

Children's activities for Sunday 20th September

God's shows mercy to a big city and Jonah learns a lesson

There was once a big city called Nineveh and it was a wicked place.

Jonah was a prophet, (a man who listened to God and told people about Him). God told Jonah to go and preach to the wicked people in Nineveh but Jonah didn't want to go, so he got on a ship and sailed away in the opposite direction.

Jonah fell asleep and while he was sleeping a big storm came up. All the sailors were afraid and woke Jonah and said, "Pray to your God to save us from drowning."

They said to Jonah, "Somebody has not done what God wanted."

Jonah knew he was running away from God and told the sailors the only way to stop the storm was to throw him overboard. No one wanted to do that but in the end they knew they would all die if they didn't throw him overboard.

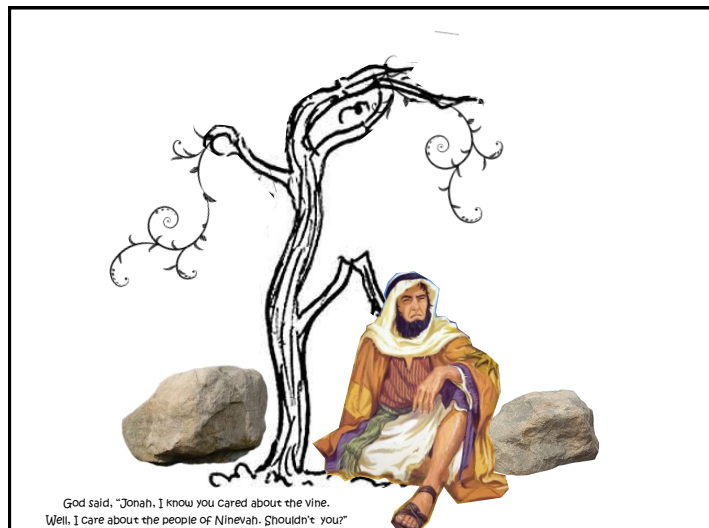
Jonah thought he was going to drown but a big whale came and swallowed him up. Jonah prayed to God to save him and eventually the whale set him free and he knew he had to go to Nineveh and tell the people they had to change their ways. If they continued to be wicked God would destroy their city in 40 days. The King told all the people to show they were very sorry and fast (not eat or drink) for 40 days.

Jonah preached to the whole city and then he went and sat on a hill nearby to see if God would destroy the city. A lovely vine grew over Jonah's head and gave him shade. God did not destroy the city because he saw the people were sorry for their bad ways but this made Jonah angry with God. He thought God should still punish the people of Nineveh, not forgive them. During the night a worm ate the roots of the vine that shaded Jonah and it died. Jonah was sorry the vine had died and that he had lost his shade.

God then said to Jonah, "You are sorry the vine has died but think about all of those people in the city. Some are only children and I have pity for them and will show them mercy as they are sorry for their sins. Shouldn't you be glad that they changed their ways too?"

Craft Activity:

*Jonah under the Vine:
Jonah learns a lesson*



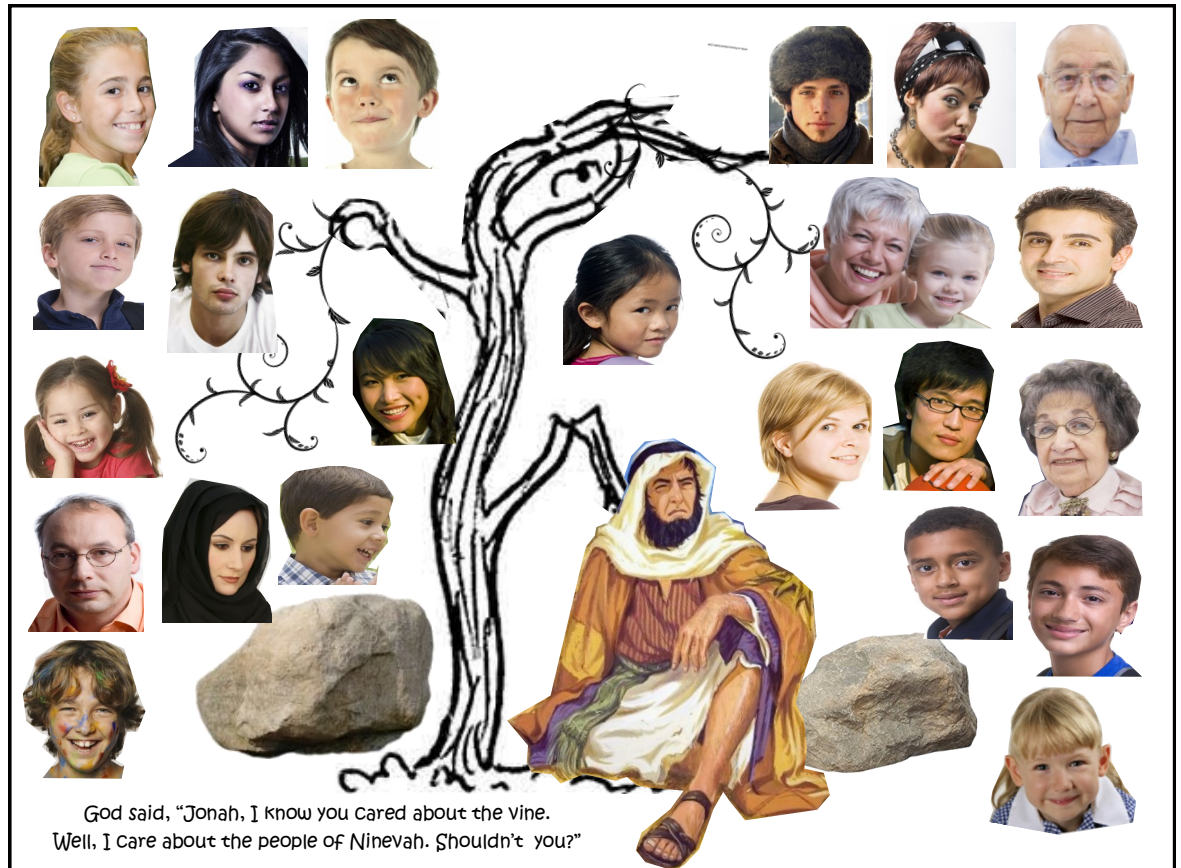
Jonah learns a lesson: Jonah under the tree Craft

