reached the bottom, he sank down into that thick, oozy mud. Jeremiah would have remained there, starved to death, or fallen from exhaustion and suffocated in the mud, but God had other plans.

Ebed-Melech, an official in Zedekiah's palace, went to the king and told him he thought Jeremiah had been treated very unfairly. Zedekiah told him to take 30 men and lift Jeremiah out of the cistern before it was too late. So Ebed-Melech took the men with him to the cistern. They tossed rags and ropes to Jeremiah to fasten around himself and then pulled him out. Do you think the time Jeremiah spent in the dungeon and in the cistern caused him to stop speaking God's words? No way! Soon after his rescue from the cistern Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah again. This King Zedekiah was going to keep after Jeremiah until he heard what he wanted to hear. But Jeremiah stayed faithful to God and God's word. He warned Zedekiah one last time that if he did not surrender, the city would be destroyed and he would be taken captive. Did Zedekiah listen this time? No, he was stuck in the mud of his pride and fear just as surely as Jeremiah had been stuck in the mud of the cistern. He refused to listen to God's messenger and what was the result?

The Babylonian army returned to Jerusalem and began their attack again. After many months they broke through the city wall and began to take control. Instead of surrendering, Zedekiah and his soldiers attempted to escape but were caught and taken to the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar. Because of his rebellion against Babylon, Zedekiah was made to watch as his sons were killed. He was then blinded and taken in chains to Babylon. This was the end of Zedekiah's pride and rebellion against God. But what about Jeremiah? The Babylonians had heard of Jeremiah and his messages from Judah's God. Nebuchadnezzar sent word that Jeremiah was not to be harmed but was to be given into the care of the new Babylonian governor of Judah.

Can you see God's faithfulness through all these years as He sent warnings through Jeremiah and provided a way for the people of Judah to escape destruction? Do you see the hardness of Zedekiah's heart as he keeps asking Jeremiah for a word from the Lord and then continually ignores what He says? Zedekiah resisted God until it was too late. We can sometimes make the same mistake. We come up with reasons why we don't need to obey God's Word. We think that it doesn't apply to us, or that we have a good reason why we don't need to obey. Be careful not to turn into a Zedekiah. Just as in Zedekiah's day, God has good reasons for asking the things He asks of us. If we ignore Him or disobey, we put ourselves in danger. We will suffer the consequences of our disobedience. Jeremiah's message can be for us, too. Surrender to God and live or ignore it and die.



Look:



CUT IT OUT. Cut out the picture of Jeremiah. Color the picture of the empty cistern. Do not color in the mud area. Cut along the line where Jeremiah sinks. Glue the cistern picture to a blank piece of paper, gluing around the edges only. To make this interesting [have a couple of mud stations set up] fill in the mud area with a mud solution:

*One part water to 2 parts Elmer's glue
Chocolate Quik Powder*

Have the Bible students spread some of the glue solution in the mud area. Sprinkle the powder on and mix it into the solution for a textured mud effect with your finger. [Don't wait until the end of class to do this project. It will need some time to dry.] **3JER24JR.GF1,2**



MUD. Good enough to eat!

Supplies:

<i>oreo cookies</i>	<i>gummy worms [for on the side!]</i>
<i>small paper cups</i>	<i>chocolate pudding</i>
<i>craft sticks</i>	<i>stickers of Jeremiah's face</i>

Spoon chocolate pudding into small paper cups, filling them half full. Crumble 1 Oreo cookie on the top of the pudding. Place a sticker of Jeremiah (**3JER24JR.GF?**) on one end of a craft stick. Place the other end of the craft stick into the cup. Pretend to be one of the 31 that pull Jeremiah. Taste the "mud". Do you think Jeremiah ate some of that mud? Do you think it was this good?



JEREMIAH. PLAN 1: After the letters from the relay have been wiped clean, (See Hook **RELAY "HELP"**) place them on the cookie sheet and set the cookie sheets at an angle so all the students can see them. How many words can you make from the letters JEREMIAH? This is similar to a spelling bee. Take turns going around the room. The first person walks up to the cookie sheet and rearranges the letters to make a word. Keep track on **3JER24JR.GF3** so that an answer is not duplicated. If there is a duplication, the student is out. If a student can't think of a new word the student is out. The student still able to spell a word at the end, **WINS!** PLAN 2: Simply have the Bible students create as many words as they can on their own. Start going around the room asking students to share their list of words. If there are any duplications, those words must not be counted. Ask if any one has any words that weren't mentioned. Have that person read their list and so on until you have a winner. The winner could receive a bag of potential mud: 5 oreo cookies in a zip-loc bag. **3JER24JR.GF3**

