

Jonah and the Big Fish

Lesson Overview

In today's lesson, we're learning about a crazy thing that happened to a guy named Jonah. Jonah was a prophet and God told Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh. He wanted Jonah to tell the people that God was going to punish them for their evil ways. Jonah didn't want to do that so he bought a ticket for a ship going the other direction! Surely Jonah knew he couldn't run away from God but that's what he tried to do. God sent a big storm that rocked the boat so badly that it was about to break apart. Jonah told the sailors to throw him overboard because he was the reason for the storm. God was angry with his disobedience. When they did throw Jonah overboard, the storm stopped! But, the story doesn't end there. A big fish came along and swallowed Jonah! Jonah was in the belly of this fish for 3 days and 3 nights. Don't worry, Jonah doesn't die in the fish. We'll learn what happens in another lesson but here's what we can learn today. God's way is always best. We should learn from Jonah. You shouldn't run away from God's plan for your life.

Big Idea

It's always better to go God's way.

Key Question

Why didn't Jonah want to go to Nineveh?

Memory Verse

Proverbs 3:6 "Seek God's will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Classroom Agenda

- (5 min) Let kids start working on Activity Page #1.**
- (5 min) WARM UP: Share a time your family got lost going somewhere. Did you ever make it?** (Tip: Maybe your Dad didn't ask for directions or you lost the address to your friend's house. Jonah got lost because he wouldn't listen to God.)
- (5 min) PREVIEW: Write out the Big Idea, Memory Verse, and Key Question on a whiteboard.** Have the kids copy it down on Activity Page #1 (if applicable).
- (20 min) LARGE GROUP: Gather for songs and videos with other kids.** Then return to class to finish this guide.
- (2 min) RECAP: Read the Lesson Overview (see above).**
- (3 min) KQ: Answer the Key Question.** (Answer: **Jonah was prideful and unloving.** (Nineveh was an evil city. They didn't care about God and they did all sorts of bad stuff. Plus, they worshipped fake gods. Jonah thought he was better than them and he didn't want to waste his time trying to help bad people. But God wanted to give the people of Nineveh a chance to turn to him because he loved them.)
 - Bonus Questions:** Why was Nineveh an evil place? Why didn't Jonah want to go to that city? **4th-5th:** What do you think Jonah was thinking as he sat in the fish?
- (5 min) EXPLORE: Read Jeremiah 29:11-13. What does God promise to do for us? Why are God's ways better than our own?** (Answer: God has a great plan for each our lives. He promises to hear us when we pray and to lead us on the path he has marked out for us. God knows everything so we should listen to him!)
- (10 min) PLAY: Choose a group activity from Activity Page #2.**
- (5 min) CLOSE: Share prayer requests and pray as a class.** Encourage kids to use the Family Guide at home with their parents - and remind them to go online to pursueGODkids.org to find this week's lesson video.

Teacher instructions: Choose an activity for your classroom.

OPTION 1: MEMORY VERSE GAME

Instructions:

- Before playing, cut up the Memory verse template (page 5-6) and place in a bowl or basket.
- Have kids take turns coming up and pulling a word out of the bowl. Each time tape it up on the whiteboard. Once all the words are on the board, work as a class to get the words in order to say the memory verse.
- If you have time, read the story of Jonah from Jonah 1. Remind the kids that it's never a good idea to run away from God! God's plans are always best so we should listen and obey.

Supplies needed: Memory verse template (pg. 5-6, pre cut, 1 set per class), Bowl/Basket, Tape

OPTION 2: JONAH IN THE BIG FISH CRAFT

Instructions:

- Give each kid a Fish template (page 7) and a clothes pin.
- Have the kids color their fish and Jonah. Have them tape the top half of the fish on the top section of the clip and the lower part of the fish on the bottom section of the clip. Then, have them tape Jonah on the back side of the bottom section of the clip so when you open the clip you can see Jonah and when you close the clip you can't!
- As they work, read the story of Jonah from Jonah 1. Remind the kids that it's never a good idea to run away from God! God's plans are always best so we should listen and obey.

