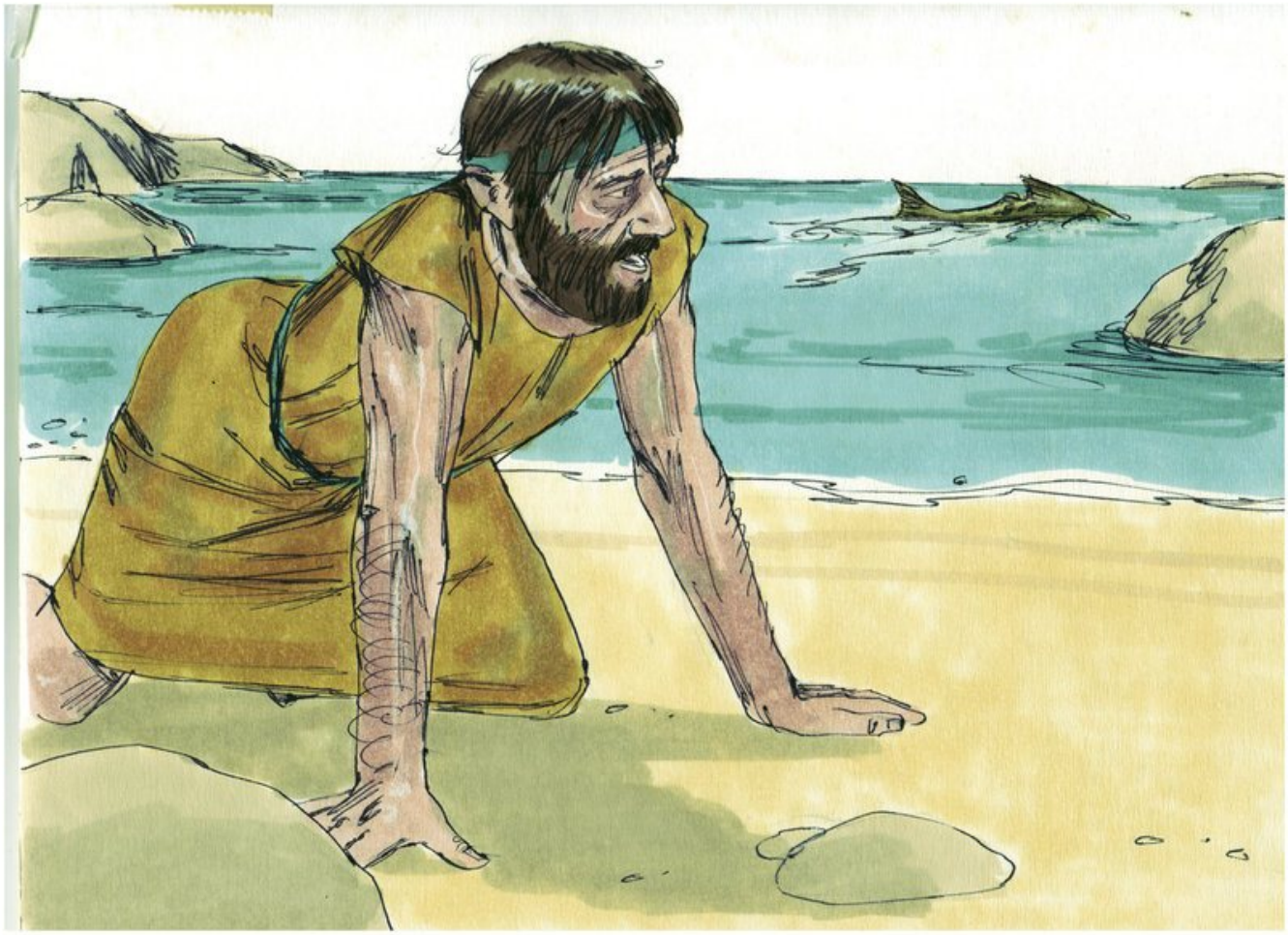
GENESIS TO REVELATION | BIBLE ACCOUNT

Jonah Learns about God's Mercy

Jonah 1:1-4:11



YOUR BIBLE READING

God’s mercy reaches people Jonah did not want to welcome.

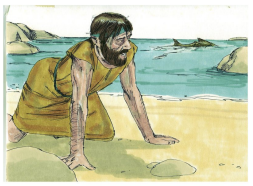
Inside: two extended reading pages, a thoughtful reflection, creative activities and a grown-up guide.

AGES 6-10 WITH AN ADULT • 6 COLORFUL A4 PAGES • ENGLISH ONLY

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 1 OF 2

Running in the Other Direction

Jonah 1:1-4:11



God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and speak against its wrongdoing. Jonah instead went to Joppa and paid to board a ship headed toward Tarshish, away from the place he had been sent. He was trying to flee from God's presence. His journey began with a refusal. The account follows him onto the sea rather than pretending he obeyed as soon as he heard the instruction.

A mighty storm came, and the ship was in danger of breaking apart. The sailors were afraid, cried for help, and threw cargo into the water to lighten the ship. Jonah was sleeping below until the captain woke him. When the sailors questioned him, Jonah admitted that he was fleeing from the God who made the sea and the dry land. His answer made their concern even greater.

Jonah told them to throw him overboard so the sea would become calm. The sailors first tried hard to row to shore instead. They did not immediately treat his life as unimportant. But the storm grew worse. At last they prayed, put Jonah into the sea, and saw the raging water become still. Their fear turned toward reverence for God. Jonah's refusal had affected other people as well as himself.