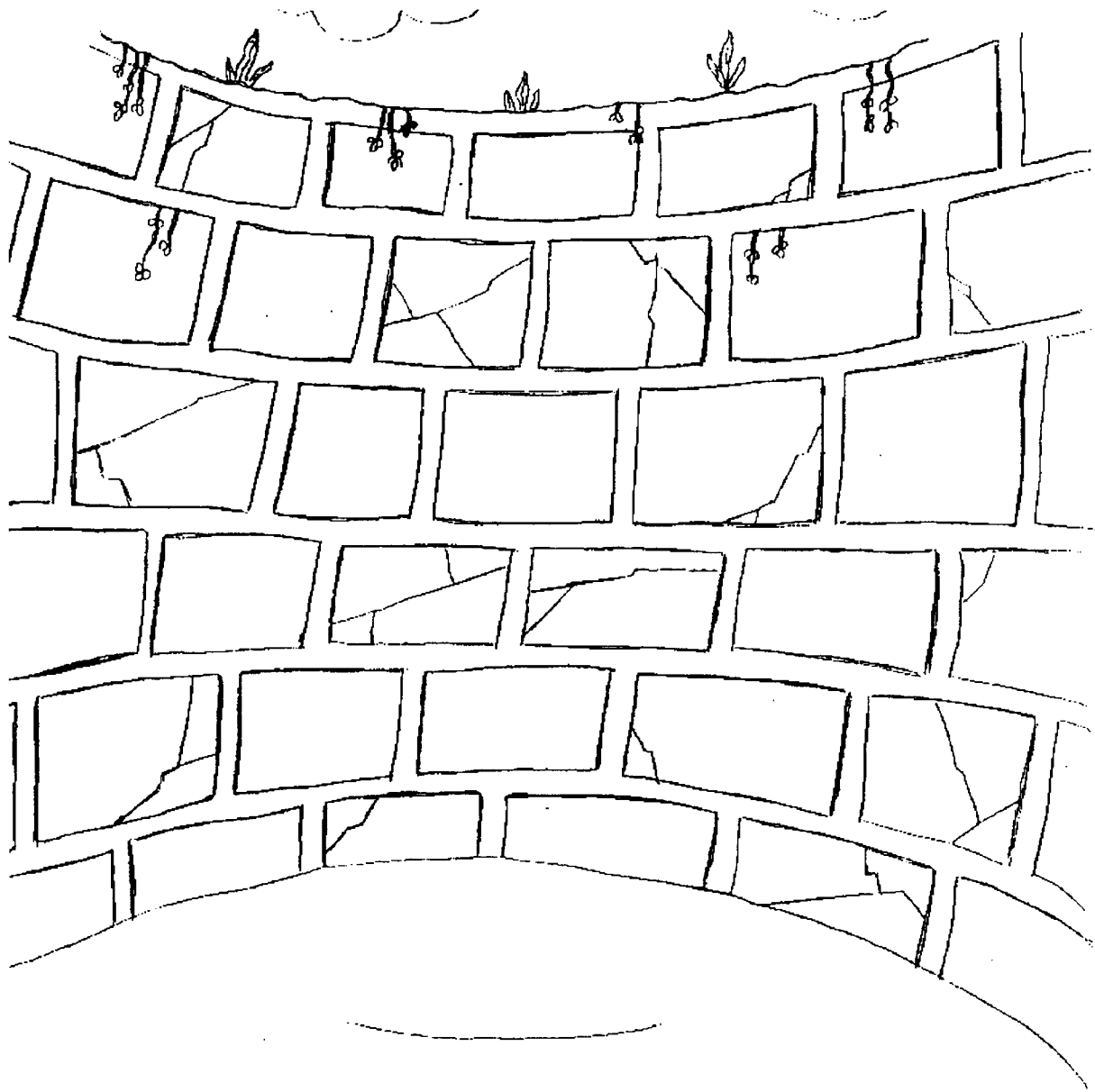


Took:

4 P's. The four P's is a little ditty to help you remember the prophet, people, prophecy and principle of each book of the Old Testament that we are studying this year. You can jump rope to each little ditty if you can do to rhythm!

