

# Lesson 15



12-13-2020  
LEADER GUIDE

## JONAH, NINEVEH, & THE BIG FISH

JONAH 1-4

### GOAL

▶ To help children understand the importance of obeying God.

### CHARACTERS

▶ **Jonah:** This prophet ran away from God, was swallowed by a big fish, and traveled to Nineveh where he reluctantly preached to the people about repentance.

**Sailors:** They threw Jonah overboard.

**Ninevites:** Pagans who repented before God and turned to Him

### MEMORY VERSE

▶ **Jonah 2:9:** Salvation belongs to the Lord.

### MEMORY VERSE

▶ **Jonah 2:9:** Salvation is a gift from our gracious and merciful God that is given to those who believe in and love Him. We cannot earn salvation.

### MEANING

### OVERVIEW

▶ **Read the book of Jonah:** God called Jonah to preach to the foreign city of Nineveh, Israel's enemy and the scourge of the ancient world. Jonah flatly refused and ran the opposite direction. God sent a storm that threatened to sink the ship on which Jonah was sailing. When the sailors discovered that it was Jonah's fault that they were in peril, they asked him what they could do. Jonah told them to throw him overboard. As soon as they threw Jonah off of the boat, the sea became calm. A huge fish swallowed Jonah, and for three days and three nights, Jonah sat in the belly of the great fish. Jonah prayed, and God made the fish spit Jonah out onto dry land. Jonah eventually went to Nineveh to preach, where the people received his message, and the people there repented of their sin and turned to God.

## SLIDE 1



### QUESTION & ANSWER



**Q1a:** Where did God tell Jonah to go preach?

**A1:** God told him to go to Nineveh.

**Q1b:** Would you rather visit Disneyland or a prison?

**TN:** It seems pretty likely that everyone would rather visit Disneyland than a prison. God asked Jonah to go to a place filled with evil people. He was afraid for his life. The important thing for us to remember is that if God calls us to go to a potentially scary place, He will protect us and help us to be successful.

## SLIDE 2



**Q2a:** Where did Jonah go?

**A2:** He went to the port city of Joppa.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 3



**Q3a:** Jonah bought a ticket on a ship going to what city?

**A3:** The ship was going to Tarshish.

**Q3b:** Is there anywhere in your house where you could hide and never be found?

**TN:** Probably not. It might take a while for someone to find us, but if we were known to be hiding in the house, they could look in every room, around all of the furniture, and behind every door. At some point, we would be found. God is with us always. Trying to hide from God is like playing hide-and-go-seek in a single room without furniture and the seeker doesn't have to cover his or her eyes. There's nowhere to go.

### SLIDE 4



**Q4a:** What did the sailors do to help lighten the ship's load during the storm?

**A4:** The sailors started throwing cargo off of the ship.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 5



**Q5a:** What was Jonah doing while the storm was raging?

**A5:** Jonah was sleeping below the deck of the ship.

**Q5b:** When are some good times to pray?

**TN:** Well, pretty much any time is a good time to pray, but we often think to pray when we are facing danger or trouble. God hears all of our prayers, and He will always help us.

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### SLIDE 6



**Q6a:** What did Jonah say had caused the storm?

**A6:** God sent the storm because of Jonah's disobedience.

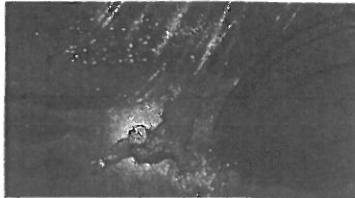
**Q6b:** What might happen if you don't study for a test?

**TN:** We could get lucky and pass, but more than likely, we would fail. That's a pretty obvious consequence for not doing something we know we should. Jonah had hoped that God would find someone else to go to Nineveh, but when he saw the terrible storm, he knew that God sent it because of his disobedience.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 8



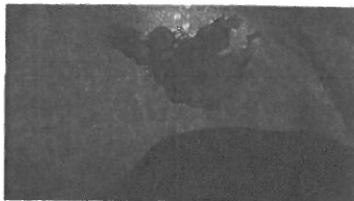
**Q8a:** What happened after the sailors threw Jonah overboard?

