

Dear Teacher,

This week we look at the last part to the story of Jonah. A great story of God's mercy towards the wicked, disobedience by God's servant, and repentance. This week we see the response of Nineveh to God's message delivered by Jonah. All of Nineveh, including the king, repents and God exercises His mercy towards Nineveh. God's mercy towards Nineveh, Jonah's enemy, draws anger and frustration Jonah has for the city being spared. Jonah would rather die in the end than see people come to repentance of their wickedness and their worship of God. This month's memory verse is part of this week's lesson and should be repeated for the children: "I know that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Jonah 4:2b).

We encourage all classrooms to engage with the story from the options provided in class. Teachers, tell the story using any of the provided helps (Vos, Jesus Story Book Bible, Gospel Story Book Bible or printed Handout). If you would like, read the selected Scripture passages aloud in class, discuss or explain what the passages mean, and use the questions below to help guide the discussion. Also, use time in class to teach the Scripture Memory and the Catechism Questions.

Morning Overview

Lesson: *Split:* Jonah, Part 3

Lesson Objective: To communicate to children that God always keeps His promises despite circumstances and even our inability to trust Him. God wants us to trust Him and obey His commands.

Scripture: Jonah 3:6-4:11

Story: Vos Children's Bible, Chapter 91 (Pages 209-210); The Jesus Story Book Bible, Pages 160-169;
The Beginner's Bible, Pages 260-264; The Gospel Story Book, Pages 138-139.

Teaching Summary:

- God's promises do not change despite circumstances, people and even our inability to believe them. God keeps His promises even when we do not trust Him or follow His commands.
- The city of Nineveh is a great, but wicked city. It serves as the capital city for the great Assyrian empire.
- The Assyrians were enemies to God's people, the Israelites. The Israelites hated the Assyrians for their cruelty towards them.
- God appointed Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach against it. Jonah instead fled in the opposite direction of Nineveh. Jonah attempted an escape by sea. God sent a great storm to toss the ship.
- A powerful storm came upon the ship. Jonah was the cause of it and he had the sailors throw him overboard.
- A giant fish swallowed Jonah whole. Jonah stayed in the fish's belly for 3 days and 3 nights. God caused the giant fish to spit up Jonah after the third day.
- God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh again and preach against it. Jonah was obedient.
- Nineveh repented of their wickedness against the Lord. They fasted and wore sackcloth to show their contrition.
- Jonah was angry that Nineveh repented and God spared the city of punishment. Jonah left the city angry.
- Jonah camped outside the city and argued with God about His mercy towards Nineveh.

9:30am Sunday Schedule

For the Sunday Schedule, please see "Sunday Schedule for Preschool" found in Handbook on the teacher's table.

Cherub Church

- Kindergarten/5's – 9:35-10:00 (Classroom's: 162, 163, 121, 123, 124)
- 3's/4's – 10:05-10:30 (Classroom's: 166, 165, 164)

Craft: Concern for Nineveh

Supplies: Cardstock city, heart, verse sticker, tape, crayons/markers

Instructions:

1. Have children color the city
2. Place verse sticker on heart
3. Tape heart to top edge of city so it can be flipped up and down



Snack

11am Sunday Schedule

Craft: Paper bag worm

Supplies: Paper bag, worm face and body, sticker, glue, crayons/markers

Instructions:

1. Glue worm face to bag flap
2. Glue body to bag
3. Place sticker on bag
4. Color worm if desired



Story: Split: Jonah, Part 3

1. **PRAY** for your time and any requests the children may have.
2. **ASK** the Transition Question: Boys and girls, today we learn the last part in the story of Jonah. Can anyone tell me where Jonah is preaching God's message? [Nineveh] Well today we find out what the king of Nineveh thinks about Jonah and God's message.
3. **TELL** the Story. Use the Vos Children's Bible, the Jesus Storybook Bible, the Beginner's Bible, or the story below to aid in telling the story.
4. **REVIEW** the questions to help children understand the story.

