

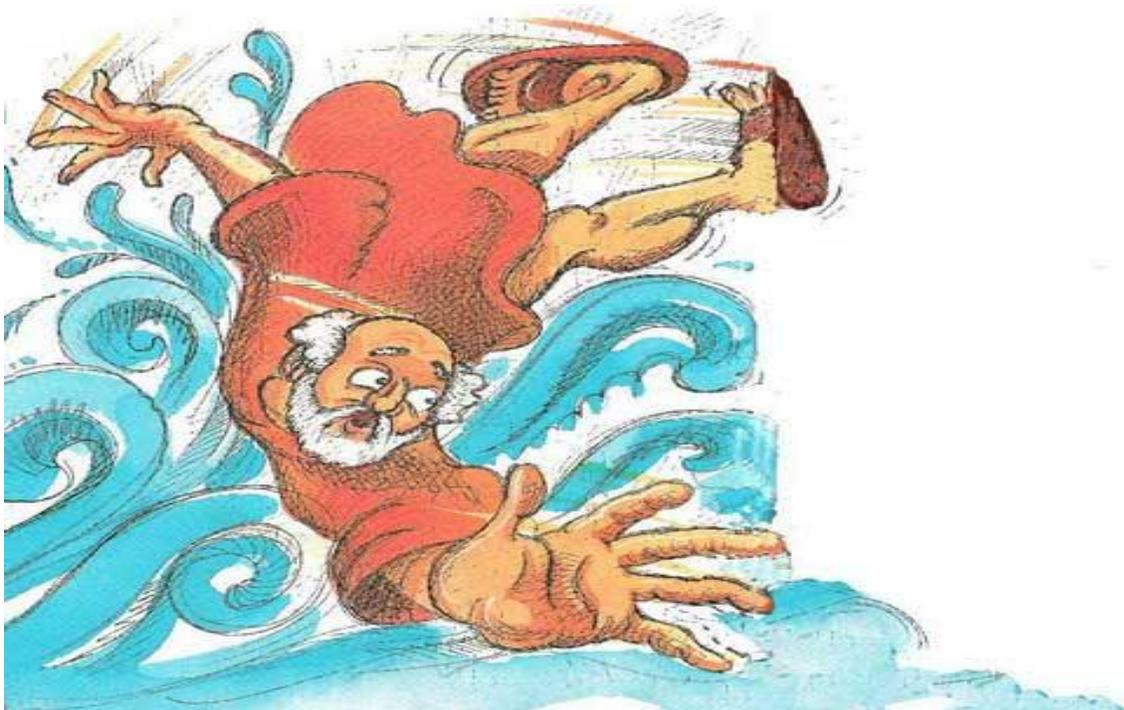
# Jonah and the Big Fish

## Jonah 1 to 4

Jonah," said God, "go to Ninevah and tell them I've seen their wickedness."

But Jonah didn't like the people of Ninevah. And he thought he could run away from God. So he got on a ship sailing away from Nineveh.

Soon a storm began to beat upon the ship until the sailors were afraid that it would break into pieces. The wind roared and the waves crashed! Finally, Jonah realized he was the reason for the terrible storm. "Throw me overboard," said Jonah, "and the storm will end." The sailors didn't want to throw Jonah out, but the storm grew even wilder. At last they agreed. They threw Jonah into the sea. Instantly, the sea became calm.



Then God sent a gigantic fish to swallow Jonah. For three days and three nights, Jonah stayed inside the fish. While he was inside the fish, he asked God to help him.

Finally, God made the fish spit Jonah out onto dry land. And this time, Jonah obeyed God. He went straight to Nineveh and began to preach.



"God has seen your wickedness," said Jonah. "He will destroy Nineveh in forty days."

The people listened to Jonah. They were sorry for the bad things they had done. They began to pray. They returned to God. And God did not destroy them.

### Getting the Right Perspective

Jonah was angry at God. First he was commanded to go to the capital of Assyria, the arch-enemies of Israel. Second the indignity of being thrown overboard and swallowed by a big fish. Then God actually granted forgiveness to the people of Nineveh. And, to top it all off, God had taken away the nice shade that was making Jonah's suffering a bit more endurable. Jonah cried out in his anger!

When life doesn't go our way we can react in much the same way as Jonah. We can whine when the car won't start, or the kids are obnoxious, or things at work are unmanageable.

But none of these things is important. Poverty, war, and injustice are important. Jonah moaned in despair because he lost his plant, but didn't care if 120 000 people died without the knowledge of God. What is your attitude? Do you need to look at life a bit differently?

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