

# THE MAN WHO TRIED TO RUN AWAY FROM GOD

**Jonah 1:1-17; Jonah 2:1-10; Jonah 3:1-10; Jonah 4:1-11.**

## Lesson 143 Primary Course

**Memory Verse: “Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it” (Luke 11:28).**

### BIBLE TEXTS

#### Jonah 1:1-17;

1 ¶ Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

3 But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

4 ¶ But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

6 So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

7 And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

8 Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?

9 And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.

10 Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

11 ¶ Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

12 And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

14 Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee.

15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.

17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

## **Jonah 2:1-10;**

1 ¶ Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,

2 And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

3 For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

4 Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

5 The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

6 I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.

7 When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

8 They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.

10 ¶ And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

## **Jonah 3:1-10;**

1 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

5 ¶ So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

9 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

## **Jonah 4:1-11.**

1 ¶ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

3 Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.

4 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?

5 ¶ So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

6 And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

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9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

10 Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:

11 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle

## Notes

### Jonah Sent

Long, long ago there lived a man named Jonah. Jonah believed in God. Many people in the countries around where he lived did not believe in the living God. They worshiped idols, or statues, made of wood and stone, and because they did not believe in the good God, they became very wicked and sinful. The people of Nineveh were like that, so God sent Jonah to tell them that they should be good or they would be destroyed. But Jonah did not do at first what God told him to do. Jonah thought that because they were heathen people, God should not save them. But we know that God loves everyone. He wants every little boy and girl, and every man and woman in all the world to be saved and go to Heaven and live with Him forever.

Sometimes children do not want to do what Mother and Father tell them to do because, like Jonah, they think it is better to do something else. But it is always right to do what God tells them to do, and God tells the little children: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."

### Jonah Disobeys

Perhaps Jonah thought: I do not want to go to Nineveh and tell them they are so bad that they will be destroyed if they do not pray and repent and ask God to forgive them; maybe they will stop bowing down to their idols and pray to God for mercy and help, and God will bless them and let them live. So instead of going east across the desert to Nineveh, Jonah went down to the sea and took a ship going west across the big ocean to Tarshish. But, of course, God was not going to let the people of Nineveh be destroyed without giving them a chance to be saved. So God had to make Jonah willing to go to Nineveh and preach.

### The Storm

As Jonah was sailing to Tarshish, God sent a great wind on the sea. It blew so hard the sailors thought the ship was going to be broken up and they would be drowned. Each one of them cried out to his god to help them, but of course their gods did not help them because they were only wood and stone and could not hear nor see nor move. The ship was carrying some things over to Tarshish — perhaps kegs of grape juice and olive oil — and the sailors threw these out into the ocean to make the ship lighter so it would not sink. Still the wind blew very hard and the big waves probably went right over the top of the ship.

The shipmaster found Jonah asleep and told him to get up and call upon his God. But Jonah could not very well pray and expect God to help him, because he was not doing what God asked him to do. Jonah told the sailors that he was running away from God — the God of Heaven who had made the sea and the dry land. Then they knew why this big wind and storm had come upon them, and they were afraid.

### Jonah Spared

They asked Jonah what they should do so that the wind would quit blowing and the sea would be quiet. He told them to throw him overboard into the ocean. Of course, they did not want to do that; they thought he would be drowned. They worked hard to get the ship to land, but the wind only blew harder and big waves almost upset them. They decided they would have to do what Jonah told them to do, and after they had prayed to God, they threw Jonah into the ocean.

God knew Jonah would go to Nineveh and preach if he had another chance, so God made a special, big fish to swallow Jonah. There are whales in the ocean today with big enough throats and stomachs to swallow a man. Some men caught a whale that had room in his stomach for a small automobile. But the fish we read about in our lesson today, God made especially to swallow Jonah, and of course it was easy for God to make it big enough for Jonah to be swallowed and live inside of the fish. Jesus knew about Jonah's being inside of the whale, too — He spoke of it many years afterward when He was on earth. While Jonah was being carried

around in the sea by this big fish, he prayed and told God that he would do what He wanted him to do. So God spoke to the fish and it vomited out Jonah on the dry land.

### **Nineveh Repents**

Then God spoke to Jonah again and told him to go to Nineveh and preach. And Jonah went right away. God told him just what to say, and he walked down the streets calling out. “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”

When the king heard that he and his people were to be destroyed because they did many naughty, bad things, he stopped doing what he knew was wrong. Then he took off his beautiful robe and put on coarse, rough clothes and sat down in ashes to show God how sorry he was that he had been bad. He told his people to repent -- to stop doing wrong things. They all put on rough clothes, called sackcloth. They didn't even eat nor drink water, and they cried and prayed to God to forgive them. When God saw how sorry they were, and that they were going to be good, He saved them, and the city of Nineveh was not destroyed.

