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## Detective Dan's (Shorter/Simpler) Version of Bible Story for Big Question 14, Bible Truth 3

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### The Case of the Wet and Wild Thank You *Jonah*

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*(Numbers correspond to Bible story picture pages in Detective Dan's Big Question Box)*

1. The LORD had a job for Jonah. "Go to Nineveh, the city of the Assyrians, your enemies. Give them this message: 'I've seen the terrible things you Assyrians have done. In forty days, I'm going to punish you for them,'" the LORD said.
2. Prophets, like Jonah, were supposed to give the LORD's messages, but this time, Jonah refused. "If I take this message, the Assyrians might turn to the LORD and not be punished. I don't want Him to have mercy on them!" Jonah thought. "I'm not giving them this message. I'm running away."
3. So, Jonah went to Joppa, by the sea. He got on board a boat headed to Tarshish --a city as far away from Nineveh as he could get. Jonah was running from the LORD and from his job. He would not be part of the LORD's plan of mercy this time. No, he would not!
4. Jonah hated the Assyrians for the sinful things they had done, but forgot he was a sinner, too. Why, he was even disobeying the LORD that very minute, as he sailed to Tarshish! He deserved God's punishment and needed His mercy as much as the Assyrians, as he soon found out.
5. Suddenly, a big storm struck. The boat was tossed in the storm. It would sink if something wasn't done quickly. "Help us!" the sailors cried to their fake gods, but the storm kept raging. They threw supplies off the boat to make it lighter, but it wasn't enough. Was there no hope?
6. There WAS hope, but only Jonah knew Who could rescue them. It was the LORD. He had brought this big storm, and it was only He who could help them out of it.
7. The sailors found Jonah asleep and woke him up. "Get up, Jonah! Cry out to your God! Perhaps He can help us!" they pleaded. Jonah knew the LORD could help them, but it would take more than praying to Him for this storm to stop.
8. "The LORD brought this storm upon us because I've disobeyed Him," Jonah told them. "Throw me off the ship if you want the storm to stop," he said. The sailors didn't want to throw Jonah overboard, but the storm would drown them all, if they didn't. So, into the sea they sent Jonah.
9. Immediately, the sea grew calm --Jonah's God was God. But Jonah sank down to the depths of the sea. He knew he deserved this punishment, but he cried out to the LORD anyway. The LORD heard Jonah and sent a giant fish to swallow him, keeping him safe and alive in its big belly.
10. Three days and nights, Jonah lay in that fish belly. "I was sinking down in the stormy waters about to die. I deserved Your punishment, but You rescued me. Thank You for saving me!" Jonah said to the LORD. Then, the LORD spoke to the fish, and it spit Jonah out on the beach.
11. Now, Jonah was ready to obey. He went to Nineveh and gave the king his message. "The LORD says: 'I've seen the terrible things you've done. In forty days, I'm going to punish you for them.'" The Assyrians worshiped fake gods, not the LORD. Would the king listen? Would he believe?
12. The king believed. "Let no one eat or drink but spend your time praying to the LORD. Turn from your sins. Perhaps He'll have mercy and not punish us," he exclaimed. And the LORD DID have mercy on them. On Day Forty, He didn't punish them. How thankful were the Assyrians!