

GRADES K-3 TEACHER GUIDE

GREAT PROPHETS:

Jonah, Prophet to Nineveh

October 17, 2021

OT 501, WEEK 2

LEGACY UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM POWERED BY THE GOSPEL PROJECT

Bible Passage: Jonah 1-4

Big Picture Question: How can we be forgiven? God forgives people when they repent. We can share this good news with others!

Unit Christ Connection: Through these prophets we see a picture of the salvation provided through Jesus Christ.

October Family Memory Verse: *"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119: 103-105*

The Bible Story

Jonah was a prophet to the kingdom of Israel. One day, God spoke to Jonah. God said, "Go to the great city of Nineveh. They have been doing very evil things; tell them to stop."

Nineveh was the capital of Assyria. The people who lived there were known for the evil things they did.

When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, Jonah ran the other way! Jonah got on a boat heading to a faraway city. He didn't want to go to Nineveh at all!

But God wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh. When Jonah was on the boat, **God sent a storm that tossed the boat up and down on the waves.** The sailors on the boat were afraid! **They cried out to their false gods for help. They threw overboard the things on the ship to make it lighter.**

Wait, where was Jonah? **Jonah was not on deck panicking like the sailors. He was below deck, and he was sleeping! The captain woke up Jonah. "What are you doing?" the captain asked. "Get up! Ask your god to save us so we will not die."**

The sailors cast lots, like flipping coins or tossing dice, to figure out who had caused this trouble for them. The lot fell on Jonah. They asked Jonah, "Who are you? What are you doing here, and where did you come from?"

Jonah replied, "I am a Hebrew. I worship the One True God who made everything."

The sailors were afraid! What had Jonah done to make God angry? **The storm was getting worse, and the sailors said to Jonah, "Tell us what to do!"**

"Throw me into the sea!" Jonah said. "This storm is my fault!" The sailors threw Jonah into the sea, and the storm stopped. From that moment on, the sailors worshiped the One True God.

Jonah was in the ocean! Even if he was a good swimmer, he would eventually sink and drown! **God did not let Jonah drown. He sent a big fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days**

and three nights.

From the belly of the fish, **Jonah prayed to God.** Jonah thanked God for sending the fish to save him. **Then, the fish vomited Jonah onto dry land.**

God said to Jonah, "Go to Nineveh and preach My message." So Jonah went to Nineveh. **He walked around the city shouting God's message: "In 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed!"**

The people of Nineveh heard Jonah's message and they turned from their evil ways right away. Everyone in Nineveh put on sackcloth and did not eat. **Even the king of Nineveh repented.** He told everyone to repent; maybe God would decide not to destroy them.

God saw how quickly everyone in Nineveh stopped doing evil things. He decided not to destroy the city like He had planned. Jonah was very angry! How could God be so kind to such evil people? **"I knew it!"** **Jonah said. "This is why I ran away in the first place. I know You are a gracious God. You show mercy to people. You are slow to anger, and You are loving. I knew You would decide to not destroy Nineveh. I am so mad; I just want to die!"**

"Is it right for you to be angry?" God asked Jonah. Jonah left Nineveh and made a shelter where he could still see the city. He watched Nineveh; maybe God would change His mind and destroy Nineveh after all.

God taught Jonah a lesson. He **provided a plant to shade Jonah** from the sun. Jonah was glad to have the plant. **But the next day, God sent a worm. The worm attacked the plant, and the plant died.** Then God sent a dry east wind. **Jonah was so hot, he almost fainted. "I want to die," Jonah said.**

God asked Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?"

"Yes!" Jonah said. "It is right. I'm so angry I could die."

God said to Jonah, **"You cared about the plant, but you did not** take care of it or **make it grow.** It only lasted one day. **But Nineveh is a big city with thousands of people who do not know right from wrong.** I created them and care about them. **Aren't they more important than a plant?"**

Christ Connection: God displayed His mercy and grace by forgiving the people of Nineveh when they repented of their sin. God showed His love to the rest of the world by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. God saves those who trust in Jesus and repent of their sin, and He sends them out, like Jonah, with the good news of salvation.

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

Activity: "I want to ..." Choices

Instruct kids to hold up one finger, or two fingers to signal which item they would rather do.

- I want to eat sardines (#1) or onions (#2).
- I want to eat ice cream (#1) or pizza (#2).
- I want to drink milk (#1) or juice (#2).
- I want to wear sneakers (#1) or sandals (#2).
- I want to play golf (#1) or video games (#2).
- I want to watch TV (#1) or take a nap (#2).
- I want to tell a group of evil, sinful people about God (#1) or I don't want to tell them about God because they are so mean and sinful (#2).

Ask kids to share about their choices.