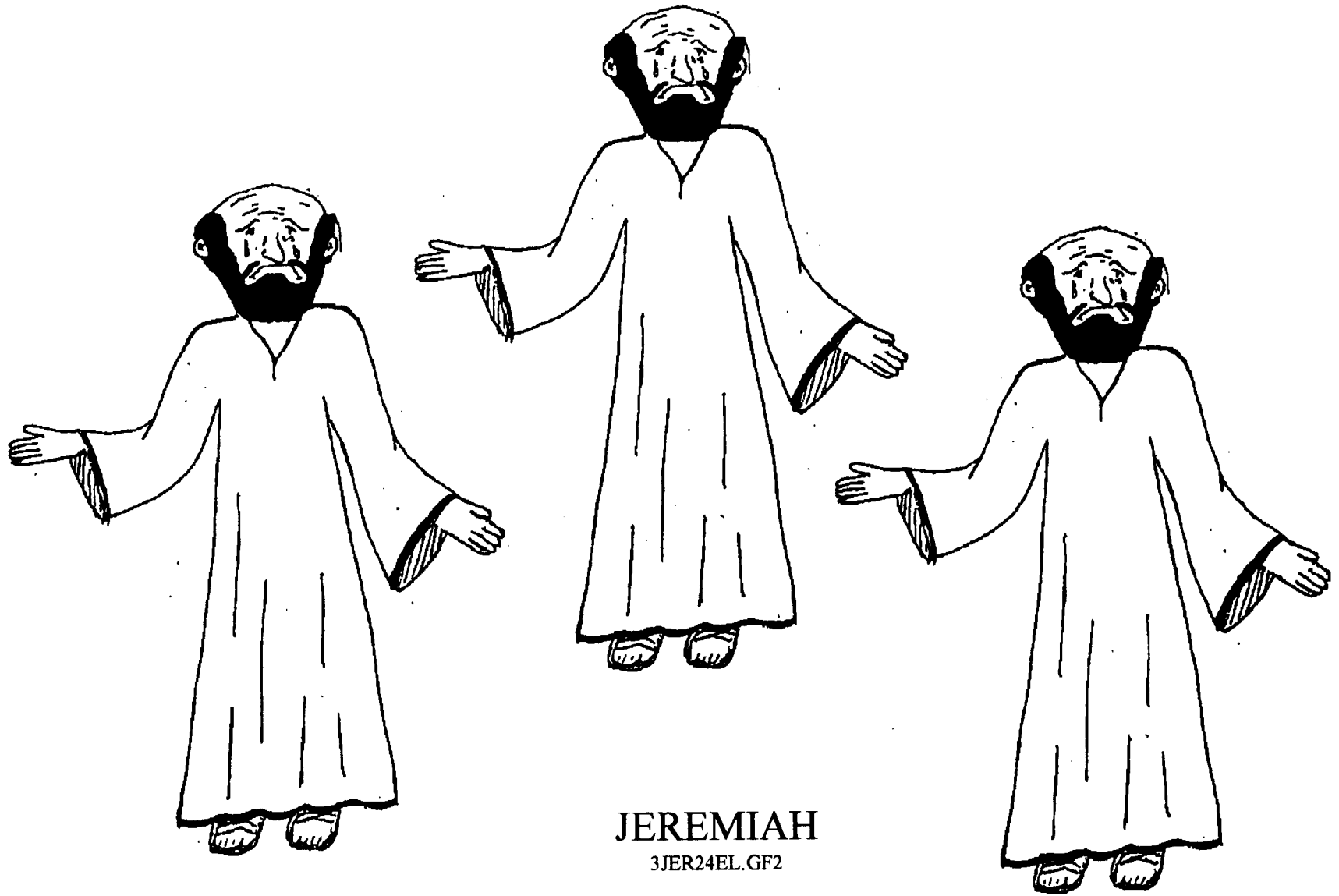
The Prophet is Jeremiah
The People are from Judah
The Prophecy . . . God's Punishment
Exile . . . to Babylon
The Principle . . . godliness goal
Popularity No.
These are the 4 P's
Got 'em from Jeremiah
Now it's time . . . to jump out.

QUESTIONS. Things that make you say Hhhmmmm. Jeremiah said, in Chapter 38, verse 22, that the women of the palace would say to King Zedekiah that he was stuck in the mud. In what way was Zedekiah stuck? Jeremiah was stuck in the kind of mud that makes your skin dirty. Zedekiah was stuck in the kind of mud that makes you heart dirty. How is it possible for us to be stuck today? How can we keep from being stuck? Who is strong enough to pull us out? Have students share experiences where, like Zedekiah, they knew what God wanted them to do, but they were stuck wanting and trying to get their own way. **3JER24JR.GF3**



A CISTERN FOR JEREMIAH

3JER24GF1



JEREMIAH
3JER24EL.GF2



A CISTERN FOR JEREMIAH

3JER24JRGF2

J E R E M I A H

How many words can you make from JEREMIAH.
[3 Letters or more.]

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'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'
Jeremiah 29:11

3JER24JRGF3

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