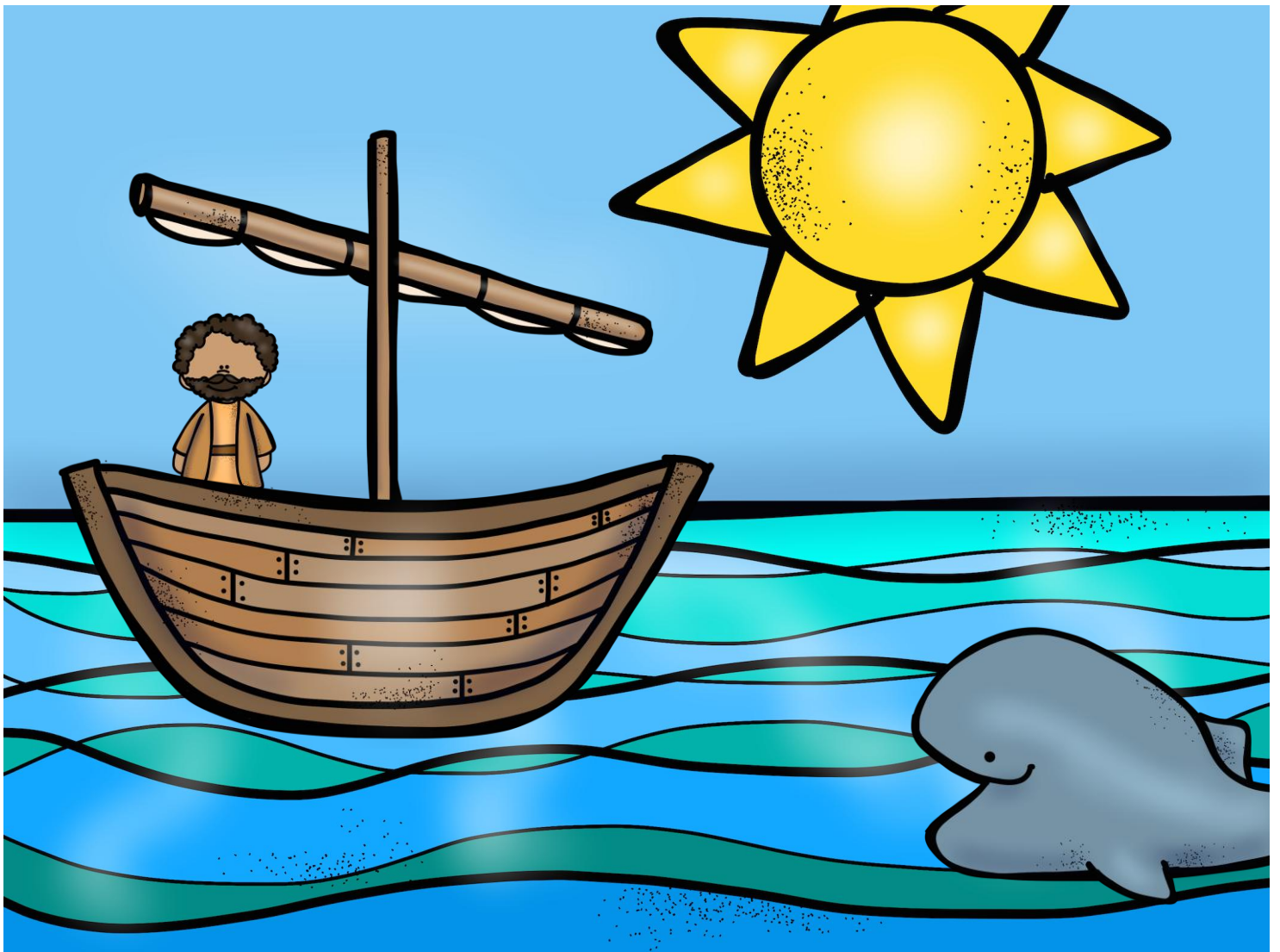


EXPLORING GOD'S WORD

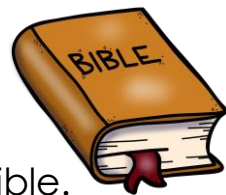
JONAH

A BIBLE LESSON FOR KIDS IN 1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD GRADES



Poet Prints TEACHING

Finding Bible Stories



These Bible lessons are designed to be taught using your own children's Bible.

Which kids' Bible do you use?

I love both the "Jesus Storybook Bible" and "Jesus Calling Bible" when teaching kids in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades. You can read more about these Bibles and why I use them [in this blog post](#).

What if a story isn't in my kids Bible?

From time to time, these Bible lessons will reference a story that isn't found in your personal children's Bible. When this happens, I suggest finding a version on YouTube or doing a Google search. You can also read directly from your preferred translation of the Bible.

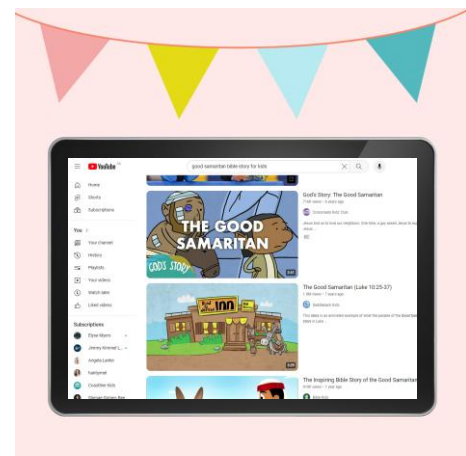
Finding a story using Google.

