

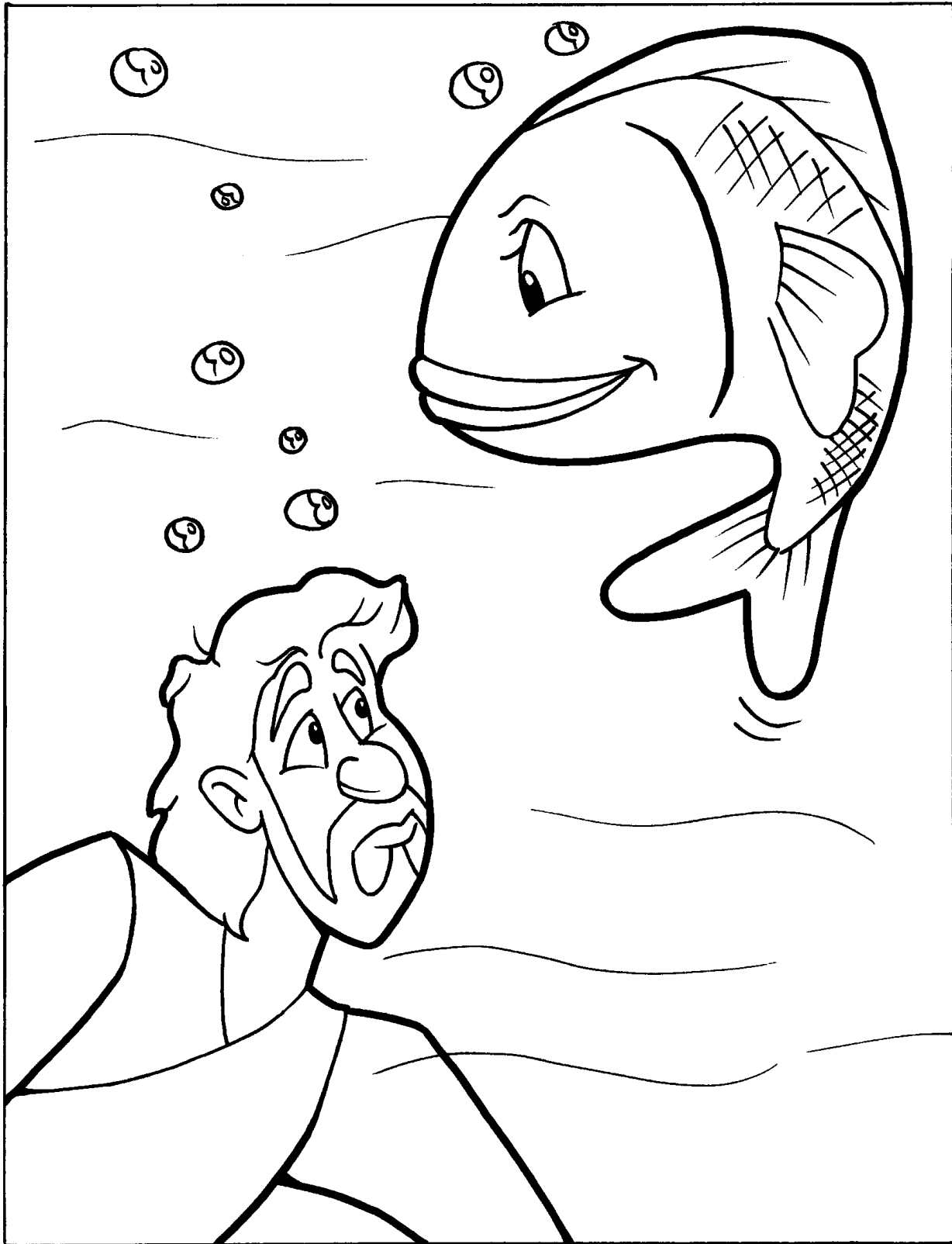
**Story Time - Read the story to the children**  
**Lesson 161: JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH**  
**JONAH 1:1 - 2:10**

The LORD spoke to Jonah son of Amittai saying, "Arise and go up to Nineveh that big city and speak out against it. I have heard about the many evil things the people are doing there." But Jonah tried to run away from the LORD. He went to Joppa and found a boat that was going to the faraway city of Tarshish. Jonah paid money for the trip and went on the boat. He wanted to travel with the people on this boat to Tarshish and run away from the LORD. But the LORD brought a great storm on the sea. The wind made the sea very rough. The storm was very strong, and the boat was ready to break apart. The men wanted to make the boat lighter to stop it from sinking, so they began throwing the cargo into the sea. The sailors were very afraid. Each man began praying to his god. Jonah had gone down inside the boat to lie down, and he went to sleep. The captain of the boat saw Jonah and said, "Wake up! Why are you sleeping? Pray to your god! Maybe your god will hear your prayer and save us!" Then the men said to each other, "We should cast lots (which is like rolling dice or throwing rocks) to find out why this is happening to us." So the men cast lots. (Show the children the picture of the different 'lots' that could have been used in ancient Bible times) The lots showed them that the troubles came to them because of Jonah. Then the men said to Jonah, "It is your fault that this terrible thing is happening to us. Tell us, what have you done? What is your job? Where do you come from? What is your country? Who are your people?" Jonah said to them, "I am a Hebrew. I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the land and the sea." Jonah told the men he was running away from the LORD. The men became very afraid when they learned this. They asked Jonah, "What terrible thing did you do against your God?" The wind and the waves of the sea were becoming stronger and stronger. So the men said to Jonah, "What should we do to save ourselves? What should we do to you to make the sea calm?" Jonah said to the men, "I know I did wrong--that is why the storm came on the sea. So throw me into the sea, and the sea will become calm." Instead, the men tried to row the ship back to the shore, but they couldn't do it. The wind and the waves of the sea were too strong--and they were becoming

stronger and stronger. So the men cried to the LORD, "LORD, please don't say we are guilty of killing an innocent man. Please don't make us die for killing him. We know you are the LORD, and you will do whatever you want." So the men threw Jonah into the sea. The storm stopped, and the sea became calm. When the men saw this, they began to fear and respect the LORD. They offered a sacrifice and made special promises to the LORD. When Jonah fell into the sea, the LORD chose a very big fish to swallow Jonah. He was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights.

