

Jonah 4

The Problem

Scripture: Jonah 4

Memory Verse: Jonah 4:2b “...for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness...”

Lesson Focus: As we wrap up the short book of Jonah we truly get to the root of the problem that Jonah has had from the beginning. His primary problem was not with the mission or job that he was given, but with the God who gave him the job! Jonah has a problem with “*the merciful God that is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness*” as our memory verse says. He wants justice (not mercy) towards his enemies. Yet what would happen to Jonah if he received that same justice? It is only once we truly appreciate the **undeserved** grace and mercy of God received through faith that we are empowered to share that same grace and mercy to others, even enemies. We hope and pray this lesson will enhance the appreciation the kids have for God’s **undeserved** grace and mercy such that they would be more eager to extend His grace and mercy to others.

Teachers: We will watch a Superbook that portrays this tension very well. For one of the Superbook characters shares similar struggles to Jonah. Yet unlike Jonah, the character appears to be changed when brought face-to-face with the mercy of God. Please inform parents as they are dropping off their kids that we will be watching a cartoon video that covers the story of Jonah. While the video does not have any exceedingly intense moments in it, overly sensitive kids might get excited. If parents have any concerns, they may want to keep their kids with them in the main sanctuary. If you’d like to preview the video, you can find it on Rightnow Media [here](#).

Schedule:

- 1) Please bring kids into the main sanctuary as usual 10-15 minutes after service starts.
- 2) After our normal worship, I will introduce the video with some background information. *
- 3) Sit down with the kids and watch the video with them (about 25 minutes).
- 4) We will dismiss the kids back to their rooms where we will provide follow-up small group activities.

Room Time Afterwards: We will have a coloring page and a word maze available for the lesson. Also see discussion questions below for your reference.

- 1) 1st-2nd Grade leaders: There will also be a craft that we would encourage you to do with the kids.
- 2) 3rd-5th Grade Leaders: Please process and digest the video with the kids in the classroom. You can use the discussion Qs below or feel free to come up with your own Qs.

Discussion Qs

- 1) What was Jonah upset about at the beginning of the video?
How about Joy?
- 2) Both Jonah and Joy wanted “justice”. What is justice?
- 3) Did Jonah truly obey God when he went to Nineveh?
(**Teachers:** Contrast what obeying from a grateful heart looks like vs. obeying from a grumpy heart)
- 4) **Read Jonah 3:10.** How did God respond to the repentance of the Ninevites?
- 5) **Read Jonah 4:1-2.** How did Jonah respond to the repentance of the Ninevites and God’s mercy towards them?
- 6) **Read Jonah 4:4.** Was Jonah right? He wanted the Ninevites to get what they deserved! But what do you think would have happened to Jonah if God gave **him** what he deserved?
- 7) **Read Ephesians 2:4-5.** How has God been merciful to you?
Do you deserve God’s grace and mercy?
- 8) In the video Joy said, “*If I receive mercy from God, I must be willing to give it to others.*” **Read Matthew 5:7.** How do you think God expects His people to treat others?
- 9) **Read Psalm 89:14.** God is both just AND merciful. How is God able to show mercy to us while still being just (punishing sin and evil)? (Hint: Someone willingly took the punishment we deserve! **See 1 Peter 3:18**)