If a story is unavailable in your own children's Bible, you can often find it by typing the title of the story plus "Bible story for kids" into Google. Many reputable websites include kid-friendly versions of Bible stories. Find one that works for you and print it out!

- "The story of Abigail Bible story for kids"
- "Daniel in the Den of Lions Bible story for kids"

Finding a story on YouTube.

Similar to using Google, I type the search terms into YouTube. Many churches and online children's ministries have uploaded Bible stories in video form. These can be a great way to capture kids' attention during your Bible lesson! I can often find stories I'm looking for on the YouTube channels [Saddleback Kids](#), [Minno – Bible Stories for Kids](#), [Bible Kids](#), or [Crossroads Kids' Club](#).



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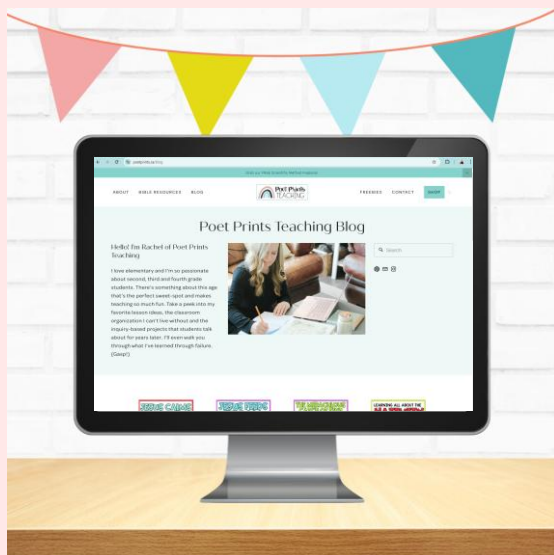
Even More Activities and Ideas

For more teaching ideas, crafts, and activities to go with the story of

Jonah and the Great Fish

Click Here

www.poetprints.ca/jonah-and-the-whale-bible-lessons-for-kids





Helping Big Kids Memorize the Bible

I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11 NIV

Kids have an incredible capacity to memorize! While young children might not need these verses to help them through life circumstances now, memorizing Scripture helps them internalize wisdom to help them make wise choices throughout life. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it" (NIV).

Use Silly Voices

Use a variety of silly voices to practice your memory verse. The more ridiculous, the better. Can you say your memory verse like...

- A squeaky little mouse?
- A big loud lion?
- A raspy crocodile?
- A fish underwater?



Write and Erase

Write your memory verse on a whiteboard and ask your kids to say it out loud. Then, erase one word at a time and have them repeat it. Continue doing this until the whole verse is erased.

Play Bible Ping-Pong

Divide your kids into two groups that face each other. The first group will say the first word of the verse, and then the second group will say the second, and so on. (It's kind of like a ping-pong ball being sent from one group to another!) Like this...

Group 1: "In"

Group 2: "the"

Group 1: "beginning"

Group 2: "God"

And so on.

Create Actions

Use simple actions that go along with the verse. For example, point up for "God", point to yourself for "me", stretch your arms out wide for "big", etc.).

Sing It

Kids love to sing, and memorizing is often easier in song form



Come up with a simple tune to sing the memory verse ("Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" works great for many verses), or find a song on YouTube or a music app. Many popular verses already have songs to go with them! Sing this song several times with your kids.



Jonah and the Great Fish

This packet was designed to be an easy way to teach foundational Bible stories to kids in first, second, and third grades. Each lesson in this series is structured the same and can be taught in about 40 minutes!

Step One: Read or watch the Bible story.

Gather your group together and read the story of Jonah from your children's Bible. You can also read it in Jonah 1:1-3:4 from your preferred translation of the Bible.

Would you rather watch it? Many animated Bible stories are available for free on YouTube. Try searching "Jonah Bible Story for Kids" in the YouTube search bar. Watch it fully before showing it to your class to ensure it's appropriate.

Background Information

Jonah was a prophet. A prophet was someone who heard messages from God and shared those messages with the people around them.

Why was Nineveh such a scary place?

Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrians were an enemy of Israel. History books tell us a lot about Nineveh, and we know that Nineveh was a place known for causing great pain to the Israelites and doing terrible things.

Jonah was likely afraid of the Ninevites, and he didn't think they deserved God's mercy or love because of all the terrible things the Ninevites had done.

Was it a whale or a fish?

Many Bible storybooks say, "whale," but the Bible calls it a big fish. We don't know exactly what kind of fish it was (it might have been a whale), but it was definitely BIG!

You can't hide from God.

Jonah tried to run away from what God asked him to do. He got on a boat and went in the opposite direction, hoping God wouldn't see him or notice where he went. But you can't trick God; He is always present. We learn from Jonah that you can't hide from God. No matter where we are or what we're doing, God sees us, knows us, and cares for us. Instead of running away like Jonah did, we can choose to follow God and trust Him because He is always with us.

Step Two: Explore the story.

After reading or watching the story, use the retell the story worksheet to help students explain the main points. You can also map out the story together on a piece of large paper or a whiteboard.

Jonah: Quickly map out the six main parts of the story.

1. God tells Jonah to go to Nineveh
2. Jonah runs away on a boat
3. God sends a storm
4. Jonah is swallowed by a big fish
5. The big fish spits up Jonah
6. Jonah goes to Nineveh and obeys God

Then, talk through the discussion questions as a group.

Jonah and the Great Fish	
Name: _____	
1	2
3	4
5	6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	
QUESTION #1 Why do you think Jonah chose to run away instead of doing what God asked him to do?	QUESTION #2 How do you think the sailors felt when the storm grew stronger? What did they do to find out what was happening?
QUESTION #3 What do you think it was like in the belly of the giant fish? What did it smell like, look like, feel like?	QUESTION #4 How does Jonah's story show that God always knows where we are and what we're doing?



