

# **THEME 3**

## **Helping Others Find a Place to Belong**

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In this theme we see the life experiences of Naomi and Jonah, both of whom experience the compassion of God through their encounters with people from different lands. Naomi's daughter-in-law Ruth chooses to identify with the God of Israel and God's people. This story is like a welcome sign inviting all to believe in God and to belong to God's family. Despite Jonah's initial disobedience to God's call, he eventually learns that God desires to use him as an instrument of compassion and good news to reach the Ninevites.

Units in Theme 3:

Unit 6: People from Other Places Belong in God's Kingdom

## **Second Grade—Unit 6**

# **People from Other Places Belong in God's Kingdom**

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The stories of Naomi and Jonah show God's faithfulness as we respond by trusting in God's continued presence. The first story in this unit, taken from Ruth, is often told through the eyes of Ruth, the faithful daughter-in-law who leaves her homeland for the sake of Naomi. This unit will portray the story from the perspective of Naomi, the person whose life was changed because of the selfless acts around her. The second story, about Jonah, revolves around one man's initial disobedience to God and eventual response to God's call to preach to those who were outside of Israel. Both stories show God's desire to reach all people and to include all people in the kingdom.

### **LESSONS**

1. Life's Journey
2. God is Faithful
3. A Happy Ending
4. Jonah and the Great Fish
5. Jonah Speaks to the Ninevites

# Unit 6: People from Other Places Belong in God’s Kingdom

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## Unit Information

### SUMMARY

In telling the story of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz, we often focus on Ruth. In this unit, we will view the story through the eyes of Naomi. Her faithful daughter-in-law and Boaz, through selfless acts, were able to help Naomi find a place to belong in her home country. God rewarded Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz for their acts of faithfulness. The son of Ruth and Boaz was the grandfather of David.

We will also look at the story of Jonah, who initially tries to run away from God’s call but eventually obeys God’s instructions to preach to the Ninevites. The story of Jonah reiterates this unit’s focus on God’s compassion for all people, not just the Israelites.

### KEY BIBLE TEXTS

- Ruth 1–4
- Jonah 1–4

### BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

#### Naomi’s Story

The story of Naomi takes place during the time of the judges and is recorded in the book of Ruth. The writer of this book is unknown. It is the story of an ordinary family who experienced the joys and sorrows of life and remained faithful to God’s leading. God blessed Naomi with the love, loyalty and friendship of her daughter-in-law, Ruth. Ruth’s loyalty to Naomi led her to a newfound belief in the one true God, the God of Israel.

#### Jonah’s Story

It is understandable that Jonah initially disobeyed God. He would have had to travel about 750 miles across a desert on foot, and on reaching Nineveh, be responsible to preach the word of God to a city of more than 120,000 residents. In addition, the Ninevites were known for their cruelty and arrogance, and were traditional enemies of Israel.

In many ways, God was asking the impossible of Jonah. According to the story, Jonah tries to flee and put a barrier between himself and God, but eventually, on the boat, becomes willing to sacrifice his own life. After being swallowed and spit out by a great fish, Jonah accepts God’s call and goes to preach to the Ninevites. God has compassion on the Ninevites when they repent, and spares the city through Jonah’s faithfulness. Jonah struggles with God’s decision to spare the city, and is initially angry that God did not still destroy the city. God then teaches Jonah that he has been an instrument of compassion to the Ninevites, and should be happy that they have been spared. We, too, can be agents of compassion and good news to people on behalf of God.

## ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- God uses our unselfishness to bless others.
- God is with us even when we disobey God.
- God has compassion on all people.
- God uses us as instruments of compassion and salvation in the world.

## WORSHIP

*Focus:* Welcoming others

*Worship Table Symbols:*

- **welcome sign** to represent the welcome we can offer to newcomers in our community
- **handful of corn or grain** to depict the story of Ruth gleaning the fields
- **doll** to represent Ruth and Boaz's son
- **toy whale or photo of whale** to represent the great fish that swallowed Jonah
- **piece of burlap** to represent the sackcloth of repentance the Ninevites wore

*Suggested Songs:* Peace Like a River (p. 183); Rejoice in the Lord Always (p. 184), You've Got a Place (*Sing the Journey* #4)

## ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

You will have various opportunities throughout this unit to assess your students' understanding of the material and/or to add to their portfolios: their descriptions of the main characters in the story of Ruth in Lesson 2, their ability to order the events in the book of Ruth in Lesson 3, their dramatic portrayals of the story of Jonah in Lesson 4, and their completion of the Jonah page in Lesson 5. A Unit 6 assessment sheet is also available.

## MEMORY VERSE

*Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. (Ruth 1:16b)*

### **Suggested Motions:**

Where you go (*point to another person*)

I will go (*point to self*)

and where you stay (*point to another person*)

I will stay (*point to self*)

Your people (*move index finger in arc with arm extended*)

will be my people (*move index finger in arc with arm close to body*)

and your God (*point diagonally and upward, and look up*)

my God (*point upward, and look up*)



Where you go I will go,  
and where you stay  
I will stay.

Your people will be  
my people  
and your God my God.

Ruth 1:16b

# Peace Like a River

Traditional

Spiritual

F A7 Bb

1 I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a  
 2 I've got love like an o - cean, I've got love like an  
 3 I've got joy like a foun - tain, I've got joy like a

C7 F Dm G7 C7sus/Gm7 C7

riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er in my soul,  
 o - cean, I've got love like an o - cean in my soul,  
 foun - tain, I've got joy like a foun - tain in my soul,

F A7 Bb

I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a  
 I've got love like an o - cean, I've got love like an  
 I've got joy like a foun - tain, I've got joy like a

C7 F Dm G7 C7 F Gm7 F

riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er in my soul!  
 o - cean, I've got love like an o - cean in my soul!  
 foun - tain, I've got joy like a foun - tain in my soul!

# Rejoice in the Lord, Always

Philippians 4:4

(A Round)

Source unknown

The musical score consists of four staves of music in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is written in a simple, melodic style with lyrics underneath. Chord markings (I, F, C7) are placed above the notes. The lyrics are: "Re - joice in the Lord\_ al - ways; a - gain I say, Re - joice." repeated across the staves.

I F C7 F  
Re - joice in the Lord\_ al - ways; a - gain I say, Re - joice.

II F C7 F  
Re - joice in the Lord\_ al - ways; a - gain I say, Re - joice.

F C7 F  
Re - joice; re - joice; a - gain I say, Re - joice.

F C7 F  
Re - joice, re - joice; a - gain I say, Re - joice.

## **Dear Parents,**

*In this unit, students will learn that “People from Other Places Belong in God’s Kingdom.” They will study the stories of Naomi and Jonah, which show how God is faithful if we trust in God’s continued presence. The two stories show God’s desire to reach all people and to include all people in the kingdom.*

### **Unit Overview**

Students will learn about the loyalty of Ruth, an ancestor of King David. Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi, whose sons and husband died in Moab after they had moved there to escape famine in Israel, decides to return to her homeland. Ruth refuses to let her go alone, and utters the famous declaration of loyalty, “Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.” Ruth accompanies her mother-in-law back to Bethlehem, and while gleaning in the fields meets Boaz, a relative of Naomi’s husband, who eventually marries her. Their son Obed is the grandfather of King David.

