

LESSON 2: SWIMMINGLY SAVED

Scripture: Jonah 2

Main Point: God loves us and wants to rescue us from our sins. God saved Jonah using a fish and saves us through His son Jesus.

Memory Verse: "Salvation belongs to the Lord!" Jonah 2:9

LARGE GROUP LESSON

INTRODUCTION

Last week we "dove" into the book of Jonah. We read almost all of chapter one, and in the coming weeks we'll walk through the next three chapters. Yep, Jonah is just 4 chapters, so we're going to read and learn the **WHOLE** book!

Let's think back on chapter one. We learned that Jonah was a "what"? A Prophet of God- God's messenger to His people. We also learned that Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh and bolted in the other direction & disobeyed God. We also began to understand that God is sovereign-he can make all things work together according to His plan-even when we sin and mess things up.

We left Jonah in chapter one being tossed off a ship and into a stormy sea. Let's find out what happens next to our runaway prophet.

MAIN LESSON

Jonah 1:17, "And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

Now this is the part of the story that we're all familiar with. Jonah gets tossed overboard and swallowed up by a big fish. God **RESCUES** Jonah from the sea. Remember-there was a storm, so this wasn't like jumping into a nice pool, it was a deep, scary and violent ocean. Jonah couldn't have swam back to shore, he would have drowned, but God sent a way to rescue him. Hmmmm, and Jonah stayed in the rescue fish for three days & nights...where else have we heard that number....(JESUS)

Let's read on:

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying, "I called out to the Lord, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice."

Jonah stops and prays sitting in the belly of a fish. Can you even imagine that? Sitting in a gross, icky belly and the first thing he does is pray! Why? Because God rescued him. In his distress or his fear he called to God and he answered him. Let's keep going..

3 For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me.

4 Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.'

Jonah is saying, "I was in the middle of the sea, waves are crashing over me"-Jonah knows he's going to die and then he tells God, "I'll look again upon your holy temple". He's talking about heaven, seeing God once he's died. Jonah knows this is probably the end for him.

5 The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head 6 at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever;

This part makes me think he's just sinking into the ocean. Seaweed around him, sinking deeper and deeper.

yet you brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God.

7 When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

Jonah is sinking and sinking and he calls out to God and God hears him! He sends the fish to scoop him up and rescue him. Just when he thought there was no hope, God reminds him there is! Our hope must be in our Rescuer. But Jonah's prayer doesn't end there:

8 Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love. 9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving

will sacrifice to you;

what I have vowed I will pay.

Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

Here's where we see Jonah's attitude change. He is thanking God for saving him when he was almost dead, but now he is repenting and making a new commitment to God. He realizes his mistake was running from God—he was the same as an idol worshiper and now wants to sacrifice TO God. He's repenting, turning from his old behavior. He promises to do just as God asked him to—Go to Nineveh.

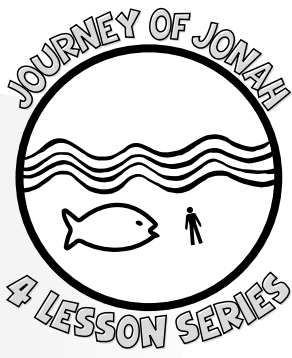
And the last verse here is super important. "Salvation belongs to the Lord". Jonah recognizes that God is the only one who could save him, but also that through God is the only way ANYONE can be saved. How does Salvation belong to the Lord? Through Jesus. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. We can only get to the father, God through Jesus, God's son. We are just like Jonah, drowning in our sin. We keep making the wrong choices over and over, but God gives us a Rescuer to save us from our sin. Just like God sent the fish to save Jonah, He gives Jesus. Jesus came to earth, lived a perfect life, died on the cross and then rose again three days later. He did that because God loves us so much—the same love he had for Jonah, he has for us

Now wait a minute—where have we heard 3 days before....oh yes, back to Jonah. We left him in the belly of the fish for three days and then verse 10 happens:

10 And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

Three days later, Jonah is ready to follow God's plan and gets thrown up on the dry land. Next week we'll hear if Jonah obeys God's plan and gets back on track!

