

# Lesson 35

-Jonah-

## Jonah

### 2-5 Years:

**Opening Prayer:** To welcome the start of the class. For example:

"Dear God. As we once again come together, help us to learn more about your work and how we can be better Christians. Amen"

### Bible Story:

Tell the story of Jonah in basic language that this age group can understand. If you can't find an illustrated copy of this in the library for use in your class, use the bible use simple language.

### Discuss:

Why did Jonah stay inside the fish/whale for 3 days and night? What happens when the children in your class do something that their parents tell them not too?

**Game:**

For this you will need a container such as a bucket that will symbolize the fish/whale, and an object such as bean bag, or soft sponge ball, to symbolize Jonah. Decorate the container around the rim with "teeth", and put a face on the object so that the symbolism is clear.

In turn have the children come and throw "Jonah" into the mouth of the fish/whale.

**Song:** (To the tune of Bobby Bingo - "there was a farmer had a dog..")

There once was a man inside a fish  
 And his name was Jonah  
 J-O-N-A-H  
 J-O-N-A-H  
 J-O-N-A-H  
 And his name was Jonah

**Activity 2:**

Cut out a large fish shape. Glue this onto a background of blue construction paper (the ocean). Provide a pile of small metallic shapes and some glue (unless the shapes are self-adhesive) and have the children stick the metallic paper onto the fish. Once the fish is complete, either use a pen that will work on the metallic "scales" to draw Jonah inside the fish, or cut out a basic shape to symbolize Jonah and stick this on top of the scales. Pin the picture on the wall.

**Closing Prayer:** Thanking God for saving Jonah even though he did something to make him cross. For example:

"Dear God, thank for providing the fish so that Jonah was saved. Help me to be good and do what I'm told. Amen."

**9-11 Years:**

**Opening prayer:** To welcome students to class and introduce the theme. Keep the prayer simple and easy for the children to learn so that it can be said as a group prayer rather than one that the leader says. For example:

"Dear God. We thank you for the chance to meet once again in your presence. Help us to learn more about your work and to understand how we can follow in your footsteps. Amen"

**Bible Story:**

Today's bible reading is the story Jonah.

Jonah 1: 1-17

Jonah 2: 10

**Discussion 1:**

Why did God put Jonah inside the fish? Why did he then release him after 3 days?

**Activity 1:**

Give a sheet of paper to each student and ask them to fold it into three sections - you might have to demonstrate how to do this.

Provide art supplies and tell the students that they are to tell the story of Jonah in 3 parts - Jonah angering God, Jonah's punishment, and Jonah's release from the fish. How they illustrate their 3 parts is up to each student, but they should be able to describe how their images tell the story.

**Discussion 2:**

In our society we have laws. Can the students find a similarity between what happened to Jonah and what happens to people who break the law?

**Activity:**

Break the code:

Tbmrwbujpo dpnft gspn uif Mpse

(Salvation comes from the Lord - Jonah 2: 9 .....the code is "letter +1" for example a becomes b)

**Closing Prayer:** Thanking God for his compassion. For example:

"Dear God thank you for the story of Jonah, and for your compassion in saving him. Help me to follow your path, even when I don't want to. Amen"

## 12-14 Years:

**Opening prayer:** To welcome students to class and introduce the theme. Keep the prayer simple and easy for the students to learn so that it can be said as a group prayer rather than one that the leader says. For example:

"Dear God. We thank you for the chance to meet once again in your presence. Help us to learn more about your work and to understand how we can follow in your footsteps. Amen"

### Bible Reading:

Today's bible reading is the story Jonah.

Jonah 1: 1-17

Jonah 2: 10



### Discussion 1:

Why was God angry with Jonah? Why did he keep him in the fish's stomach for 3 days? Why did he then let him out again?

### Activity 1: Role Play

Split the class into pairs. In each pair get them to decide who will be Jonah and who will be the interviewer. Give the class 5 minutes to practice their interview, then have each pair "perform" in front of the rest of the class. The interviewer should ask questions about "Jonah's" experience based on the story that they've been told, as should the responses given by "Jonah" - although they should be free to interpret some things such as how he felt, if he felt he would ever get out, and so forth.

### Discussion 2:

Discuss about people who break the laws of our country, who enforces the law, who holds them accountable and decides how they ought to be punished. What about when we break God's laws, his Commandments? When we break a Commandment then we are like Jonah, refusing to do what God has asked. Who holds us accountable? How do we make peace with our conscience for doing something that we know God would not like?

**Activity 2:**

Write a haiku verse about how they think it would feel being in the stomach of the fish. A haiku verse is written to a strict format of 3 lines and each line has a specific number of syllables in it as follows:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

If there's time ask the students to read out their poems.

**Closing Prayer:** Thanking God for the story of Jonah and for the reminder that each day we should think about Gods rules in the way we live our lives. For example:

"Dear God, thank you for the story of Jonah, and for the reminder that although your love is with us always, we must remember your rules in our daily lives so that others will come to know you from watching how we live. Amen."