



# OLD TESTAMENT: JONAH

Lesson 30

### BIG IDEA

Jonah is chosen by God to preach God’s warning to Israel’s enemies, the Assyrians, in the capitol city of Nineveh. Jonah disobeys God and runs away on a ship. He ends up in the belly of a great fish where he repents. Jonah obeys God and the people of Nineveh repent. Jonah is still not pleased and goes off to pout. God reminds him that it is right for God to care about lost people.

### MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 8 and/or Jonah 2:9

### KEY VERSES

Book of Jonah

### • PREPARATION & MATERIALS •

### BIBLE LESSON: SKIT

- Small fishing pole (or stick with string and a paper clip “hook”)
- Cast: TL wearing baseball cap. Bear wearing bear ears.
- *Experience Mission will provide a baseball cap and bear ears.*

### CRAFT - STAIN GLASS JONAH

- Black 9 x 12 construction paper with large fish precut from middle, one per child (see template).
- Contact paper precut 8 x 11, two per child.
- Orange tissue paper precut in 1 inch squares
- 2 inch Jonah precut, one per child (see template)
- Tape

### GAME - SHIP CAPTAIN

- Chalk or ropes for marking off boat boundaries.

### WORKSHEETS

- copies of coloring sheet (one per student)



### EM PROVIDES

- scissors
- hole punches
- staplers

## Psalm 8

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!



(extend hands to sides)

You have set your glory in the heavens.



(extend hands high)

Through the praise of children and infants you have



("stop" hand)

established a stronghold against your enemies,

To silence the foe and the avenger.



(index finger over lips)

(wiggle fingers both hands)

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,



The moon and the stars which you have set in place,



(point to moon and stars)

What is mankind that you are mindful of them,



(shrug shoulders)

Human beings that you care for them?

You have made them a little lower than the angels



(flat hand at waist)

And crowned them with glory and honor.



(make crown with hands)

You have made them rulers over the works of your

hands;



(open hands)

You put everything under their feet:



(stomp feet)

All flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,



(hands like claws)

The birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim

the paths of the seas.



(hands together wiggle like fish)

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!



(arms up as if cheering)



# OLD TESTAMENT: JONAH

BIBLE LESSON • SKIT

Lesson 30

---

## CAST

TL wears baseball cap. Bear wears bear ears.

---

## SCRIPT

Bear (Enter stage with a fishing pole over shoulder whistling and strolling)

TL (Enter stage) Well howdy Bear. It looks like you are going fishing.

Bear Indeed I am.

TL I love fresh fish. Fresh caught fish is way, way better than stinky old fish.

Bear I whole heartedly disagree! Stinky fish is the best. The stinkier the better!

TL Ewww. I guess we'll never see eye to eye on that one. I know a story from the bible about a man who spent a lot of time with a stinky fish. Do you have time to hear it?

Bear Sure. Wanna come fishing with me and you can tell the story while I fish?

TL That's a perfect plan. Lead the way.

Bear and TL (Stroll back and forth across the stage a few times)

Bear Ah, here's a good spot. I'll just cast my line and settle in. (Cast fishing line and settle into a comfortable fishing pose)

TL Remember how David and Solomon were good kings and the Lord blessed them by enlarging the land of Israel and giving wisdom and riches? Well, after Solomon died there were many disagreements about who should be king next. The country was divided into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Both kingdoms copied the idol worship of the neighboring countries and God allowed their enemies to conquer them.

During this time the country of Assyria was very great. It had a large capital city named Nineveh that was so large it would take three days for a man to walk around its walls. There was also a prophet named Jonah who had been giving the word of the Lord to the Israelites. One day the Lord gave Jonah a surprising order. "Go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it. It is very wicked."