Questions for Review

Scripture Memory (Jonah 4:2b)

Catechism Questions (1-14)

Hymn of the Month: O Worship the King (Trinity Hymnal, Page 2)

Free Play

Questions for Review

Questions for Younger Children:

- What is the name of the wicked city in our story?
- Who did God want to go to Nineveh?
- What did God want Jonah to do in Nineveh?
- What did Jonah do?
- What came and swallowed Jonah?
- How long was Jonah in the giant fish?
- What did the giant fish do on the third day with Jonah?
- What does Jonah tell the people of Nineveh?
- What do the people of Nineveh do once they hear Jonah's message?
- Where does Jonah go once the people of Nineveh repent?
- What happens to Jonah's plant that shaded his shelter?

Questions for Older Children:

- What does the story tell us about God?
- What does this story tell us about Jonah?

Scripture Memory for February:

"...I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love..."
Jonah 4:2b

Catechism Questions:

- Question 1 – Who made you? *God*
- Question 2 – What else did God make? *God made all things.*
- Question 3 – Why did God make you and all things? *For his own glory.*
- Question 4 – How can you glorify God? *By loving him and doing what he commands.*
- Question 5 – Why are you to glorify God? *Because he made me and takes care of me.*
- Question 6 – Is there more than one true God? *No. There is only one true God.*
- Question 7 – In how many persons does this One God exist? *In three persons.*
- Question 8 – Who are they? *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*
- Question 9 – What is God? *God is a Spirit and does not have a body like men.*
- Question 10 – Where is God? *God is everywhere.*
- Question 11 - Can you see God? *No; I cannot see God, but He can always see me.*
- Question 12 – Does God know all things? *Yes. Nothing can be hidden from God.*
- Question 13 – Can God do all things? *Yes. God can do all His holy will.*
- Question 14 – Where do you learn how to love and obey God? *In the Bible alone.*

Story

Transition

Boys and girls, today we learn the last part in the story of Jonah. Can anyone tell me where Jonah is preaching God's message? [Nineveh] Well today we find out what the king of Nineveh thinks about Jonah and God's message.

God Calls and Jonah Obeys

The Lord spoke to Jonah again. The Lord said, "Get up. Go to the great city Nineveh. Preach against it what I tell you." Jonah had heard these words before. The first time he heard them he ran away. But Jonah made a promise to do what the Lord wanted. Jonah made his way towards Nineveh.

Nineveh was a very large city. It was so large it took a person three days to walk across it! Jonah continued to travel across the land toward Nineveh in obedience to what the Lord wanted him to do. Then one day Jonah saw the large city from afar; he knew he would be at Nineveh soon. As the moments passed and Jonah got closer, Nineveh became larger and larger. Finally, he arrived at Nineveh's city gates. Jonah had promised to be obedient to the Lord even though the Ninevehites were Jonah's enemies. And not just Jonah's but all of Israel.

Jonah went into the city. He had God's Word to tell, but "Where to tell it?" Jonah wondered. Jonah's message wasn't very long or great. Jonah decided he would just start telling God's Word to as many people as possible. Jonah shouted to people as they passed by, "After 40 days, Nineveh will be destroyed!" That was it! That was Jonah's message to the Ninevehites. The Bible tells us that the people of Nineveh believed God after hearing Jonah's message. The message traveled through the whole city! The people of Nineveh decided they would stop eating for a while. They did this to show how sorry they were to God. Then the people of Nineveh put on rough, itchy clothing. The Bible tells us that the most important people to the least important people in Nineveh did this. The people of Nineveh wanted to show God they were sorry for their wickedness.

The King Hears

Jonah's message spread wide and fast throughout all of Nineveh. Everyone was truly sorry for their terrible sin. The news eventually made its way to the king of Nineveh. When the messenger brought the news to the king, no one knew how the king would react to such a message. "After 40 days, Nineveh will be destroyed!" Nineveh was the greatest city on Earth. It was the home of the most powerful king and army ever. There was no way it could be destroyed! But if God says something will happen, it will happen. The messenger came close to the king and told him what was being said and what was happening throughout his city. The king heard the news, and then there was a slight pause. Everyone in the throne room was watching to see what the king would do. The king stood up from his throne and took off his robe. The king went out and put on the same rough clothing that everyone else was wearing. The king then sat in ashes to show how upset he was. The king was very sorry for how wicked he was and all the wicked things the Ninevehites had done. The king wanted his whole kingdom to know how important it was that they turn from their wicked ways and turn to God.