While Jonah was in the stomach of the fish, he prayed to the LORD his God. He said, "I was in very bad trouble. I called to the LORD for help, and he answered me. I was deep in the grave. I cried to you, and you heard my voice. "You threw me into the sea. Your powerful waves splashed over me. I went down, down into the deep sea. The water was all around me. Then I thought, 'Now I must go where you cannot see me,' but I continued looking to your holy Temple for help. "The seawater closed over me. The water covered my mouth, and I could not breathe. I went down, down into the deep sea. Seaweed wrapped around my head. I was at the bottom of the sea, the place where the mountains begin. I thought I was locked in this prison forever, but the LORD my God took me out of my grave. God, you gave me life again! "My soul gave up all hope, but then I remembered the LORD. I prayed to you, and you heard my prayers in your holy Temple. "Some people worship useless idols, but those statues never help them. I will give sacrifices to you, and I will praise and thank you. I will make special promises to you, and I will do what I promise." Salvation only comes from the LORD! Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out of its stomach onto the dry land.

## 161. JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH (JONAH 1:1 - 2:10)



"So the men threw Jonah into the sea. The storm stopped, and the sea became calm."

**JONAH 1:5**

"When Jonah fell into the sea, the LORD chose a very big fish to swallow Jonah. He was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights." **JONAH 1:7**

# 161. JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH

JONAH 1:1 - 2:10

## MEMORY VERSE:

*"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* MATTHEW 12:40

## TRUE OR FALSE

1. The LORD spoke to Jonah and told him to arise and go up to Ninevah, that big city, and speak out against it. TRUE or FALSE
2. So Jonah got up and went to Ninevah immediately. TRUE or FALSE
3. The sea remained as smooth as glass and the whole journey went by smoothly. TRUE or FALSE
4. Jonah told the men on the boat, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." TRUE or FALSE
5. Jonah told the men to pick him up and throw him into the sea and it would be calm again. TRUE or FALSE

## ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. Why did the LORD want Jonah to go to Ninevah and speak out against it?
2. What happened when Jonah got on a boat going to Tarshish to run away?
3. How did the men decide that Jonah was the reason that the great storm had come upon them?
4. Did they want to throw Jonah into the sea?
5. After they threw him into the sea, what happened to Jonah?
6. How long was Jonah in the belly of the fish?
7. What happened to Jonah after he prayed when he was in the belly of the fish?

## PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to pursue rather than run from God's will and calling for their lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

## Lesson 161

### PLAY “THE FISH SWALLOWS JONAH” Beanbag toss game

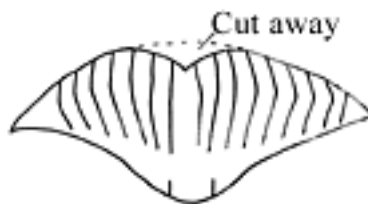
#### Make your Jonah Beanbag Doll(s):

**What you will need:** 1 Small square of scrap material (about 1” longer than the Jonah pattern and about 6” wide should work just fine – you can make more than one if you want), hot glue (or you can sew your material squares before-hand) and enough beans or rice to fill each baggie loosely full.

#### How to make:

1. Fold the material over into  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and hot glue (or sew) the edges together (leave about 1” at the top, bottom or side un-glued so you can fill it with the beans, rice, beads, or whatever). Turn the square inside-out and fill with the beans, rice, or beads.
2. After filling, hot-glue the last open 1” shut.
3. Print out the Jonah pattern and color it, then cut it out around the line.
4. Hot glue the Jonah onto your bean bag. (you can make more than one beanbag if you want)

#### Plastic Milk Jug Fish Craft



This fish is easy to make. All you need is a clean plastic milk jug, a knife and scissors, black permanent marker and a hot glue gun.

#### How to make:

1. Draw the mouth shape as shown around the bottom of the milk jug with a marker (use a marker that will wipe off in case you make a mistake). Poke a hole in the marked line with a knife so that you will be able to insert your scissors. Cut out the mouth in one piece. This piece will be used for the fish’s fin.
3. Shape the mouth piece to cut it into a fin shape as shown in the diagram.
4. Roll and insert the fin into the top on the milk jug and glue it in place.
5. Use a permanent black marker to trace around the mouth, draw in eyes, and lines on the fin.

Have children toss the beanbags into the mouth of the fish. Let the children take turns throwing the beanbag doll(s) into the fish.

## JONAH BEANBAG PATTERN TEMPLATES



## Lesson 161 Optional Craft

**Fishy Scales** For this craft, you will need one template for each child, colored tissue paper cut into small triangles (light colors), glue, poster board, crayons and/or markers. When Jonah found himself in the belly of the great fish, he turned from his sin and decided that he would follow God. In this craft, you will draw a Jonah inside of a great fish to help you remember today's lesson. On the template, color the fins, face, and tail of the fish. Using a marker, draw a small "Jonah" inside of the belly of the fish. Cut out the fish and glue it onto the poster board. Next cut out the fish from the poster board. Layer the poster board with various colors of tissue paper. Glue the tissue pieces onto the poster board fish. Glue the tissue paper onto the fish in such a way that Jonah can still be seen through the tissue paper. Write the memory verse on the back of the fish.