**A8:** The storm stopped and the sea was peaceful.

**Q8b:** What happens when you throw a big rock into a pond?

**TN:** The rock causes a splash, and then the water ripples out from the spot where the rock hit the water. It might take quite a while for the water to become completely calm again. So when the sailors threw Jonah off of their boat and the storm stopped and the water became instantly calm, they recognized the power of Jonah's God. Once they witnessed that kind of power, they knew Jonah's God was the only true God.

### SLIDE 9



**Q9a:** What swallowed Jonah?

**A9:** A big fish swallowed him.

### SLIDE 10



**Q10a:** How long was Jonah in the belly of the fish?

**A10:** Jonah was in the fish's belly for three days.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 11



**Q11a:** Once on the beach, what did Jonah know he had to do?

**A11:** He knew he had to obey God and go to Nineveh.

### SLIDE 13



**Q13a:** What did God do after the Ninevites repented and asked for mercy?

**A13:** God forgave the Ninevites.

### SLIDE 14



**Q14a:** Where did Jonah go after he saw that God wasn't going to punish Nineveh?

**A14:** Jonah left the city and sat on a hill that overlooked Nineveh.





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 15



**Q15a:** What destroyed the plant that had shaded Jonah.

**A15:** A worm destroyed the plant.

**Q15b:** Your sibling eats a bunch of junk food before dinner and is forgiven. You do the same thing and get grounded. Is that fair?

**TN:** Let the students answer. The people of Nineveh were disobedient, and Jonah thought they should be punished for their wickedness. Jonah had just experienced God's mercy and grace for being disobedient. While Jonah's disobedience may not have been quite as extensively wicked as that of the Ninevites, it was still disobedience. Jonah was thankful for God's mercy when it was bestowed upon him, but he was angry with God for being merciful to the Ninevites. God is constant. He doesn't change or bend the rules. No matter what, when we repent and ask for forgiveness, we are met with God's mercy.

### SLIDE 16



**Q16a:** What did God want to teach Jonah?

**A16:** God wanted to teach Jonah that when we repent, God forgives us.



## MEMORY VERSE

▶ **Jonah 2:9:** "Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

## BIG IDEA

▶ God is merciful to save those who love and obey Him.

## CLOSING PRAYER

▶ Dear God, thank You for teaching Jonah a lesson. Thank You that we can learn the lesson of obedience, too. Help us all to obey You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.

# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH CROSSWORD PUZZLE

## ANSWER KEY

### Across

2. Instead of letting Jonah drown, God sent a big **(Fish)** to rescue Jonah.
3. Up on the hill above Nineveh, God taught Jonah a lesson that he is a God of **(Mercy)**.
5. God wanted Jonah to tell the people to stop what? **(Sinning)**
6. Jonah told the sailors to throw him **(Overboard)**.
7. To get right with God again, Jonah spent three days **(Praying)** inside the stinky belly.
9. God sent a **(Storm)** to the ship Jonah was on.

### Down

1. What city did God tell Jonah to travel to? **(Nineveh)**
2. God **(Forgave)** the people, and listened to their prayers.
4. Instead of obeying God, Jonah **(Ran Away)**.
8. Jonah told the people of Nineveh to **(Repent)**. But in his heart he still did not want them to.



# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH

Jonah 2:9

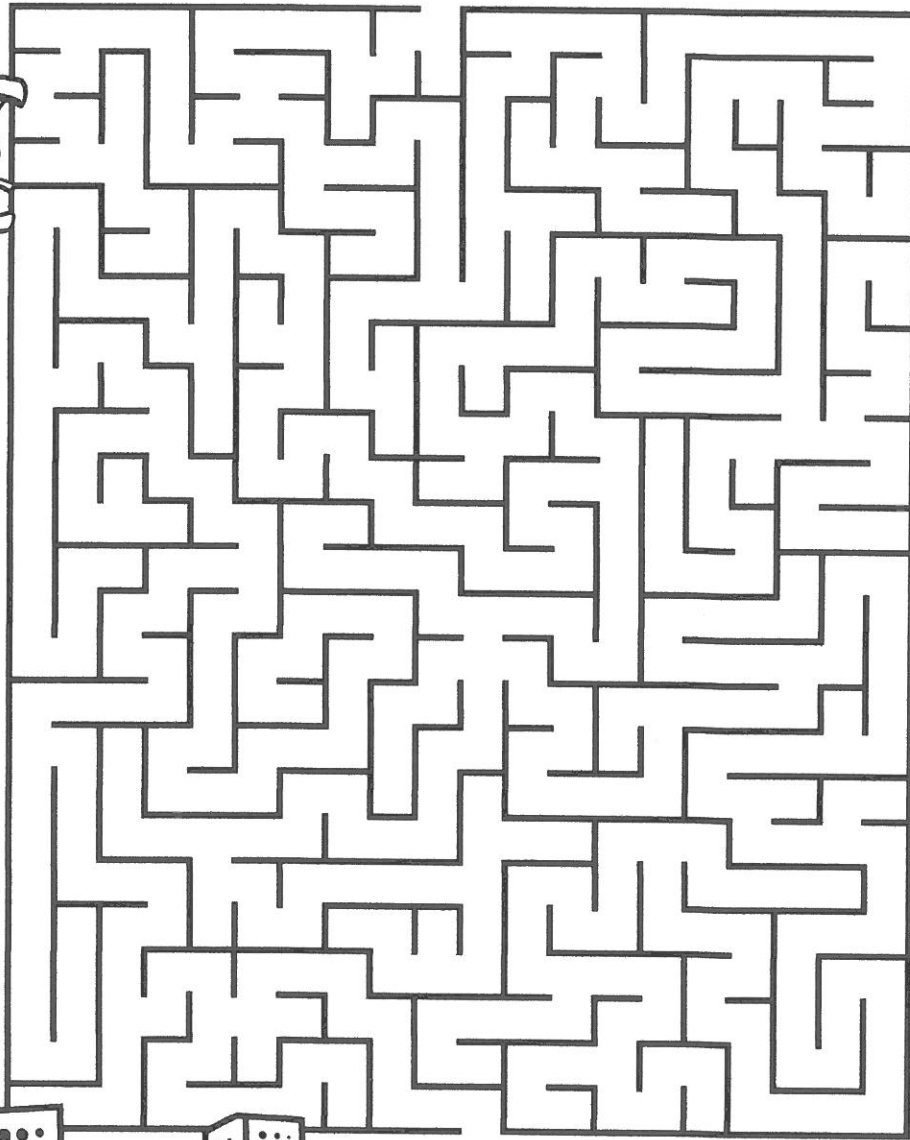
Salvation belongs to the Lord.



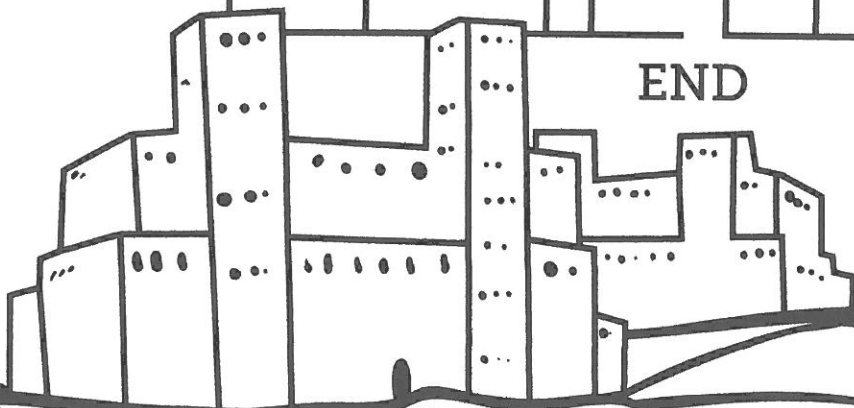
# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH

Help Jonah on his way to Ninevah.



