Say: Today, we will discuss a prophet who didn't want to go tell a sinful people about God.

Watch the Bible Story Video. <https://lcc.org/kidscurriculum/>

STEP 2: REVIEW THE STORY

Bible Story Review and Bible Skills

Materials: Bibles, 1 per kid; Timeline; megaphone template; scissors; marker; three charts from last week's lesson

Preparation:

- Teachers: cut out a megaphone; write "Jonah" on it

Timeline Picture

- Today's Bible story is the great, epic, totally amazing, story of Jonah and the town of Nineveh. Does anyone know anything about Nineveh? Nineveh was a great city in the Assyrian Empire. It was one of their capital cities.
- Do you remember when we talked about the Assyrians before? The Assyrians are the people who conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
- The Assyrians were horrible, mean, ungodly people. They were the enemies of the Israelites. The Assyrians worshiped false gods instead of the One True God.

Bible Skills

- Remind the kids that Jonah was also a prophet to Israel.
- Encourage the kids to find the Book of Jonah in their Bibles. Help them as needed.
- Jonah is in the division of the Old Testament called what? (*Minor Prophets*)
- How many Minor Prophet books are there? (*12*)
- Can any of you name some of the minor prophets? (*Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*)

Bible Story Review

- Challenge kids to think of a current day place that would be like Nineveh to them.
- Guide kids to re-enact the story of Jonah using the current day location.
 - Consider focusing on these verses: Jonah 1:1-5; 2:1; 3:2-5; 4:5-11.

Say:

- Think about a time you really didn't want to share the gospel with other people. Maybe it's because you were scared. Maybe it's because you were nervous. What can you remember about the story of Jonah that would help you during that time?
- ***How can we be forgiven? God forgives people when they repent. We can share this good news with others.***
- Who does God save? (*God saves those who trust in Jesus and repent of their sin, and He sends them out, like Jonah, with the good news of salvation.*)
- Did you know that Jesus talked about Jonah? In Matthew 12:40, Jesus used Jonah and his three days in the fish to explain that He would die and rise again three days later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Optional Activity 1: Name a Country Game

Materials: world map

Give kids a few minutes to study the countries on the map. Guide kids to form a circle and create a clap or stomp rhythm. At the appointed time in the rhythm, kids must name a country in the world.

If a kid cannot name a country on his turn, the group must restart. The kid who did not name a country successfully is out and must wait a turn to play again. While he is out, he can study the map.

Say:

- How many people in the world have not heard about Jesus?
- Entire groups of people have never heard the gospel message. People in every country have not repented of their sin and trusted in Jesus as their Savior and Lord.
- ***How can we be forgiven? God forgives people when they repent. We can share this good news with others!***
- You can pray for the people in the countries we named in our game. You can also pray for the Christians in that country as they share the gospel with others.
- How can you share the gospel with people you see and meet?

Optional Activity 2: Country Sand Art

Materials: construction paper; markers; pencils; colored sand; shallow 13-by-9-inch pan; spoon; glue bottles; bowl; map of the world

Guide kids to each select a country from the map that they want to pray for. Have kids use pencils to sketch the outline of their country on their paper. Instruct kids to print the name of their countries on their papers. Help each kid use a glue bottle to trace the country's shape. Using spoons, kids may sprinkle sand on the glue. Shake off excess sand into the shallow pans.

Say:

- Do you think there are people in the world who have not heard about Jesus?
- Entire groups of people have never heard the gospel message.
- People in every country have not repented of their sin and trusted in Jesus as their Savior and Lord.
- ***How can we be forgiven? God forgives people when they repent. We can share this good news with others!***
- You can pray for the people in the country you chose. You can also pray for the Christians in that country as they share the gospel with others
- How can you share the gospel with people you know and with people you meet?

STEP 4: BIBLE MEMORIZATION

October Family Memory Verse: *"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119: 103-105*

Review the memory verse. Activity idea: create motions to go with the verse.

MISSIONS MOMENT

Please visit the Missions Map either in your classroom or at your campus. While there, please pray for the Bowers Family in West Africa. **Andrew, Reilly, Callaway, Emmerson, Everly, and Fiona Bowers** are part of Team Valor. They are reaching the Zephyr people with the Gospel. Please pray that...

- many of the Zephyr people will hear and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- the Bowers family would continue to transition smoothly into the Zephyr culture and learn their language.
- God would bless the Bowers and keep them safe.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." Matthew 28:19

STEP 5: Remember...

Say: *How can we be forgiven? God forgives people when they repent. We can share this good news with others!*

If time remains, take prayer requests. Pray, thanking God for forgiveness through Jesus. Ask God to help the kids realize just how much God loves people and wants to see them repent.

