

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 34
Jonah (Jonah 1-4)

I. Underling Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord allows hard experiences to come to us when we will learn in no other way. This is of the Lord's permission and not of His will.
- B. We should never despise anyone just because he is different from us.
- C. The Lord's love for people is greater than any love of ours.
- D. True charity rejoices when an evil person repents and is spared from punishment.
- E. Basic correspondences:

a ship	= doctrine
the sea	= knowledges gathered in the mind
a fish	= an affection for learning truth
Nineveh	= falsities from the fallacies of the senses with those in ignorance
the shade plant	= the evil in which Jonah was
the worm	= falsity from evil

II. Story Circle

- A. Introduce the Story
 - 1. For the last few weeks we have been hearing stories about some of the prophets. Can you remember the names of any of them? (Elijah, Elisha, Daniel)
 - 2. There are a total of 16 books in the Word written by the prophets. Why don't you say the names of these 16 prophets after me? [Pronounce each one and have the children repeat after you.]
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
 - 3. This week we will hear a story about a prophet you may have heard of before. His name was Jonah.
- B. Tell/Read the Story: Read the attached retelling of Jonah 1-4. (Since the story is rather long, the teacher could alternate reading parts of the story with asking the questions which follow in an attempt to keep the children's attention.)

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C. Ideas to Discuss

1. Literal Sense

- a. Why did the Lord want Jonah to go to Nineveh? (To tell the people there that they were being wicked)
- b. How did Jonah try to escape from the Lord? (He got on a ship and went down into the lowest parts of it)
- c. What happened to the ship? (The Lord sent such a great tempest— — a storm— — that the ship was about to break up)
- d. How did the sailors find out which person on the ship was the cause of the storm? (They cast lots)
- e. What did Jonah suggest that they do to calm the storm? (Throw him into the sea)
- f. At first the sailors didn't want to do this, but the storm got worse. What happened when they finally threw Jonah into the sea? (The storm stopped)
- g. Rather than letting Jonah drown, what had the Lord prepared for Jonah? (A great fish to swallow him. [Only if the children ask: Whales don't normally swallow people; they eat tiny fish. We don't know if Jonah was swallowed by a whale or by some other fish that the Lord had prepared. Whichever it was, it was a miracle!])
- h. How long was Jonah in the fish's belly? (3 days and 3 nights)
- i. What did he do inside the fish? (prayed)
- j. The Lord spoke to the fish, and what did it do? (Vomited Jonah onto dry land)
- k. Then did Jonah obey the Lord and go to Nineveh? (yes)
- l. What did the people of Nineveh do when they heard what Jonah had to say? (They repented, that is, they felt sorry for the evil things they had done and stopped doing them)
- m. Since the people of Nineveh repented, the Lord did not destroy the city. Was Jonah happy about this? (no)
- n. In fact, the Lord showed Jonah that he had more good feelings towards a little shade plant than he had towards the people of Nineveh.

2. Further ideas

- a. Sometimes, when you know you have to do something that you really don't want to do, you might try to run away or hide. But who always knows where you are? (The Lord!) Do you think it ever really works to run away from a job that you don't like? (no)
- b. Sometimes we feel happy when we know someone is going to be punished for doing something bad. If they say they're sorry and they won't do it again, and then they aren't punished, we might even feel disappointed about that. But that's not how the Lord feels. The Lord is always glad when a person stops doing something bad because then He can be near that person and make him happy.

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III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

“Father in heaven,” HYMNAL #152.

B. Activities

In order to review this year’s Sunday School series, THE STORY OF ISRAEL, use a stack of pictures that illustrate the year’s lessons beginning with the call of Abram. Briefly show each picture and mention the lesson without going into any detail just to refresh the children’s memories about the story line and the important names. This should probably be done after project time since it could take up a flexible amount of time.

C. Project: JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH See project description in *Sunday School Activity Book* for Lesson 96–project for older children.

IV. Teaching Aids

A. JONAH by Peter Spier (picture book).

B. THE STORY OF JONAH by Alice Joyce Davidson; Victoria Marshall, illustrator.

C. THE STORY OF JONAH by Juliana Bragg; Charles E. Martin, illustrator.

D. Any illustrations of the Jonah story.

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

A. Dole’s BIBLE STUDY NOTES, Vol. 4, “Jonah and the Great Fish” (Jonah 1; 2), pp. 153– 167; and “Jonah and the Gourd” (Jonah 3; 4), pp. 168– 182.

B. SOWER NOTES, Vol. III, “Repentance Preached in Nineveh” (Jonah 1-4), pp.195– 200.

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Retelling of Jonah 1-4

Jonah 1

- 1 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah, saying,
- 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against their wickedness."
- 3 But Jonah arose to flee from the presence of the Lord. He went and found a ship, paid the fare, and went down into it.
- 4 But the Lord sent a great wind and there was a mighty tempest [storm] on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.
- 5 Then the mariners [sailors] were afraid and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten the load. But Jonah was asleep.
- 6 So the captain came to Jonah and said, "Why are you sleeping? Arise, call on your God so we may not perish."
- 7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots so we may know who has brought this trouble upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.
- 11 Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?" – for the sea was growing more tempestuous [stormy].
- 12 And Jonah said, "Throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me."
- 13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous.
- 15 So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its storming.
- 17 Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Jonah 2

- 1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly.
- 2 And he said, "I cried out to the Lord, and He answered me.
- 4 "I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.'"
- 10 So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Jonah 3

- 1 Now the Lord told Jonah the second time,
- 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, and preach to it the message that I tell you."
- 3 So Jonah did as the Lord said.
- 4 And Jonah cried out and said, "In forty days Nineveh shall be overthrown!"
- 5 So the people of Nineveh believed God.
- 10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

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Jonah 4 (summary)

Now Jonah was angry that the Lord did not destroy Nineveh, and he told this to the Lord.

Then Jonah went out of the city and made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city. And the Lord prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah to shade his head. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant. But the next day God prepared a worm that killed the plant; and the sun beat on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. And Jonah was not happy.

So the Lord told Jonah that he was foolish to be upset about a plant's dying and yet not be upset at all that the many people of Nineveh might have been destroyed.