Jonah and the Great Fish

Step Three: Play the game and do a craft.

Game: Hiding Jonah

To play this game, you'll need a small figurine. I suggest a Lego person or other small figure. We will call this figurine "Jonah," like in our story. In this game, the group will try to 'hide' Jonah, much like Jonah tried to hide from God.

Arrange your group of kids into a circle. Designate one child to be "it" and remove them from the circle. Tell this child that they will need to close and cover their eyes.

While the child's eyes are closed, the rest of the group will pass Jonah around in a circle. I like to do this with worship music playing, though you could also do it while singing a song as a group. When the song ends (or is paused), the whole group will pretend to be holding the Jonah figurine in their hands.

Ask the child covering their eyes to return to the circle. They will try to guess who is *really* holding the Jonah figurine (even though the whole group is pretending to hold it). Once the figurine has been found, select another child to cover their eyes.

Craft: A Whale in the Ocean

Before the lesson, print out whale templates for each child. Gather thick white paper, scissors, glue, crayons, and watercolor painting supplies (paints, brushes, etc).

Give each child a piece of white paper. Turn the paper horizontally and draw an ocean scene using light-colored crayons. Instruct kids to press relatively hard with the crayons, which will help the scene pop through the watercolor paints later. Give them enough time to add elements like seaweed, smaller sea creatures, underwater volcanos, etc.

Then, use blue watercolor paints to paint over their scene. The wax crayons should pop through the paint. Make sure the paint is nice and watery; if it's too thick or vivid, it may not work.

While the scene dries, have the kids cut out the whale and clean up the paints.

Kids can glue their whale onto the page when the ocean scene is dry (or mostly dry).



Step Four: Finish with the take-home worksheet.

The 'Jonah and the Great Fish' coloring page is the perfect way to wrap up the lesson and create a take-home page that includes caregivers in what you have learned. Students will color a picture, write down their memory verse, and add the key takeaway (a "big idea") from the story.

Memory verse suggestion from the story:

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. Psalm 139:7

Big idea suggestion: You can't hide from God.



Jonah and the Great Fish

Name: _____

1

2

3

4

5

6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

QUESTION #1

Why do you think Jonah chose to run away instead of doing what God asked him to do?

QUESTION #2

How do you think the sailors felt when the storm grew stronger?

What did they do to find out what was happening?

