



# LESSON 4: POUTING PROPHET

Scripture: Jonah 4:1-11

Main Point: God is gracious & loving. God loves all nations and wants all nations to turn to Him.

Memory Verse: "you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster" Jonah 4:2

## LARGE GROUP LESSON

### INTRODUCTION

It's our fourth and final week for the Journey of Jonah. Last week, Jonah got back on track and warned the Ninevites to repent. Through that chapter we learned all about God's mercy. When the Ninevites deserved judgment and death, God showed them mercy when they repented and turned to Him. God shows us mercy through his son Jesus.

This week we are reading the last part of Jonah's journey and the ending might surprise you. Sure, Jonah has had his ups and really underwater downs, but how will he end his journey? Let's dive in one final time to Jonah.

### MAIN LESSON

Before I read our first verse in chapter four, I want you to remember that all the Ninevites, even their king, just repented and turned to God. Let's read verse 1:

*But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry.*

Excuse me!? Jonah is angry and unhappy. About what....oh, the Ninevites repentance! What is he thinking....

2 And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.

3 Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." 4 And the Lord said, "Do you do well to be angry?"

Who saw that coming?? Who knew Jonah would be mad about people being saved! He tells God "Hey I knew you were like this-gracious and kind and loving and merciful". And Jonah's MAD about it! Jonah is so mad he would rather be dead than see these people saved. He didn't like them, they had done bad things and he wanted them punished. But didn't Jonah get the same mercy and love when God rescued him from the fish? Another translation of verse 4 says "The Lord replied, "Is it right for you to be angry about this?". Does Jonah have a right to be mad about this? Let's see what he does next:

*5 Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city.*

Jonah goes out in a little shelter type tent to watch Nineveh like a fireworks show. He wants to see if his plea to God will actually bring about judgment and destruction on Nineveh.

*6 Now the Lord God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant.*

Here we go again, Jonah is mad and now he's happy. He has this little plant giving him shade while he waits for Nineveh to fall.

*7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." 9 But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die."*

Oh man, Jonah is feeling all the feelings. The plant dies and now he thinks HE should die because he's hot and light headed. Who thinks he's being a little too dramatic? God asks him again "is it right for you to be angry about this plant?". And Jonah says YES!

God is proving a point to Jonah-he gave and took away the plant to teach him a lesson. Let's read the last two lines of Jonah to discover the point of his lesson:

*10 And the Lord said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. 11 And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"*

God tells Jonah—you are more worried about a plant that you had nothing to do with creating or taking care of, than 120,000 people in Nineveh! 120,000 people he didn't want saved, some of them are even children!? But here's what's crazy—that's the end of the story. God leaves Jonah with this question and we get no answer. Another translation phrases God's questions as: "Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?"

Jonah didn't want Nineveh to get the same grace, love and mercy that God gave *his* people. Even Jonah said these things about God in verse 2: "*for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster*".

God showed grace, which means he showed undeserved & free favor, to Nineveh and he does the same to all the world. He showed grace through sending Jesus as our Savior to come and forgive people of all the nations. In fact, Jesus commands his own followers in Matthew 28:19 to "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*"

God's heart is for all people. We are commanded to love God and then love others (Matthew 22:36-40). Jonah's heart was for himself and his own people. He loved God, but he struggled loving others. Jonah disobeyed, he was selfish and he sinned just like you and me. He put *his* feelings first, just like we do. But God still loved and used Jonah, and he will still love and use us too, even when we whine, gripe or try to run away from Him.

Think about all we learned with Jonah and what it showed us about God. God loves us, he wants to rescue us and he is filled with grace AND he is sovereign. A little tiny book of the Bible told us some BIG things about God. So just like the end of Jonah, we'll end our Journey of Jonah with a question: will you be like Jonah or will you be like Jesus?

*Close in prayer and dismiss to small groups.*



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## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

### DISCUSSION

Today we read Jonah 4 and learned about Jonah's response to God's grace on Nineveh.

