

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 162: NINEVEH REPENTS
JONAH 3:1-10

Then the LORD spoke to Jonah again and said, "Go to that big city Nineveh, and say what I tell you." So Jonah obeyed the LORD and went to Nineveh. It was a very large city. A person had to walk for three days to travel through it. Jonah walked for one day through the city and went to the center of the city and began speaking to the people. He said, "After 40 days, Nineveh will be destroyed!" The people of Nineveh believed God. They decided to fast (to stop eating) for a time to think about their sins. They put on special clothes called sackcloth to show they were sorry. All the people in the city did this, from the most important to the least important. When the king of Nineveh heard about this, he left his throne, removed his robe, put on sackcloth to show that he was sorry, and sat in ashes. The king wrote a special message and sent it throughout the city: A command from the king and his great rulers: "For a short time no person or animal should eat anything. No herd or flock will be allowed in the fields. Nothing living in Nineveh will eat or drink water. But every person and every animal must be covered with sackcloth to show they are sad and they must cry loudly to God. Everyone must change their life and stop doing bad things. Who can tell if God will turn and relent (which means to stop), and turn away from His fierce anger so that we may not perish?" God saw what the people did. He saw that they stopped doing evil. So God changed His mind and did not do what He had said He was going to do to them, and He did not punish the people of Nineveh.

God is very merciful and loves all of us. For that reason, he sent Jonah to warn the people of Nineveh first. When God saw that they were truly sorry and were turning from their evil ways, He changed His mind and did not bring the disaster upon them. In 2 Peter 3:9, we are told that the Lord is very patient with us, and doesn't want any of us to die, but He wants all of us to change and know Him. God does not want to punish people when they sin. For this reason, God sent His Son to die for the sins of the whole world so that "whoever believes in Him should not perish (or die) but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). **God wants ALL people to be saved!**

162. NINEVEH REPENTS (JONAH 3:1-10)



“And Jonah walked one day’s journey to the city and he cried out and said, ‘In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed’.” **JONAH 3:4**

162. NINEVEH REPENTS

JONAH 3:1-10

MEMORY VERSE:

"Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger so that we may not perish?" JONAH 3:9

TRUE OR FALSE

1. The LORD spoke to Jonah a second time and told him to arise and go up to Ninevah, that big city, and speak out against it. TRUE or FALSE
2. So Jonah got up and went to Ninevah immediately. TRUE or FALSE
3. Jonah went one day's journey to the middle of the city and said, 'In three days Nineveh will be destroyed.' TRUE or FALSE
4. So the people of Nineveh did not believe God. TRUE or FALSE
5. The people began fasting, and didn't eat or drink anything, and wore sackcloth, a special kind of clothing, to show that they were sad. TRUE or FALSE

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. How many days did it take to walk through the city of Nineveh?
2. What did the people do when they heard Jonah? Did they believe God? Did they fast? What did they wear?
3. What happened when the king of Nineveh heard what Jonah said? What did he do?
4. Did the people of Nineveh all stop sinning and doing bad things?
5. What happened when God saw that the people turned from their evil ways and stopped doing bad things?
6. Did He punish the people like He planned on doing?

Lesson 162 Activity

Pass It On!

Have the children get in a large circle. This is a game similar to the old game of “telephone.” The object is to whisper into a child’s ear and see if everyone can pass the message on without missing a word.

Think of a phrase or something from today’s lesson to pass around. Whisper the message into the child next to you. Have them pass it around by whispering until it returns all the way around. The last child should then shout the message. It will be fun to see how much it changes by going through the circle. Keep playing with new phrases until the class gets it right or they tire of the game. Jonah had a message from the Lord. It spread around Nineveh like wildfire. How important do you think it was for that message to remain the same wherever it went? It was VERY important!

Do this a few times to help the children remember the story.

Ideas:

The Lord spoke to Jonah a second time and told him to go to Nineveh and cry out against it.

Nineveh was so big, it took three days to walk through it.

Jonah told the people, “In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed!”

The people of Nineveh stopped sinning and fasted and put on sackcloth.

The king of Nineveh took off his royal robes and put on sackcloth and fasted.

The king told the people, “Who knows if God will change His mind and turn from His fierce anger so that we won’t die?”

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God’s extended mercy and salvation. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.