Jonah did not want to preach to the people of Nineveh because they were enemies of the Israelites. He wanted Nineveh to be punished for their wickedness, not saved. So Jonah ran away. He found a ship that was sailing in the opposite direction and he went on board. But the Lord knew Jonah had disobeyed. He sent a great storm on the sea so the ship was in danger of sinking. The sailors were desperate so they threw everything overboard and prayed to their idols and gods to save them. Jonah was sleeping down in the bottom of the ship when the captain came to him and said, "What are you doing sleeping at a time like this? Wake up. Pray to your God. Maybe your God will hear you and save our lives." The storm continued to rage and finally the sailors came to the conclusion that someone on the ship was bringing the trouble on them. They decided to cast lots to find out who that



# OLD TESTAMENT: JONAH

## BIBLE LESSON • SKIT (PAGE 2)

lesson 30

man was.

Bear What does that mean? To cast lots?

TL Well, casting lots was a way of deciding something. Today people might flip a coin and say heads or tails to make a decision. In other place people use sticks of different lengths and the decision is made based on who pulls the shortest stick. We don't know exactly what the sailors used for their lots, but the bible says that the lot fell to Jonah and that is how they know Jonah was the source of their trouble. "Tell us, who are you? What country are you from? What business are you involved in? Why have you brought all this trouble on us?"

Jonah told them everything: how he came from the land of Israel and had disobeyed the Lord God by running away.

"What should we do to you to make this storm stop?" They asked him.

"Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the storm will stop and the waters will be calm." The sailors were afraid to throw Jonah into the sea, so instead they rowed as hard as they could to land, but they couldn't do it.

Finally they prayed to the Lord God, "Please, don't make us die for this man's life." And they threw Jonah into the sea. Right away the storm ceased and the waves became still. The men on the ship were amazed and frightened. They offered a sacrifice to the Lord God and promised to serve him.

Bear But what happened to Jonah? Did he die? You said something about stinky fish. Where does the stinky fish come into the story?

TL God did a miraculous thing. He caused a great big fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah stayed alive three days and three nights inside the fish. And while Jonah sat in that wet, dark, stinky, slimy fish...

Bear So cool!

TL ...he prayed the Lord and repented of his disobedience. Here's a part of what he prayed. The Lord heard Jonah's prayer and commanded the fish to spit Jonah up on to dry land.

Bear EWWWW! Gross! And so completely awesome!

TL (Laugh) I thought you'd like this story.

Bear Wet, dark, stinky, slimy...wonderful stuff!

TL Hmm. Well, we'll just agree to disagree on that one. May I continue with the story?

Bear Sure. I suppose Jonah is going to visit his enemies now and preach to them? Right?

TL Yes. Jonah went to the city of Nineveh and called, "Within forty days, Nineveh will be destroyed!" He wandered all throughout the city calling the same warning. And the people listened to his message, even though he was a prophet from an enemy land. They turned away from their sins, fasted, and sought the Lord, every one of them. The king even took off his royal robes and wore course sack



# OLD TESTAMENT: JONAH

BIBLE LESSON • SKIT (PAGE 3)

Lesson 30

cloth and sat in ashes as a sign of sorrow.

The Lord saw that the people were sorry for their wickedness and he forgave them and did not destroy their city. Bear, can you guess how Jonah felt when the whole city of Nineveh turned to the Lord?

Bear Wow. I bet he was totally relieved to have finished the job. And he must have been pretty excited that he saved an entire city from destruction.

TL That's what I would have guessed to, but Jonah felt very differently. He was angry because God had spared an enemy of the Israelites. He was afraid that his own people would reject him and call him a false prophet. He did not yet see that God loves all people and wants them to turn from their sin and trust him. Jonah was so angry that he said, "Lord, I was sure it would be like this and you would spare the city. That's why I tried to run away. I know you are gracious and full of pity, slow to anger and rich in mercy. So, take away my life, it's better for me to die than to live." Jonah sat outside the city and watched to see what would happen to the city. While he was there, pouting and angry, the Lord allowed a plant to grow beside him and give him shade from the hot sun. This made Jonah happy. But then a worm destroyed the plant and the hot wind blew. Jonah was suffering and again wanted to die.