START











END














Jonah was a prophet from Israel. God wanted him to go to Nineveh to warn the people to stop their wickedness.

Code													
	= A		= E		= I		= M		= Q		= U		= Y
	= B		= F		= J		= N		= R		= V		= Z
	= C		= G		= K		= O		= S		= W		
	= D		= H		= L		= P		= T		= X		

What did Jonah do?

 e  o  o  a    i  o

 a  i     o  u   a a  

Something happened ...

A   o  a  e  u    i  

 a  i  a  e   o     

 e  e  o  a  ai   o     

 i  o  e  oa    e  a  

    i g   o  o  e  

  o  o    e 

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH

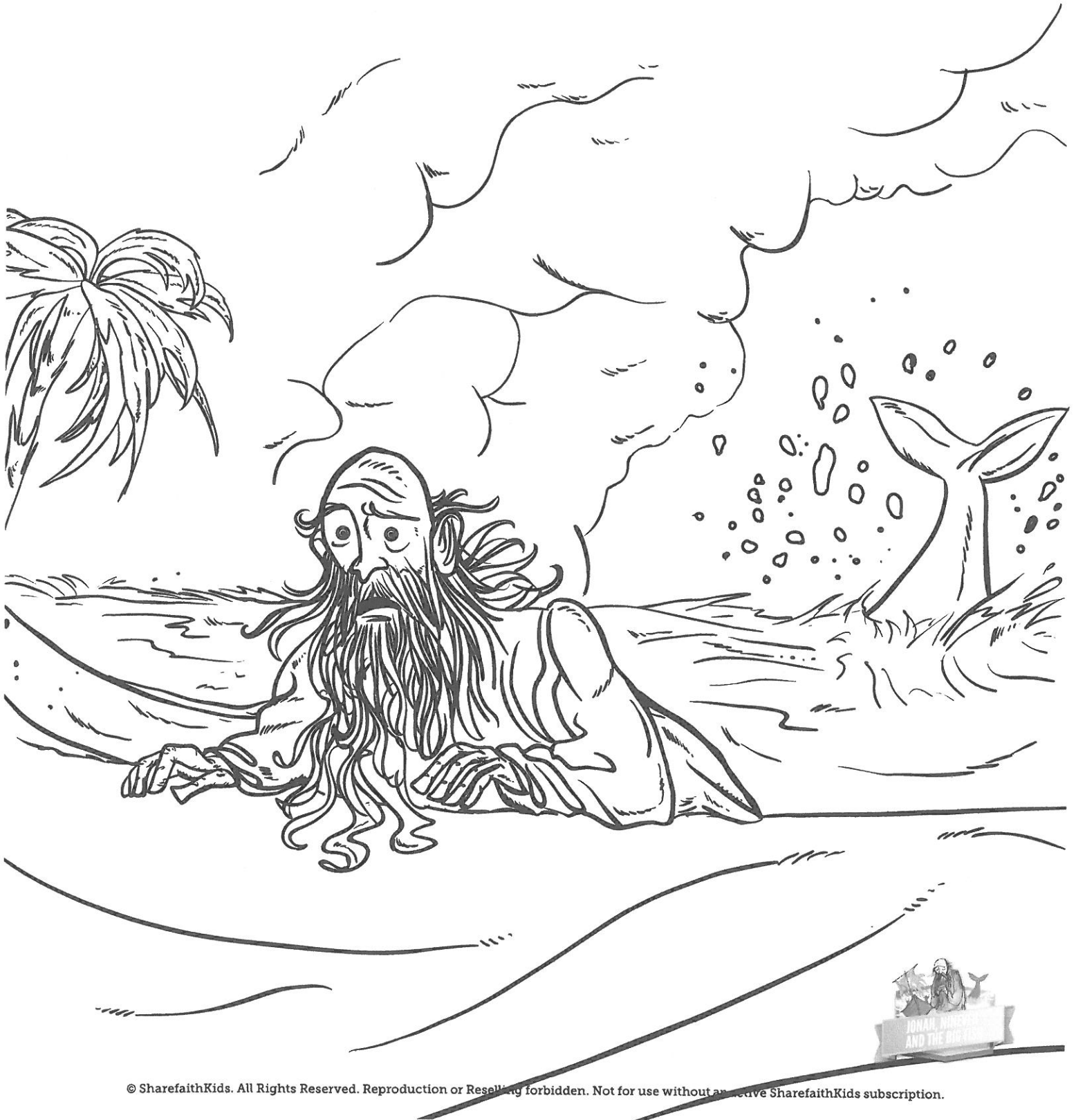
Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.



# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH

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Psalm 139:7  
Where can I go from your Spirit?



# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH



Discover the hidden words.



D	S	V	S	G	M	D	E	Z	X	Y	P	Z	H	C
A	R	T	Y	X	C	N	U	N	R	L	K	E	N	Q
X	L	A	O	O	B	A	H	C	X	L	J	M	I	R
F	P	O	O	R	M	L	S	E	P	E	C	E	S	K
M	Z	N	X	B	M	S	A	M	V	B	R	R	H	K
F	I	S	H	U	R	I	L	D	H	E	Q	C	I	Y
W	U	M	S	Z	M	E	K	Z	B	U	N	Y	P	Z
T	K	X	Q	G	S	Q	V	G	O	P	B	I	Z	O
Q	X	P	N	M	N	R	O	O	U	O	S	W	N	T
Z	R	Q	X	Z	Q	D	W	W	G	T	A	J	E	N
F	O	R	G	I	V	E	N	E	S	S	O	H	C	E
E	R	J	G	T	Y	R	H	X	U	N	M	A	Q	P
F	Q	H	O	K	M	W	U	B	A	R	G	C	Z	E
O	Z	G	Y	Q	Y	R	S	H	L	J	I	L	K	R
J	X	D	F	M	E	Q	G	B	P	N	N	T	G	O

