

Major Event: Exile

Lesson 1: Jonah

Scriptures: Jonah 1-4

Central Text: Jonah 1:17

“Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”

Suggested Subjects for Teacher to Cover:

Jonah 1-2, Pattern: God gives a directive, Jonah disobeys, discipline ensues, Jonah repents, God relents (Deuteronomy 28-30)

Jonah 3:4-10: Jonah proclaimed to the Ninevites that there were only 40 days till Nineveh would be destroyed if they did not believe in God. This warning and their resultant belief display God’s mercy to extend grace to even these Gentile enemies of Israel. 2 Peter 3:9 “...God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

Jonah 4: Jonah does not reflect God’s grace toward Ninevah. Instead, after delivering God’s message to Ninevah, he shows a lack of compassion and becomes steeped in self-pity, wishing for Ninevah to be judged (v5)

God’s power extends over all creation (the storm, the fish, the vine, the worm)

Suggested Attributes:

1. Of God: Sovereign, Omnipotent, Merciful
2. Of Man: The flesh desires justice be shown to our enemies, not mercy

Suggested Reading for Parents and Child at Home: Jonah 1-3

Notes:

- Nineveh stood on the eastern bank of the Tigris River. It had walls 100 feet high and 50 feet thick, and the main one, punctuated by 15 gates, was over seven and one-half miles long. The residents were idolaters and worshipped Asur and Ishtar, as did almost all the Assyrians.
- Assyria was a threat to Israel's security (Hos. 11:5; Amos 5:27). This is one reason Jonah refused to go to Nineveh. He feared the people might repent and that God would refrain from punishing Israel's enemy (4:2). (*Constable*)
- Jesus used the story of Jonah as an analogy of His own impending death and resurrection (Matt. 12:39-41)