



February 12, 2017

Dear Teacher,

This week we look at the first of three parts of the story of Jonah. A great story of God's mercy toward the wicked, disobedience, and repentance. This week we look at the first chapter of Jonah; his fleeing to Tarshish to being swallowed by a giant fish. The hope is not to dwell on the fish, but to have children understand Jonah's disobedience and God's incredible mercy towards the wicked Ninevehites. As the story unfolds both Jonah's disobedience and God's mercy become greater. As you prepare to teach the lesson, an encouragement is to keep this month's memory verse, Jonah 4:2b, in the forefront, "I know that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."

We encourage all classrooms to engage with the story from the options provided in class. Teachers, tell the story using any of the provided helps (Vos, Jesus Story Book Bible, Gospel Story Book Bible or printed Handout). If you would like, read the selected Scripture passages aloud in class, discuss or explain what the passages mean, and use the questions below to help guide the discussion. Also, use time in class to teach the Scripture Memory and the Catechism Questions.

Morning Overview

Lesson: *Split:* Jonah, Part 1

Lesson Objective: To communicate to children that God always keeps His promises despite circumstances and even our inability to trust Him. God wants us to trust Him and obey His commands.

Scripture: Jonah 1:1-17

Story: Vos Children's Bible, Chapter 91 (Pages 209-210); The Beginner's Bible, Pages 260-264;
The Gospel Story Book, Pages 138-139.

Teaching Summary:

- God's promises do not change despite circumstances, people and even our inability to believe them. God keeps His promises even when we do not trust Him or follow His commands.
- The city of Nineveh is a great, but wicked city. It serves as the capital city for the great Assyrian empire.
- The Assyrians were enemies of God's people, the Israelites. The Israelites hated the Assyrians for their cruelty towards them.
- God appointed Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach against it. Jonah instead fled in the opposite direction of Nineveh.
- Jonah attempted an escape by sea. God sent a great storm to toss the ship.
- Jonah confessed his disobedience as the reason for the storm and told the sailors to throw him overboard to quiet the mighty storm.
- The sailors threw Jonah overboard, and the storm ceased.
- A giant fish swallowed Jonah whole. Jonah stayed in the fish's belly for 3 days and 3 nights.

9:30am Sunday Schedule

For the Sunday Schedule, please see "Sunday Schedule for Preschool" found in Handbook on the teacher's table.

Cherub Church

- Kindergarten/5's – 9:35-10:00 (Classroom's: 162, 163, 121, 123, 124)
- 3's/4's – 10:05-10:30 (Classroom's: 166, 165, 164)

Craft: Fleeing Jonah Finger Puppet

Supplies: Jonah puppet, crayons/markers

Instructions: Have children color Jonah, insert index and middle fingers into holes as Jonah's legs/feet.

Snack



11am Sunday Schedule

Craft: Ship to Tarshish

Supplies: Sponge, popsicle stick, cardstock sail, verse sticker, glue

Instructions: Place end of popsicle stick into pre-cut slit in sponge, place verse sticker on sail, glue sail to popsicle stick.



Story: *Split:* Jonah, Part 1

1. **PRAY** for your time and any requests the children may have.
2. **ASK** the Transition Question: Boys and girls, have your parents ever told you to do something (a task or chore), and you didn't do it? [Ask for a few examples if kids seem eager to share]. In our story today, we will hear about a man named Jonah. Jonah is in the Old Testament. And Jonah had a big problem. The Lord told him to do something, and Jonah did not do it. Let's find out what God told Jonah to do...
3. **TELL** the Story. Use the Vos Children's Bible, the Jesus Storybook Bible, the Beginner's Bible, or the story below to aid in telling the story.
4. **REVIEW** the questions to help children understand the story.

Questions for Review

Scripture Memory (Jonah 4:2b)

Catechism Questions (1-14)

Hymn of the Month: O Worship the King (Trinity Hymnal, Page 2)

Free Play

Questions for Review

Questions for Younger Children:

- What is the name of the wicked city in our story?
- Who did God want to go to Nineveh?
- What did God want Jonah to do in Nineveh?
- What did Jonah do?
- What happened on the sea to the boat?
- What did the sailors do?
- Why did the sailors throw Jonah overboard?

Questions for Older Children:

- What does the story tell us about God?
- What does the story tell us about Jonah?

Scripture Memory for February:

“...I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love...”