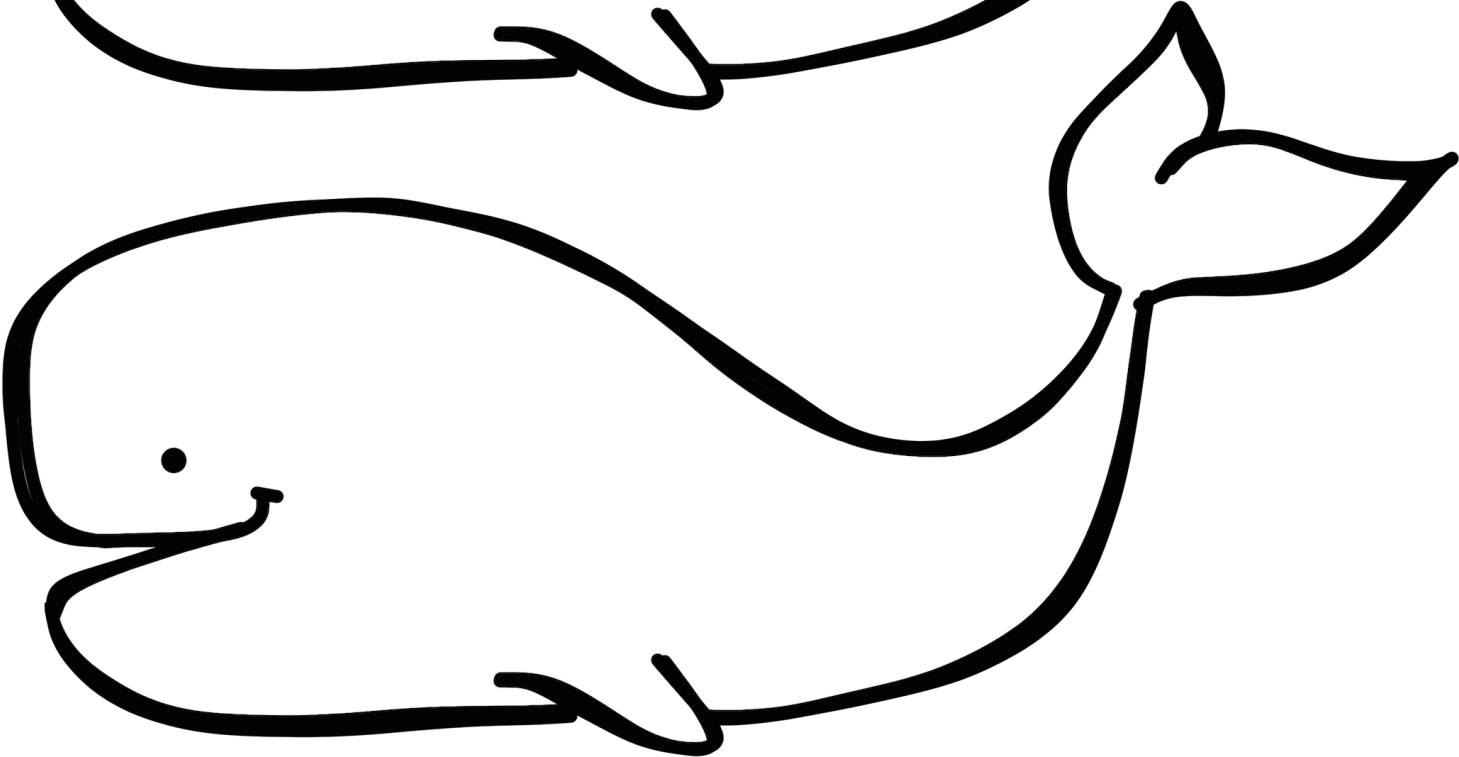
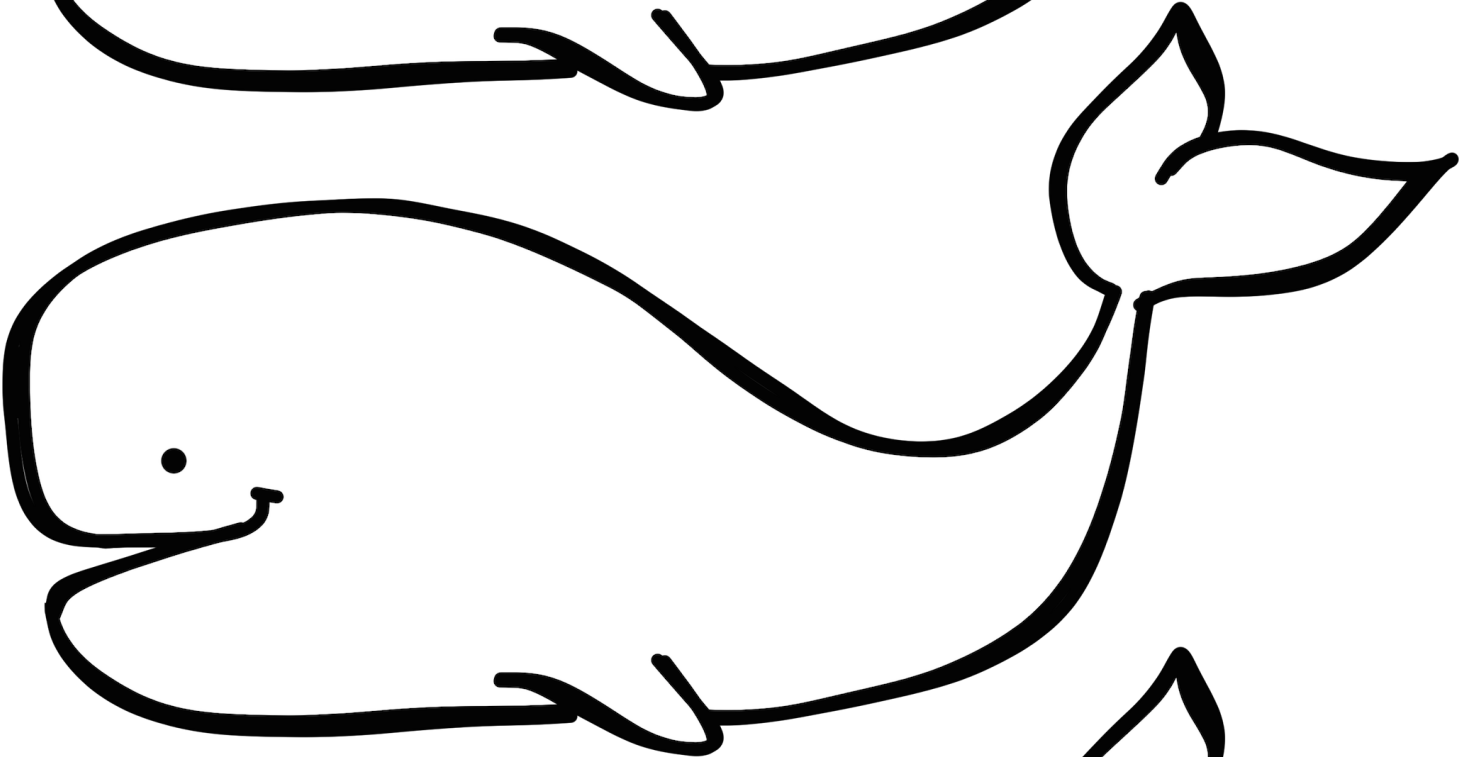
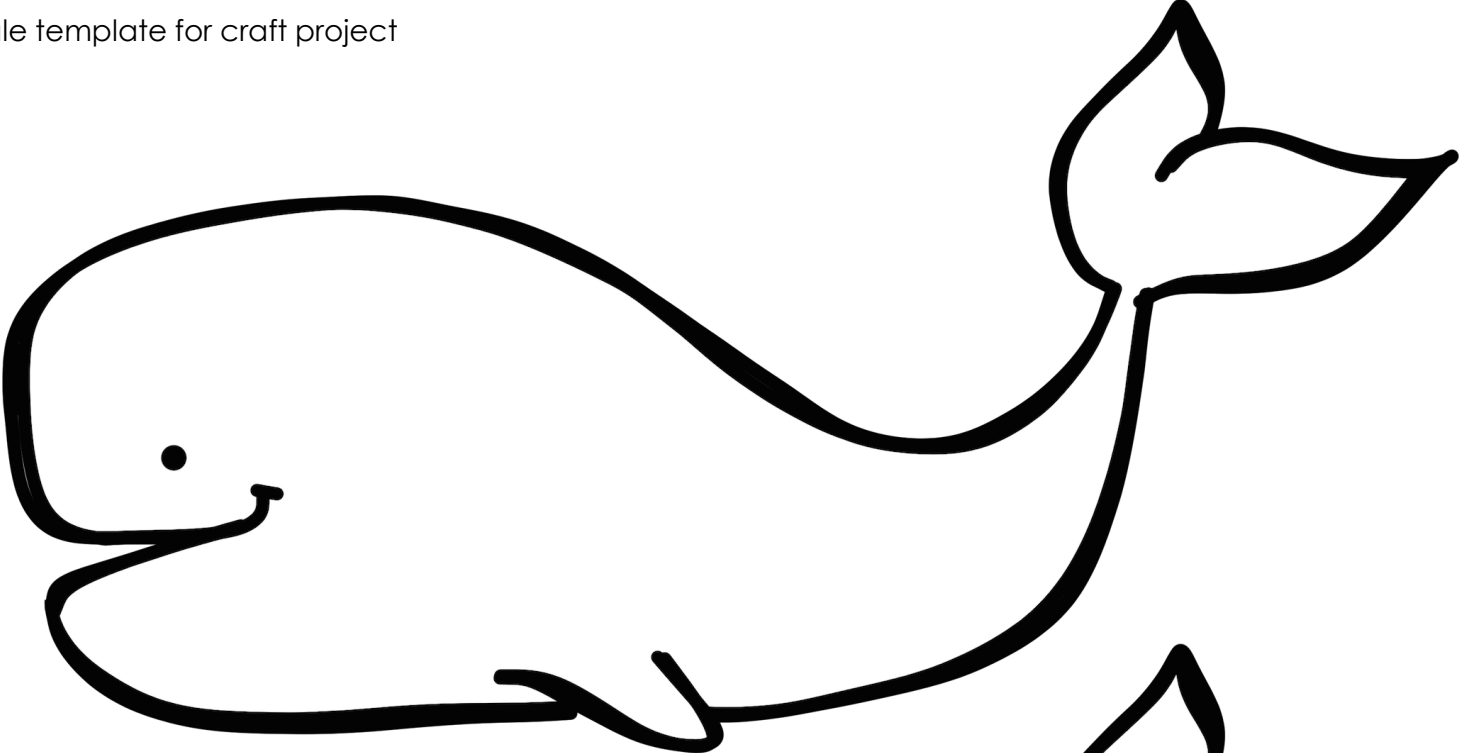
QUESTION #3

