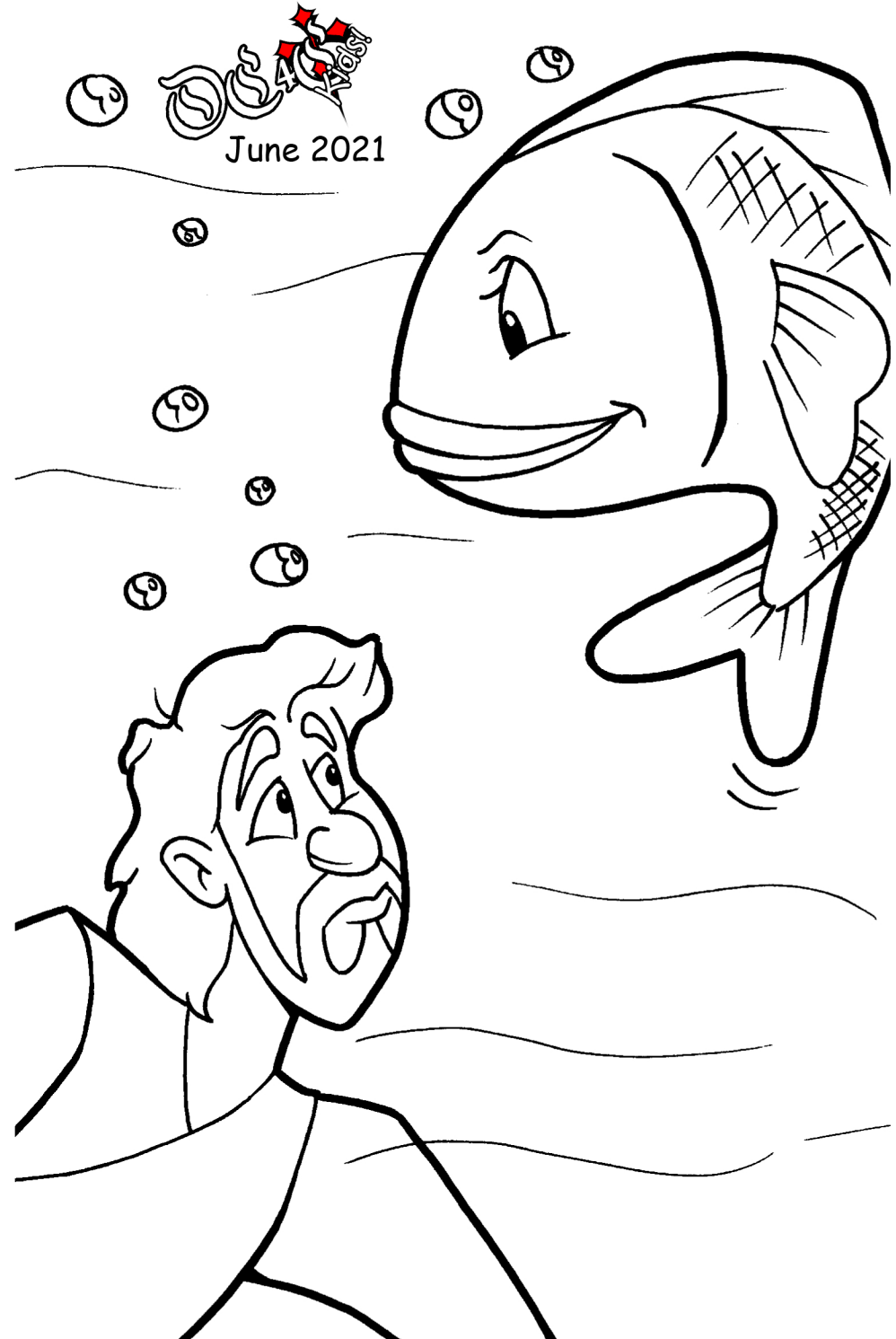


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AFRAID	LORD
BELLY	LOTS
CAPTAIN	MARINERS
FISH	NINEVEH
JONAH	PRAYED
SEA	THREE DAYS
SWALLOW	THREE NIGHTS
TARSHISH	WICKEDNESS
TEMPEST	WIND





OR
"THE CHICKEN OF THE SEA"



freely adapted from

THE BOOK OF JONAH
By Paul Dallgas-Frey

I DON'T WANT TO!!!

Would you ever say that to God?

Jonah did.

God said to Jonah, "Go to Ninevah!"

And Jonah said, "I don't want to!"

Well, he didn't exactly SAY that to God - but that's what he was thinking.

Back in Jonah's day - this was a LONG time ago, about 800 years before Jesus was born - the greatest city in the world was Ninevah. Everyone had heard of Ninevah. And everyone knew it was an evil place.

So, God had a job for Jonah.

"Jonah," God called, "Get up! Go to Ninevah!"

"Tell the people there that I know all about the terrible things they are doing. They think no one can see the evil things they do. But I see!"

But Ninevah was a big, scary place, and Jonah didn't want to go!

Besides, the Assyrians lived in Ninevah, and the Assyrians were big bullies. They were always beating up on everybody, especially Jonah's people. They deserved to get in trouble from God.

If Jonah warned the people of Ninevah, they might change their evil ways - and then God might forgive them (God is always forgiving people!) - and then they might get away with all the terrible things they have done.

That wouldn't be fair!

So, do you know what Jonah did?

He ran away.



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Jonah went down to Joppa and jumped on a ship that was sailing for Tarshish. Tarshish was a city in Spain, or maybe it was what we call the whole country of Spain now, I am not entirely sure, but whatever, it was about as far away as a person could go. Jonah thought, "God will never find me there."

But God knows where every gnat, ant, and bug on the face of the earth is. He knows when a mosquito lands on your nose. He knows where it came from, and where it goes. Of course God would know where Jonah went!

So the ship put out to sea, with Jonah hiding from God below the deck.

But God wasn't going to let Jonah get off that easy.

Just as the last bit of land disappeared from view, God sent a terrible storm.

Sometimes God has to send storms of one kind or another to bring us back to him. But no matter how terrible the trouble, God's power is always greater. God is always with us - sometimes in amazing ways.

Jonah was about to learn that.

continued next time ...