



JONAH

BIBLE PASSAGE (JONAH 1-4)

Summary: God called the prophet Jonah to warn Nineveh, but Jonah disobeyed and sailed in the opposite direction. A huge storm came, and the sailors threw Jonah into the sea. God sent a big fish to swallow him. Inside the fish, Jonah prayed and admitted he was wrong. The fish spit him out, and this time Jonah went to Nineveh. He warned the people, and they responded by believing in God. Jonah was upset that God showed grace, and God used a vine to remind him to show grace to others.

Today's Brite Idea is: God gives grace.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

*Great is the LORD, and
greatly to be praised.*

(PSALM 145:3)



BIG QUESTION

Who is greater than everything? God!



God is love.



God shows
us grace.



God shows
me grace.

LEADER TRAINING: FOCUS ON RHYTHM AND ROUTINE

Preschoolers thrive when they know what comes next. Consistent routines reduce frustration by preventing misbehavior and giving kids a sense of safety.

- **Keep daily patterns predictable.** Use songs, claps or visual cues to signal transitions so kids know what's coming next. A cheerful clean-up song or a rhythmic countdown can turn potential chaos into order.
- **Give gentle warnings before transitions.** "Five more minutes of play, then clean-up time!" helps kids prepare emotionally and physically to shift from one activity to another.
- **Celebrate routine success.** Notice when kids follow the routine well and say things like "You listened so well when it was time to line up!" Recognition reinforces healthy habits and builds confidence.
- **Connect to God's order.** Just as God created the world with rhythm (day and night, work and rest), routines bring peace and structure that reflect His good design!

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: GUILT

One study revealed that as many as 40 percent of believers struggle with guilt because they are afraid that they are displeasing God.* Guilt is a normal human emotion that the Holy Spirit often uses to show us the sins we have committed. Even a preschooler can feel guilt from sinning. A preschooler may express this emotion as feeling yucky or sad. The feeling of guilt is designed to bring us back to God, not to produce fear or anxiety. Some kids, even at a young age, struggle with guilt, especially kids who have experienced trauma. In today's lesson, kids will learn about the grace God shows us when we mess up. Help kids learn that guilt can guide us away from sin and back toward God. When we turn back to God, we can receive His grace just as Jonah did.

PRESCHOOL GLOSSARY:

Grace: God's kindness that we don't deserve

Prophet: a person who gives God's messages to His people

*For more resources on this topic, check out: [britecurriculum.com/resources](https://www.britecurriculum.com/resources)

1

BELONG

Small Group (15 MINUTES)

GOAL: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

BIG FISH TAG

SUPPLIES: None

OR

CALM OR STORM?

SUPPLIES: Parachute

2

BIBLE TEACHING

Large Group (20 MINUTES)

JONAH

(JONAH 1-4)

SUPPLIES: Bible, teaching slides, teaching pictures (printed/shown from teaching slides), video player, music player, printable pages, 4 craft sticks, tape, scissors (prep)

3

BELIEVE

Small Group (10 MINUTES)

GOAL: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

PASS THE PRAISE

SUPPLIES: Memory Verse Song, music player, soft ball

OR

BEFORE OR AFTER?

SUPPLIES: Painter's tape

4

BECOME

Small Group (15 MINUTES)

GOAL: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

JONAH'S STORY

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies, craft sticks (1 per kid), tape, printable page, scissors (prep)

OR

POM-POM RESCUE

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies, bin, pom-poms (1 large bag), rubber bands (several), 2 tongs



BIG FISH TAG

SUPPLIES:

None

PREP:

None

LEADER TIP: For small spaces, have kids sit or stand in a circle. One kid can tap a friend, who will put their head down to “pray,” then will pop up and tap the next person.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Create a “safe zone” where kids can take a break. This can support sensory needs and allow kids with mobility challenges to rest.

ACTIVITY INTRO:

Welcome, everyone! My name is _____. Can each of you tell us your name?

Welcome each kid by name and welcome any new kids to the group.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Say:** Today we will learn about when Jonah ended up in the sea. But don’t worry—God’s plan will still work out!
2. **Say:** We will play “Big Fish Tag.” I will choose a Big Fish. *Point to a kid.* Everyone else is a Swimmer. *Point around to everyone else.*
3. **Say:** When you’re tagged, freeze and count to five before starting to swim again!
4. *Demonstrate being tagged, freezing and starting to swim again.*
5. *Play the game as long as time allows, periodically choosing a new Big Fish until everyone has had a turn.*
6. **Ask:** What do you think it would feel like to be inside a big fish?
7. **Ask:** What sounds do you think a big fish makes?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Great swimming! Today we will hear a Bible story about Jonah, who ended up inside a big fish. Let’s get ready to find out what happened!



CALM OR STORM?

