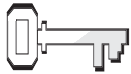


## The Runaway Prophet



### References

Jonah 1:1-9;  
*Prophets and Kings*,  
pp. 265, 268



### Memory Verse

"I desire to do your will,  
O my God"  
(Psalm 40:8, NIV).



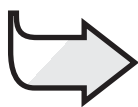
### Objectives

The children will:

**Know** that our  
choices affect others.

**Feel** willing to share  
God's love with others.

**Respond** by choosing  
to tell others of God's love.



### The Message

People in God's  
family share His  
love with others.

### Monthly Theme

God teaches us how to treat others.

### The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God gives Jonah a message to give to the people in Nineveh, a message that will save them from danger. But Jonah refuses and tries to run away from God by boarding a ship and going away from Nineveh. The Lord sends a terrible storm and all the people on the ship are in danger. The sailors cast lots to see who is responsible, and the lot falls on Jonah. When they ask him who he is, he identifies himself as a Hebrew who worships the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and land.

### *This is a lesson about community.*

Though an unwilling witness to Nineveh, Jonah nevertheless witnessed to the sailors on the boat, although not in the way God intended. His disobedience put at jeopardy all in his immediate community, but in the end he was honest with them and identified himself with the God of heaven, the Creator.

### Teacher Enrichment

"In the charge given him, Jonah had been entrusted with a heavy responsibility; yet He who had bidden him go was able to sustain His servant and grant him success. Had the prophet obeyed unquestioningly, he would have been spared many bitter experiences, and would have been blessed abundantly. Yet in the hour of Jonah's despair the Lord did not desert him. Through a series of trials and strange providences, the prophet's confidence in God and in His infinite power to save was to be revived" (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 266, 267).

### Room Decorations

Hang some fishnet on the wall. Add a blue sheet, blanket, or paper to look like water. Sand and scattered seashells will add to the appearance of a seascape. If desired, provide craft materials and fish outlines and have the children trace and cut out paper fish. You may want them to write their name on the fish. Attach their fish to the fishnet with staples or straight pins. The words above the net can read, "We are swimming in God's school." A boat (or boats) may be added if the children do Readiness Activity A. More decorations will be added as these lessons about Jonah progress. (If you do not use Activity A, add to the decorations a "boat" in which children may sit.)

## Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
<b>1</b> Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Boat Builders</i> B. <i>Paper People</i>	large boxes, art supplies, blue sheet(s) or blanket(s), Bible paper, pencils, scissors, people pattern (see page 102), Bible
<b>Any Time</b> Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	<i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> model ship none
<b>2</b> Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story  Memory Verse Bible Study	boats from Readiness A or provide a "boat" for children to sit in, elec- tric fan, Bible Bible Bibles
<b>3</b> Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Who Am I?</i>	paper, pencils, Bible
<b>4</b> Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Rocking the Boat</i>  B. <i>Sharing God's Love</i>	paper plates, craft sticks or tongue depressors, art supplies, scissors, brown construction paper, glue paper, art supplies, coupon pattern (see page 144)

**\*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

# TEACHING THE LESSON

## Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

## Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

### You Need:

- large boxes (appliance size, if possible)
- art supplies
- blue sheet(s) or blanket(s)
- Bible

### A. Boat Builders

Ask the children to select a box they can sit in. (Large class: have children work in groups to make one boat for each group. Small class: have all children work together to make one boat in which all can sit together.) Provide each child or group with art supplies.

Say: **Today we will learn about a man who took a boat ride—in the wrong direction. Your boat(s) will be a part of our decorations for the rest of this quarter, and you will have a chance to sit in it (them) during part of our program.**

Allow time for completion, then have the children place their boat(s) on a blue sheet or blanket (as if in water) near the other room decorations.

### Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What kind of boat do you think you would need to take a trip on the sea or ocean? Would the boat you made keep you safe? Why? In our story today we will learn about some people traveling in a ship who were in a bad storm. One of them was a missionary and prophet whom God sent to warn some people of their wickedness.**

**What is a missionary? What is a prophet? In our lesson today we will learn about someone God asked to tell others about Him.** Read aloud Psalm 40:8. **Why do people want to do God's will? (They love Him; He cares about them, etc.) And that brings us to our message for today:**



**PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY SHARE HIS LOVE WITH OTHERS.**

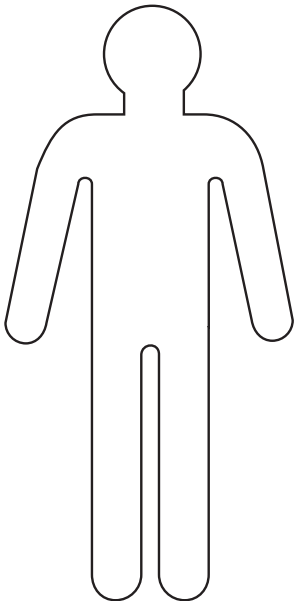
Say that with me.

### B. Paper People

Demonstrate as you say: **Fold your paper into a fan with four equal parts. Draw a person on the top layer (or use the pattern in the margin). Cut out the person, leaving the edges joined at the hands on both sides. Now open your paper. You have a string of people. Save these people. We will use them later.**

### Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How is your string of people like a community? Yes, we are all connected to each other. We support each other and share God's love with others. What we do affects those around us. Name some communities to which you belong.** (school, church, home, Adventurer Club, etc.) Read aloud Psalm 40:8. **What do you think God's will is for you? I think our message**



### You Need:

- paper for each child (8 1/2" x 11" or larger)
- scissors
- people pattern (see above)
- Bible

tells us one thing God wants us to do.



**PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY SHARE HIS LOVE WITH OTHERS.**

**Say that with me.**

## Prayer and Praise

Any  
Time



### Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Give a special warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge any birthdays or special events.



### Suggested Songs

- "Come and Praise the Lord Our King" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 5)
- "Psalm 66" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 11)
- "Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 12)
- "In His Time" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 42)
- "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 139)
- "God Made Our Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 57)



### Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Help the children identify someone who is sharing God's love with others or is learning to know God.



### Offering

Say: **We bring our offerings as an act of worship to God. Our gifts will be used to tell others about His love.** In a short prayer, thank God that you can bring gifts to share His love with others.

**You Need:**  
• model ship



### Prayer

Say: **We are learning about community today. Our community includes the people who are closest to us—our neighbors, friends, relatives, church members, classmates. Because we belong to God's family, we want to show others God's love. Think of someone in your community who needs to know God's love, and we'll ask Jesus to give you just the right time and place to share His love with them.** Pray a simple, short prayer.

## Bible Lesson

### Experiencing the Story

#### You Need:

- boat(s) from Readiness A or provide a “boat” children can sit in
- electric fan
- Bible

#### Setting the Scene

Remember that children this age love drama and expression, so use your best storyteller. Have the children sit in the boat. During the “storm” part of the story, turn on a large fan as you describe the wind. Ask the children to make storm noises like wind and thunder. When you reach the part in the story where the sailors ask Jonah who he is, let the children answer with: “I am Jonah. I worship the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land.”

#### Read or tell the story.

“Jonah,” God called, “I have a very special job for you. You have heard about the big city of Nineveh. I want you to go there and preach to the people for Me. Most of those people are wicked. I can’t ignore all the wrong things they are doing. I want you to be My messenger. Tell them that I know how they are living, and they need to change.”

Jonah thought about what God said. He did not like the idea of going to preach in Nineveh. What if the people did not want to listen to him? What if people laughed at him? He knew that many people who lived in Nineveh were wicked. Everyone knew that. Those people might even kill him if they didn’t like what he said. *No*, he thought, *God really couldn’t expect me to go to Nineveh.* So Jonah decided to run away.

Quickly, he made his way to Joppa, the nearest seaport. There he looked for a ship that was ready to sail. He didn’t care which ship he got on, as long as it wasn’t going anywhere near Nineveh. He

soon found what he was looking for—a ship sailing for Tarshish. Jonah paid his fare and hurried on board. He was so tired, he thought he could sleep through the whole trip. (It was hard work running away from God.)

Soon after Jonah boarded, the ship sailed. As he watched the shoreline disappear, Jonah felt safe—safe enough to go to sleep. He searched for a quiet place out of the way of others. Exhausted, he was soon fast asleep.

