LESSON 8

JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH



Aim: **To show the children that God is with us, even in the most terrible places we can imagine.**

Scripture Reading: **Jonah 1:10 – 2:10**
It would be best to read the whole of Jonah 1 to revise the complete story.

Memory Verse: **Exodus 20:7**
(the Ten Commandments)
"You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God …"

Presenting the Lesson

Starting Point

Show Picture 7 and review the story of Lesson 7 by putting questions.

Suggested questions:

1. **Who is the man hurrying towards the ship? Jonah 1:3.**
2. **Who is he hurrying away from? Jonah 1:3.**
3. **Why is he running away from God? Jonah 1:23.**
4. **What happened to the ship? Jonah 1:4.**
5. **What was Jonah doing while everyone else was working hard trying to save the ship? Jonah 1:6.**

Main Points of the Lesson

1. The sailors, who did not know the living God and who worshipped idols, were amazed that Jonah had tried to run away (Jonah 1:10). They wanted to know what they could do to bring an end to the storm (1:11).
2. Jonah said they had to throw him into the sea. The sailors did not want to do this. They even tried to row closer to the shore. But the storm grew worse, so they asked God not to blame them for Jonah's death and threw him overboard. They knew he could not survive in those stormy waters (1:12–16).
3. But Jonah did not die. **Show Picture 8.** God sent a great fish to swallow Jonah (1:17).
4. Inside a fish must be a terrible place to be. A few people have had the same experience as Jonah and lived to tell the tale. Jonah did the only thing he could. He prayed to God. He knew that God was with him, even inside that fish (2:1).

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5. In his prayer Jonah confessed that God was with him and was listening to him (2:2). He had thought he had put himself beyond God's help, but now he really knew that he could not shut God out of his life (2:3-4). At the end of his prayer Jonah praised God and promised to obey him (2:9).
6. After three days the fish vomited Jonah out onto dry land (2:10).

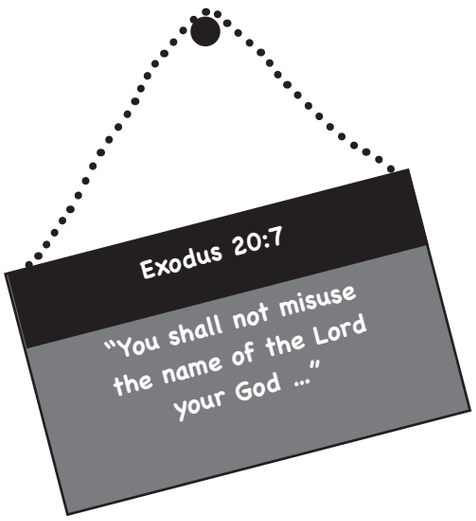
Our Response to the Story

During the past few years people of all ages have testified that God was with them during times of great terror and suffering – when they fled war, lived in refugee camps or were in prison. We hear this from people coming from various parts of the world; from Africa to Northern Ireland and to the region that used to be called Yugoslavia.

Read aloud to the class the parts of Jonah's prayer that are mentioned under point 5 above: Jonah 2:2-4, 9. Perhaps there is someone among you who wants to mention a time of special difficulty and danger and say how he or she was reminded of God's presence.

Instil the Memory Verse

Review all the verses of Exodus 20 learnt so far.



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