SUPPLIES:

Parachute

PREP:

None

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Have the group take three to four deep breaths together to “calm their seas” and reset before discussion questions.

ACTIVITY INTRO:

Welcome, everyone! My name is _____. Can each of you tell us your name? *Welcome each kid by name and welcome any new kids to the group.*

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lay out the parachute and gather kids to sit on top of it.*
2. **Say:** We will pretend this parachute is like a boat.
3. **Say:** When I say “Storm!”, move like wild waves by waving your arms and swaying from side to side. When I say “Calm!”, freeze like a quiet sea.
4. *Alternate between calling out “Storm!” and “Calm!”*
5. *Let kids take turns being the “storm caller.”*
6. *Call “Big storm!” for giant movements and “Little storm” for tiny wiggles.*
7. *Play as long as time allows.*
8. **Ask:** Have you ever seen big waves or a storm?
9. **Ask:** Can you make a storm noise?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Great job making those storm waves! Today we will hear a Bible story about someone who was in a big storm. Let’s get ready to find out what happened.

INTRO:

Play the Countdown Video and guide kids to sit together for large group teaching time.

WELCOME:

Say: I am so happy my friends are here today! I'm also happy that we get to talk about another true story from the Bible.

RECAP FROM *Last Week*

Say: Last week we learned about a man named Elijah who prayed on a mountain for God to show He is real. God answered by sending down fire from the sky!

Show teaching image: Fire Falls.

Say: Today we will learn a true story from the Bible about Jonah and some people from a place called Nineveh. We will see that God loved them all, even when they made wrong choices.

Say: Let's take a look at this month's Big Question. Can you help me do a drumroll? Ready?
1, 2, 3... drumroll!



BIG QUESTION

Show Big Question Teaching Slide.

Say: Who is greater than everything? We will find out in today's Bible story!

Play the "Find It in the Bible" song.

Hold up a Bible.

Say: Who can tell me the name of this book? *Allow kids to respond.*



PLAY FIND IT IN THE *Bible Song*

Say: Yes! This book is called the Bible. The Bible is the most important book of all. The Bible is full of true stories about how God takes care of His people and loves them. Today we will hear a story from the Old Testament in the book of Jonah. The Old Testament is filled with lots of stories about God's creation, His people and the things that happened before Jesus came to Earth.

SUPPLIES:

Bible, teaching slides, teaching pictures (printed/shown from teaching slides), video player, music player, printable pages, 4 craft sticks, tape, scissors (prep)

PREP:

Print the printable pages on cardstock and cut out. Tape each image to a craft stick.

LEADER TIP:

Little fingers might want to hold the craft sticks too! Consider passing around each image so that kids get a chance to hold them.

JONAH

(JONAH 1-4)

Say: Jonah was a man who told people God's truth. One day, God told Jonah to go to a faraway city called Nineveh and tell the people to stop doing bad things. Nineveh was in an enemy country, and Jonah didn't like those people. He didn't want to go. Instead, he got on a boat going the other way!

Hold up the boat on the craft stick and move it from one side to the other in a wavy motion.

Say: God sent a big storm with strong winds and waves. The ship rocked back and forth and was about to break!

Shake and wiggle the boat.

Say: But Jonah was asleep. The other sailors woke him and told him to pray. Jonah knew the storm was his fault, so he told the sailors to throw him into the sea. When they did, the storm stopped!

Hold the boat perfectly still and then put it down.

Say: Then God sent a big fish to swallow Jonah.

Show teaching image: Jonah Swallowed by the Fish.

Hold up the big fish on the craft stick and move it from one side to the other in a wavy motion.

Say: Jonah stayed inside the fish for three days and three nights. Help me count to three—one, two, three! Finally, he prayed, "God, I was in trouble, and You saved me! Salvation comes only from You!" Then God made the big fish spit out Jonah onto dry land.

Move the big fish to one side and make a spit sound, then put the big fish down.

Say: God gave Jonah another chance and said again, "Go to Nineveh and tell them My message." Jonah obeyed!

Show teaching image: Jonah Shares God's Message.

Say: Jonah went to Nineveh and told the people God's message. The people listened and were very sorry for doing bad things. They believed in God. God forgave them and showed them His great love.

PRESCHOOL GLOSSARY:

Grace: God's kindness that we don't deserve

Prophet: a person who gives God's messages to His people



Hold up the heart on a craft stick for a moment and then put it down.

Say: But Jonah got mad again. He went outside the city and sat down to watch. Jonah hoped God would still destroy Nineveh. He was upset that God had saved the people. While Jonah sat, God made a vine grow over Jonah's head.

Hold up the vine on a popsicle stick.

Say: The vine gave Jonah shade from the hot sun. Jonah was very happy about the vine. But the next day, God sent a worm to eat the vine. Say "chomp" three times. Chomp, chomp, chomp!