Students will also learn the story of Jonah, a man who initially rebels against God’s call on his life and tries to run away. After an ordeal in a boat and the belly of a great fish, Jonah accepts God’s mission to preach to the Ninevites, who repent. God had originally planned to destroy the city but now saves it, thereby teaching both the Ninevites and Jonah a lesson about God’s compassion and forgiveness.

### **Memory Verse**

The memory verse for this unit is Ruth 1:16b: *Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.*

### **Suggested Motions:**

Where you go (*point to another person*)

I will go (*point to self*)

and where you stay (*point to another person*)

I will stay (*point to self*)

Your people (*move index finger in arc with arm extended*)

will be my people (*move index finger in arc with arm close to body*)

and your God (*point diagonally and upward, and look up*)

my God (*point upward, and look up*)

### **Ideas**

✓ Since students will be hearing about loss of family members through the story of Naomi and Ruth, you might want to check out some of the following books from the library to read with your student: *Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs* by Tomi dePaola, *Annie and the Old One* by Miska Miles, and *It Must Hurt a Lot* by Doris Sanford.

✓ Your child may be making a “Welcome” sign at school during this unit. You could help him or her learn how to say “Welcome” in several different languages. For example: *Bienvenidos* (Spanish), *Willkommen* (German), *Karibu* (Swahili), *Lafia* (Hausa), *Oso oseyo* (Korean), *Haere mai* (Maori, New Zealand); *Skee-kizzen* (Apache).

✓ Since welcoming people into God’s kingdom is the focus of this unit, you might want to help your child think about ways your family could welcome newcomers. Some ideas would be to invite someone from your neighborhood over for dinner or for dessert, to invite one of your child’s friends to church, or to volunteer with an immigrant resettlement service in your area.

- ✓ If you have access to *Sing the Journey, Hymnal: A Worship Book, Supplement 1*, teach your child “You’ve Got a Place.”
- ✓ Worship Table: The theme of worship during this unit is welcoming others. Symbols you could use on a worship table are: **a welcome sign**; **a handful of corn** to represent the story of Ruth gleaning in the fields; **a doll** to represent Ruth and Boaz’s son; **a photograph of a whale** to represent the Jonah story; and a piece of burlap to represent the repentance of the Ninevites.

## Notes

# People from Other Places Belong in God’s Kingdom

## LESSON 1: LIFE’S JOURNEY

### Objective

Students will memorize the passage from Ruth 1:16b, and through discussion and art, will reflect on the meaning of welcoming strangers.

### Key Concepts

- God is with us wherever we go.
- God welcomes anyone who trusts God into the family of God.

**Text:** Ruth 1

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35-40 minutes

### Materials

- Map of the world or globe
- Children’s Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Student Bibles
- “Ruth’s Promise” (p. 190), *optional*
- Scrap lumber (or heavy tag board or poster board)
- Pencils, paints, and brushes
- Chalkboard or newsprint/markers
- “Naomi’s Journey” (p. 192), *optional*
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: stories or videos about refugees
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: a journal for each student

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to read or tell the story of Naomi’s journey from Ruth 1 or from a children’s Bible storybook. Alternately, you could invite a visitor to come to your classroom and play the role of Naomi. A script is provided on p. 189. *Note: The next two lessons contain Naomi scripts as well. You may want to ask the same person to play Naomi for each of these.*
2. Bring a piece of scrap lumber (or heavy tag board or poster board) for each child, large enough to write the word “Welcome” on it.
4. *Optional:* Make one copy of the “Ruth’s Promise” handout and of the map for each student.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Talk about moving to a new place.** Invite the students to tell stories of times they have moved, or times when someone new has moved into their neighborhood or congregation. Help them think of people they know who have moved to the United States from a different country. You may want to use a map or globe to locate the countries that come up during the discussion.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell or read the story of Ruth 1** directly from the Bible or from a children’s Bible storybook. Or, if you invited a visitor to be Naomi, have her read the script on p. 189. In either case, highlight the words of Ruth to Naomi in verse 16, which is the children’s memory verse for this unit. You might want to pass out copies of the map from p. 192 at this point as well.

**2. Have the students locate the book of Ruth** in their Bibles, and then find Ruth 1:16b. (*If this seems to difficult, you may simply wish to have this memory work written on a poster.*) Help the children to begin memorizing the verse, using either the hand motions suggested on p. 181 in Unit Information or the “Ruth’s Promise” handout (p. 190).

**3. Make welcome signs.** Distribute pieces of scrap lumber and pencils, one of each to each child. Invite the students to design welcome signs with their pencils. Once they have achieved the desired look, they can paint “Welcome” on the wood and decorate the borders. Children may want to hang their welcome signs near their front doors at home. Hang one outside your classroom door.

Your students might also enjoy writing the word “Welcome” in another language. Here are words for Welcome in other languages: *Bienvenidos* (Spanish), *Willkommen* (German), *Karibu* (Swahili), *Lafia* (Hausa), *Oso oseyo* (Korean), *Haere mai* (Maori, New Zealand); *Skee-kizzen* (Apache). You can find other options on the Internet. You could locate the countries or regions from which the words come. *Note: One welcome sign may be used again in unit 13, lesson 3.*

**4. Welcoming newcomers.** End the lesson by talking about specific ways that students can welcome newcomers to their neighborhood, church, or school. Make a list of their ideas on the chalkboard or newsprint, and encourage them to choose one of the ideas to do for someone new. You could also invite students to write down on pieces of paper their specific commitments to welcoming strangers, or have them share their commitments briefly with a partner.

## EXTEND THE LESSON

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Stories of refugees.** To make Naomi’s journey more relevant, find stories of refugees to read or tell to your class, or better yet, have your students research refugee stories of their own. You could contact area churches who have helped to resettle refugees, or Mennonite Central Committee or other aid organizations that loan out refugee-related resources.

Two videos available from MCC are especially pertinent: “Serbia: Sladjana’s Journey,” (5 minutes) tells the story of an eight-year-old Croatian girl who fled her home with her family because of war; “Mela’s Lunch” (15 minutes) describes the beginnings of a friendship between Mela, a 10-year-old girl who recently emigrated from India, and Allison, her classmate. Check with your local MCC office.

- **Naomi journals.** Have the students begin “Naomi journals” that will continue for the next three lessons. Pass out small journals (*these could simply be two or three pieces of paper stapled together*) for students to write in, pretending they are Naomi. Have them write about what they feel about the events described in each lesson. They could also choose to write “Ruth journals,” in which they imagine that they are Ruth.

## NAOMI'S STORY, PART ONE

# My Journey

*(Naomi enters in costume, carrying a basket.)*

Hello. My name is Naomi. I am a Jew. I live in my homeland of Bethlehem. It feels so good to be home again, among friends and relatives. A number of years ago, a terrible famine came to Bethlehem. There was very little food, and many people were starving. My husband, Elimelech, left our beloved Bethlehem with our two sons and traveled to the foreign land of Moab. While we were living there, both of my sons married Moabite women. But very soon my husband and both my sons died. It was a terribly sad and lonely time. I felt as if God had turned against me.