## Word Bank

FISH

JONAH

MERCY

OVERBOARD

SHIP

ISLAND

NINEVEH

FORGIVENESS

REPENT

STORM

BELLY

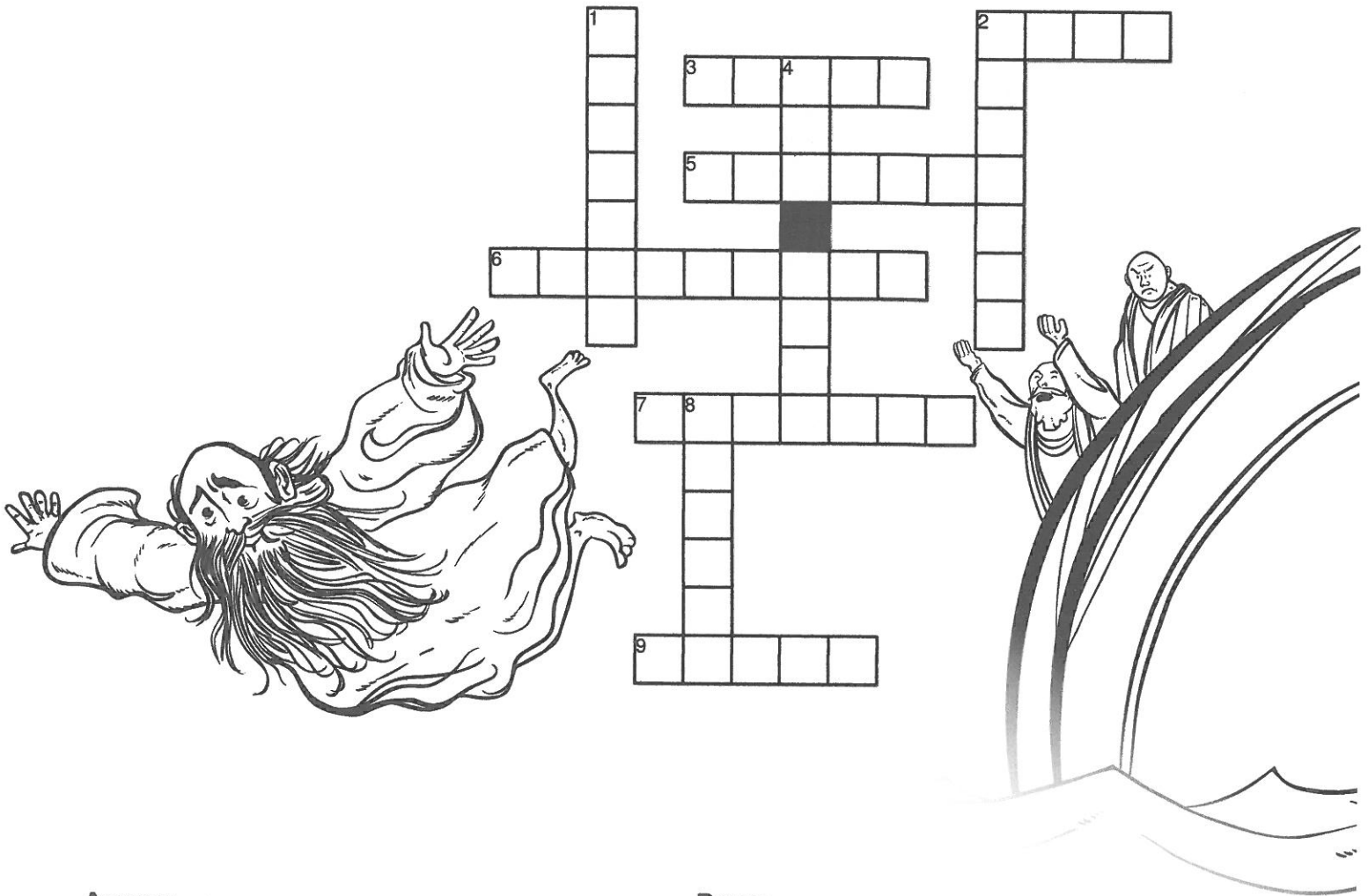
GOD





# JONAH, NINEVEH AND THE BIG FISH

## Book of Jonah



### Across

2. Instead of letting Jonah drown, God sent a big \_\_\_\_\_ to rescue Jonah.
3. Up on the hill above Nineveh, God taught Jonah a lesson that he is a God of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. God wanted Jonah to tell the people to stop what?
6. Jonah told the sailors to throw him \_\_\_\_\_.
7. To get right with God again, Jonah spent three days \_\_\_\_\_ inside the stinky belly.
9. God sent a \_\_\_\_\_ to the ship Jonah was on.

### Down

1. What city did God tell Jonah to travel to?
2. God \_\_\_\_\_ the people, and listened to their prayers.
4. Instead of obeying God, Jonah \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Jonah told the people of Nineveh to \_\_\_\_\_. But in his heart he still did not want them to.



## **Big Gulp of Jonah Instructions**

**You will need scissors, tape, a small (bathroom-sized) paper cup, a 15" piece of string or yarn, and a paperclip.**

1. Cut out all of the pieces: the blue fish top, yellow fish bottom & Jonah.
2. Poke a tiny hole in the bottom of the cup. Thread the string through the hole, tie a knot & tape the knot to the bottom of the cup.
3. Wrap the blue fish top around the paper cup; placing the cup deep enough so that you don't see it sticking out of the fish's mouth. Secure with tape.
4. Tape the yellow fish bottom to the cup and to the sides of the blue fish top.
5. Fold the tips of the tail fins up so that the fish rests on the table.
6. Tape a paperclip to the back of Jonah. Let it stick down below his feet a little so you have a place to tie the string.
7. Tie the end of the string to the paperclip at Jonah's feet.
8. Flip Jonah into the air and try to catch him in the mouth of the fish!

# Big Gulp of Jonah

