

# Bible Story 23: JONAH REFUSING TO OBEY GOD

**SCRIPTURE:** Jonah 1:1-17; 2:1,9-10; 3:1-10

**MEMORY VERSE:** 1 John 5:3

## BIBLE STORY:

One day, God spoke to Jonah. He told him to go and preach to the people in the city of Nineveh. Jonah did not want to go, because they were his enemies. He tried to run away from God. He went in the opposite direction, going to Joppa. There he entered a ship going out to the sea towards Spain.

Could Jonah flee from God? No! God sent a terrible storm. The ship was about to break apart. Everyone on the ship was very afraid. Where was Jonah? He was sleeping below the deck of the ship!

The captain went and woke Jonah up. He asked him, ***“How can you be sleeping during this terrible storm?”***

Jonah told those on the ship that he was the reason God sent this terrible storm. Then Jonah told the sailors to throw him overboard and the storm would stop. Finally, the sailors tossed Jonah into the stormy waters. Everything became very calm.

What happened to Jonah? God had prepared a large fish who came and swallowed Jonah. He stayed in the fish one, two, three days and one, two, three nights. Jonah prayed and asked God for help. He said that he was now willing to obey God. Then God ordered the fish and it spit Jonah up onto a beach.

Once again, God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach to the people. This time Jonah obeyed God. He went to Nineveh, where he preached God’s message. What message? The people of Nineveh must stop doing their evil, bad ways and follow God. If they did not do this, God would destroy the city. All the people listened and believed. They asked God to forgive them. God saw that they repented, turning away from their bad ways, and began to follow Him. God saved the people. The city was not destroyed.

## PART 1: PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. What did you learn from the story?
  
2. How can you apply this story to your life?

## **PART 2: GENERIC QUESTIONS**

1. What do you like about the story?
2. What is there in the story that you do not understand?
3. Who are the main people in the story?
4. What problems did the people face?
5. How did the people face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

## **PART 3: SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

1. What did Jonah do when God told him to go to Nineveh? Why?
2. Was Jonah able to run away from God? What happened?
3. Can anyone run away from God? What are some ways that God uses to bring people back to serving Him?
4. Where was Jonah during the storm?
  - Who woke him up?
  - Why did the sailors throw Jonah overboard?
  - What happened when Jonah was in the stormy sea?
  - What do you think it was like to be inside a large fish?
  - How do you think Jonah felt?
  - What did Jonah do when he was inside the fish?
5. How do you feel when you are doing something that God does not want you to do?
6. Did God listen to Jonah's prayer when he was inside the fish? What did God do? What did the fish do?
7. When someone is not obeying what God wants him to do, what should he do in order to return to serve God?
8. What happened when Jonah obeyed God and preached in Nineveh?
9. Should you share God's love to people you do not like? Why?
10. What are some ways that you can share God's love to family, friends and those around you?