- Why was Jonah mad at first? *God didn't punish Nineveh after he told them to repent*
- Why was Jonah mad the second time? *God killed the plant that was giving him shade*
- What do you think about Jonah getting so mad? Do you ever get mad about selfish things?
- What did God tell Jonah? Why are you mad about something you didn't create or care for? Shouldn't I care about this city and its people?
- What does this chapter tell us about God? *God is gracious, merciful, loving and he cares for ALL people.*
- What does GRACE mean? *Grace is undeserved & free favor*
- How did God show grace in this chapter? *God showed grace on the Ninevites and Jonah-they both received grace when they didn't deserve it.*
- How do we see Jesus in today's chapter? *Jesus is our grace-we didn't deserve him and God gave Him as our Savior, just like Nineveh was shown grace.*
- Through this book, what did you learn about God that you didn't know before?

Jonah was a prophet that made lots of mistakes. God gave Jonah chances, grace and mercy. God loved Jonah, He loved Nineveh and He loves us—even if we sin or disobey. We can never be good enough to earn salvation through Jesus or bad enough to lose it. It's a free gift to all who believe. That's how much God loves us.

### BIBLE CHALLENGE

This Week's Memory Verse: "you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster" Jonah 4:2

Go over this week's verse. Practice as a group. Remind them of all the things we learned about God through our study of Jonah.

# JONAH RECAP JOURNAL

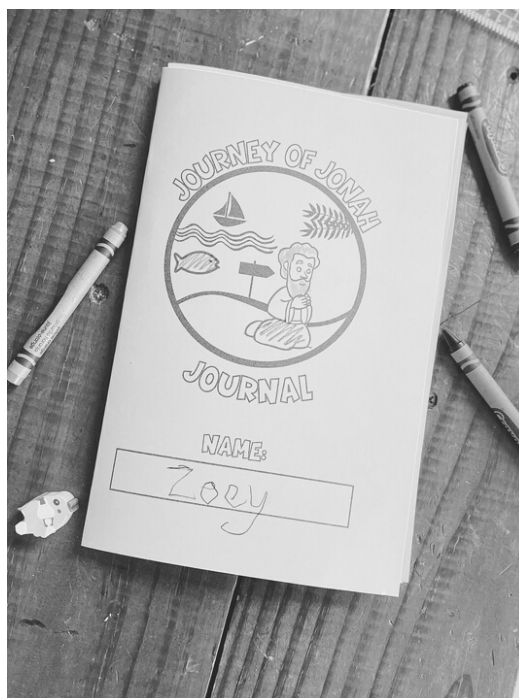
**Supplies:** Staplers, Journey of Jonah Journal, Crayons, Bibles, pencils

## Instructions:

1. Give each child the pages to the journal. Using pencils, have them fill out their journal. Review each week the correct chapter we covered.
2. Encourage them to write 1-2 sentences and then illustrate something that happened in the chapter.
3. If they still have questions about Jonah or what God did in the book of Jonah they can write those on the back.
4. Once finished, help the kids with assembling their books, stapling them in the middle.

*Play several times to let all kids have a chance to put them in the right order.*

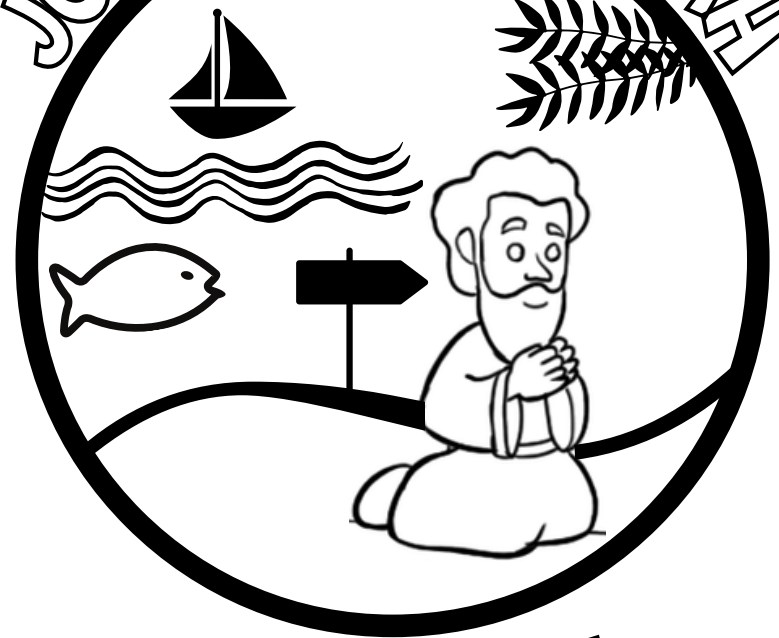
**Prayer:** Ask children if they have any prayer needs and then close in prayer.