### **God Loves Everybody**

How good it is to tell others -- maybe our playmates or a neighbour -- that Jesus loves them; that He will save them and take them to Heaven some day if they will pray and ask Jesus to forgive them. We would be glad if our friends and neighbour were saved -- just as glad as though they were our own brothers and sisters. God showed Jonah that He wanted every boy and girl, man and woman, in all the world to repent and be saved, even the heathen and people who were very bad and sinful.

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Jonah do when God told him to preach to the people of Nineveh? [Jonah:1:3].
2. What happened to Jonah when he disobeyed? [Jonah:1:17].
3. What did Jonah do when he was inside the big fish? [Jonah:2:1].
4. What did the people of Nineveh do when Jonah told them they were to be destroyed? [Jonah:3:8].
5. Does God love our neighbours and heathen people just as much as He loves us? [2 Peter:3:9].

## LESSON RESOURCES

### TOPIC

# THE MAN WHO TRIED TO RUN AWAY FROM GOD

Lesson 143

Jonah 1:1-17; 2:1-10; 3:1-10; 4:1-11

MUSIC

# I Don't Want To Be A Jonah

WATCH & PRAY 65



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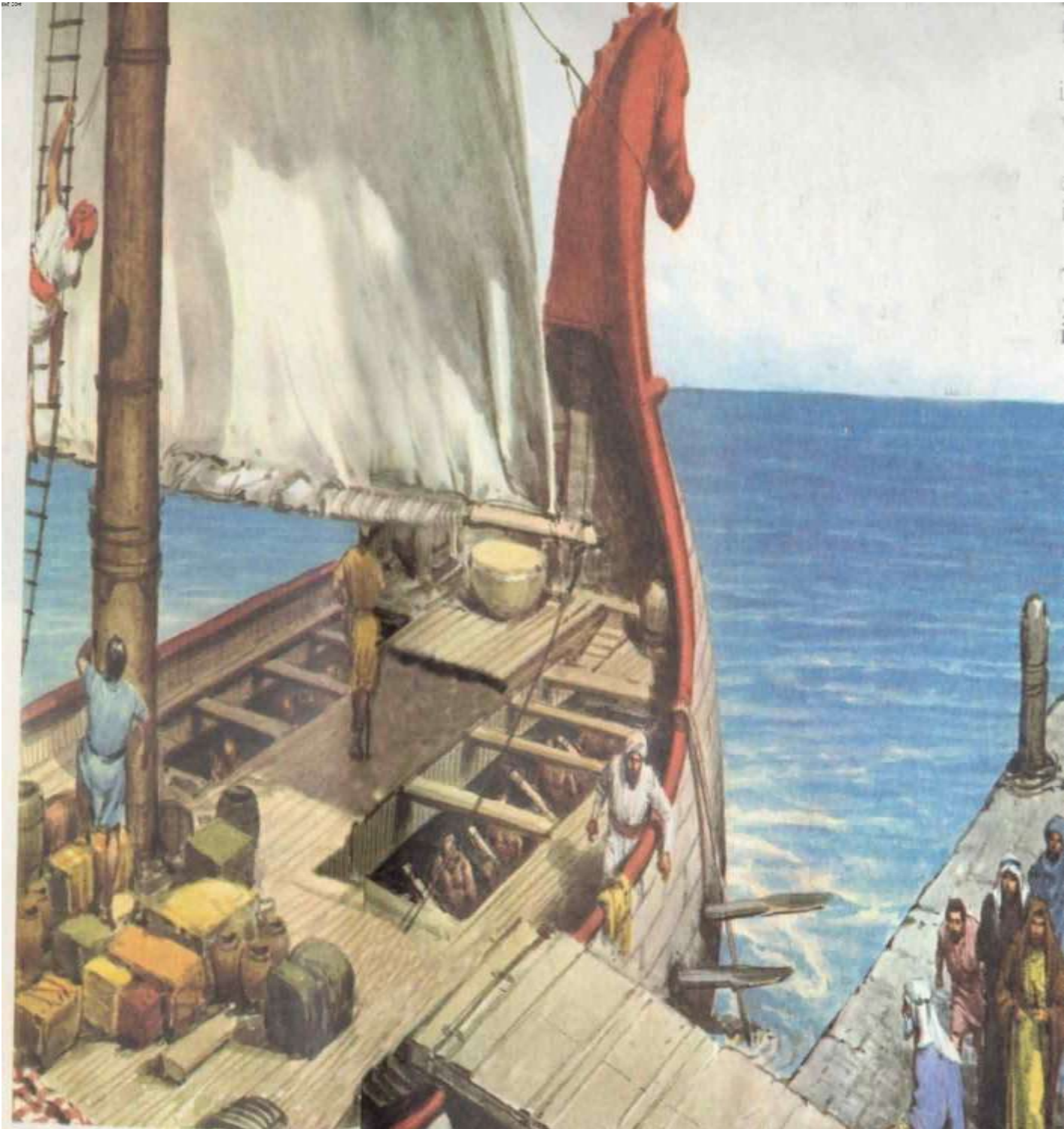
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## SONG