I wanted desperately to return to Bethlehem, and finally decided to go. Both of my daughters-in-law started out with me on my journey. When we had gone part way, I tried to talk them into returning to their homes. Orpah was sad to leave me, but she did return to her home. Ruth, however, refused to go. She said a beautiful thing: "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." Ruth's family had worshiped idols, but she learned about our God of Israel and had decided to put her faith in God.

The journey was not easy. It was about 100 miles long. I was so grateful to be in Bethlehem again! My friends welcomed me home. I told them not to call me Naomi, but to call me Marah, which means "bitter." You see, I felt that God had made my life bitter.

Yet I must say that it wasn't completely bitter, because Ruth was a wonderful friend and comfort to me. You will learn more about Ruth in the next two lessons, or you can read more about our lives in the book of Ruth in the Bible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Ruth's Promise



*Fill in the blanks to complete Ruth's promise to Naomi.*

Where you go, I will \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ you stay I  
will \_\_\_\_\_. Your \_\_\_\_\_ will be my \_\_\_\_\_  
and your God my \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1:16b

Ruth made this promise to Naomi. Who else might make this kind of promise to each other?

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## Ruth's Promise



*Fill in the blanks to complete Ruth's promise to Naomi.*

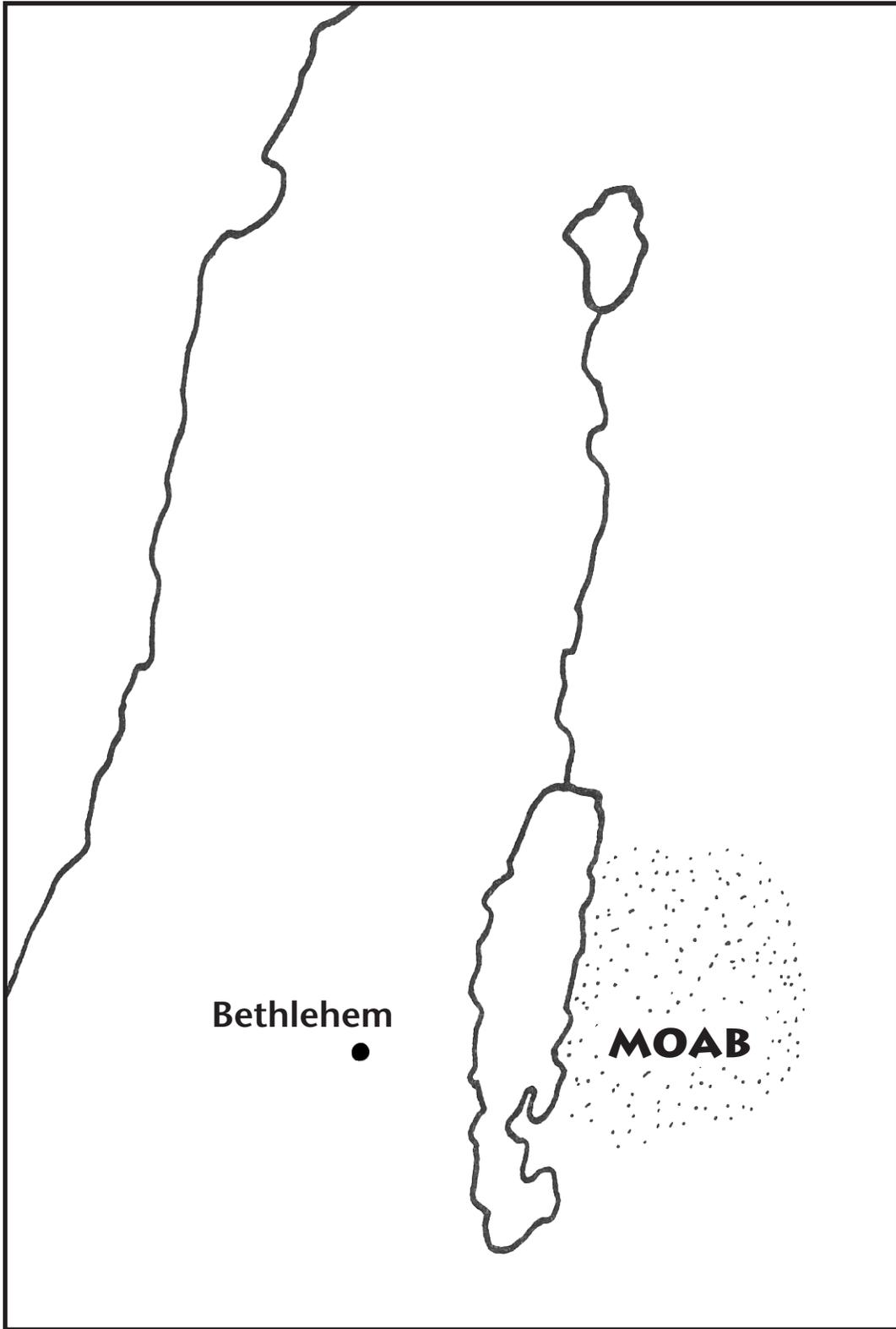
Where you go, I will go, and where you stay I  
will stay. Your people will be my people  
and your God my God.

Ruth 1:16b

Ruth made this promise to Naomi. Who else might make this kind of promise to each other?

Possible answers: a husband to a wife or vice versa, a child to a parent,  
a person to a church community.

# NAOMI'S JOURNEY



# People from Other Places Belong in God’s Kingdom

## LESSON 2: GOD IS FAITHFUL

### Objective

Students will understand that God cares for us through other people, and write sentences about Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz.

### Key Concepts

- God cares for us through others.

**Text:** Ruth 2–3

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35 minutes

### Materials

- Children’s Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Student Bibles
- “God Is Faithful” (p. 196)
- For Extend the Lesson: brown paper grocery bags (1 per student), strips of paper (1½ in. x 15 in.) in various colors, tape

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to read or tell the story of Ruth and Boaz, from Ruth 2–3 or from a children’s Bible storybook. You could also use the script on p. 195, a first-person narrative from Naomi’s perspective. As in Lesson 1 of this unit, you may invite a visitor to play the role of Naomi.
2. Make copies of “God Is Faithful,” one for each student.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Talk about marriage.** Ask students if they have heard any stories of how married people first met. How did their parents meet for the first time? Have any of them been to weddings? How do people decide to get married? What character traits might you look for in someone to marry? (*During this discussion, you will want to be sensitive to children in the classroom whose parents may be divorced.*) Explain that they will hear a story of marriage from long ago, the marriage of Naomi’s daughter-in-law, Ruth.

### LESSON STEPS

1. **Read or tell the story of Ruth meeting Boaz** from Ruth 2–3, from a children’s Bible storybook, or using the script on p. 195 and a visiting “Naomi.” Decide ahead of time how (*or if*) you want to tell the story from chapter 3, since this is confusing.

**2. Interview Naomi (Optional).** If you have a visitor playing the role of Naomi, give the children a chance to ask her some questions about the story she just told (*if the visitor is comfortable with this*). Give the students several minutes before asking their questions to jot them down on pieces of scrap paper. This will give them practice in writing questions.