Jonah 4:2b

Catechism Questions:

- Question 1 – Who made you? *God*
- Question 2 – What else did God make? *God made all things.*
- Question 3 – Why did God make you and all things? *For his own glory.*
- Question 4 – How can you glorify God? *By loving him and doing what he commands.*
- Question 5 – Why are you to glorify God? *Because he made me and takes care of me.*
- Question 6 – Is there more than one true God? *No. There is only one true God.*
- Question 7 – In how many persons does this One God exist? *In three persons.*
- Question 8 – Who are they? *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*
- Question 9 – What is God? *God is a Spirit and does not have a body like men.*
- Question 10 – Where is God? *God is everywhere.*
- Question 11 - Can you see God? *No; I cannot see God, but He can always see me.*
- Question 12 – Does God know all things? *Yes. Nothing can be hidden from God.*
- Question 13 – Can God do all things? *Yes. God can do all His holy will.*
- Question 14 – Where do you learn how to love and obey God? *In the Bible alone.*

Story

Transition

Boys and girls, have your parents ever told you to do something (a task or chore), and you didn't do it? [Ask for a few examples if kids seem eager to share]. In our story today, we will hear about a man named Jonah. Jonah is in the Old Testament. And Jonah had a big problem. The Lord told him to do something, and Jonah did not do it. Let's find out what God told Jonah to do...

Nineveh and Jonah

Nineveh was a great city. In fact, it was the capital of the great Assyrian Empire. This empire stretched across the entire ancient lands that we have read about in the Old Testament. The people of Nineveh did not love or obey the Lord. The people of Nineveh, called Ninevehites, worshipped idols, or false gods. If you remember, idols were carved statues made from stone or wood that were not real. Nineveh was also an enemy of God's people in Israel. The Israelites feared the Ninevehites. The Ninevehites invaded Israel and waged war on God's people.

One day, the Bible says, the word of the Lord came to Jonah and told him, “Get up, go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it. I see the evil things they do.”

Jonah was an Israelite and worshiped the One, True God. When Jonah heard God's command, he knew what it meant to go to Nineveh. Jonah knew that God was gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (4:2b). God wanted the Ninevehites to repent and worship Him alone. And if the Ninevehites did this – if they worshipped God – they would be saved. Jonah knew that God wanted to extend mercy to the wicked Ninevehites. But Jonah did not want God to do this, so Jonah decided to do the opposite of what God said.

Going in A Different Direction

The Bible tells us Jonah got up, just like God said, but when he stepped outside of his house he went in the exact opposite direction of Nineveh. Jonah traveled to the city of Joppa [**pronunciation:** jop-pa]. Joppa was a coastal city filled with ships going to different cities and places. Jonah was waiting for a ship to go across the sea, and there he found one sailing to Tarshish [**pronunciation:** tar-sh-ish]. Tarshish was a wealthy city and far away from Joppa. So far away, it took a very long time for a ship to get to Tarshish. Jonah wanted to get as far away from Nineveh as possible! So, Jonah boarded the ship to Tarshish and watched the city disappear across the horizon as the ship made its way out to sea.

As Jonah traveled across the sea, God's word to him kept echoing in his mind. "Get up, go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it. I see the evil things they do." The words kept repeating over and over, and Jonah knew he had disobeyed the Lord. Jonah could not forget the words. Soon Jonah was so tired from his travels and running away from the Lord, he fell fast asleep.

The Storm

"Crash!" "Whoosh!" "Thud!" "Crash!" "Whoosh!" "Thud!" A violent storm came out of nowhere it seemed. The ship Jonah was on was suddenly overtaken by a big thunderstorm. The sea rocked the ship almost as though it was throwing it between the waves. The sailors onboard were scrambling to tie down the cargo and prepare for the storm. These seasoned sailors had sailed through rough storms before, but this one was the worst they had seen in quite some time. The captain of the ship shouted orders to the crew, but nothing could be heard because the storm was so loud. Below deck, cargo went from one side to the next as the ship rocked between the waves. Jonah was fast asleep for a very long time. The storm had done nothing to waken the slumbering Jonah. Huge wave after huge wave kept hitting the ship. Boards began to creak and whine as though they were about to snap into pieces. The ship's captain was terrified as was his crew. He did not know what else to do. He then ordered his men to throw the cargo overboard thinking that maybe the ship could survive the terrible storm if it did not weigh as much. As the captain barked the orders he watched sailors cry out to their gods for help. But there was no answer; there was no relief from the storm. The men kept tossing boxes of goods overboard. The precious cargo was all gone, but it did not help.

