



UNIT 12, SESSION 1

# JONAH

JONAH 1-4

## KEY POINTS

God calls people to repent. • We need to obey God. • God forgives people who ask for His forgiveness.

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Does God forgive us if we ask Him to? **Yes!**

## MEMORY VERSE

He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge. Psalm 91:4



## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

In the time of the Old Testament, people didn't have the Bible like we do today. Instead, God spoke through prophets, men chosen to deliver His message. These prophets had an important job: listen to God and do exactly what He said.

But not all of them obeyed right away.

Jonah is a perfect example. When God told him to go to Nineveh, Jonah ran in the opposite direction. He tried to hide, but as Psalm 139:1-14 reminds us, there is nowhere we can go where God isn't already there. God sees us, knows us, and lovingly pursues us.

We may not run in the opposite direction physically, but sometimes, we hesitate. We delay. We question. We choose what feels easier instead of what God is asking. Jonah eventually obeyed, but it wasn't first-time obedience. It took a storm, a fish, and a moment of surrender. Inside the fish, Jonah finally repented. And God, in His mercy, gave Jonah a second chance.

That same mercy is available to us.

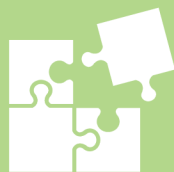
When Jonah finally went to Nineveh, the people listened. They repented, turning away from their sin and toward God. That's the power of obedience, even delayed: God still uses it.

But how much more powerful is first-time obedience?

Small things matter. A gentle word. A patient response. A moment of kindness. These are often the very things God nudges us to provide for others. As we lead and teach children, even our quick obedience can help shape their understanding of God's love.

Psalm 103:12 reminds us that when we repent, God removes our sins "as far as the east is from the west." That means no matter how many times we've delayed or gone our own way, God offers forgiveness and a fresh start.

# WELCOME & OPENING



Connect with children as service starts.

## WELCOME

Play music through the undercabinet radio (flash drive), or connect your phone to Bluetooth through the radio and play Christian preschool/Bible songs as you greet children coming into the classroom. Help them transition in and feel welcome as they play games and interact with others.

## MEMORY VERSE SONG

Gather children and sing to the tune of “Oh My Darling Clementine”:

He will cover you  
with His feathers.  
and under His wings  
you will find refuge.  
Psalm 91:4

## THE LORD’S PRAYER/TEN COMMANDMENTS

**Toddlers & Twos:** Use the provided poster to review the Lord’s Prayer with the children in your class.

**Threes & Fours:** Using the provided poster, review the Ten Commandments with the children in your class. Read through each one, then have children repeat after you as you say them together.

# CRAFT



Help children with a craft connected to the lesson.

## CRAFT: JONAH AND THE FISH

Give each child a fish template, crayons/markers, scissors, and a brad. Have each child take time to decorate their fish. Then, help them cut their fish and the fish's jaw out.

Place the bottom jaw of the fish over its open mouth, then secure it with the metal brad as the image below shows.

As you work, review today's Bible lesson.





## BABIES & TWOS BIBLE LESSON

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, but Jonah said no and hid from God. He got on a boat to run away and almost drowned.

A big fish swallowed Jonah and he felt very sorry. After three days, the fish spat Jonah back onto shore. God spoke to Jonah again and told him to go to Nineveh. Jonah went, and the people of Nineveh were saved thanks to him!

## THREES & FOURS BIBLE LESSON

Jonah was a prophet. This means God gave him important messages to share with people. One day, God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and tell the people God would destroy their city. Jonah didn't want to go. He hated the people in Nineveh, and they were scary. Jonah decided to disobey God and run away in the wrong direction.

Jonah caught a ship to sail far away. When it was in the middle of the sea, the wind began to blow. The storm was so bad, the ship was going to sink. The sailors tried everything. They threw things off the ship, but nothing helped. Jonah knew the storm was his fault for disobeying God.

He told the men to throw him off the ship. As Jonah hit the water, a big fish leaped out and swallowed him. God saved Jonah. Jonah was inside the fish for three days. Jonah prayed and said sorry to God. God commanded the fish to spit Jonah onto dry land.

Jonah obeyed God and preached in Nineveh. Everyone listened to Jonah's message from God. They were really sorry. They prayed to God and repented of the wrong things they did. When God heard their prayers, He forgave them and didn't destroy their city.

**KEY POINTS:** God calls people to repent. • We need to obey God. • God forgives people who ask for His forgiveness.

# SNACK & CLOSING



Continue to engage children near the end of the morning.

## SNACK & DISCUSSION

**Have everyone wash their hands, then serve a snack. Ask the following questions and retell parts of the lesson as needed.**

1. What was your favorite part of today's Bible lesson?
2. What did you learn about God in today's Bible lesson?
3. How many days was Jonah inside the big fish?
4. Does God forgive us if we ask Him to? **Yes!**

## CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Sing the clean up song. Have children help put toys on tables.

Gather them on the rug in a circle and have one volunteer read today's Bible lesson from the children's Bible. Have a regular Bible ready as well.

Sing the "B.I.B.L.E." and "Everything in the Bible is Absolutely True" songs. Remind children that the Bible is God's Word and the most important book in the whole world!

The other volunteer should stand at the door and help with pick up, matching stickers, gathering children's things, etc.

## BEFORE YOU GO...

**Second service leaders, please clean up by doing the following:**

1. Spray down toys with disinfectant.
2. Spot sweep if needed.
3. Return toys to closet, close door.
4. Throw away any trash left on counters and in room.
5. Return binders to the cabinet.

**THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!**