**3. “God Is Faithful.”** Distribute copies of the handout. Have students work together to try to remember the three characters from the story. Next, have them write sentences on their papers about things each character did in the story.

**4. Bible memory.** If there is time, work on the Bible memory verse and sing “Rejoice in the Lord Always,” if you know the song.

## **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(This activity will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

• **Make baskets** to represent the basket Ruth would have used to glean in the fields. Give each child a brown grocery bag and seven paper strips (1½ in. x 15 in., in various colors). Invite children to write the names of the main characters of the story, the places where Naomi lived, and some of the feelings Naomi experienced on the strips of paper. Weave these strips over and under the cuts in the bag as described in the following instructions. Use additional strips as needed. Secure with tape. Use one strip as a handle and tape in place.

*Instructions:*

*Step 1:* Make 16 two-inch vertical cuts as follows: one in each corner, two cuts on each narrow side, and four cuts on each wide side of the bag. Begin each cut ½-inch from the bottom of the bag and extend it halfway up the bag.

*Step 2:* Roll down the uncut top of the bag 2 or 3 times to form a sturdy rim for the basket.

*Step 3:* Children will begin by taping a paper strip to one section at the bottom of their bags. They can weave the strip in and out until the bottom strip is completed. Cut to fit, and secure with tape. Begin the next strip exactly the same way, except reverse the over-under pattern. Keep going in this way until the basket is finished.

## NAOMI'S STORY, PART TWO

# Ruth Meets Boaz

*(Naomi enters in costume, carrying a basket.)*

I have such news for you! You will not believe what has happened since I last spoke with you. I must start at the beginning.

You might remember that I had returned to my hometown of Bethlehem with my daughter-in-law Ruth, after my husband and sons died in Moab. Well, now that we were back in Bethlehem, Ruth and I had to figure out a way to make money to live. After experiencing the famine that drove us away from our home, I worried a lot about how we would eat and survive. So Ruth volunteered to go and glean grain in the fields for us to eat. Many of the poor people in my land follow the fieldworkers and pick up grain that the workers missed. *(Pantomime gleaning and putting pretend grain into the basket.)*

God must have been with us in a special way. It turned out that Ruth was gleaning grain in the field of a wealthy relative of my husband! His name was Boaz. He noticed Ruth from far away, and asked who she was. When he found out she was the one who had come home with me from Moab and been so kind to me, he went up to Ruth and talked to her. He told her that she should stay and glean in his field and help herself to drinking water from his jars. He was very kind to her. We heard later that he even told his harvesters to leave some stalks of grain on the ground for her to pick up.

When Ruth returned home that evening with almost a bushel of barley, I couldn't believe how much she had gathered! I rejoiced and told her, "Blessed be the man who took notice of you!" When she told me about Boaz's kindness to her, I was so excited I could hardly speak. "That man is our close relative!" I told her, clutching her hands. "He is one of our kinsman-redeemers!"

I should tell you what a *kinsman-redeemer* is. In our society, when a married man dies, one of his relatives is given the right to marry his widow. That relative is called the "kinsman-redeemer." You see, in our society, women who are not married have a hard time making enough money to live, or getting enough food to eat. A kinsman-redeemer takes care of a widow so she doesn't need to worry about those things.

Ruth was still young, and I hoped that she could marry again. But I knew that people often looked down on foreigners in our land, and it would be hard for her to find a man to marry. So I encouraged Ruth to keep on gleaning in Boaz's fields. When the harvest was finished, I told Ruth to return to Boaz on the night he and his workers would winnow barley. I asked her to wear her best clothes and perfume, so Boaz might find her attractive and want to marry her. My plan worked! Boaz admired Ruth because of her care and devotion to me and her hard work in the fields. He sent her home with her shawl full of barley, to make sure that we still had enough to eat, now that the harvest was over.

Boaz wanted to marry Ruth, but there was a problem: another man was a closer relative and had first chance to be Ruth's kinsman-redeemer. Boaz told Ruth he would ask the man for permission to marry her. We were worried, but I knew Boaz would do his best to convince the other man. "Wait, my daughter," I told Ruth, "until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today."

I will come and talk to you again and tell you the rest of the story. Or you can read it for yourself in the book of Ruth.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## God Is Faithful

Write the names of the three main characters in this story in the blanks below. Below their names, write a sentence telling about something they did in the story.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

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## ANSWER KEY



# God Is Faithful

Write the names of the three main characters in this story in the blanks below. Below their names, write a sentence telling about something they did in the story.

1.       *Ruth*      

*Answers may include: Ruth did not leave Naomi. Ruth went with Naomi to her land. Ruth gleaned (gathered the harvest) in the field. Ruth met Boaz.*

2.       *Naomi*      

*Answers may include: Naomi told Ruth to glean (gather the harvest) in the field of Boaz, a relative. Naomi helped Ruth meet Boaz. Naomi hoped Ruth and Boaz would marry.*

3.       *Boaz*      

*Answers may include: Boaz was kind to Ruth. Boaz shared what he had with Ruth. Boaz talked to Ruth and told her to stay and glean in his field.*

# People from Other Places Belong in God’s Kingdom

## LESSON 3: A HAPPY ENDING

### Objective

Students will place in chronological order the events from the book of Ruth.

### Key Concepts

- God blessed Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz with the birth of a baby boy.

**Text:** Ruth 4

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35-40 minutes

### Materials

- Baby doll
- Children’s Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Scissors
- “Naomi’s Life” (p. 201)
- Notebook paper
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: newsprint or other large sheets of paper, art materials, tape
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: children’s books (*see activity for suggestions*)

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to read or tell the story from Ruth 4 from the Bible, a children’s Bible storybook, or the script on page 200. If you had a visitor act the part of Naomi, invite her back for this final dramatic reading.
2. Make copies of “Naomi’s Life,” one for every two students.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Show the doll** that you (or one of the children) brought in, and begin a conversation about the students’ experiences with babies. Invite them to share their memories of welcoming a new baby into their own family or watching another family welcome a baby. (*An alternate introduction would be to invite your children to reflect on grandparents, since you will be talking about Naomi becoming a grandmother in this lesson. What experiences have they had with their own grandparents?*)

## LESSON STEPS

1. **Read or tell the story from Ruth 4**, or have your visitor enact the part of Naomi for this third and last installment of the story from Ruth.
2. **“Naomi’s Life.”** Distribute copies of the handout and scissors to pairs of students and ask them to cut apart the blocks. Then have them put the blocks in order of the events that happened in the story. The blocks go in the following order:

1. Naomi and Elimelech live in Bethlehem and have two sons.
2. A famine hits Bethlehem.
3. Naomi and her family move to Moab.
4. Naomi's sons marry Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah.
5. Naomi's husband and sons die.
6. Naomi is full of grief and decides to return to Bethlehem. Ruth and Orpah follow her.
7. Ruth refuses to return to Moab and goes with Naomi to Bethlehem.
8. Ruth gleans in the fields so that she and Naomi will have enough to eat.
9. Boaz sees Ruth gleaning in his field and invites her to eat and drink with his harvesters.
10. Naomi tells Ruth to go to Boaz and talk to him.
11. Boaz tells Ruth that he wants to marry her but must speak to another man first.
12. Boaz talks to Elimelech's other relative, who agrees that Boaz can marry Ruth.
13. Ruth and Boaz marry.
14. Ruth gives birth to Obed.
15. Obed becomes the great-grandfather to David, who is in the line of Jesus.

