LESSON 7

JONAH FLEES FROM GOD



Aim: **To show the children that, no matter where we go, we are never out of reach of God's care and protection.**

Scripture Reading: **Jonah 1:1–10**

Memory Verse: **Exodus 20:6 (the Ten Commandments) "[I show] love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments."**

PRESENTING THE LESSON

STARTING POINT

Describe how children often run and hide when they hear their parents calling them to do a job they don't want to do.

MAIN POINTS OF THE LESSON

1. Jonah was a prophet like Elisha, but he tried to run away from the task God gave him. God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach to the people. They were very wicked (Jon 1:12). The Ninevites also were enemies of Israel. Jonah did not want to see those wicked people saved. He was not afraid that they would harm him; he was afraid that they would repent while he wanted God to punish them.
2. Jonah thought that if he went away from his own country (Israel), he could get away from God. So he boarded a boat going in the opposite direction from Nineveh (1:3). **Show Picture 7.**
3. But as soon as the ship was on the open sea God sent a great storm. Everyone was terrified. **Describe what they did (1:4–5a).**
4. The captain found Jonah down in the ship's belly, asleep! Why wasn't he praying and trying to help save the ship, the captain wanted to know (1:5b–6).
5. The sailors drew lots and found out that Jonah was to blame for the storm (1:7). From his answer to the sailors' questions, we see that Jonah knew in his heart that God is the sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth (1:9). However, one could not tell that from his actions. Jonah was full of courage, even if it was misplaced (1:10). In the next lesson we shall see the amazing way in which God rescued Jonah.

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Our Response to the Story

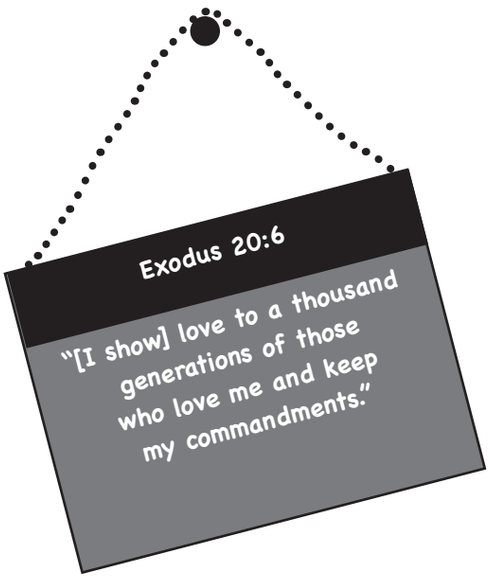
You are now going to hear a psalm from the Bible. I want you to listen to all the different places God says he is with us. Afterwards I am going to ask you how many you remember. **Read Psalm 139:1–12 to the class. It will work very well if you have two people who read well, each reading a verse in turn. Read the psalm twice. If you have a blackboard or some similar aid, draw up a list of the class's answers.**

Now let us say a prayer to thank God for being with us everywhere we go.

Instil the Memory Verse

Jonah was not willing to show his love for God by obeying his commandments.

Review all the verses of Exodus 20 learnt so far.



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