Then the Lord said, "You were sorry to see the plant die, though you did not make it grow, and though it came up in a night and died in a night. Shouldn't I have pity on Nineveh, that great city where there are more than a hundred thousand people? They can't tell right from wrong. Shouldn't I show compassion for them?"

Bear Oh, I bet Jonah felt sorry for his bad attitude.

TL I hope he was. The bible doesn't say any more about how Jonah felt. We only know that God spared Nineveh out of his mercy and compassion.

---

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What did God command Jonah to do?
- Why didn't Jonah obey?
- Why did the ship run into a storm?
- What does it mean to cast lots?
- What did Jonah tell the sailors to do?
- What did the sailors do after the storm stopped?
- How did God save Jonah?
- Did Jonah repent? What does it mean to repent?
- What lesson did God want Jonah to learn?
- Why did God show mercy on the people of Nineveh?



# OLD TESTAMENT: JONAH

CRAFT

Lesson 30

• CRAFT •

### STAIN GLASS JONAH

Objective: Kids will make a “stained glass” picture of Jonah in the big fish.

### MATERIALS PROVIDED BY EM

- scissors
- staplers
- hole punches

### MATERIALS BROUGHT BY TEAM

- Black 9 x 12 construction paper with large fish precut from middle, one per child (see template).
- Contact paper precut 8 x 11, two per child.
- Orange tissue paper precut in 1 inch squares
- 2 inch Jonah precut, one per child (see template)
- Tape

### DIRECTIONS

- Peel one piece of contact paper in front of each child.
- Kids carefully cover the contact paper completely with tissue paper squares.
- Place paper Jonah in the middle of the tissue paper.
- Cover with second sheet of contact paper.
- Tape contact paper to the black construction paper with fish cut out.
- Hold up to the light and see Jonah in the belly of the fish.

### EXAMPLE





# OLD TESTAMENT: JONAH

GAME

Lesson 30

• GAME •

**OBJECTIVE: SHIP CAPTAIN**

Kids listen carefully to the Captain's orders and obey.

**MATERIALS BROUGHT BY TEAM**

- Chalk or rope to mark off boat boundaries.

**DIRECTIONS**

- One player is chosen as captain. He calls out orders to the rest of the players who are the crew.
- If a player does not follow an order correctly he is out of the game.
- Introduce about 6 orders to begin with. Add a few more orders as the game continues.

**Orders:**

To the ship: run to the captain's right

To the island: run to the captain's left

Hit the deck: lay down on your stomach (or if players don't want to get dirty, they can crouch down)

Attention on deck: salute and yell, "Aye, aye captain!" -- players may not move now until the captain gives the order of, "At ease!" (i.e. even if the captain gives a different order such as "to the ship" the crew must continue to remain at attention until told "at ease")

Three men in a boat: the crew must form groups of three and sing "Row, row, row your boat" Anybody who is not in a group of three is out.

The love boat: crew members grab a partner and dance. Anybody without a partner is out.

Clear the deck: everyone must have their feet up off the floor

Scrub the deck: everyone on their knees scrubbing

Captain's Quarters: everyone ran towards the captain.

Up Periscope: Every player falls on their back and sticks one leg in the air. The last ones are eliminated.

SHARK!!!!: Everyone must run to a designated base (multiple bases can be used). The last player to the base is eliminated.

Crow's nest: All players must find a partner. The lightest player rides on their partner's back. Those without partners or who assemble the crow's nest too slowly are eliminated.

Three maids in a row: Children form groups of three and sit in a vertical row. The players who are the odd-man-out are eliminated.

Sick turtle: Everyone falls onto their backs and waves hands and feet in the air.

Bow: Run to the front of the boat

Stern: Run to the back

Port: Run to the left side of the boat

Starboard: Run to the right side of the boat.

Row the Boat: Each player finds a partner, sits face to face, holds hands, and pretends to row a boat. Players who can't find partners or who are too slow are eliminated.



Optional: To make the game less competitive, players do not get "out." Instead, if the captain notices that they do not follow an order, they must stand outside the boat for the next 5 orders.





