



Family Worship Experience

— READ THE SCRIPTURE —

JONAH, PROPHET TO NINEVEH



Watch the Bible story video or read all or parts of the book of Jonah from the Bible.



Family Worship Experience

- TALK ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE -

If you were a Jew in 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 maybe even deadly—mission. No wonder Jonah didn't want to go!

The real reason Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh, however, 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 the Ninevites to 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 showed us His mercy through Jesus. Unlike Jonah, Jesus willingly accepted the mission God gave Him. Jesus came to save the sinners who God cared to much about.

Jonah spent three days in a fish so that the people of Nineveh could hear God's message, turn from sin, and be saved. Jesus was in the tomb for three days so that we could hear and trust the gospel, turn from sin, and be saved.

***Pray:** God, thank You for showing mercy 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. Amen.*



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LEARN SCRIPTURE

The key passage below is focused on at church. Consider talking about what this passage means and memorizing it as well.



You must follow the LORD your God and fear him. You must keep his commands and listen to him; you must worship him and remain faithful to him.

Deuteronomy 13:4



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SING SCRIPTURE

Finish your family worship experience by playing the key passage song. This song is a helpful way to worship as your family learns and memorizes the key passage.



Family Prayer Time

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 right 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?



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 a fish, release it back into the water to lead into a discussion on mercy, emphasizing that, while a fish doesn't deserve to die, all sinners do deserve death, but—through Jesus—God doesn't give believers what they deserve. 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 the people in your neighborhood. Invite everyone to come and eat for free. 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, but how it was worth it because of the relationships you made. Remind kids that God often calls us into hard things but it always worth it to serve God.