Squeeze your hand over the vine each time the kids say "chomp" as if it's the worm chomping on the vine. Put the vine down.

Say: The vine died, and Jonah got mad again! Then God said, "Jonah, you care about this plant you did not grow. I care about the many people in this big city who do not know Me."

Show teaching slide: Point to Jesus.



POINT TO JESUS

Say: God never stopped loving Jonah or the people in Nineveh, no matter what! God rescued Jonah with a big fish. God rescues people by sending His Son, Jesus.

Say: Let's close in prayer as we wrap up our Bible story time together. Reach your hands up really high.

Reach hands up high.

Say: Now clap them together like this.

Clap hands together.

Say: Let's pray.

Pray: Dear God, thank You for loving us all the time! You show us grace when we make wrong choices. Help us to remember Your love and love other people more. Amen.



BIG QUESTION

Say: Now it's time to answer our Big Question. Can you all help me do a drumroll?
1, 2, 3... drumroll!

Show the Big Question and Answer Teaching Image.

Say: Who is greater than everything? God!

Say: That's right! The Bible teaches that God is bigger and stronger and greater than anyone or anything!



VERSE VIDEO

*Play Memory Verse
Motion Video after the
verse is read.*

MEMORY VERSE MOTIONS:

Help kids recite and retain the memory verse by teaching it with motions. Before you teach the verse, be sure to explain what it means.

- Great (*make a V with your arms*)
- is the LORD, (*point to the sky*)
- and greatly (*bring arms in and extend out to one side*)
- to be praised. (*bring arms in and extend out to the other side*)
- Psalm 145:3 (*open hands like a book*)



MONTHLY Memory Verse

*Great is the LORD, and
greatly to be praised.*

(PSALM 145:3)



REVIEW:

Say: It's been so great being with you today, friends! Before we end our teaching time, let's review what we have learned. Let's all point up really high and say, "God is love."

Have the kids point up and say, "God is love."

Say: Now let's reach our hands out to the side and say, "God shows us grace."

Have kids reach out and say, "God shows us grace."

Say: Now let's point to ourselves and say, "God shows me grace."

Have kids point to themselves and say, "God shows me grace."



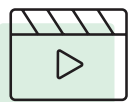
God is love.



God shows us grace.



God shows me grace.



** Consider showing the Bible Review Video as kids eat snack, are waiting for pick-up, or another time that fits your church's schedule.*



PASS THE PRAISE

SUPPLIES:

Memory Verse Song, music player, soft ball

PREP:

None

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Be mindful of the music volume to support the needs of all kids.

ACTIVITY INTRO:

The Bible teaches us true stories about God. Today we learned God is love and He gives us grace.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Gather kids to sit in a circle.*
2. **Say:** When the music plays, pass the ball around the circle. When the music stops, we will say our verse all together. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.* (Psalm 145:3)
3. *Start the Memory Verse Song and let kids pass the ball around the circle.*
4. *Stop the music randomly and say the verse together as a group. Then replay and begin helping kids pass the ball again.*
5. **Ask:** Why do we praise God?
6. **Ask:** How did Jonah learn that God is love?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Great job! Jonah learned that God loved him even when Jonah messed up. We can praise God because He is great and He loves us!



BEFORE OR AFTER?

SUPPLIES:

Painter's tape

PREP:

Tape a line on the floor long enough for everyone to stand on.

LEADER TIP: If you're limited on space, tape a line on a table and give the kids pom-poms to act as their placeholders.

ACTIVITY INTRO:

The Bible teaches us true stories about God. Today we learned that God gives grace and that He is love.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Gather kids to stand on the line.*
2. **Say:** We will play a game by stepping in front of or behind the line to help us remember the order of what happened in today's Bible story.
3. **Say:** If something happened before the fish swallowed Jonah, you will step behind the line. If something happened after the fish swallowed Jonah, you will step in front of the line.
4. **Say:** Are you ready?
5. **Work through the Bible story recap with the kids:**
 - God told Jonah to go to Nineveh. *(Step backward.)*
 - Jonah was thrown into the sea. *(Step backward.)*
 - Jonah went onto a boat. *(Step backward.)*
 - Jonah went to Nineveh. *(Step forward.)*
 - Jonah prayed to God in the fish. *(Step forward.)*
 - God gave Jonah a message for the people of Nineveh. *(Step backward.)*
 - Jonah went to Nineveh and warned the people of Nineveh. *(Step forward.)*
 - God showed grace to the people of Nineveh. *(Step forward.)*
 - God made a vine grow to give Jonah shade. *(Step forward.)*
 - God made a worm eat the plant, Jonah was mad. *(Step forward.)*
 - God showed grace to Jonah after He disobeyed. *(Step forward.)*
6. **Ask:** Why did God give Jonah grace?

