

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Bigmouth!



Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. – Jonah 1:17

In 1976, a naval research vessel working in the deep waters off Hawaii discovered a large fish that was entangled in its anchor. When the sailors hauled the fish aboard, they saw something no one had ever seen before. This fish – now considered to be one of the most important marine discoveries of the twentieth century – was over 14 feet in length and weighed 1,650 pounds.

What they had discovered was a shark with a very, very, VERY big mouth! That's why this fish is now commonly known as the megamouth shark. With its enormous mouth, you might expect it to feed on large prey, but its gaping mouth is actually filled with very tiny teeth. Megamouth is a filter feeder. When jellyfish, shrimp and other small invertebrates are nearby, the shark simply opens its mouth, sucks in a large amount of water and filters out its lunch. Megamouth sharks swim in a vertical position, with their mouth pointing straight up towards the surface. They also migrate vertically. That is, they spend their daylight hours submerged to a depth of about 500 feet. Then at night they migrate vertically to approximately 50 feet.

The megamouth shark reminds us of an event recorded in the Bible book of Jonah. No, we're not talking about the big fish that swallowed the disobedient prophet. We're talking about Jonah himself. With his constant complaining against God, what a bigmouth he turned out to be!

Ref: Tim Flannery and Peter Schouten, "Megamouth," *Astonishing Animals* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 2004), pp. 110-111. Also, Wikipedia article on Megamouth shark. Photo: Megamouth shark (*Megachasma pelagios*). Courtesy of OpenCage. (CC BY-SA 2.5)

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