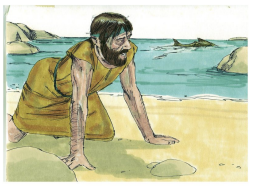
God provided a great fish that swallowed Jonah. He remained inside it for three days and nights. There, Jonah prayed about the deep waters and thanked God for preserving his life. The passage does not name the fish's species or describe a comfortable room inside it. It tells of rescue in an extraordinary way. At God's command, the fish released Jonah onto dry land. His story had not ended beneath the sea.

Remember: God teaches me to care beyond my own group.

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 2 OF 2

Mercy for Nineveh Too

Jonah 1:1-4:11



God's word came to Jonah again, sending him to Nineveh with the message he was to deliver. This time Jonah went. He warned that the city would be overthrown. The people believed God and responded seriously. From ordinary residents to their king, they humbled themselves. The king called on everyone to turn from evil and violence and cry to God, hoping that the announced destruction might not fall upon them.

God saw that the people turned from their evil ways and showed mercy. The destruction Jonah had announced did not happen. Jonah, however, was deeply displeased. He told God that this was why he had wanted to flee: he knew God was gracious, patient, and rich in steadfast kindness. The prophet who had received rescue from the sea did not welcome mercy when it reached the people of Nineveh.

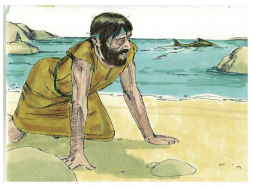
Jonah went outside the city and waited under a shelter to see what would happen. God provided a plant that gave him shade, and Jonah was glad for it. Then a worm damaged the plant, and it withered. Hot wind and sun made him faint and angry. God asked whether he was right to be so upset about the plant. Jonah insisted that he was, expressing how miserable he felt.

God pointed to the difference between Jonah's concern for a short-lived plant and God's concern for a great city full of people and animals. Jonah had not made the plant grow, yet he grieved its loss. Should God not care about Nineveh? The book ends with that question. We are not told that Jonah finally smiled or changed his mind. The open ending invites readers to consider whether their compassion reaches beyond their own comfort and group.

Pause and think: Whose well-being might matter more to you if you looked beyond your own group or convenience?

THINK, NOTICE & GROW

Letting Compassion Grow Wider



Jonah was grateful to be rescued, but angry when others received mercy. That difference can help us examine ourselves. We may want patience when we make a mistake yet demand that someone else be punished immediately. Wanting fairness is not wrong. The question is whether we can also want people to turn from wrongdoing and receive a real chance to change, rather than wishing only for their loss.

The people of Nineveh did not simply ask for a kinder ending while continuing the same violence. Their response included turning from evil. Mercy and changed behavior appear together. In our lives, a second chance can include responsibility, repair, and safe boundaries. Showing compassion does not require pretending a harmful action was harmless or asking someone vulnerable to remain exposed to it.

God's last question includes animals as well as people. Jonah's shade mattered to him, but the city mattered far more. Think about a person or group you find easy to dismiss. Learning their names, listening to their needs, and praying for their good can stretch a narrow concern. The story leaves space for us to answer its question through a wider, kinder way of seeing.

A SMALL STEP FOR TODAY

God's mercy reaches beyond the people and comforts we find easiest to care about.

Whose well-being might matter more to you if you looked beyond your own group or convenience?

Read, Remember & Create

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Think about the reading

1. How did the people of Nineveh respond to the warning?

2. What did God ask Jonah to care about?

2 Put the ideas in order

Write 1, 2 and 3 for the order these ideas appear in the reading.

- ☐ God questioned Jonah about mercy after the shading plant withered.
- ☐ Jonah warned Nineveh, and the people turned from evil.
- ☐ Jonah ran away and was rescued through a great fish.

3 Draw a meaningful picture

Draw Nineveh with people and animals, showing whom God cared about.

Tell someone how your picture connects to the reading.

Read & Grow Together

Read and learn with context

This English edition is designed for ages 6-10 with an adult. Read both extended readings together, or enjoy one each day. Pause at unfamiliar words, invite questions and use the reflection page to connect the story with everyday life. These are retellings and lessons with explanations; read the listed Bible passage for context. Poetry, parables, letters and symbolic visions are identified by type.

Remember this

God teaches me to care beyond my own group.
Original memory thought, not a direct Bible quotation. Related passage: Jonah 4:10-11

A thoughtful conversation

The text says great fish, not a named species. It does not tell us Jonah's final response. Keep the ending open, and never present Jonah's dangerous sea experience as something to copy.

Activity answers

1. They believed God and turned from wrongdoing and violence.
2. The many people and animals in Nineveh, not just his own shade.
Sequence boxes, top to bottom: 3, 2, 1. Personal responses and drawings will vary.

Optional prayer

God, widen our compassion for people who are different from us. Amen.

Print and share

Each pack has 6 pages. Print on A4 at Actual Size (100%). The worksheet is page 5. You may print just that page, or use the separate 150-page activity book. The collection contains 150 packs in Bible book order, 15 volumes and one ZIP. Catalog pack IDs stay the same when new readings are added.

Sources and sharing

English retellings, lessons, reflections and activities by DigiPick (2026), based on Jonah 1:1-4:11. Source checked with the public-domain World English Bible. Illustration © Sweet Publishing; 32_Jon_02_01_RG.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0. Source: unfoldingWord. Resized proportionally, without cropping.
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