

Cooking Workshop

Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet Lesson Plan

Focus: Repentance

Chapters: Jonah 2 and 3

Jonah repented and was given a second chance. The people of Nineveh repented and were given a second chance.

God gives us second chances! Even when we mess up, disobey, or do wrong things, God is willing to forgive us when we are truly sorry, when we repent! Remember, repentance means a turning away from the wrong things we are doing and putting our whole hearts toward God.

Overview of the Workshop: Children will explore the concepts of repentance, forgiveness and obedience while telling the story of Jonah with food. Children will create an edible picture of the story while telling and discussing the story.

Supplies:

1. *“Cooking”*:

Paper Plates (1 per child)
Plastic Sandwich size bags (1 per child)
Graham Crackers (to crush for “sand”)
Blue Jello (for “water”)
Large Goldfish Crackers (the big fish)
Gummy Bears or Teddy Graham cookies (for Jonah and Ninevites)
Green string licorice (the vine)
Gummy worms
Chocolate wafers/crumbs (the “ashes”)
Mixing bowl
Spoon to serve Jello
Measuring cup
Water
Kettle
Food wrap
Scissors
Masking Tape

2. *“Closing”*: (optional)

Small pieces of note paper (1 for each child)
Pencils
Matches or lighter
Metal container (coffee can or aluminum pan)
Large glass of water

Preparation and Room Set Up:

- Review the Background Information and Lesson plan.
- Gather all necessary supplies.
- Place one plate per child on the table at their seats.

ALLERGY NOTE: Check ingredient labels to make sure nuts and nut oils are not included in any cooking activities.

Important Note for Cooking Workshop Leaders:

Children LOVE to cook and create various concoctions in this workshop. Help the children make the connection by intentionally discussing the way the activity relates to the lesson of the day. Discuss during preparation, eating and clean-up times.

Important Teacher Notes:

Each workshop includes the Bible story. One of our primary goals is to improve the children’s Bible literacy! Shepherds should help the children locate the stories. Use the Background Information to help you introduce the story.

Remember that as the rotation progresses, the children will become more familiar with the story. When this happens, allow the children to tell you what they know. The children should still locate the story in their Bibles every week. Use the bold headings in their Bibles to guide your discussion. You may want to review some of the Bible notes as well. Be sure to fill in any missing information and add additional details using the Background Information to help you. One of the greatest advantages of this model is that children who come regularly learn the story in great depth.

Time Guidelines:

Welcome and Introductions	5 minutes
Bible Study	10 minutes
The Edible Story of Jonah	30 minutes
Reflection/Closing	5 minutes

Welcome/Introduction:

Welcome the children and introduce yourself. You are meeting a new group of children each week who may/may not know you! Be sure to tell them you’re glad they’re here! Make sure everyone is wearing a nametag (you too). Have the children introduce themselves. Please include the shepherd in introductions.

Give the children a simple one or two-sentence synopsis of what you will be doing during the workshop: Today you’re going to make an edible picture to go with the story of Jonah. To make the water, we’re going to use blue Jell-O, which we will make for next week’s class. I know you’re going to have fun telling this story!

Prayer:

Please begin your class with prayer each week. Pray your own or use the prayer printed below.

Father, We thank you for this day and this time we spend together learning about you. Guide us to be obedient to you. We know that we do make mistakes. Help us to admit our mistakes and to share the forgiveness you have for us with others. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

Bible Study:

1. Introduce the story:

Jonah was a prophet. What is a prophet? (God's messenger) Let's think back to the time of the prophets. When Jonah lived, the nation of Israel was divided into two parts – the northern kingdom called Israel and the southern kingdom called Judah. When things got really bad, God sent his prophets to try to get the people to return to him, to stop making and worshiping idols and to put God first in their lives again. Sometimes God had other messages for his prophets. In the case of the prophet Jonah, God wanted to teach his people about how much God loves everyone – even the people who didn't live in Israel.