QUESTIONS ABOUT JONAH:

QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD:

JOURNEY OF JONAH



JOURNAL

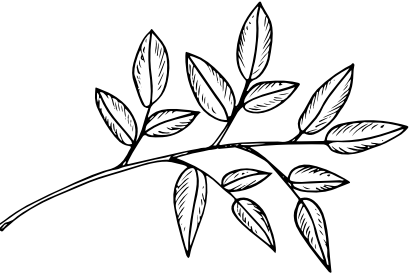
NAME:

# JONAH 4

WRITE WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



DRAW WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:

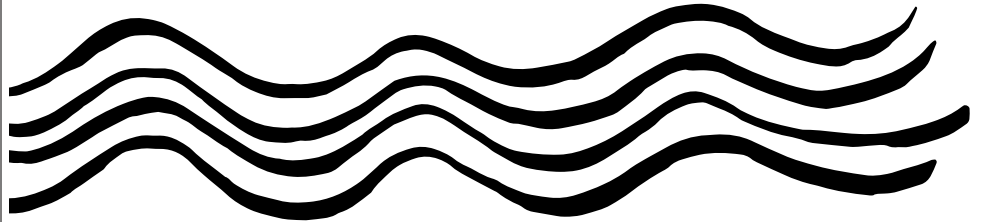


WE LEARNED THAT

# GOD IS GRACIOUS

# JONAH 1:1-16

DRAW WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



WRITE WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



WE LEARNED THAT

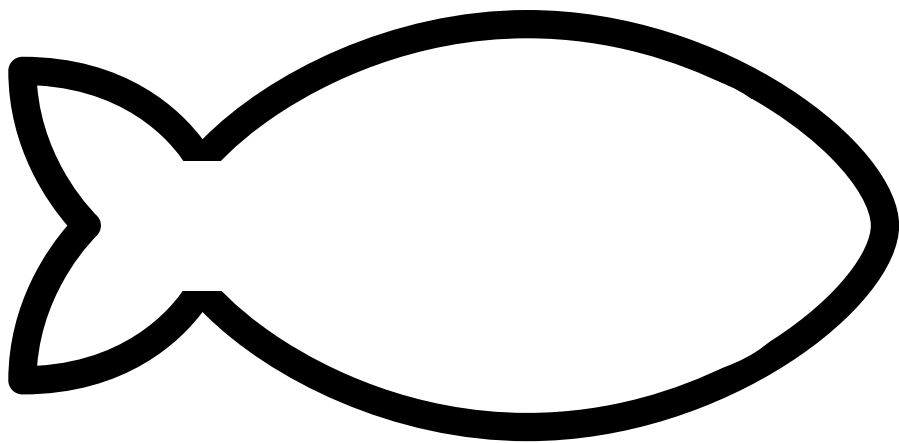
# GOD IS SOVEREIGN

# JONAH 1:17-2:10

WRITE WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



DRAW WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



WE LEARNED THAT  
**SALVATION BELONGS  
TO GOD**

# JONAH 3

DRAW WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



WRITE WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS CHAPTER BELOW:



WE LEARNED THAT  
**GOD IS MERCIFUL**