

## 20. God's Messenger

*The story of Jonah.*

### Memory Verse

"Love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute [who are unkind] you!"

Matthew 5:44

### Story Time

Read 'God's Messenger' (pages 160-169 in the Jesus Storybook Bible) or watch the video on our website.

### Understanding the Story

Talk this through with your kids:

God asked Jonah to give the people of Nineveh a message, but Jonah tries to run away! Why? Because going to Nineveh was a hard thing. Jonah didn't like the people of Nineveh, he didn't like the idea of going there, he didn't like God's idea at all! Sometimes, God asks us to do hard things! Loving people and showing them kindness isn't always easy.

But God doesn't always plan things the way we would. He asks us to love one another, but not just the people who are our friends. ALL people. Even the ones who are bullies and enemies.

It took Jonah a while to do as he was asked, but in the end, loving his enemies worked out for good. The people of Nineveh said sorry to God for all the wrong they'd done.

### Digging a little deeper:

Loving our enemies might sound crazy – but God's way of thinking is amazing. The bible teaches that because of sin, the terrible lie, we made ourselves enemies of God. Jesus loved his enemies so much, that he died to rescue us! Now we can be friends of God again because of His love and kindness!

### Questions to get you talking:

- Have your parents ever asked you to do something and you said "NO!"? What happened?
- What do you think it would be like living in a fish's belly for 3 days?
- Is it easy to do something nice for someone who isn't nice to you?

### Activities in your box:

- **Growing Sea Creatures** Put the pill shaped foam pieces (attached below) into water. Watch them grow!

### - Ocean theme activity

### Activities using things around the house:

- **Play 'Sink-or-Float'** Gather a few items from around your house. Guess if they'll sink or float?

- **Play 'Hide-n-Seek.** Jonah tried to runaway and hide from God!

- **Build a fort,** pretend you're in the belly of a big fish! (A great place to read the story!)

- **Act out the story using toys** around the house, make your own storm sound effects. Could be a great game to play at bath time!