

Jonah: God's Messenger

Welcome

Welcome children and introduce or remind them of Bible story time rules.

Open time in Prayer

Bible Story (Jonah 1-4)

- How many of you have ever not listened to your parents? They told you to pick up your toys or put your clothes away and instead you disobey and don't do it. Then you get punished and it would have just been easier to do what they asked in the first place!
- Today our story is about a man named Jonah, he was a messenger from God and who didn't follow God's orders very well. This story is called "God's Messenger" and we're going to read it from our Storybook Bible (pages 160-169).
- *Read the Story*
- Jonah didn't listen to God. In fact, he ran the opposite direction God wanted him to go. What was Jonah supposed to tell the Ninevites? *To stop doing bad things because God loves them and wants to forgive them.*
- Where did Jonah run away to? *A Boat*
- What did God send to get Jonah off that boat? *A big storm*
- Everyone was scared and Jonah knew it was his fault. He told the men to throw him overboard so the storm would stop. Then what happened? *A big fish swallowed him*
- God rescued Jonah with the fish. He would have drowned if it didn't swallow him up. How long was Jonah in belly of the fish? *Three days*
- Then what happened? *Jonah was spit out on the shore and told to go to Nineveh.*
- Jonah obeyed God this time and told the people that God loved them and wanted to forgive them. The people listened and started loving God.
- Jonah was in the fish for three days. Who else was in a dark place for three days? *Jesus*. He was in the tomb three days before he rose from the dead. Jonah didn't love the people of Nineveh and didn't care if God forgave them. But Jesus loves people and wants to forgive them. Part of being like Jesus is loving and forgiving others. That's what we learned today: Jesus wants me to love and forgive others.

Memory Verse

Jonah 2:9—'Salvation comes from the Lord.'"

Songs

Jonah Song <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlvuWMqAPTQ> (recaps the story)

Story Reinforcers

Jonah Tissue Paper Craft: The belly of the fish was probably a scary place to be, but God was with Jonah even there! This craft will use tissue paper, contact paper, construction paper and a cut out of Jonah to remind children that God was Jonah's salvation and He is ours. Each child will put orange or yellow tissue paper all over the sticky side of contact paper. Then they'll add a Jonah cutout in the middle. Place a another piece of contact paper on top. Then glue the construction paper with the fish cut out on each side of the contact paper. For full instructions see this link:

<http://almostunschoolers.blogspot.co.uk/2010/02/jonah-craft.html>

Memory Verse Drawing: Give each child a piece of lined paper. Help them write Jonah 2:9 on the paper. Allow them to illustrate the story they heard and what it means to them.

Man Overboard Game: *This game is adapted from The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum.*

1. Say to the kids, "Imagine this room is a ship and you are in a storm at sea with Jonah. The waves are pouring over you; the ship is rocking from side to side; you can't see anything; the wind is blowing; you are scared. How would you move around? Who would like to go to the center of the circle and show us how to move in a storm?"
2. Choose a one or two kids to demonstrate.
3. Say: "We are going to play a game. This room is a ship and it is in a storm. You can move anywhere you like, pretending to be in the storm, but when I call out, 'Man overboard!' everyone has to stop moving and freeze. Anyone who moves is then out of the game."
4. Ask them to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. "Jonah 2:9 — 'Salvation comes from the Lord.'" Remind them that "salvation" is just a longer word for saving or being rescued.
5. Play the game, allowing the children who are out and sitting near you to call out "Man overboard!" with you. You can also send them back to the ship after a few rounds so they are not sitting out for too long. Call out other instructions and descriptions; e.g., "The wind is getting worse!" "The ship is tipping to the right!" "Hit the deck!" etc.
6. At the end of the game talk to the kids about our rescuer, Jesus Christ.