

GOD'S RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF JONAH



Chapter Three

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

This week we see Jonah reluctantly doing what God commanded, but his heart was still far off. Pray that you and the kids you are teaching will see the beauty of being in God's will, of desiring what He desires, and of rejoicing in His salvation.

- **Big Idea:** We need to get off of the throne because only God is king

Starter

Watch Video: This silly short recap video helps remind what has happened so far in the first two chapters of Jonah. Remember, this is not the end of the story though! Ask the kids who the hero of the story is (hint: it's not Jonah)

<https://youtu.be/E37SS7dkm1s>

Sing Together

He's Got the Whole World In His Hands - <https://youtu.be/-T1CLIMjiTw>

Story

Even though Jonah tried to run as far away as possible from God, God was there. Even though Jonah had other plans, God never stopped being in control. Even though Jonah would have rather died in the sea than go to Nineveh, God had a rescue plan - for both Nineveh and Jonah!

God used the storm and the sea to get Jonah's attention - and to show His power to the sailors. He used the big fish to save Jonah from the sea. And when Jonah finally prayed and repented, God commanded the fish to vomit Jonah back out onto dry land, so that he could do what God wanted him to do. So for the second time, God's word came to Jonah. "Get up and go to Nineveh." And this time, Jonah did.

He got to Nineveh and said, "In forty days destruction will come to you!" That was it. Not a very good speech. Nothing about the option to turn and trust in God - in fact, nothing about God at all! It was as if Jonah did the bare minimum that God required, without really wanting to do it at all. Almost as if Jonah was even trying to sabotage God's rescue plan for Nineveh! Like he wanted them to not listen!

But once again, God's plan was better than Jonah's, and God's plan would win. Those few words caused the entire city of Nineveh to confess their sin of violence, to turn away from their wrongdoing, and to ask the LORD God to forgive them. Even the king of Nineveh got off of his throne, took off his royal clothes, and commanded the entire city to repent from their bad ways. He even commanded the animals to repent!

And just as God had heard about their violence, He also heard their confession and that they were sorry. So He decided not to destroy their city after all. One day, Jesus would also step down off of his throne and humble himself by becoming a man here on earth. Like Jonah, he came with a message for people to repent, but unlike Jonah, he came with good news. And unlike the king of Nineveh, Jesus now sits on the throne of all creation forever. Because the King of all creation humbled himself for God's word to reach us, we are to come humbly to him and submit to him as King.

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- How did Jonah respond to God's word? How did the people of Nineveh respond?
- The king got off of his throne and acknowledged that God was in control, but it seems like Jonah was still trying to be in control. Who is in control of your life?

Breakout Time

- **Prayer:**
God, forgive us for trying to be kings over our own lives. Only You belong on the throne! Please rule our lives with Your goodness. In Jesus' name, amen.
- **Craft:**
Color and cut out the crown attached and discuss how Jesus is King over our lives and all of creation.
- **BLESS Activity:**
For kids to do during the week
Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask the Spirit to help us to *Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak*, and *Sabbath* (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Sabbath** rhythm. Because Jesus is King and we are not, we can rest in God's goodness and not try to be in control of our lives. Take some time to rest as a family this week and remind one another how God is in control.

Other Resources

- **Bible Project:**
Watch this video overview of the book of Jonah: <https://youtu.be/dLlabZc0O4c>