As the storm raged against the ship, Jonah continued to sleep down in the bottom of the ship. Even though the cargo below moved to and fro, he was completely unfazed by the massive storm. The captain of the ship left the deck and went below to see what else could be thrown overboard. Once below, he wiped his eyes of water and rain to look around. As he looked across the belly of the ship, he saw Jonah asleep on a cot. "Asleep!" the captain thought, "How can he be asleep in a storm like this?" The captain went over to Jonah, shook him, and said, "Why are you sleeping? Get up! Pray to your god! Maybe your god will pay attention to us. Maybe he will save us!"

Then a huge wave hit the ship almost turning it over! The motion threw the captain on his back. Jonah awoke from his sleep dazed and confused. Jonah rubbed his eyes and saw all the cargo rumbling below deck. He heard the waves crashing against the ship, and knew immediately what was happening. "The Lord has sent this storm," he thought to himself. As Jonah thought this, he heard the boards of the boat creaking as though they were about to snap into pieces. He could hear the sailors above shouting and crying out to their gods for help. It did not matter though. The sailor's false gods were not in control of the storm; they were not even real. Jonah put on his coat and shoes and climbed the ladder to the upper deck.

When Jonah arrived on the deck, he was drenched by the water of the rain and sea. The boat was tossed back and forth, and Jonah soon found himself on his back. Completely soaking wet, Jonah slowly got back up. He held on to part of the deck and inched his way over to the group of sailors. He peaked over the sailor's shoulders and heard one say, "Let's throw lots to see who caused these troubles." Jonah muscled his way to the front of the crowd of sailors. The sailors wanted to know, and needed to know, why this storm was tormenting them. As Jonah looked on,

one sailor threw down several sticks to see what, or who, caused this storm. The lots fell into place and everything pointed towards Jonah. The sailors near Jonah moved away from him. All eyes were on Jonah. This terrible storm and all the trouble the ship endured was because of Jonah. A sailor asked, "Tell us what you have done. Why has this terrible thing happened to us? What is your job? Where do you come from? What is your country? Who are your people?"

Jonah ashamedly looked down at his feet. The Lord's words still echoing in his mind, "Get up, go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it. I see the evil things they do." Then Jonah looked up at the men and said, "I am a Hebrew. I fear the Lord, the God of heaven. He is the God who made the sea and the land." Once the sailors heard this they became very afraid. Another sailor asked, "What terrible thing did you do?" Jonah told them the story and how he was running away from the Lord. As Jonah finished telling them another huge wave rocked the ship. The waves were getting bigger, the wind fiercer. The sailors became more afraid. They then asked Jonah, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down?" What Jonah said next left the sailors astonished.

Man Overboard!

Jonah said, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then it will calm down. I know it is my fault that this great storm has come on you." The sailors looked at one another; they could not believe what they had heard from this Hebrew. Certainly, this cannot be true they all thought. Instead of throwing Jonah into the sea, the sailors tried to row the ship back to land. But it was useless. The wind, waves and storm were too powerful.

The sailors cried out to the One, True God, "Lord, please don't let us die because of taking this man's life. Please don't think we are guilty of killing an innocent man. Lord, you have caused all this to happen. You wanted it this way." The men grabbed Jonah and lifted him up. As they carried him closer to the edge of the ship, Jonah's heart raced. Jonah did not know what would happen next, but he knew all of this was his fault. The men got closer to the edge of the ship, and once they arrived at it they threw Jonah into the raging sea.

"Splash!" Jonah went into the dark blue sea. As soon as he disappeared underwater, the sea became calm. The wind died down, and the storm clouds disappeared. The Bible says that once the sailors saw all of this happen they feared the Lord very much. The sailors offered a sacrifice and promises to the Lord too.

As Jonah fell deeper, and deeper, and deeper into the water, it became darker, and darker, and darker. Jonah could not see anything, and he could not swim. It seemed like all was lost. But then Jonah felt a sudden rush and pull. He was sucked into a dark, stinky sort of dry cavern. It was completely dark, but Jonah could breathe a little. The cavern smelled of rotten fish, and Jonah was tangled in seaweed and fish bones. The cavern hummed and vibrated at times. Jonah was alone, confused and afraid.

The Bible tells us that the Lord caused a very big fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights. He often thought of the Lord's Words to him, "Get up, go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it. I see the evil things they do." Jonah disobeyed the Lord, and now he was in the belly of a fish. If only Jonah had obeyed God, what would have happened? Jonah did not know, but we will find out next week.