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

God loved Jonah, and He loves us too. He gave Jonah grace, and He also gives grace to us. Today's Bible story taught us about how God is love. He will love us forever!



JONAH'S STORY

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, coloring supplies, craft sticks (1 per kid), tape, printable page, scissors (prep)

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable page and cut out (1 per kid).

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each kid one pre-cut printable page and coloring supplies.
2. Point out each picture and review the Bible story. Then invite kids to color the pictures.
3. Place the picture landscape on the table and fold in half so there are two pictures per side.
4. Place a loop of tape on each side of the craft stick and help kids fold the paper in half and press it onto the tape of the craft stick. Show them how to flip between the two sides.
5. **Say:** This side shows Jonah running away and not obeying God. Now flip it! This side shows Jonah getting swallowed by the big fish then obeying God.
6. **Say:** God showed Jonah grace and gave him another chance to share God's message with the people of Nineveh. God gives us grace too.
7. Write each kid's name on their paper/craft and set aside for parent pickup.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What happened when Jonah ran away from God?
- How did God give Jonah grace and keep him safe?
- Does God give you grace?
- How can you show grace to someone this week?

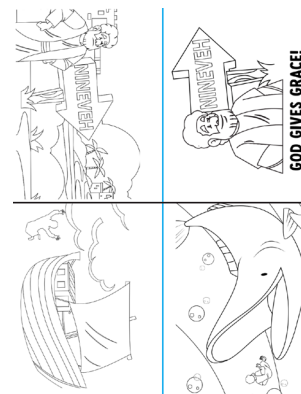


PRAY TOGETHER:

God, thank You for showing us grace. Help us to follow You and show grace to others too. Amen.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Give each kid a Take-Home page. With remaining time, kids can play in centers or color the Take-Home page.





POM-POM RESCUE

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, coloring supplies, bin, pom-poms (1 large bag), rubber bands (several), 2 tongs

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Put all the pom-poms into the bin. Stretch the rubber bands around the bin to form a loose criss-crossed web.

LEADER TIP: If you have a large group, make two sets of the pom-pom bins.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Some kids may struggle with using the tongs. Allow them to use their hands after trying the tongs a few times.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Gather kids around the bin.*
2. **Say:** We will all take turns trying to rescue the pom-poms out of the bin and through the rubber bands with the tongs. When you bring a pom-pom out, we will all say, "God rescues us!"
3. *Lead kids to take turns using the tongs to bring the pom-poms out and repeating the phrase "God rescues us!"*
4. **Say:** God rescued Jonah, and God rescues us. God showed Jonah grace, and God shows us grace. We can live with God forever when we believe in Jesus. God shows us so much grace in forgiving all our sins through Jesus. God is so good!
5. **Ask:** What is grace?
6. **Say:** Grace is God's kindness that we don't deserve.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What happened when Jonah ran away from God?
- How did God give Jonah grace and keep him safe?
- Does God give you grace?
- How can you show grace to someone this week?



PRAY TOGETHER:

God, thank You for giving us grace. Please help us show grace to others and make good choices this week. Amen.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Give each kid a Take-Home page. With remaining time, kids can play in centers or color the Take-Home page.

CENTERS:

Set up 3–4 centers around the room for kids to explore and learn as they play. While kids explore the centers, leaders can work with individuals or small groups to make the craft. Set up each center in a separate part of the room, making sure all kids are visible at all times. Show the whole group what is in each center and give simple instructions on what kids should do in each center.

- **Beanbag Toss:** Set out beanbags and a bucket. Lead kids to toss the beanbags into the bucket. Kids can pretend the beanbags are Jonah being swallowed by the fish.
- **Memory Matching:** Write numbers 1-5 on pairs of index cards. Set them out facedown for kids to flip over and find the matches. Share how Jonah shared God’s message with a big number of people from Nineveh.
- **Sensory Bottles:** Fill a bottle about three-quarters full of water. Add a few drops of blue food coloring to make it look like the sea. Drop in small toy fish or ocean animals. Add glitter, sequins or beads, if desired. Fill the rest of the bottle with water, leaving a little space for movement. Seal the lid with hot glue or duct tape for safety. Kids can shake, roll and turn the bottles to watch the fish “swim” through the ocean. Share how God is love and how He showed Jonah grace by sending the fish to keep him safe.

BONUS SCRIPT:

Preschoolers learn best through repetition. Use the script below to review the story at any opportunity. You could review the story while kids play in centers, while they work on their craft, during snack time or while waiting for parents.

Say: Jonah tried to run away from God, so he got on a boat. A big storm came, and Jonah was thrown into the sea. But God gave Jonah grace and sent a big fish to keep him safe. Jonah prayed inside the fish, and God heard him. The fish spit out Jonah. Then Jonah obeyed God and went to Nineveh. God showed grace to the people and to Jonah.



BIG QUESTION

Who is greater than everything? God!