Jonah slept so soundly that he didn’t notice the boat rock. At first the rocking was gentle, but then the waves got higher and higher. *[Children make storm sounds.]* The storm clouds gathered. The sails began creaking in the wind. He didn’t even hear the wind howling, the thunder crashing. He didn’t see the lightning or feel the rain. *[Children continue to make storm sounds.]*

But the sailors did. The storm was so bad that they feared the ship would break into pieces. They were sure everyone on board would drown. The sailors desperately tried to lighten the ship. Cargo, supplies, everything moveable was thrown overboard. But Jonah kept on sleeping. *[Children continue making storm sounds. They “row” their boat harder and faster.]*

The ship’s captain found Jonah—sound asleep. “Wake up!” he ordered. “How can you sleep through this? Wake up and call on your god!”

Then one sailor shouted to the others, “Let’s cast lots. That will tell us who is responsible for all this trouble. This isn’t natural. Someone’s god is angry.”

Jonah tried to slip into the boat’s shadows, but the sailors would not let him. “You have to take part in the lots,” they scolded. Reluctantly, Jonah joined them. When the lots were cast, they knew Jonah

had something to do with their trouble.

"Who are you?" demanded the sailors. "Who is responsible for making all this trouble? What do you do? Where do you come from?"

Jonah answered: "I am a Hebrew. I worship the God of heaven, the God who created the earth and the sea." [Children repeat "I worship the God of heaven."]

Although Jonah did not do what God wanted him to do, he did tell others about God. And the sailors learned that Jonah's God was a powerful God.

Jonah had tried to run away from God. He forgot that God made everything. He forgot that there is no place we can go to get away from God. Because Jonah did not want to take God's message to Nineveh, people on the ship suffered through a terrible, frightening storm. When he ran away from God, it affected others.

We all are part of a community. Everything we do affects others. When we do what God wants, we can make good things happen for others.

### Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

**What is a community? What communities are you a part of? How do you feel about sharing God's love with people in those communities? Do you have to preach to share God's love? What other ways can you use? How would you choose to share His love?** Read aloud Psalm 40:8. **What do you think God's will is for you? Remember our message for today:**



**PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY  
SHARE HIS LOVE WITH  
OTHERS.**

### Memory Verse

Demonstrate using sign language as indicated to teach the memory verse. Repeat until children know the signs and

the verse. Suggest that they can share God's love by "performing" the memory verse in sign language.

- I** bring thumb side of right hand, palm facing left, back against the chest
- desire** palms up, fingers pointing forward; bring hands to chest while bringing fingers toward palms
- to do** repeatedly move hands, palms down, from side to side
- your** palm facing forward, fingers pointing up, push hand away from chest
- will** hit index-finger side of right hand, palm facing forward, against left open hand, palm facing right and fingers pointing up
- O my** place palm of right hand on chest, fingers pointing left
- God** right hand, palm facing left and fingers angled upward, moves from above head downward in front of the face in an inward arc



### Bible Study

Say: **We have learned about Jonah's decision and his trip to Tarshish. God used the terrible storm to teach Jonah and the sailors something important. What was it?** (We can't run away from God, God wants us to tell others about Him, etc.) **Let's look at some other texts that tell about a time God did something unusual to help people get His message.**

Assign the following texts to five individuals or to five small groups. Have each read the assigned text and be prepared to tell the class the story they find.

**Text**  
Genesis 6:11-13, 17

**Story**  
Noah and the Flood

**You Need:**  
• Bibles

Exodus 7:17; 8:2, 16, 21; Moses and the  
 9:2, 3, 8, 9, 18; 10:4-6, ten plagues  
 21-23; 11:4-6  
 1 Kings 16:29-17:1 Elijah, Ahab,  
 and the famine  
 1 Kings 18:16-39 Elijah on Mt.  
 Carmel  
 Numbers 22:1-35 Balaam and the  
 donkey

**they tell us about people? What do they tell us about our God? Who is more powerful—people or God? How do you know? What do you think about God’s use of storms, famines, and other catastrophes to help people hear His message?**

Read aloud Psalm 40:8. Ask: **How do we know God’s will for us? If you want to do God’s will in all things, tell Him so right now.** Encourage children to pray silently. Allow time, then pray a prayer of dedication.

