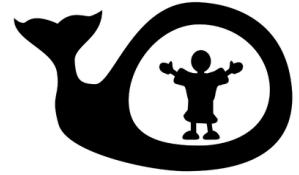


# THE BOOK OF JONAH

## 2. God's Mercy



Why not begin with a quiz on the book of Jonah? You could even reward members who give the right answers.

Here are some possible questions:

1. Which city did God tell Jonah to go to? (*Nineveh*)
2. Where did he take the ship to instead? (*Tarshish*)
3. What two things did God send to try and turn him back? (*A storm and a fish*)
4. What is the name of the Old Testament book that comes after the book of Jonah? (*Micah*)
5. How many days did it take for Jonah to walk around Nineveh? (*Three days*)
6. How many days would it be before Nineveh would be destroyed? (*Forty days*)
7. What did the people of Nineveh do? (*They fasted and put on sackcloth*)

**Scripture Reading:** Jonah 2 and 3

God is good! He is merciful and gracious. In this little book of Jonah we see how God listens to the cry of men. When Jonah cried to him from inside the belly of the fish, God heard and answered. When the people of Nineveh cried to him, he also heard and answered.



How did God respond to Jonah's prayer? Jonah 2:10

*(God commanded the fish to release Jonah and he was vomited out onto dry land.)*

None of us have been in the belly of a fish, but we may have been in situations where we were afraid we would be hurt or even die. Has anyone had such an experience? How did God answer your prayer for help?

The people of Nineveh also cried out to God. Why did God listen to their cry? Jonah 3:7-10

*(They believed what God had said and cried out to him with fasting. Not only that they turned from their evil ways.)*

The people of Nineveh were very evil and yet when they humbled themselves before God he was merciful to them. We can learn an important truth in this story. God listens to the cry of any man, however sinful he is, when he humbles himself and turns from his sin.



What does it really mean to be humble? How can we humble ourselves?

*(We must realise that we need to choose to humble ourselves.  
We must humble ourselves in our minds. The word humility means 'lowliness of mind'.  
It means we will admit our failures and sin and not try to justify ourselves.)*

Look up the following verses to see what promises God gives to those who humble themselves. Matthew 23:12, 1Peter 5:5-6, 2 Chronicles 7:14.

*(God will exalt them, he will give them grace and lift them up.  
God will hear their prayer, forgive their sin and heal their land.)*



How did God respond when the people of Nineveh humbled themselves? Jonah 3:10

*(He had compassion on them and did not bring about the destruction he had threatened.)*

Isn't God merciful? For those of us who have come to God through the Lord Jesus Christ, we have also received God's mercy. He has forgiven our sin and made us his sons and daughters. However we need to understand that God is merciful to all – even those who have done wicked things. When anyone truly repents and turns from their wicked ways, he will forgive their sin. If there is something you have done that you are not sure