

Muddy Cistern Snack

Materials

- ☐ Clear plastic cups, one per student
- ☐ Small plastic bags, one per student
- ☐ Chocolate sandwich cookies, one or two per student
- ☐ Chocolate pudding, ready-made cups or instant mix prepared before class
- ☐ Licorice string, gummy worms, or other long, colorful candy, one per student
- ☐ Candy/cracker bears or people, two per student
- ☐ Spoons
- ☐ Optional: drinks

Instructions

Before class, put 1–2 cookies in a plastic bag for each student. Make a large batch of instant chocolate pudding or use ready-made pudding cups. Place candy/crackers in bowls for students to share.

During class, place pudding and candy bowls at each table and pass out a plastic cup and small plastic bag with cookies to each student. Direct students to crush cookies to crumbs in the bag. Have them dump the crumbs into the bottom of their “cistern” cup. Add chocolate pudding on top as the mud. (If using ready-made pudding cups, have students stir their cookie crumbs into the pudding.)

Push one candy or cracker “person” as Jeremiah partway into the pudding. Use another candy or cracker as Ebed-melech outside of the cup. Give each student a licorice string or gummy worm to hang over the edge of the cup as the “rope.”

Before eating the snack, have students use their snack items to explain or act out Jeremiah’s rescue to a classmate.

Suggested Discussion

Jeremiah told the people that the Babylonians would defeat Jerusalem. The city officials were so angry with Jeremiah’s message that they threw him into a cistern and left him there to die. Jeremiah sank down in the mud at the bottom of the cistern. He must have felt miserable and alone.

But God used a servant of the king named Ebed-melech to speak to King Zedekiah. The king agreed that Jeremiah did not deserve to die from hunger in the cistern. Ebed-melech and 30 men used old rags and clothes and ropes tied together and threw them down to Jeremiah. Jeremiah tied them around his chest, and the men pulled him out. He must have been quite stuck if it took that many men to rescue him!

God didn’t abandon Jeremiah even when things looked terrible. He was with him the whole time. God won’t leave us during bad times either. Those are the times we need to trust God the most!