

# Jonah

A Study in Obedience and Attitude

## Lesson 8



**Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum - Summer 2008**

Created for use with young, unchurched learners • Adaptable for all ages including adults

# Lesson 8

## The Sign of Jonah

### Scripture References

Matthew 12:39-41  
Matthew 16:4  
Luke 11:29-32  
Philippians 2:1-15

### Lesson Goals

Understand that Jesus compared Himself to Jonah  
Understand the sign of Jonah  
Understand the importance of having the same attitude as Christ Jesus

### Memory Verse

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.  
Philippians 2:5 (NIV)

We find ourselves at the end of the book of Jonah. It doesn't end "happily ever after," does it? Jonah, God's prophet, was a selfish, angry man. Even in his obedience to go to Nineveh, he was disobedient with his attitude. So, does that mean there is nothing to learn about from the life of Jonah? Hardly! Sometimes we learn from others when they make the right choices, but we can also learn from those who do not.

Did you know that the Old Testament prophet Jonah is mentioned by Jesus in the New Testament? In fact, Jonah is the only prophet that Jesus compared Himself to! What could Jesus possibly have to say about Jonah, especially that relates to Himself? Well, Jesus went around teaching and healing people. The crowds around Him grew very large. Many people believed in Jesus, but some just kept following Him around to see the miraculous things He was doing. Some even thought they needed to see more miracles to believe. Jesus knew this and He told them, "You're not getting another miracle or sign except the sign of Jonah!"

The sign of Jonah? What's that?

Jesus explained, "Jonah was in the stomach of the huge fish for three days and three nights. He was a sign of God to the people of Nineveh. In the same way, I will be a sign from God to the people of today. Something like what happened to Jonah will also happen to me. I will spend three days and three nights in the grave."

Has that already happened? Yes! It happened when Jesus died on the cross for your sins and for my sins. Jesus gave His life for you and me! The book of Philippians is a letter Paul wrote to the church in Philippi. He told them about Jesus' death. He also talked about obedience and attitude. He said, "You should think the same way Christ Jesus does. He's God, but He made Himself nothing. He obeyed God completely, even though it led to death on a cross."

Do you remember when Jonah was willing to give his life by being thrown overboard? Who remembers why Jonah did that? He did it because the terrible storm was his fault. He did it to keep others from

## Application

The story of Jonah is a sad one. He was either disobedient or he obeyed with an attitude! Have you ever thought about your own attitude? How is it? Did you know that it could be, even should be, like Jesus' attitude? How is that possible?

Having an attitude like Jesus may seem like the most impossible thing in the world, and on your own it is impossible. It is possible only through a friendship with God. Jesus' good attitude made it possible; He died on the cross to make it happen.

"Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NirV) You can have Jesus' attitude because when you believe in Him, He takes the old, sinful you and makes something new and wonderful!

Will you let Him start something new in you today?



dying. Why did Jesus die on the cross? He did it to keep others from dying as well, but had He done anything wrong? No! So did Jesus die for His own sin? No! Then, did Jesus die only for those people who were like Him? No. Did He only die for His friends? No. Jesus died for **everyone**, even those who had made themselves His enemies.

After Jesus died, He was taken down from the cross and put in a cave. Is He still there today? No! Then what happened to Him? After three days, Jesus rose from the grave. He's alive!

So when you think of Jonah, and even his disobedience, remember the attitude Jesus had. He left heaven, became like a slave, died on a cross for you, and after three days He came out of the grave!

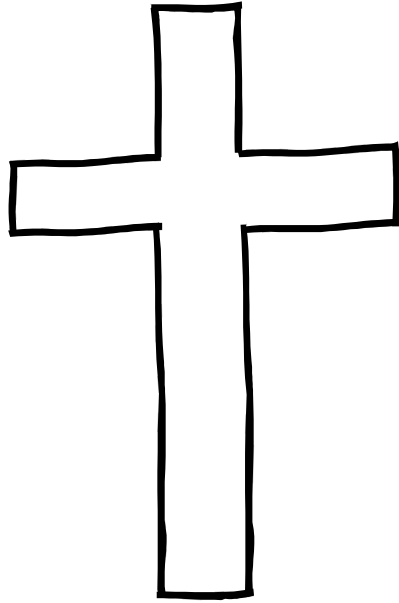
### Review Questions:

- How does the story of Jonah end? (Not very well.)
- Does the Bible say anything else about Jonah? (Yes.)
- Where? (In the New Testament.)
- What does it say? (Jesus compares Himself to Jonah. He talks about the sign of Jonah.)
- What is the sign of Jonah? (As Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days, Jesus would be in the grave three days.)
- So, was Jesus like Jonah in every way? (No! Jonah was selfish and disobedient. Jesus was obedient to God, even when it meant death on a cross for all of us who have sinned.)

# Learning Activities

- Provide Easter pictures. Talk about the sign of Jonah and how it pointed to Jesus' death on the cross and Easter, the resurrection.
- Make three dimensional fish and a Jonah puppet. Insert Jonah into the fish before the story and remove him as you explain the sign of Jonah.
- Design your own butterflies. Provide each student a blank butterfly form. Encourage your students to be creative. Print the following verse at the bottom of each page, "Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17".
- Don't forget about an Open House! Plan to show off your students' artwork and knowledge of Jonah!
- **A Deeper Look** - Look up Philippians 2:5-15 in several different translations. Assign each of your students to groups and give each group a different translation to read. Have them make practical lists of how we can have the same attitude that Jesus had. Talk about how obedience and attitude go hand in hand.

## Memory Verse



Your attitude  
should be the same  
as that  
of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5

## Word Fun

What sign  
did Jesus give the people  
to prove that He is God's Son?  
Trace the letters below to find out.

SIGN OF JONAH

# The Sign of Jonah

I F U L D E S E R V E E D W H  
F K N H E L T H R O N R N B S  
U S L E W T O A T G E R R E V  
L N D F W A R B S Y V N E L R  
U D H N N H O R I T O N I I I  
P N D U E R A R R S L R V E D  
E G T A K E P S H Y F E E V N  
R O R S E R E V C Y O B N E I  
S N A I H T N I R O C D O S K  
M E D E E N L U V N M G Y N S  
D O N O I T A E R C W E N L V  
N O C O E M D E R I F H A U F  
I O D N I K T R B R N E W D E  
K W H A M E R C I F U L E H P  
O R H N H E E I R B R A V E L

How can someone who is sinful have the same attitude as Jesus? Look up the following verse in your Bible and fill in the blanks to find out.

\_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_  
is a \_\_\_\_\_. The old is \_\_\_\_\_!  
The \_\_\_\_\_!  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 5:17

# The Sign of Jonah

I F U L D E S E R V E E D W H  
F K N H E L T H R O N R N B S  
U S L E W T O A T G E R R E V  
L N D F W A R B S Y V N E L R  
U D H N N H O R I T O N I I I  
P N D U E R A R R S L R V E D  
E G T A K E P S H Y F E E V N  
R O R S E R E V C Y O B N E I  
S N A I H T N I R O C D O S K  
M E D E E N L U V N M G Y N S  
D O N O I T A E R C W E N L V  
N O C O E M D E R I F H A U F  
I O D N I K T R B R N E W D E  
K W H A M E R C I F U L E H P  
O R H N H E E I R B R A V E L

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