



Dear Teacher,

This week we look at the story of Jonah. A great story of God's mercy towards the wicked and disobedient. 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 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: *Summer Recap:* Jonah

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 1-4

Story: Vos Children's Bible, chapter 91 (pages 209-210); The Jesus Story Book Bible, pages 160-169; 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 to 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.
- After 3 days in the fish, Jonah was thrown up onto land. He travelled to Nineveh where he preached to the people.
- The city of Nineveh repented of its sins against God. Nineveh was saved. This made Jonah angry.

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:

1. Have children color Jonah
2. Insert index and middle fingers into holes as Jonah's legs/feet.



Snack

11am Sunday Schedule

Craft: Giant Fish Swallows Jonah

Supplies: Clothespin, cardstock fish (top/bottom), Jonah, glue stick, crayons/markers

Instructions:

1. Color Jonah and the fish
2. Glue Jonah to inside mouth end of bottom half of fish
3. Glue fish tails to clothespin (place glue on cardstock) so fish mouth opens when clothespin is pinched and Jonah can be seen.



Story: *Summer Recap:* Jonah

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 (Nehemiah 1:5)

Catechism Questions (1-19)

Singing

Free Play

Questions for Review

Questions for Younger Children:

- Who disobeyed God?
- What happened when Jonah was on the boat?
- What did God send to save Jonah when he was in the water?

Questions for Older Children:

- Why didn't Jonah want to go to Nineveh?
- What did the sailors do after Jonah was gone and the water was calm?
- What did Jonah do when he was in the belly of the big fish?
- How long was he there?
- What do we call what happened in Nineveh when the people told God they were sorry and stopped doing wicked things?

Scripture Memory for Summer:

O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments. (Nehemiah 1:5)

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...

Introduction

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 at all. Nineveh was a city that worshipped idols, and one more thing: Nineveh was 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.

Jonah Disobeys

The Bible tells us Jonah got up, just like God said, but he went in the exact opposite direction of Nineveh. Jonah traveled to the city of Joppa [**pronunciation:** jop-pa]. Joppa is a coastal city filled with ships going to different cities and places. Jonah was waiting on a ship to go across the sea, and there he found a ship to Tarshish [**pronunciation:** tar-sh-ish]. Tarshish was a wealthy city and far away from Joppa. Ships traveled very far to get to Tarshish. Jonah

wanted to get as far away from Nineveh as possible! So, Jonah boarded a ship to Tarshish and watched the city disappear across the horizon as the ship made its way out to sea.

Now Jonah heard God's word very clearly. He understood exactly what God wanted him to do. But Jonah did the same thing we do sometimes, Jonah disobeyed. He disobeyed God. Jonah didn't plan on going anywhere near that city. He thought that he could run the other way and run not only from Nineveh, but also from God. And you know what boys and girls, that was a silly idea.

Can a person run away from God? Where would they go? God is everywhere. There's no way we can hide from Him and there was no way Jonah could hide either. But he tried and he ended up in lots of trouble!

The Storm

As the ship sailed across the sea, Jonah was tired, and fell asleep very fast. God loved Jonah and would not let him disobey and go his own way. So, God stopped Jonah by sending a storm. The storm came out of nowhere it seemed. The boat Jonah was in was suddenly overtaken by the big thunderstorm. The waves beat the boat back and forth. The sailors onboard were scrambling to tie down the cargo. These sailors had sailed through rough storms before, but this one was the worst they had seen. The captain of the boat shouted orders to the crew, but nothing could be heard because the storm was so bad. Below deck Jonah had been fast asleep for a very long time. Huge wave after huge wave kept hitting the boat, but Jonah did not wake up. Now the ship captain and his crew were terrified. He did not know what else to do. He then ordered his men to throw the cargo overboard thinking that just maybe the ship could survive this 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. All the cargo was gone, but it did not help. Jonah was still asleep below deck. The captain jumped to the bottom of the ship, "How can you sleep?" He said as he shook Jonah. "Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will see us and give us help."

Now this storm was a different kind of storm than the storms that the sailors had seen before. They knew that it was sent for a purpose and that someone was responsible. And so the sailors cast lots to see who it was. Lots were like dice that we play games with. God made the lots fall on Jonah. God wanted the sailors to know that the storm had come because Jonah was on that boat. The sailors asked Jonah, "What did you do to make all this trouble for us? Where do you come from? What is your country?" Jonah told the sailors the truth, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven and who made the sea and the land." And then Jonah told them what he had done and how he was running away from the Lord.

Man Overboard

As they spoke the sea was getting rougher and rougher. The wind was blowing harder and harder and the waves were beating against the ship. So the sailors asked Jonah, "What can we do to you to make the sea calm down." Jonah answered, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you." But the men didn't want to do that. They didn't want to throw Jonah out of the boat, so the Bible says they picked up the oars and started to row as hard as they could back to the land so they could get out of that rough water. But you know what? It didn't matter how hard the sailors rowed, they couldn't row against a storm that God had sent. As a matter of fact, the Bible says that the sea grew even wilder than before. And so they knew there was nothing else to do, but what Jonah had said. The sailors picked him up and threw him out of the boat. "Splash!" Jonah went into the dark blue sea. As Jonah fell into the sea, it became calm and the wind died down. Then the sailors knew that Jonah's God was the true God. 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.

The Big Fish

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 into the dark sea. He was sucked into a dark, stinky but sort of dry place. It was completely dark, but Jonah could breathe a little bit. 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. God had sent a big fish to swallow Jonah. God loved Jonah, and saved Jonah from drowning by sending the big fish.

Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the fish. He prayed to God to save him from the dark place he was in. Jonah told God that he knew that it was God who saved him in the water and he asked for God's help. After three days and three nights, the Bible says the Lord told the big fish to spit Jonah out! Jonah ended up on a sandy beach!

Revival in Nineveh

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time. "Go to the great city of Nineveh and tell the people the things I've told you." This time Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to Nineveh. On the first day he arrived, Jonah told the people God's words: Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days because of wickedness. The people listened to Jonah and they believed his message. The Bible says they stopped eating food, they took off their beautiful clothes and put on rough cloth and then prayed to the Lord and told him they were sorry. Even the King of Nineveh took off his royal robes and put on the rough cloth. The king said, "Let everyone call on God and give up their evil ways." When people do that, when they tell the Lord they are sorry and change, it is called repentance. The whole city of Nineveh repented. God heard the Ninevites. He saw that they were sorry. God did not destroy their city. God didn't have to save the people in the wicked city of Nineveh, or the sailors on the ship or disobedient Jonah, but He did. As the Bible tells us, God is "a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."