Close in prayer and dismiss to small groups.



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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

Today we read Jonah 1:17-2:10 and learned about God rescuing Jonah and Jonah repenting from his disobedience.

- What did God use to save Jonah? *A big fish*
- What did Jonah do after he was saved? *Pray to God*
- What did Jonah think would happen to him after he was tossed overboard? *He would drown and die*
- What does this chapter tell us about God? *God loves us and wants to rescue us like He rescued Jonah*
- What does Salvation mean? *Salvation means saved, specifically from our sins. God is the only one who can give us salvation*
- How did God give us salvation? *Through his son Jesus on the cross.*
- How do we see Jesus in today's chapter? *Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days like Jesus was in the grave for three days. Jesus is our salvation & rescuer.*

God loved Jonah and saved him with the fish. Jonah was able to promise God that he would obey Him and do what God asked of him. God loves us and wants to rescue us from our sins. God saved Jonah using a fish and saves us through His son Jesus.

BIBLE CHALLENGE

This Week's Memory Verse: "Salvation belongs to the Lord!" Jonah 2:9

Go over this week's verse. Practice as a group. Say: In our lesson this week we learned that Salvation only comes through God. He sent Jesus to be our rescuer, like he sent the fish to rescue Jonah. Let's make a fish saving Jonah to help us remember this truth.

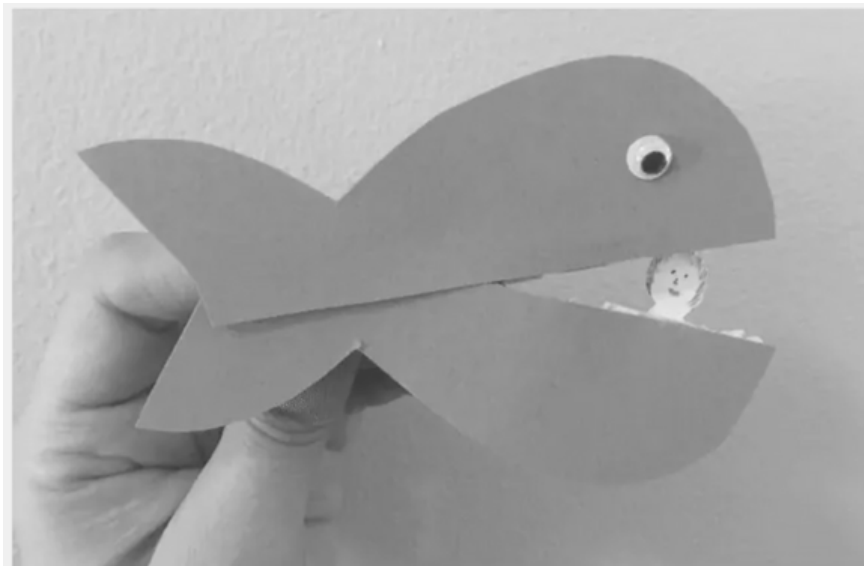
CLOTHESPIN FISH CRAFT

Supplies: blue or gray card stock for fish, google eyes, scissors, white card stock Jonah, glue, crayons, clothespins

Instructions:

1. Cut out a whale shape from your blue or gray cardstock.
2. Color and cut out Jonah shape.
3. Cut your whale in half horizontally.
4. Glue your google eye on your whale (or draw the eye on with marker).
5. Glue each half of the whale to the clothespin. (Make sure that both halves line up.)
6. Also make sure that you glue only the edge of each half-whale to one half of the clothespin.)
7. Glue Jonah on the reverse side of the clothespin, so that he peeks out when you open the clothespin.

Prayer: Ask children if they have any prayer needs and then close in prayer.



This craft is from <https://outuponthewaters.com/paper-clothespin-jonah-and-the-whale/>