The king summoned his royal messengers to declare a law throughout the whole city. The law said:

By command of the king and his important men: No person or animal should eat anything. No herd or flock will be allowed to taste anything. Do not let them eat food or drink water. But every person and animal should be covered with rough cloth. People should cry loudly to God. Everyone must turn away from his evil life. Everyone must stop doing harm. Maybe God will change his mind. Maybe he will stop being angry. Then we will not die.

The Bible tells us that God saw what the people did. He saw that they stopped doing evil things. And so God decided not to punish Nineveh for their wickedness. The people of Nineveh were truly sorry for what they had done and turned to God for forgiveness.

God's Mercy Makes Jonah Angry

Jonah had finished preaching God's message to Nineveh. He saw that the Ninevehites were sorry for their wickedness. Jonah knew that God was not going to destroy Nineveh and that made Jonah very angry. Jonah wanted to leave Nineveh he was so angry! As Jonah walked out of the city, he began to complain to God. Jonah shouted, "I knew this would happen! I knew it when I was still in Israel. It is why I quickly ran to Tarshish. I knew that you are a God who is kind and shows mercy. You don't become angry quickly. You have a great love. I knew you would rather forgive than punish the city of Nineveh." Jonah hated the Ninevehites. Jonah wanted God to punish them, but God did not. So Jonah then said something very sad, "It is better for me to die than to live." Jonah was so angry and upset that God was merciful and gracious to the Ninevehites, he would rather not live. Then the Lord said to Jonah, "Do you think it is right for you to be angry?" God knew the answer to the question because God knows all things. But it was for Jonah to wonder if he should be mad that a city of people turned to worship God.

Jonah kept traveling out of the city, and the Bible says he sat down east of the city. Once he sat down he made a shelter for himself; a place for him to camp out and rest for a while. Jonah wanted to see what would happen to the city. Jonah thought perhaps God would end up destroying the city after all. Or maybe the city of Nineveh would turn back to their wicked ways and then God would destroy them. Jonah really did not like the Ninevehites. While Jonah waited to see what would happen to the city of Nineveh, the Bible tells us that the Lord made a plant grow quickly up over Jonah. It was probably a big plant with big leaves. The plant and its leaves helped to make Jonah's shelter cool from the hot sun. Jonah had a nice little shelter and he really enjoyed sitting underneath it. But, the Bible tells us, as the sun rose the next day God sent a worm to eat the plant and the plant died.

The plant was dead. Jonah was quickly upset by this, but even worse the sun was extra hot that day. A hot wind blew across Jonah's shelter and it became more and more hot as the day wore on. The Bible even tells us that Jonah's head was very hot! Eventually the heat and extreme temperatures caused Jonah to be very weak. He was thirsty and so hot from the sun. Jonah was angry that the plant was dead. In frustration he thought, "It is better for me die than to live." Jonah was exaggerating though. God spoke to Jonah, "Do you think it is right for you to be angry because of the plant?"

Jonah was very angry though. Jonah shouted at God, "It is right for me to be angry! I will stay angry until I die!" But the Lord, graciously and kindly, replied, "You showed concern for that plant. But you did not plant it or make it grow. It appeared in the night, and the next day it died." It was true. The plant was not anything truly special and Jonah had not done anything to cause it to grow. He enjoyed the temporary shade, but it was not lasting. God went on to say, "Certainly I can show concern for the great city Nineveh. There are many animals in that city. And there are more than 120,000 people living there. Those people simply do not know right from wrong!" Jonah knew that God was a God who was gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. God wanted the people of Nineveh to turn to Him. God wanted them to be sorry for their wickedness. There were so many little ones in the city of Nineveh who did not know right from wrong. God wanted to save everyone in Nineveh. Just as important, God wanted Jonah to see that the people of Nineveh should be saved.