Jonah lived in the northern kingdom of Israel during a time when things were going pretty well. The people of Israel were looking forward to a time when God would restore their kingdom and make them a great nation again, while punishing all the people who didn't follow God's ways. But God had a different message for the people of Israel. Let's see what God had in mind....

2. Read the story of Jonah together from an age-appropriate Bible. If appropriate, the children can take turns reading.

Bible Study:

Where would we find the story of a prophet who lived many years before Jesus? (Old Testament) Jonah is a book of Old Testament prophets. Because it is a short book, it is called a Minor Prophet. The longer Prophet books are called Major Prophets.

Help the children locate Jonah in their Bibles. Depending on the Bible, this story may be too long to be read in its entirety. Paraphrase the scripture using the headings listed in the children's Bibles. Select certain sections to read or have the kids read out loud.

Memory Verse¹: Each rotation we will encourage the children to memorize one verse. Locate the verse and review it with the children at this time.

"When I was in trouble, I called out to you and you answered me." Jonah 2:2
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¹ Jonah was the first story we used for workshops. Some of our ideas evolved with experience. We started with a "memory verse" for each story, but did not continue this practice.

The Edible Story of Jonah:

Recreate the story! YUM!

Teacher says or asks (Telling and Discussing the Story)	Instruction for Food Items	Story representation
<p>First we're going to create the "sand" and the "water" where the different parts of Jonah's story happen.</p>	<p>Hand each child a baggie and a graham cracker. Place the cracker in the baggie and seal the top. Crush the cracker to make "sand". Have them pour the sand on half of the plate.</p> <p>Pass around the bowl of Jello. Have each child spoon Jello onto the other half of the plate.</p>	<p>The sand, the land scene of the story.</p> <p>The water scene.</p>
<p>Jonah was a prophet. What is a prophet? (someone who speaks for God, God's messenger) Discuss Jonah hearing from God that he was supposed to go to Nineveh, and Jonah saying "NO" and getting on a boat.</p> <p>Ask and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What did God tell Jonah to do? (go to Nineveh to preach to the people there) ◆ How did Jonah feel about the people of Nineveh? (didn't like them, they were his enemies) ◆ How did God feel about the people of Nineveh? (loved them, wanted to save them) 	<p>Hand out "Jonah" pieces.</p>	<p>Jonah</p>
<p>While Jonah was on the boat, a storm came and Jonah was thrown into the water. Note: You can be asking the kids to tell the story with coaching. E.g. What happened after Jonah was in the boat?</p>	<p>Place Jonah in the Jello "water".</p>	<p>Jonah was thrown into the water to stop the storm. God is angry with Jonah for running away.</p>
<p>God sent a whale (or a big fish – the word in Hebrew is the same!) to swallow Jonah up</p>	<p>Hand out the "whales" and place them in the "water" with Jonah.</p>	<p>God saves Jonah.</p>

<p>Jonah prayed inside the whale for 3 days. Discuss: why did Jonah now say he would do what God had asked him?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discuss what repentance means (not just saying “sorry”, but changing) (Turning away from sin and toward God – an inward change that is reflected by outward actions) ◆ Discuss how we know Jonah repented 		Jonah repents.
<p>Then God commanded the whale to spit up Jonah on dry land.</p>	Move Jonah from the whale onto the sand.	God answers Jonah’s prayer and saves him.
<p>Jonah went to Nineveh and told the people to change their evil ways, to stop doing bad things, or God would destroy their city in 40 days. The people heard what the prophet Jonah said, and they repented.</p> <p><u>Discuss:</u> What does it mean “to repent”? (Turning away from sin and toward God – an inward change that is reflected by outward actions)</p> <p>God was compassionate to the people of Nineveh (the Ninevites) because they repented, they turned away from their evil ways. (NOTE: focus concept for this workshop is repentance, so try to make sure everyone understands what this means.)</p> <p>Have kids give examples of how they have “repented”. E.g. sharing with a brother/sister after refusing.</p>	Hand out 3-4 “Ninevites” to each.	Jonah obeys. Nineveh is given a second chance. The Ninevites repent.
<p>Because the people of Nineveh repented, God did not destroy Nineveh. This made Jonah angry. Discuss why.</p>		God is merciful to the Ninevites. Jonah is angry.
<p>Jonah then prayed to God. God asked Jonah if he had any right to be angry.</p>		Jonah prays to God.
<p>Then Jonah went to watch what would happen.</p>	Move Jonah away from Ninevites.	Jonah sulked.

