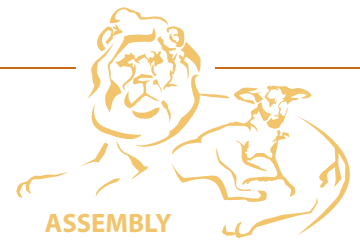


JONAH AND NINEVEH

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JONAH



The following are some ideas for creative ways that you can present this material.

LESSON IDEAS

SAILING IN THE STORM

Supplies:

- bring one short stick and many long sticks to demonstrate casting lots
- masking tape to mark out the ship on the floor

The first chapter of Jonah is the story of Jonah running away from God, trying to escape by ship to Tarshish. God sends a great storm that threatens the ship until Jonah is thrown overboard. Using the NIV Bible, have a helper read the story while you help the children act it out.

You can create the ship with chairs or even a masking tape outline on the floor. Have the children mimic the storm by leaning to this side and that.

Jonah sleeps throughout the storm until the captain wakes him up. Walk them through the casting of lots (one large stick for each child and one short stick for Jonah). Help Jonah with his lines and in the end have all the children toss him out of the boat.

One child can be the fish and use his arms as jaws coming up quickly to swallow up Jonah and take him away.

After you are finished with the reenactment, ask the children the following questions:

- How did acting out the story help you to learn about what happened?
- What do you think it would have been like to be on the ship in a storm?
- What do you think the sailors learned about Jonah's God? (The sailors learned that Jonah's God is alive and real not just an idol made of clay or wood or stone. When Jonah was thrown overboard the sea grew calm. I wouldn't be surprised if the sailors saw the fish swallow Jonah.)

JONAH AND NINEVEH

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JONAH

YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM GOD

Supplies:

blindfold

The Bible describes us as being blind in our sin (John 12:40). Although we can see with our eyes, we often live sinfully in this blindness of soul. Jonah was blind to God's power when he thought he could run away from God. Keeping our sinfulness in mind, have one of the children in the class act as Jonah who was blind in his sin. Using a blindfold to cover his or her eyes, place Jonah in the middle of the room. Use the rest of the class to represent God's presence. Have them spread out around the room (use some to protect against obstacles).

Tell Jonah to go preach to Nineveh and instruct him to respond as Jonah did. Jonah should walk away from the voice of God. Tell them that God's presence is all around them, represented by the other children. Tell them to see if they can run away from God. Of course they will run into the other children. When this happens announce, "See, you cannot run away from God." Give several children a chance at playing Jonah. Each time repeat the phrase, "See, you cannot run away from God." Afterwards talk about how God knows everything and can see everything we do.



JONAH AND NINEVEH

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JONAH

Where Is Jesus?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Jonah preaching to Nineveh to repent is directly compared to Jesus preaching repentance.

The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. (Luke 11:32)

In addition, Jesus tells us that the three days Jonah spent in the belly of a fish was a picture foretelling the time Jesus' crucified body was in the grave before the resurrection.

He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:39-40)

God had a plan to rescue Jonah from his sin of disobedience. God's plan for Jonah involved three days swallowed up in a fish. Jonah found his salvation in God. In the end Jonah was released and went on to preach repentance to Nineveh.

God has a plan to rescue us from our sin through Jesus. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and spent three days in the grave swallowed up by death. But death could not hold Him and on the third day He rose again. Now the message of repentance and faith in Christ is proclaimed all over the world. The question for us is, will we trust in Him?