# **I Don't Want To Be A Jonah**

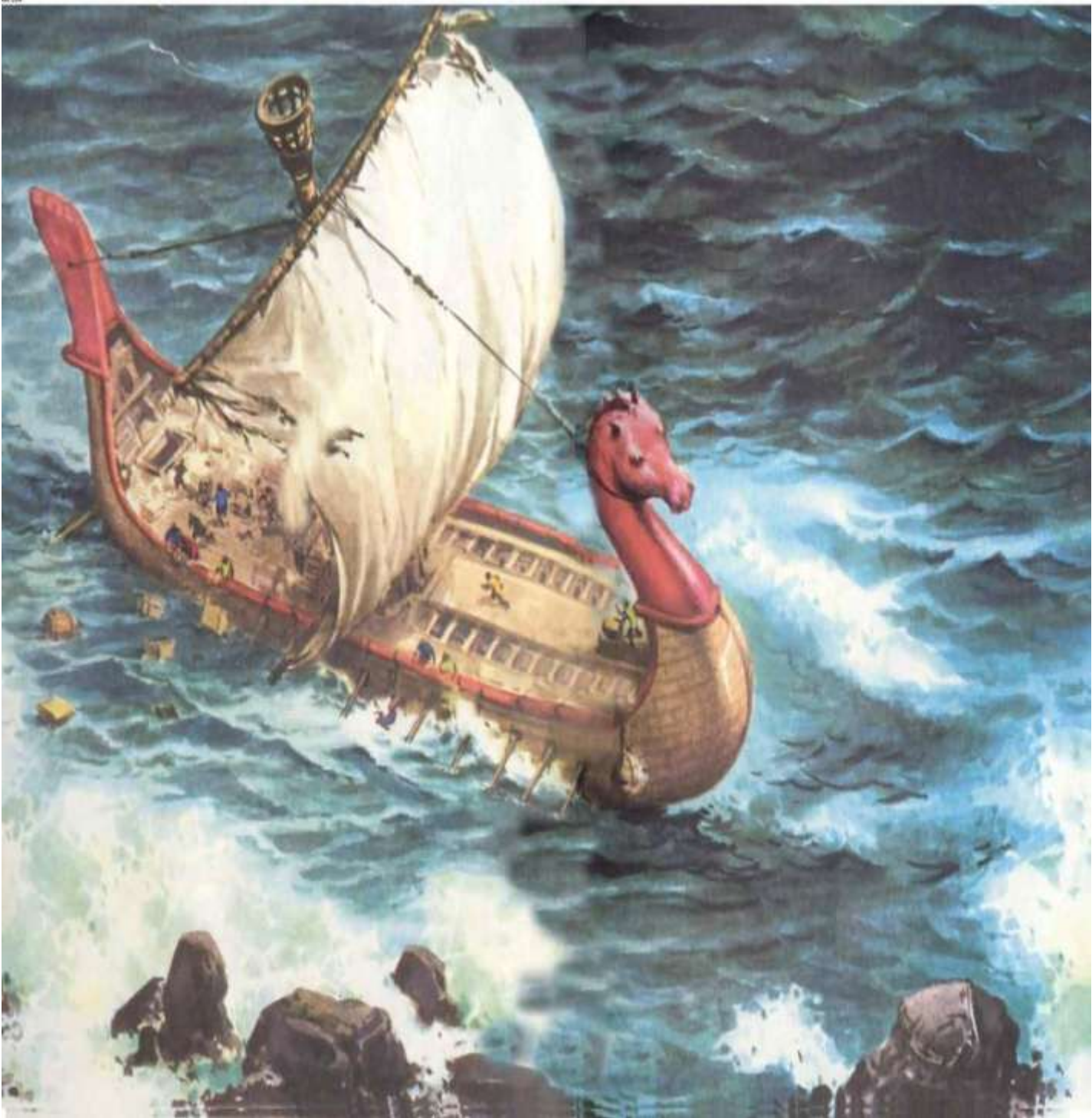
**I don't want to be a Jonah,  
And be swallowed by a whale  
Oh, I don't want to be a Jonah  
And be swallowed by a whale  
So, I'll obey the Saviour's word,  
I'll obey, come what may;  
Tell the children ev'ry where  
They must be born agian  
Oh, I don't want to be a Jonah  
And be swallowed by a whale.**

**PICTURE 1**





**PICTURE 2**



**PICTURE 3**



**PICTURE 4**