What do you think it was like in the belly of the giant fish?

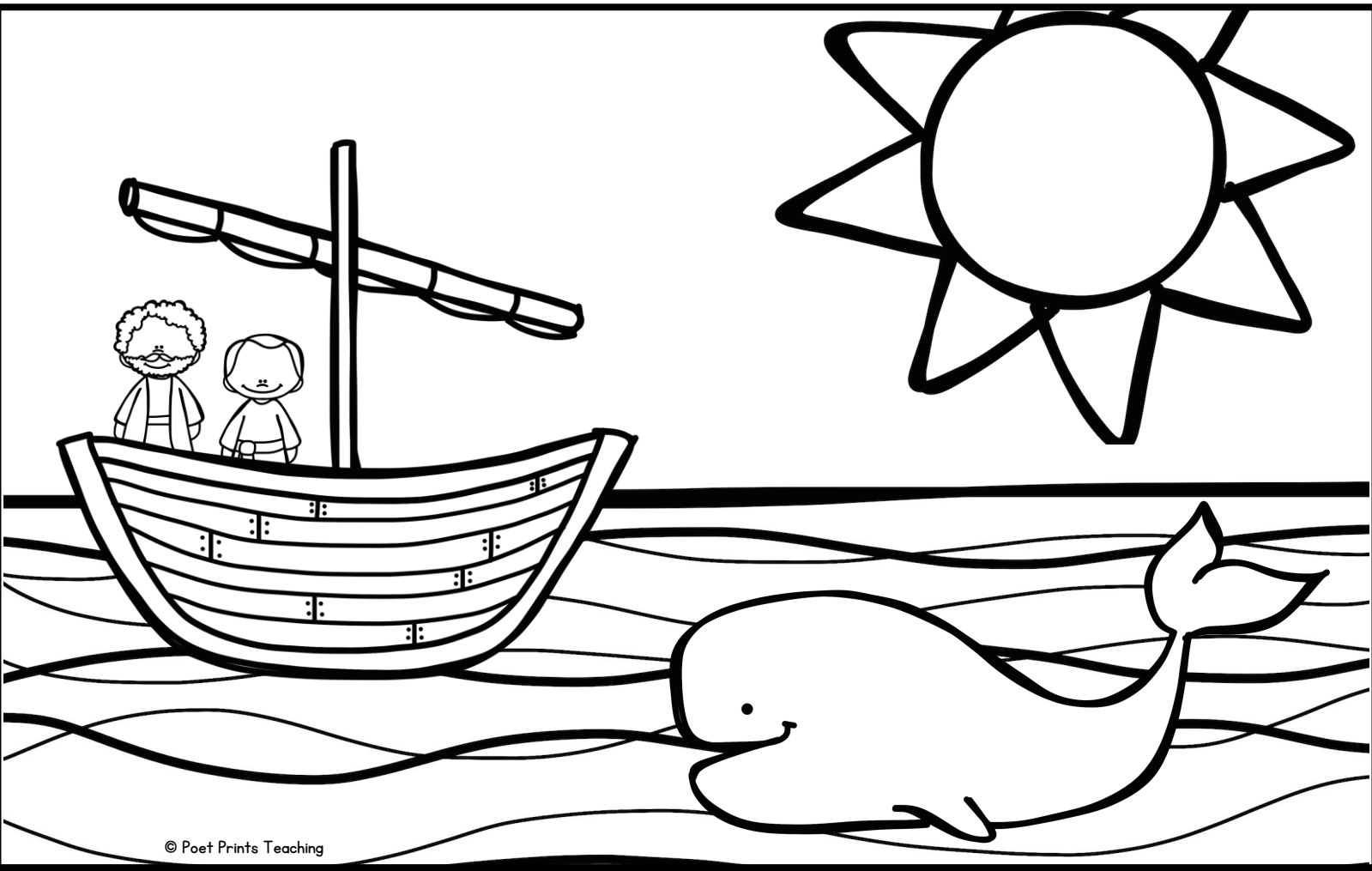
What did it smell like, look like, feel like?