Supplies needed: Fish template (pg. 7, pre cut, 1 set per kid), Clothes pins (1 per kid), Crayons, Tape

09

BIBLE STORYLINE

Jonah and the Big Fish

Hey kids and parents! Fill in the blanks as you talk about this week's lesson together. Have fun!

Key Points

- God told Jonah to go to _____.
- Jonah went the _____ way.
- Jonah got swallowed by a _____.
- It's always better to go _____ way.

Big Idea

It's always better to go God's way.

Key Question

Why didn't Jonah want to go to Nineveh?

Memory Verse

Proverbs 3:6 "Seek God's will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Talk About It

1. What's your favorite part of the video? What's one thing you learned from it?
2. Share a time your family got lost going somewhere. Did you ever make it?
3. Where did God tell Jonah to go? What did Jonah do instead?
4. Why was Jonah thrown overboard? What happened to Jonah?
5. Read Jeremiah 29:11-13. What does God promise to do for us? Why are God's ways better than our own?
6. How will you apply this lesson to your life this week?

Instructions: Color the picture.

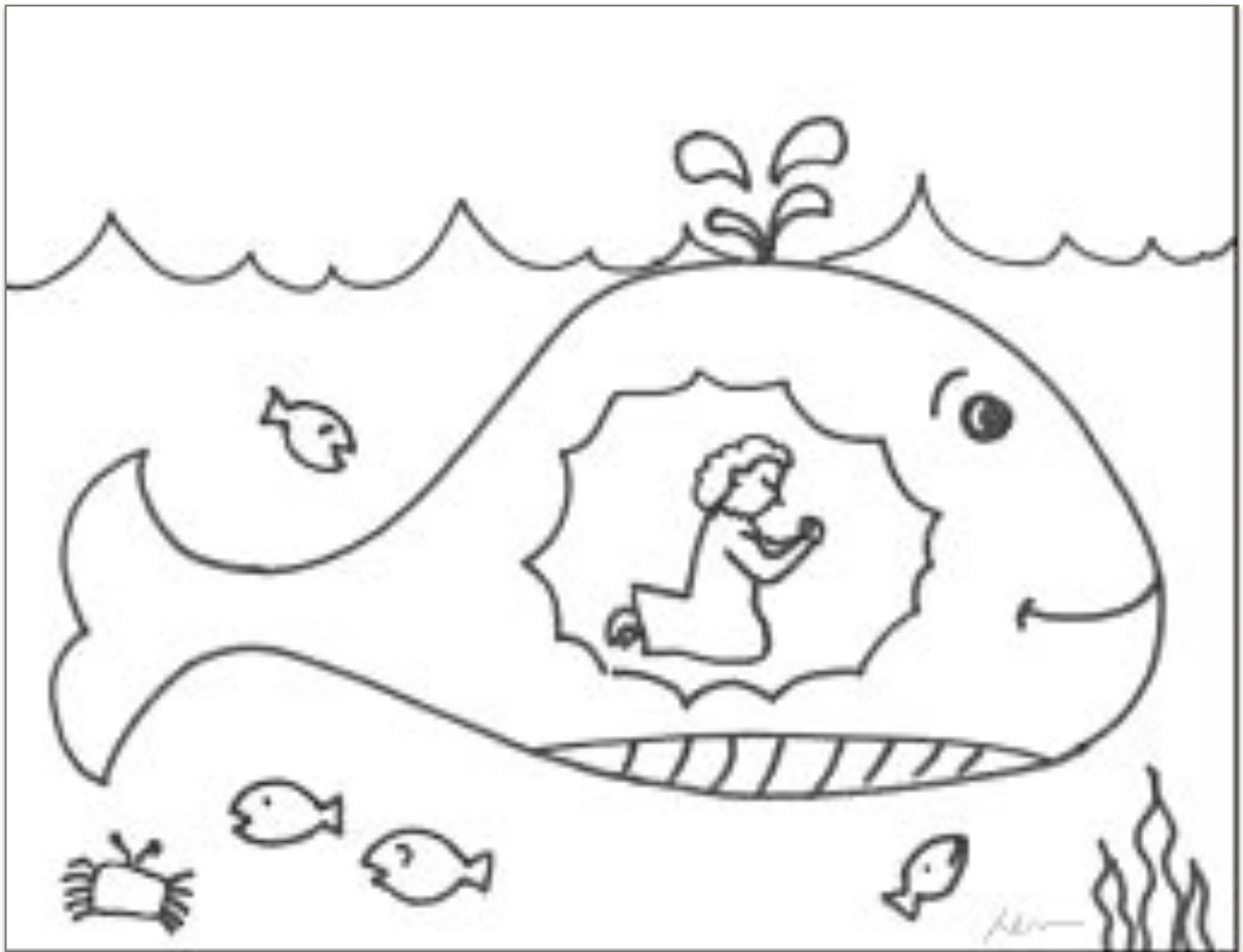
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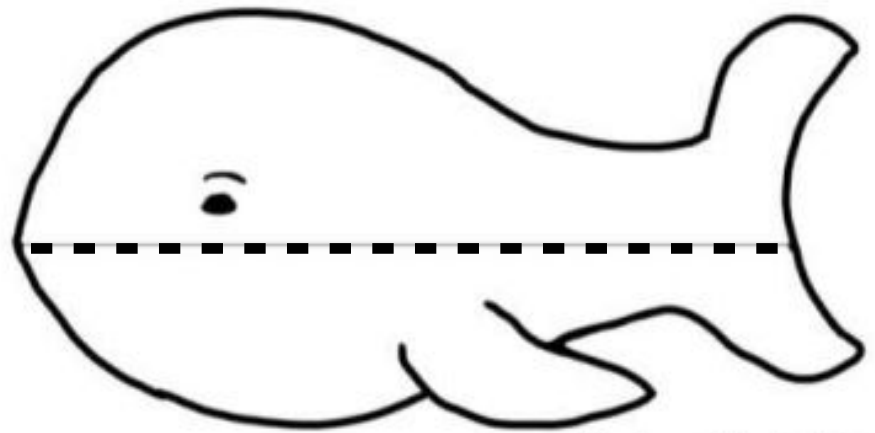
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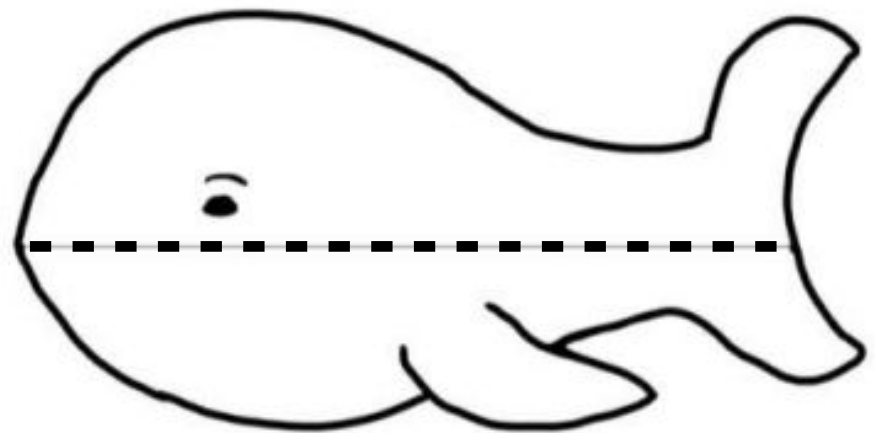
Jonah Cut-Out



The Great Fish Cut-Out



Jonah Cut-Out



The Great Fish Cut-Out