**3. Write a letter to Orpah.** When the students have refreshed their memories about the events in Naomi's life, pass out sheets of notebook paper. Have students pretend to be Naomi and write a letter to Orpah, the daughter-in-law who returned to Moab, telling her about all that had happened to Naomi since she left Moab. Invite them to think about how Naomi might have felt about Orpah by now. Was she sad or angry that Orpah hadn't joined her and Ruth in Bethlehem? Or did she miss Orpah and wish that she could join her and Ruth and Boaz in their new happiness? Was she curious about what had happened to Orpah? *(You may want to teach or review the basic parts of a letter as you begin this assignment.)*

**4. Bible memory.** If you have time, review the memory verse for this unit.

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Extend the "Naomi's Life" ordering activity** by having students paste their blocks on large sheets of paper and illustrate each event. Alternately, allow each child to choose one of the events in Naomi's life to illustrate. Distribute sheets of newsprint or other large sheets of paper, and have them write the event on the bottom and draw the event above. It's okay if more than one student illustrates a scene—this will enable the class to see the same event from two children's perspectives. Then place the drawings in the correct sequence, taping the edges together. Display this series of scenes from Naomi's life on a wall around the room, creating a frieze.

- **Read children's books** that have to do with either the birth of a baby or with grandparents. Suggestions: *She Come Bringing Me that Little Baby Girl* by Eloise Greenfield, and *A Baby Sister for Frances* by Russell and Lillian Hoban.

## NAOMI'S STORY, PART THREE

# A Baby Is Born

*(Naomi enters in costume.)*

Hello! I have returned to tell you the rest of the story of Ruth and Boaz. Maybe you remember from my last visit that Ruth and I were waiting to hear from Boaz about whether he could marry Ruth. He wanted to marry her, but he had to get permission from another relative of my husband's who would have first chance to marry Ruth.

Boaz went to the town gate, which is where people often gathered, and when the other man came along, Boaz asked him to sit down and talk with him. He also asked ten other men to join them. He explained how Naomi and Ruth had returned from Moab, and that, according to the law, this other man could, if he wanted, marry Ruth and take over the dead man's property.

As Ruth and I heard the story, we held our breath. Would the other man let Boaz marry Ruth? We were so happy when we heard the rest of the story: yes, the relative gave Boaz permission to marry Ruth! He would also become the owner of my husband Elimelech's property.

So Boaz and Ruth got married, and after a while she had a baby boy. They called the baby Obed, and I often cared for him. As I held him, I felt so grateful to God for making me a grandmother, even after the deaths of my sons and husband. God had been faithful to me and to my daughter-in-law, who was so loyal to me. In fact, on the day Obed was born, my friends exclaimed, "Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth."

Boaz did become famous, didn't he? You're hearing about him thousands of years later! And you have probably also heard of someone else in our family, who came along two generations later. You see, Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David. That means that I am the great-grandmother of David, who became the king of Israel! And do you know what else? Jesus, God's son, would be born into this same family many, many years later. So praise God, who turned my loneliness into comfort and my grief into joy! Praise God, who is faithful to God's people from generation to generation!

# Naomi's Life

Ruth refuses to return to Moab and goes with Naomi to Bethlehem.	A famine hits Bethlehem.	Boaz talks to Elimelech's other relative, who agrees that Boaz can marry Ruth.
Naomi tells Ruth to go to Boaz and talk to him.	Ruth and Boaz marry.	Naomi's sons marry Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah.
Naomi and her family move to Moab.	Obed becomes the great-grandfather to David, who is in the line of Jesus.	Naomi and Elimelech live in Bethlehem and have two sons.
Naomi is full of grief and decides to return to Bethlehem.	Boaz tells Ruth that he wants to marry her but must speak to another man first.	Ruth gleans in the fields so that she and Naomi will have enough to eat.
Naomi's husband and sons die.	Boaz sees Ruth gleaning in his field and invites her to eat and drink with his harvesters.	Ruth gives birth to Obed.

# People from Other Places Belong in God’s Kingdom

## LESSON 4: JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH

### Objective

Students will dramatically portray the story of Jonah’s attempt to flee from God and will reflect on how God was present with Jonah even in his rebellion.

### Key Concepts

- God asks us to do work to build up God’s kingdom.
- We can choose to obey God or to disobey God.
- God is with us even when we disobey God.

**Text:** Jonah 1–2

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35 minutes

### Materials

- Student Bibles
- Paper, markers, crayons, and pencils
- “Jonah’s Prayer” (p. 204)
- For Extend the Lesson: Video/DVD, “Iraq: Noor Lives Near Nineveh,” available to borrow from Mennonite Central Committee, [www.mcc.org](http://www.mcc.org)

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to read the first half of the story of Jonah from Jonah 1–2.
2. Ask for at least five volunteers to act out parts of the Jonah story: Jonah, God, the ship captain, and at least two sailors. You should read the narrator’s part (Jonah 1–2) and give direction to the students as you read. Think through this ahead of time. You may want to find a time to practice with the students before acting out the story for the class.
3. Make copies of “Jonah’s Prayer,” one for each student.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**I don’t want to!** Start a discussion about times students knew they were supposed to do something but didn’t want to do it. You may want to share an experience from your own life. Talk about the reasons that people don’t do what they know is right (*fear, laziness, peer pressure, etc.*). Explain that today you will learn about someone who had to decide either to follow God or ignore God, and chose the second. (*Now or after reading the story, you might want to share some of the biblical background from p. 180, to help them understand the reasons that Jonah disobeyed God.*)

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Read the first half of the Jonah story** from Jonah 1-2. As you read, have your volunteers act out the story. If you want them to read parts, they should follow along in their own student Bibles. In addition to your volunteers, you could have the rest of the class act as the sea and storm, making appropriate noises and motions when you read parts that mention the sea and the storm. You may want to have the class follow along in their student Bibles so that they are ready to make noises at the correct time. You might also do a quick practice with the them before starting the story.

**2. Illustrate the story.** Distribute paper, markers, crayons, and pencils, and have each of the children choose one scene from the story to illustrate. You might want to outline options for them (*Jonah boarding the ship, Jonah sleeping during the storm, the sailors talking to Jonah, the sailors throwing Jonah overboard, Jonah in the belly of the great fish, etc.*) After they have each made a drawing, have them show their pictures to each other and, without speaking, find the other artists who drew the same scenes as they did. Have artists who drew the same scene stand together in a group, and share briefly with each other what they drew and why.

**3. “Jonah’s Prayer.”** Have children complete the cloze activity based on Jonah’s prayer from inside the great fish. They will need to use context clues to choose the correct words.