QUESTION #4

How does Jonah's story show that God always knows where we are and what we're doing?



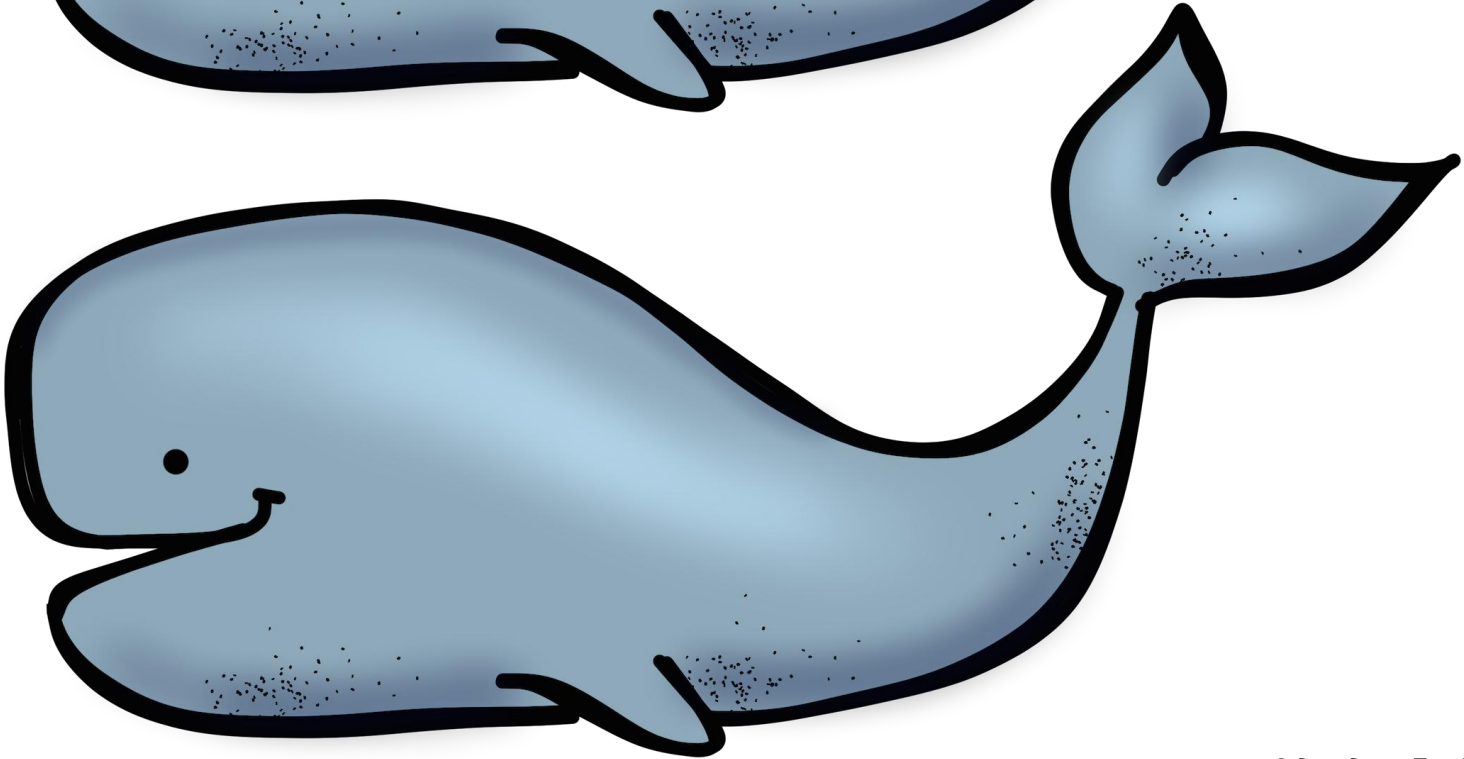
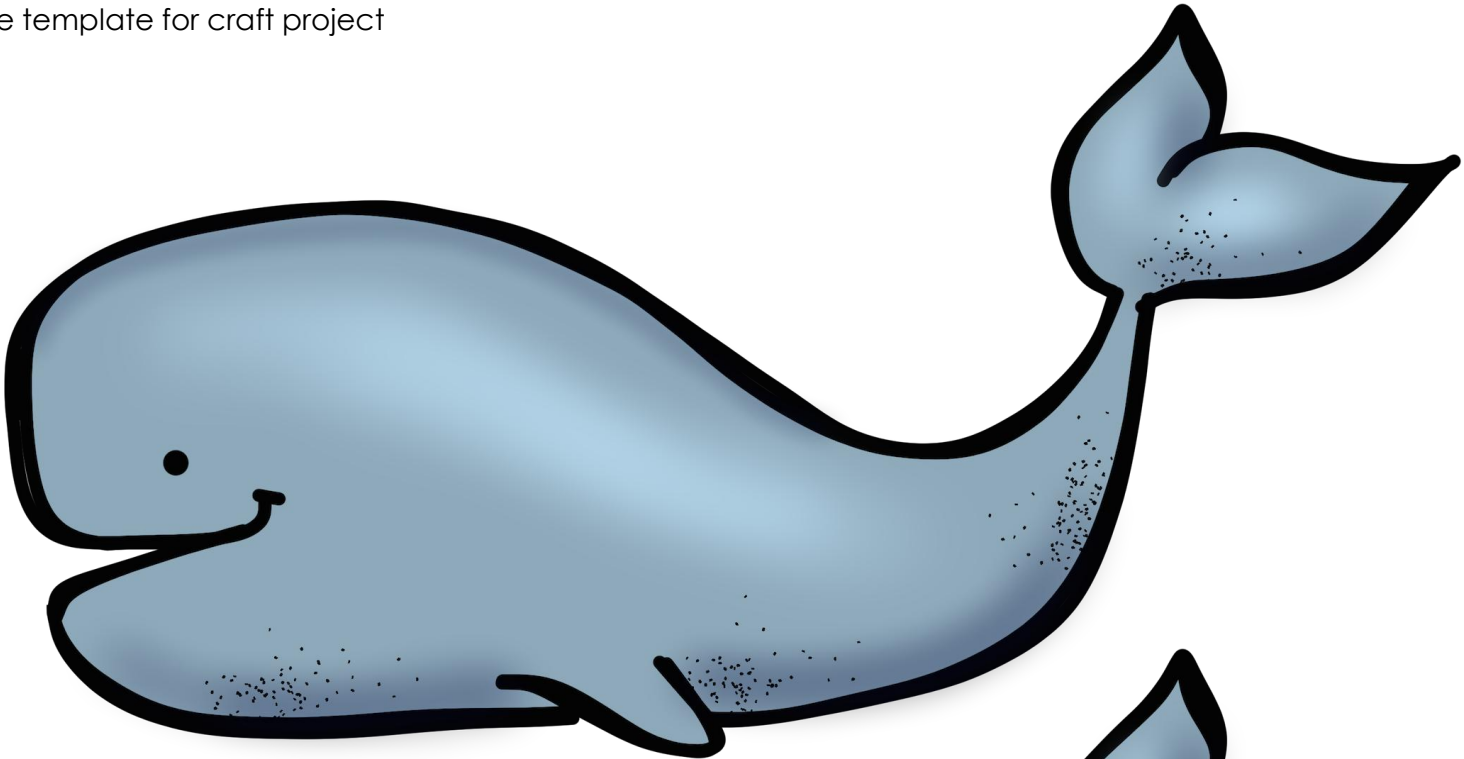
JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH



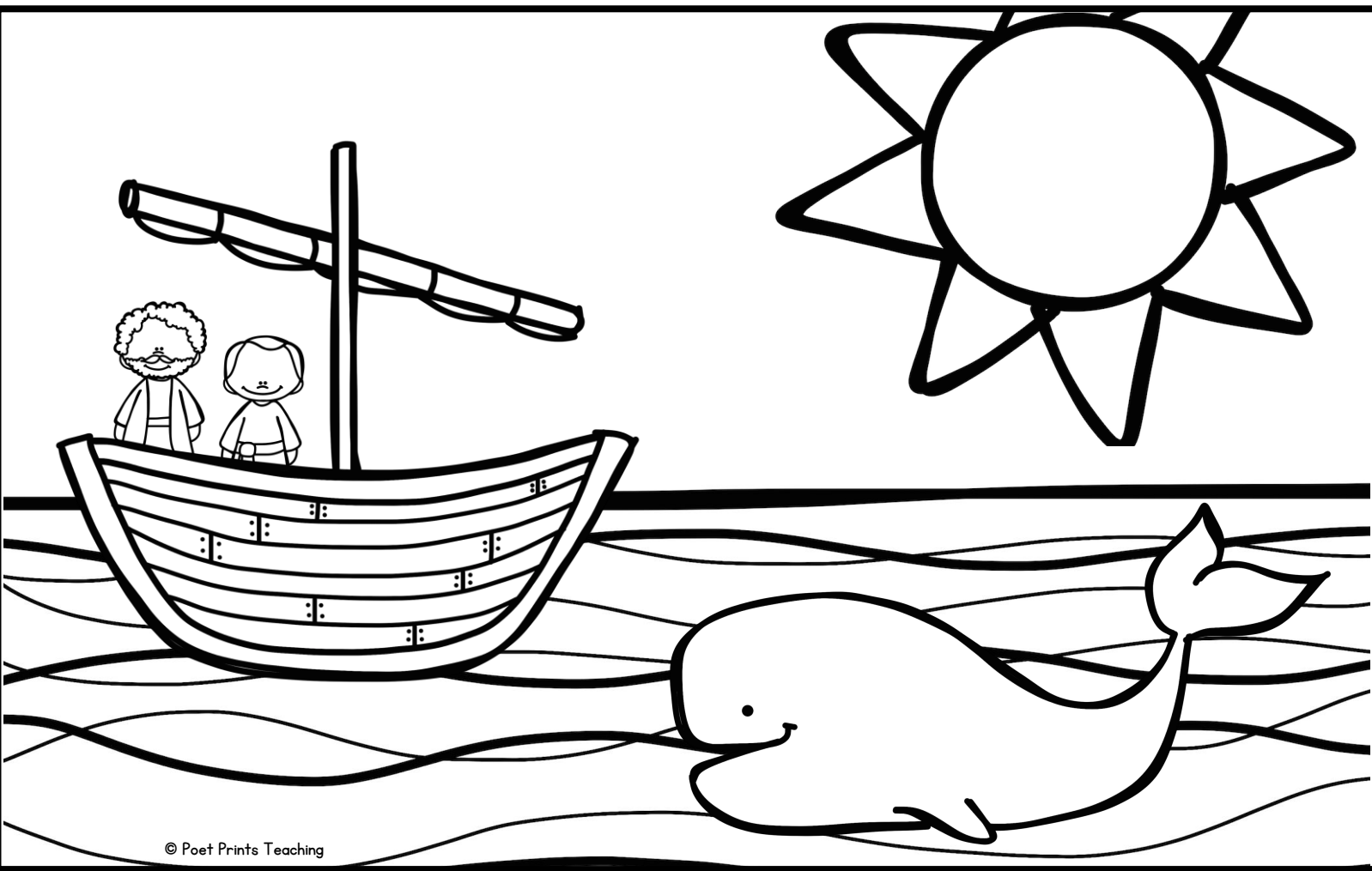
MEMORIZE THIS:

THE BIG IDEA

What does this story teach us about God?



JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH



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MEMORIZE THIS:

Where can I go from
your Spirit? Where can I
flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens
you are there; if I make
my bed in the depths, you
are there.

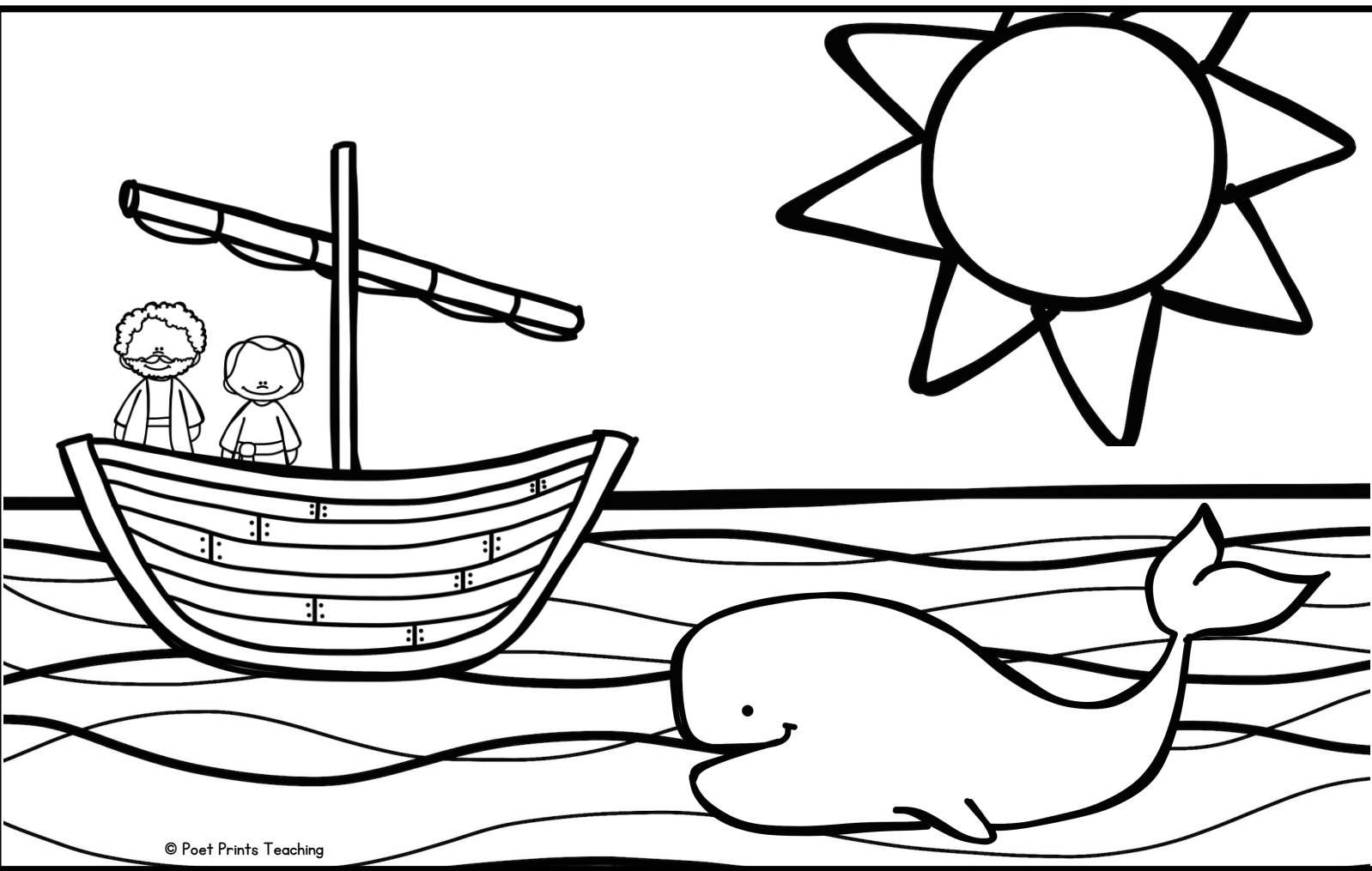
Psalms 139:7-8 NIV

THE BIG IDEA

What does this story teach us about God?

You can't
hide from
God.

JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH



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MEMORIZE THIS:

Whither shall I go from
thy spirit? Or whither shall
I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven,
thou art there: If I make
my bed in hell, behold, thou
art there.

Psalms 139:7 KJV

THE BIG IDEA

What does this story teach us about God?

You can't
hide from
God.