**Debriefing**

Allow response time as you ask:  
**How are these stories alike? What do**

**3**

**Applying the Lesson**

- You Need:**
- paper
  - pencils
  - Bible

**Who Am I?**

Distribute pencils and paper. Where all can see, write: *Who am I?* Have the children copy that at the top of their paper. Then say: **Who are you? Think about that and list some words that describe yourself. You might write brother, friend, cousin, student, singer, and other words to tell about yourself.** Adults assist as needed.

Allow time, then give each child a chance to share a word and tell why that word describes them.


Say: **For the next few weeks we will be learning about community and how we fit into our community, the family of God. Your words tell about how you belong to some community—your family, school family, church family, neighborhood, and so on. People in a community care about others. And that is what our message tells us today:**

 **PEOPLE IN GOD’S FAMILY SHARE HIS LOVE WITH OTHERS.**

**Debriefing**

Allow response time as you ask: **Was it easy to think of words that describe yourself? What did you discover about yourself? Which one of your “selves” are you most often? Which do you enjoy most? Why?**

Read aloud Psalm 40:8, then ask: **Which word that you wrote describes that part of you that wants to do God’s will? (all of them) If you want to do God’s will all the time, you are truly a member of His family. And if we are a part of God’s family, we want to tell others about Him. Today’s message tells us:**

 **PEOPLE IN GOD’S FAMILY SHARE HIS LOVE WITH OTHERS.**

Have the children say the message with you.

## Sharing the Lesson

### A. Rocking the Boat

Give each child a paper plate, craft stick, and a variety of art materials. Demonstrate as you give the following directions:

1. Fold your plate in half and cut a small 2" slit in the center on the fold line.

2. Decorate the plate to look like water.

3. Make a small boat out of the craft materials (brown paper or paper colored brown) and glue it to the top of the craft stick.

4. Insert the bottom of the stick through the hole and hold the stick from beneath the plate.

By moving the stick back and forth, the children can simulate Jonah's boat in the storm. Encourage the children to use this craft to tell the lesson story to someone this week.

### Debriefing

Allow response time as you say:

**Show me how your boat will rock in the storm. Think of someone with whom you want to share today's Bible**

#### You Need:

- paper plates
- craft sticks or tongue depressors
- art supplies
- scissors
- brown construction paper
- glue

story. Will it be a school friend? An older person? A young child? How will you get them to listen to the story? As you make your plans, remember . . .



**PEOPLE IN GOD'S FAMILY  
SHARE HIS LOVE WITH  
OTHERS.**

**How will you share God's love as you tell the story?**

### B. Sharing God's Love

To encourage the children to share God's love in ways they can, help them list some of the things they can do to show love to others—at home, school, in the neighborhood, at Adventurer Club, etc. Examples:

I will make your bed.

I will rake your yard.

I will bring you a cool drink.

I will sweep the floor.

I will help you carry groceries.

I will help put things away.

I will carry out the trash.

Furnish paper and art supplies and allow time to make several coupons (see page 144) the children can distribute in their various communities.

### Closing

In a short, simple prayer, ask God to bless the children's efforts as they go forward to share His love with others.

#### You Need:

- paper
- art supplies
- coupon pattern (see page 144)



## The Runaway Prophet

### References

Jonah 1:1-9;  
*Prophets and Kings*,  
pp. 265, 268

### Memory Verse

“I desire to do  
your will, O my  
God” (Psalm 40:8,  
NIV).

### The Message

People in God’s  
family share His  
love with others.

*“Come, Jonathan!” called Mother. “I need your help!”*

*Jonathan frowned. He was having fun riding his bike, and he just didn’t want to answer. Speeding up, he turned the corner and rode away from home. Maybe his mother would think he hadn’t heard her. Later, he thought. I’ll help her later.*

*A long time ago, God asked a friend to do something for Him. What do you think it was?*

“Jonah,” God called, “I need your help. You know about Nineveh, that big city. Many of the people living there are wicked. I can no longer ignore all the wrong things they do. Go and tell them that they must change.”

Jonah knew he should do what God wanted. But Nineveh was a BIG city. At least 120,000 people lived there—wicked people. The city was so big that it would take three days just to walk from one end to the other. Besides, what if the people wouldn’t listen to him? What if people laughed at him? The people living in Nineveh were bad, just plain bad. Everyone knew that. They might even kill him if they didn’t like what he said.

