

>>> COMMUNITY KIDS <<<

JONAH WARNED OF GOD'S JUDGMENT

JONAH

FAMILY
DISCUSSION
STARTERS:

- **Mornings:** Ask God to help you see people the way He sees them. Instead of judging them for their wrong behaviors, ask God to help you see them as loved by Him and in need of a relationship with Him. How does seeing people this way show us the greatness of God's mercy?
- **Evenings:** Thank God for the ways He has shown His patience, mercy, and loving kindness to your family. Thank Him for the ultimate display of mercy when Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sin. How has God shown His mercy to you? How does God's mercy compel you to show mercy to others?

>>> MAIN IDEAS:

CHRIST CONNECTION

THIS IS THE BIG IDEA OF HOW THIS WEEK'S BIBLE
STORY POINTS TO JESUS:

JOHN CALLED PEOPLE TO REPENT. WHEN WE REALIZE THAT OUR SIN DESERVES GOD'S PUNISHMENT AND TRUST IN JESUS TO SAVE US, WE CAN TURN FROM OUR SINS AND LIVE FOR JESUS. JESUS CHANGES OUR HEARTS SO WE CAN LOVE GOD AND PEOPLE.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What makes people
special?

People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

»»» CONTINUE THE STORY AT HOME

JONAH

Dear Families,

If you were a Jewish man in the 900 B.C., the last place on earth you wanted to visit was the city of Nineveh! Nineveh was full of Assyrians—a group of wicked and violent people who did not follow God. Going to Nineveh to tell them about God was a dangerous—and possibly a deadly mission. No wonder Jonah didn't want to go!

The real reason Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh was because he felt like these wicked people didn't deserve God's forgiveness. They were wicked and cruel, so how could God show them mercy? What Jonah didn't understand is that God cared for the people of Nineveh as much as He cared for the rest of the world.

God wanted to see the Ninevites turn away from sin and trust in Him. So much so, that God used a big fish to get Jonah back to Nineveh when he tried to run away. Finally, Jonah reluctantly preached the message God had given and warned the people about God's judgment. The people repented and God spared their lives.

The Bible tells us that God shows mercy on whomever He wants to show mercy. Jonah didn't think the Ninevites deserved God's mercy, but the truth is that none of us deserve His mercy. But God loved the world so much that He shows us His mercy through Jesus. Unlike Jonah, Jesus was willing to accept the mission God gave Him. Jesus came to save the sinners who God cared so much about.

God called Jonah to go to his enemies and call them to turn away from their sin, but Jonah refused. Instead, he ran away. Later, God sent Jesus to His enemies to call us to repentance. Jesus willingly obeyed. Jesus died on the cross to rescue us from sin.

Pray: God, thank You for showing mercy that we do not deserve. Thank You for sending Jesus to make Your mercy available to those who believe in Him. Help us to remember that Your mercy is great and extends to all who repent and believe.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES<<<

For Fun: Take your family fishing or simulate fishing using sticks, string, magnets, and paper clips. See who can catch the biggest fish. If you catch any fish, release them back to the water to lead into a discussion on mercy. Ask kids to retell what they remember from the story of Jonah. Discuss how Jonah did not want God to show mercy to the people of Nineveh, but God's mercy is greater than anything we can imagine. Talk as a family about ways God has shown mercy to you.

To Serve: Host a meal or dessert party for your neighbors. Give each family member a job to help make the night a wonderful experience for others. After the party, talk about the hard work, sacrifice, and time it took to love others. Emphasize how it was worth it because of the relationships you made or deepened. Remind kids that God often calls us into hard things, but serving God is always worth it.



UNIT MEMORY VERSE:

For it was you who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well.

—Psalm 139:13-14