**4. Read Psalm 139:1-12** as a closing. The psalm speaks of God’s presence with us no matter where we go.

## EXTEND THE LESSON

*(This activity will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Learn about Iraq (Nineveh).** Borrow a copy of the video/DVD “Iraq: Noor Lives Near Nineveh” (11 minutes) from Mennonite Central Committee. Noor is an Iraqi girl who lives in Mosul, a modern-day Iraqi city near ancient Nineveh. Noor takes viewers on a tour of her city, and children will get to see the site of the tomb of Jonah, which is now a mosque.

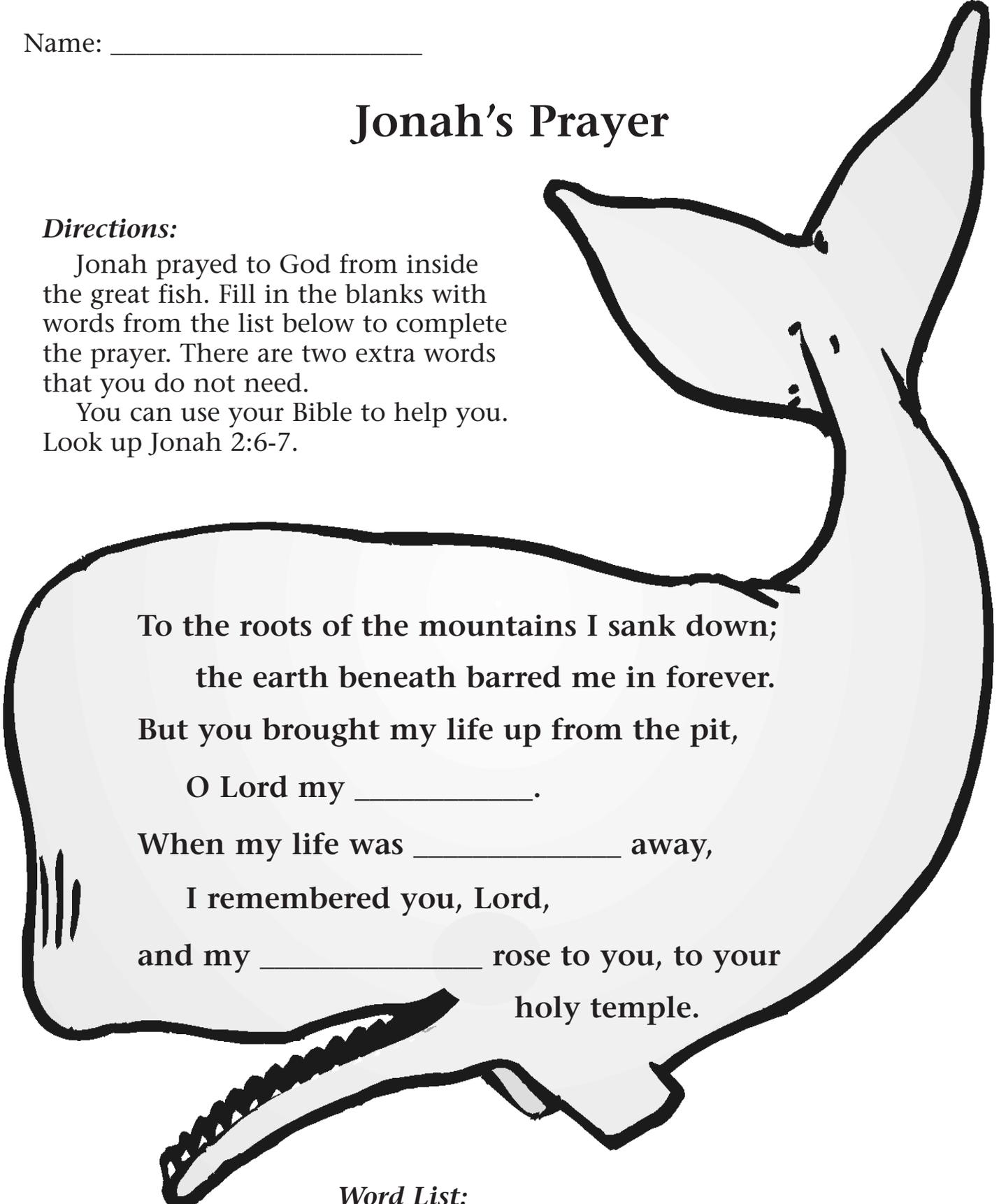
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## Jonah's Prayer

### *Directions:*

Jonah prayed to God from inside the great fish. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below to complete the prayer. There are two extra words that you do not need.

You can use your Bible to help you. Look up Jonah 2:6-7.



To the roots of the mountains I sank down;  
the earth beneath barred me in forever.  
But you brought my life up from the pit,  
O Lord my \_\_\_\_\_.  
When my life was \_\_\_\_\_ away,  
I remembered you, Lord,  
and my \_\_\_\_\_ rose to you, to your  
holy temple.