Soon Jonah thought, *No, God really couldn’t expect me to go to Nineveh.* So Jonah ran away.

Jonah hurried to Joppa, the nearest seaport. There he found a ship just ready to sail for Tarshish. He really didn’t care where the ship was going—as long as it wasn’t anywhere near Nineveh. Quickly he paid his fare and went on board.

Soon after Jonah boarded, the ship sailed away. After watching the shoreline disappear, Jonah felt safe. He searched for a quiet place away from the sailors and was soon fast asleep.

Jonah did not feel the boat begin to



rock. At first the rocking was gentle, but then the waves got higher and higher. The storm clouds gathered. The sails began creaking in the wind. But Jonah was sleeping so soundly that he didn’t even hear the howling wind or the crashing thunder.

“This ship is going to break up. We will all drown!” the sailors called to one another. Desperately, they tried to lighten the ship. Cargo, supplies, everything moveable was thrown overboard. But Jonah kept on sleeping.

The captain looked for passengers and came across Jonah, still asleep. “How can you sleep through this?” the captain screamed at Jonah. “Wake up! Call on your god! We are drowning. Pray and maybe he will help us.”

Then one sailor shouted to the others, “Let’s cast lots. That will tell us who is responsible for all this trouble. This isn’t a natural storm. Someone’s god is angry.”

Jonah tried to slip into the shadows, but the sailors would not let him. “You have to take part in the lots,” they demanded. Reluctantly, Jonah joined

them. He knew who was responsible. When the lots were cast, everyone else knew too.

“Who are you?” demanded the sailors. “What do you do? Where do you come from?”

Jonah answered: “I am a Hebrew. I worship the God of heaven. My God created the earth and the sea.”

If only Jonah had taken that message to Nineveh! But Jonah chose to “forget” that he could never really run away from God. As a result, the people on the ship suffered.

We all are part of a community. Everything we do affects others. When we do what God wants, we can make good things happen in our community. We can share His love with others.

## **Daily Activities**

### **Sabbath**

- With your family, go to a place where you can watch boats. Read your lesson together. Talk about the boat in the story. Was it little? Big? Clean? What did it carry?
- Use hand signals to help your family learn your memory verse. Do this every day this week.
- Cut or fold paper to make a boat. Write your memory verse on it and put it where you will see it every day.

### **Sunday**

- For worship today, read Jonah 1:1-9 together. Find Joppa and Nineveh on a Bible map. How would Jonah probably have traveled to Nineveh? How do you know?
- If possible, go for a boat ride today.
- Sing a song about stormy weather. Thank God for taking care of your family during storms.

### **Monday**

- During worship, read the lesson story. Turn on a fan (low speed) at the beginning. Turn it on high speed when you read about the storm. Shout as you think the captain and sailors shouted at Jonah. Speak Jonah’s answer boldly.
- Review your memory verse. Do you want to do God’s will? Tell Him when you pray. Sing a song about rain and thank God for rainy days.

### **Tuesday**

- Read Jonah 1:1-9 again for worship. What five questions did the sailors ask Jonah? How did Jonah answer? How do you answer when peo-

ple ask about your God?

- Review the memory verse. Don’t forget the hand signals.
- Sing a song about God’s care, then thank Him for it.

### **Wednesday**

- During worship, help your family make a family tree. Start with your parents, add their parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and others. Put a star by people who worship God. Ask your parents to tell you how their family became Christians. Save your family tree for tomorrow.
- Sing “The Family of God” (*Sing for Joy*, No. 139) then thank God for your BIG family.

### **Thursday**

- Read Jonah 1:9 during worship. Change the word *Hebrew* to tell who you are. Then say the verse again.
- Look at your family tree. Who are some people you want to share God’s love with? Make a plan and do it. Ask God to help you.
- Use the hand signals as you say the memory verse together, then sing “The Family of God.”

### **Friday**

- Have a “Family Reunion” worship. Invite grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins who live nearby to join you. Ask them to tell how they joined God’s family (if they did) or share your family’s story with them.
- Have each one share a favorite Bible verse. Sing songs of praise before you pray. Thank God for all your family.