

## Bible Story 23: JONAH REFUSING TO OBEY GOD

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** “AND THIS IS LOVE: THAT WE WALK IN OBEDIENCE TO HIS (GOD’S) COMMANDS.”  
2 JOHN 6 NIV

### 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! 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. They 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.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What do you like about the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to 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?

### RETELL THE STORY:

Ask volunteers from the group to retell the story.