### *Word List:*

prayer      swirled      ebbing      God      grave

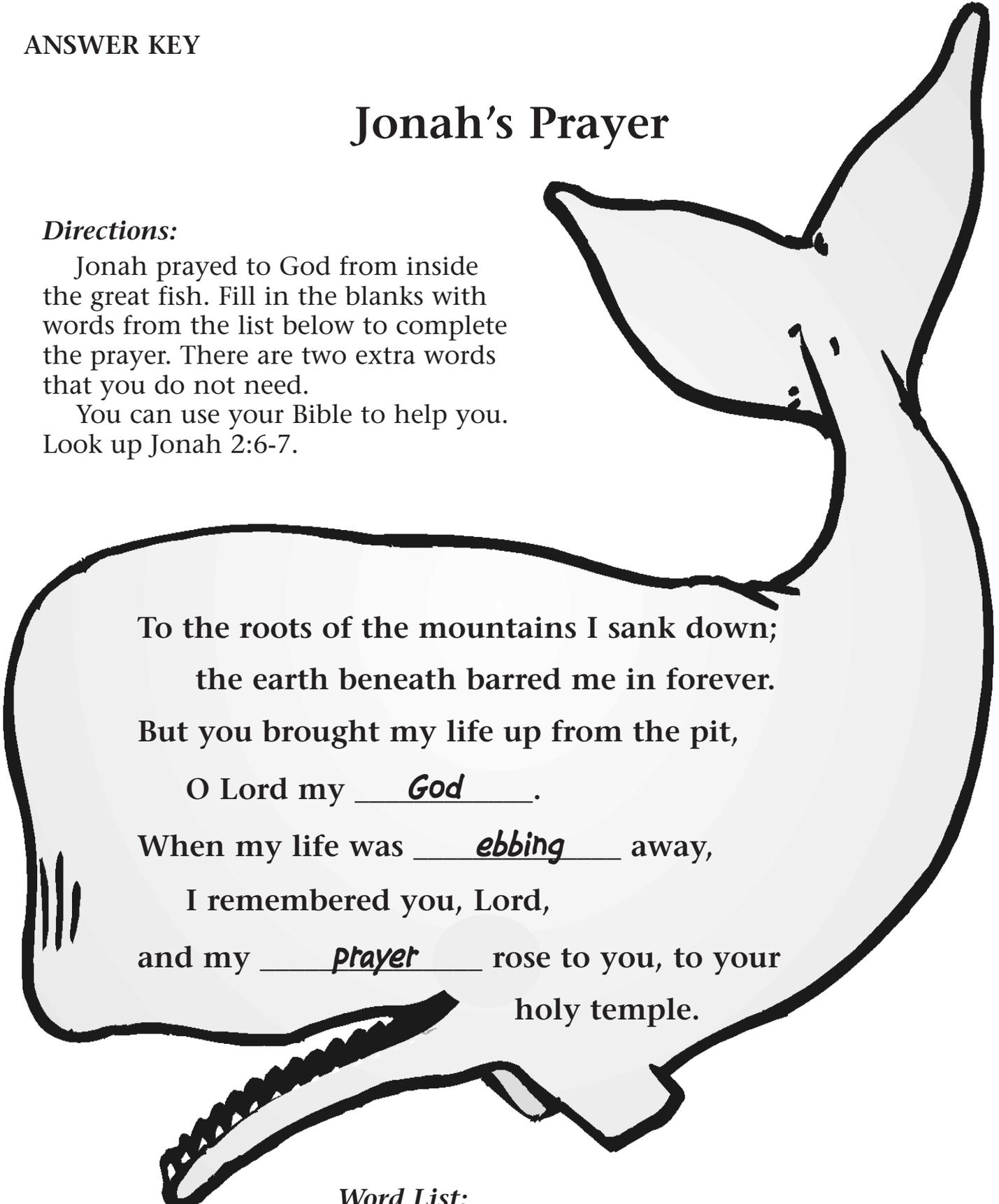
## ANSWER KEY

# Jonah's Prayer

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Jonah prayed to God from inside the great fish. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below to complete the prayer. There are two extra words that you do not need.

You can use your Bible to help you. Look up Jonah 2:6-7.



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the earth beneath barred me in forever.

But you brought my life up from the pit,

O Lord my God.

When my life was ebbing away,

I remembered you, Lord,

and my prayer rose to you, to your  
holy temple.

### Word List:

prayer    swirled    ebbing    God    grave

# People from Other Places Belong in God's Kingdom

## LESSON 5: JONAH SPEAKS TO THE NINEVITES

### Objective

Students will relate Jonah's anger to their own anger and will write prayers that they can say when they're angry.

### Key Concepts

- God has compassion on all people.
- God uses us as instruments of compassion and salvation in the world.

**Text:** Jonah 3–4

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 30-35 minutes

### Materials

- Piece of burlap, to represent sackcloth
- Student Bibles
- “Jonah's Anger” (p. 208)
- For Extend the Lesson: “Jonah's Words” (p. 209)

### Teacher Preparation

1. Make copies of “Jonah's Anger,” one for each student.
2. If using Extend the Lesson, make copies of the “Jonah's Words” word search, one per student.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Show the piece of burlap** and tell the students that in Jonah's time, wearing “sackcloth,” or burlap, was a sign of repentance. What do people do today when they are sorry for something they've done? (*Say they're sorry to someone they hurt, pray to God to ask for forgiveness, try to make things right, etc.*) Explain that after Jonah finally preached to Nineveh, the Ninevites repented of their wickedness and wore sackcloth to show they were sorry. Invite children to predict Jonah's reaction to the Ninevites' repentance and God's decision to save the city because of it. Will Jonah be happy that they repented and God saved them? Or will he be frustrated that God decided not to destroy them after all?

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Have students turn to Jonah 4:1** in their student Bibles. Give them plenty of time to do this, allowing students to help each other. Read the verse to find out Jonah's reaction. Talk about the reasons Jonah was angry that God had saved the Ninevites; help students relate it to a time that they thought someone should have been punished and wasn't.

**2. Read or tell the story from Jonah 3 and 4.** *OR*, if you think your students would like to read it themselves, invite them to read the passage silently or in pairs. *(If the students read on their own, have them make a list of words they don't know.)*

**3. New words.** Call everyone's attention and invite them to call out words they heard or read in the story that they didn't know. Make a class list of these new words on the board, explaining what they mean.

**4. "Jonah's Anger."** Distribute copies of the handout for students to complete. You could have them share their responses with each other or with the class when they're finished working.

**5. Sing together.** End the lesson by singing "Peace Like a River" (p. 183) and "Rejoice in the Lord Always" (p. 184).

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Write in journals.** Have students pretend to be Jonah and journal about running from God, being swallowed by the great fish, and finally obeying God.

- **"Jonah's Words."** Make copies of this word search from p. 209 and have students work on it. You may want to remind them that words might be spelled backwards and diagonally in the puzzle.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Jonah's Anger

Jonah got angry. What makes you angry?

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Jonah told God that he was angry. What do you do when you're angry?

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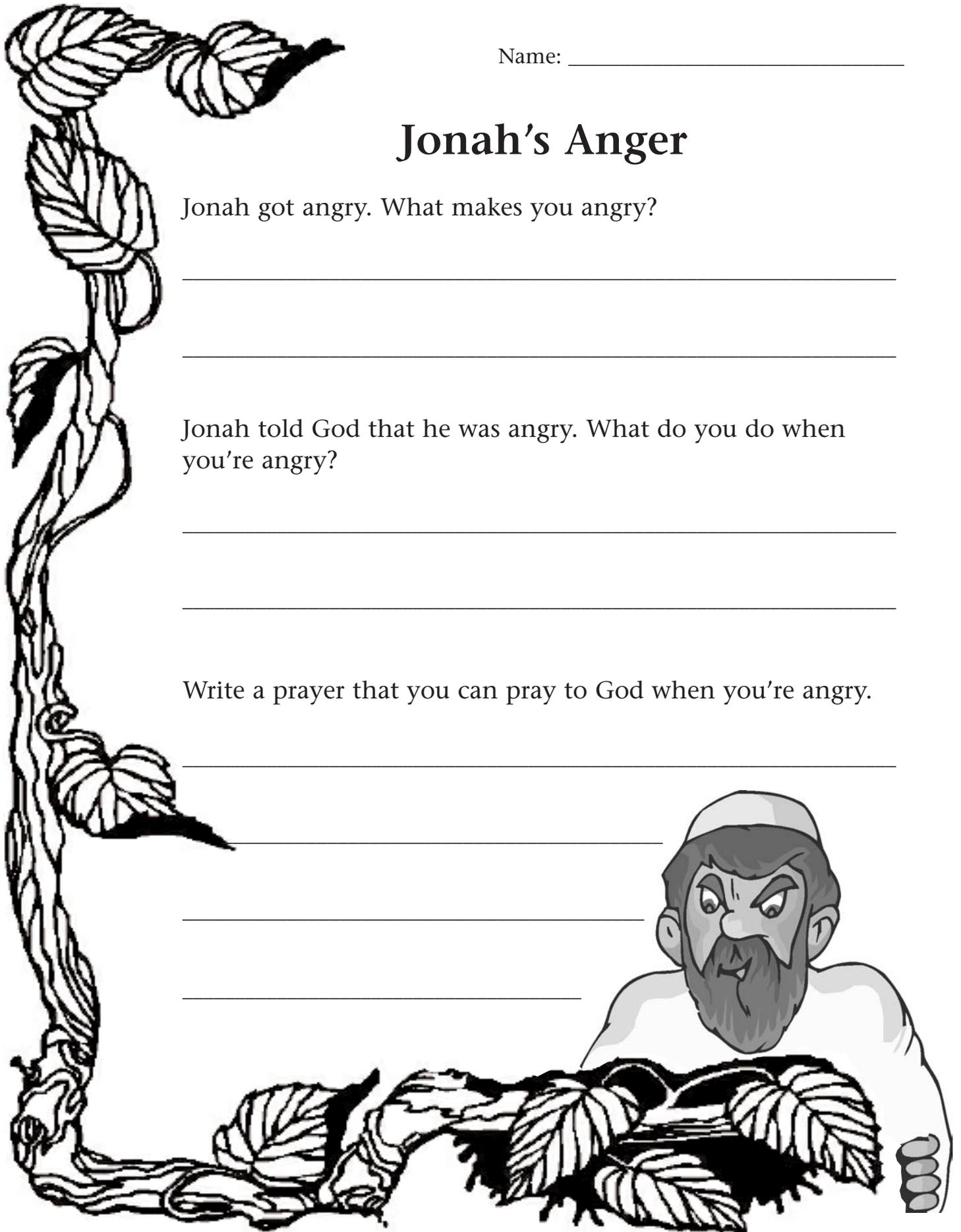
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Write a prayer that you can pray to God when you're angry.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Jonah's Words