When God forgave the people of Ninevah, Jonah sat under a shady vine outside the city and sulked. He thought God should have punished the people of Ninevah anyway. When the vine withered and died, Jonah was angry. He missed the shade and thought it wasn't fair that the vine had died.

God said, "You care about the vine. I care about the people of Ninevah. I'm more interested in the people changing their mind and learning to be good than I am in punishing people. Shouldn't you be happy too that they have changed?"

You will need:

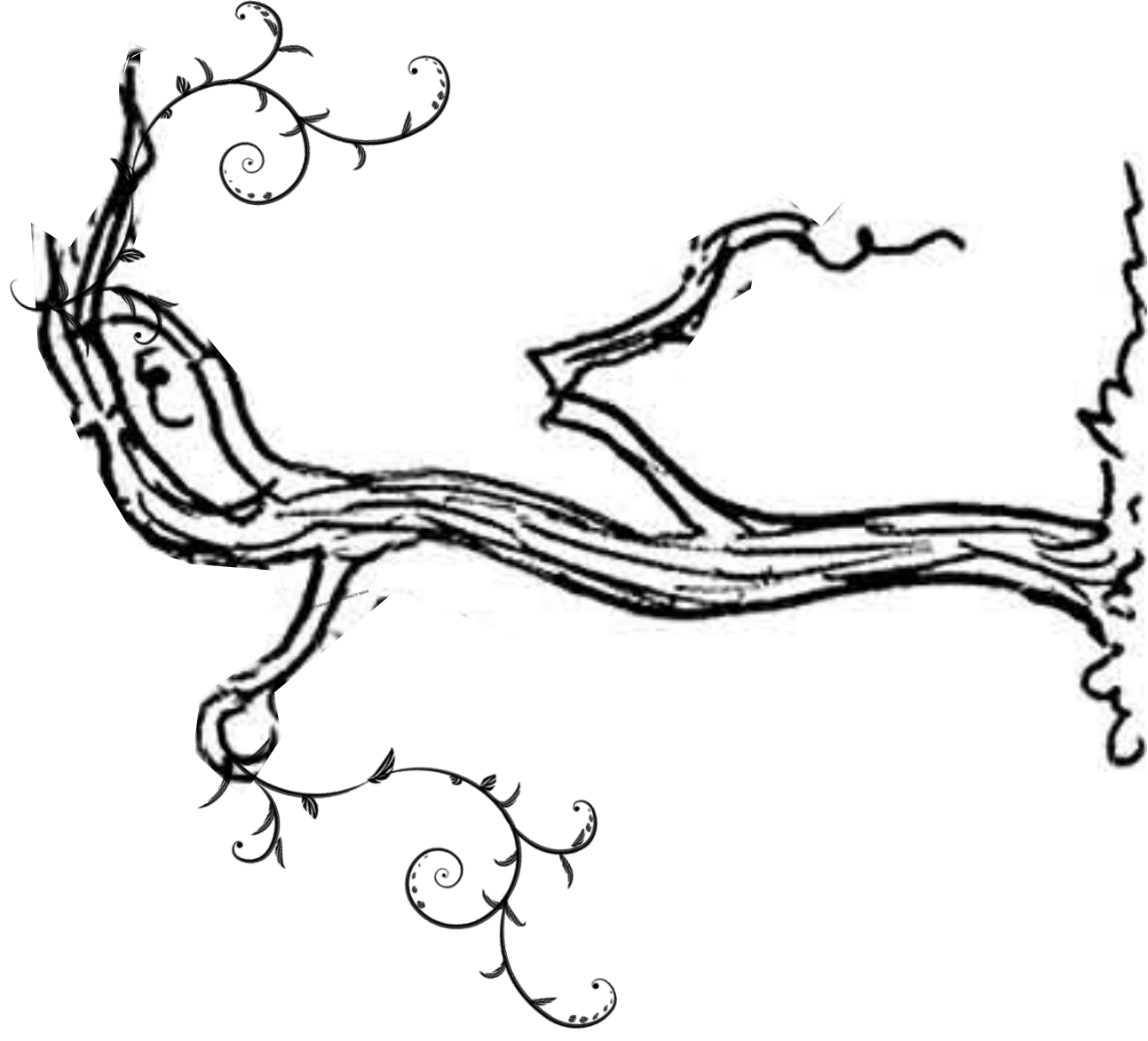
- scissors
- glue stick
- catalogues or magazines.
- picture of Jonah
- rocks
- background page
- brown pencil



What to do:

- Print the background page and this page with the rocks and the picture of Jonah.
- Colour the withered vine.
- Cut out the pictures of the rocks and glue them in the background around the vine.
- Cut out the picture of Jonah and glue it under the vine.
- Draw some withered leaves on the ground around Jonah.
- Cut out a variety of people from magazines or catalogues.
- Glue them around the vine to remind Jonah that people learning to change their bad behaviour is more important than punishment.





God said, "Jonah, I know you cared about the vine.
Well, I care about the people of Ninevah. Shouldn't you?"