<p>God provided a vine to grow over Jonah’s head to protect him from the hot sun, and Jonah was very happy.</p>	<p>Hand out “vines” to put with Jonah on “sand”.</p>	<p>God provides for Jonah’s need.</p>
<p>The next day, God sent a worm to eat the vine. The vine died.</p> <p>When the sun rose, there was also a hot wind, and Jonah had no shade or protection from the heat. Jonah became faint. He was very upset. God said to Jonah, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?" "I do," he said. "I am angry enough to die." God asked Jonah if he had a right to be upset about the plant dying, when he hadn’t planted it, or watered it? Jonah cared about that plant even though it had only been there one day. God explained that HE had a right to care about the people of Nineveh – there were over 120,000 people there, and he was very glad that they had changed their ways.</p>	<p>Hand out the “worms”.</p>	<p>God tries to teach Jonah about forgiveness and grace, using Jonah’s concern for the vine to compare to God’s concern for the people of Nineveh.</p>
<p>Kids can snack on their creations, or put in baggies to take with them.</p>		

Follow-up with discussion:

- ◆ What did Jonah do inside the fish? (prayed in thanksgiving to God, promised to obey)
- ◆ What happened after Jonah preached in Nineveh? (people repented, God showed them mercy)
- ◆ How did Jonah feel about that? (angry)
- ◆ What can we learn about God from this story? (God loves everyone, grace, mercy, forgiveness)
- ◆ How do we show forgiveness in our lives?
- ◆ How do we tell others about the good news of God’s grace and love?
- ◆ How can we change our attitude toward others who are different than us or who are not easy to love?

As a final step, in preparation for next week’s workshop, have the class make Jell-O. You can continue the discussion during this activity. Have the kids help measure the water and each can take a turn stirring. You should handle the boiling water and warn the kids (younger in particular) of the safety hazard. Once the Jell-O is dissolved, put the food wrap over top of the bowl. The bowl should be put in the fridge upstairs, with tape labeling it for Sunday School.

Closing:

Gather the children and give each one a piece of notepaper and pencil. Encourage the children to think about something they have done for which they would like God's forgiveness. Something that they are ready to repent about: to change their way. Remind them that this should be something they sincerely wish to change. Tell the children that no one will read their papers. They may want to fold their papers for privacy.

For children who cannot write, they can draw something or just use the paper to mean the thing they are repentant about. If they prefer, they can ask a Shepherd to help.

Wait quietly as the children work. Or do the activity along with the children.

Have children come up one at a time with their papers.

OPTIONAL: Light a match and burn each of the children's papers in the metal can. Add only one paper at a time, allowing it to burn before adding the next. Have large glass of water on hand in case flames become too large.

Give each child an opportunity to burn or destroy their statements of sin.

Then say: *The Lord is merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. We can be confident of God's forgiveness and love. God does give a second chance.*

Close with the Lord's Prayer or another prayer of your choice. Or, let the kids offer prayer petitions.

(Activity adapted from New Invitation Bible Studies, Abingdon Press, Summer 1997.)

Clean Up:

1. Let everyone help with the clean up!
2. Please wash utensils, bowl, and table.
3. Return nametags and materials to Shepherd's Box.
4. Hand out memory verse cards to any child who doesn't have one yet (one card for Jonah story per student, not one each week)