**Directions:** Find and circle the words. After you're done, use the leftover letters to spell out a message. Hint: The message is something Jonah said.

ANGRY

FISH

NINEVEH

OBEY

REPENT

SAVE

SEA

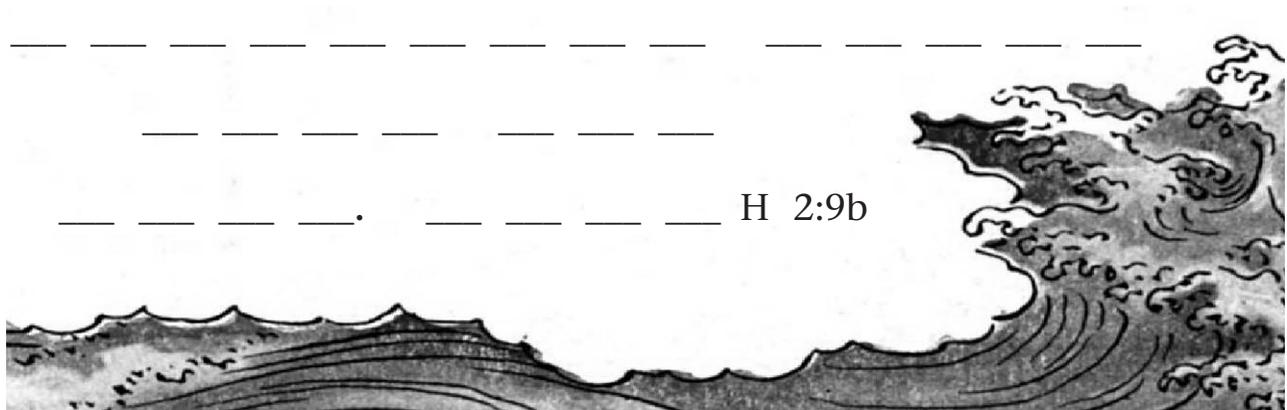
STORM

TARSHISH

VINE

WORM

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



ANSWER KEY

# Jonah's Words

**Directions:** Find and circle the words. After you're done, use the leftover letters to spell out a message. Hint: The message is something Jonah said.

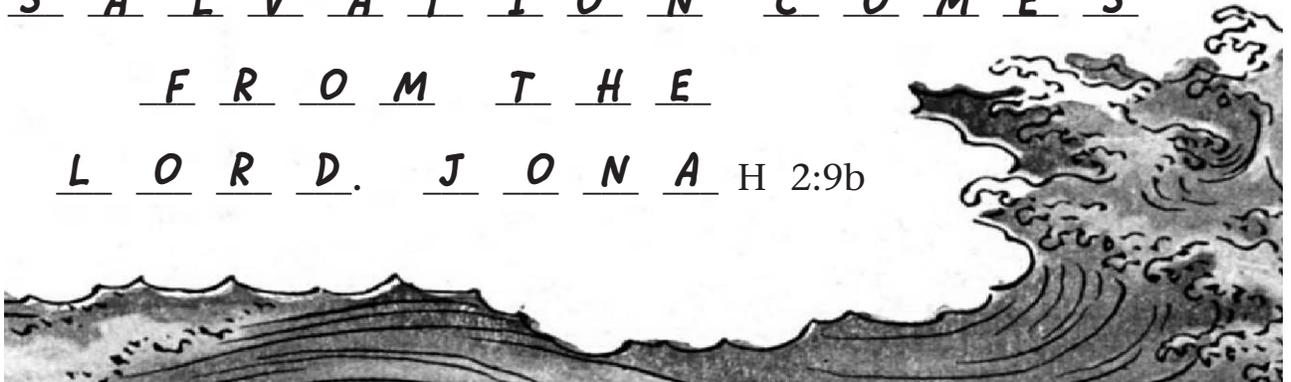
ANGRY  
OBEY  
SEA  
VINE

FISH  
REPENT  
STORM  
WORM

NINEVEH  
SAVE  
TARSHISH

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

S A L V A T I O N C O M E S  
F R O M T H E  
L O R D J O N A H 2:9b



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit 6 Assessment

*Circle the letter of the correct answer.*

1. Why did Naomi and her family leave Bethlehem to flee to Moab?
  - a. The grandfather died and they wanted to live somewhere else.
  - b. There was a famine in the land.
  - c. They lost their jobs.
  - d. Moab had lots of amusement parks.
  
2. How were Ruth and Orpah related to Naomi?
  - a. They were her sisters.
  - b. They were her nieces.
  - c. They were her aunts.
  - d. They were her daughters-in-law.
  
3. How did Ruth meet Boaz?
  - a. She was gleaning in one of his fields.
  - b. They met at the well.
  - c. They were both at the temple at the same time.
  - d. Ruth took care of Boaz's sheep.

*In the next section choose a word and place it in the correct space.*

overboard      Nineveh      Obed      David      angry

4. Boaz and Ruth's son was named \_\_\_\_\_ and was the grandfather of \_\_\_\_\_.
  
5. Jonah didn't want to go to the city of \_\_\_\_\_ to preach to the people who lived there.

6. The sailors threw Jonah \_\_\_\_\_ because he told them God was punishing him, and that the sea would get calm if they did.

7. When God saved the city that Jonah preached to, Jonah felt \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Write your memory verse here:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit 6 Assessment

*Circle the letter of the correct answer.*

1. Why did Naomi and her family leave Bethlehem to flee to Moab?
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6. The sailors threw Jonah overboard because he told them God was punishing him, and that the sea would get calm if they did.

7. When God saved the city that Jonah preached to, Jonah felt angry.

8. Write your memory verse here:

*Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. (Ruth 1:16b)*

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