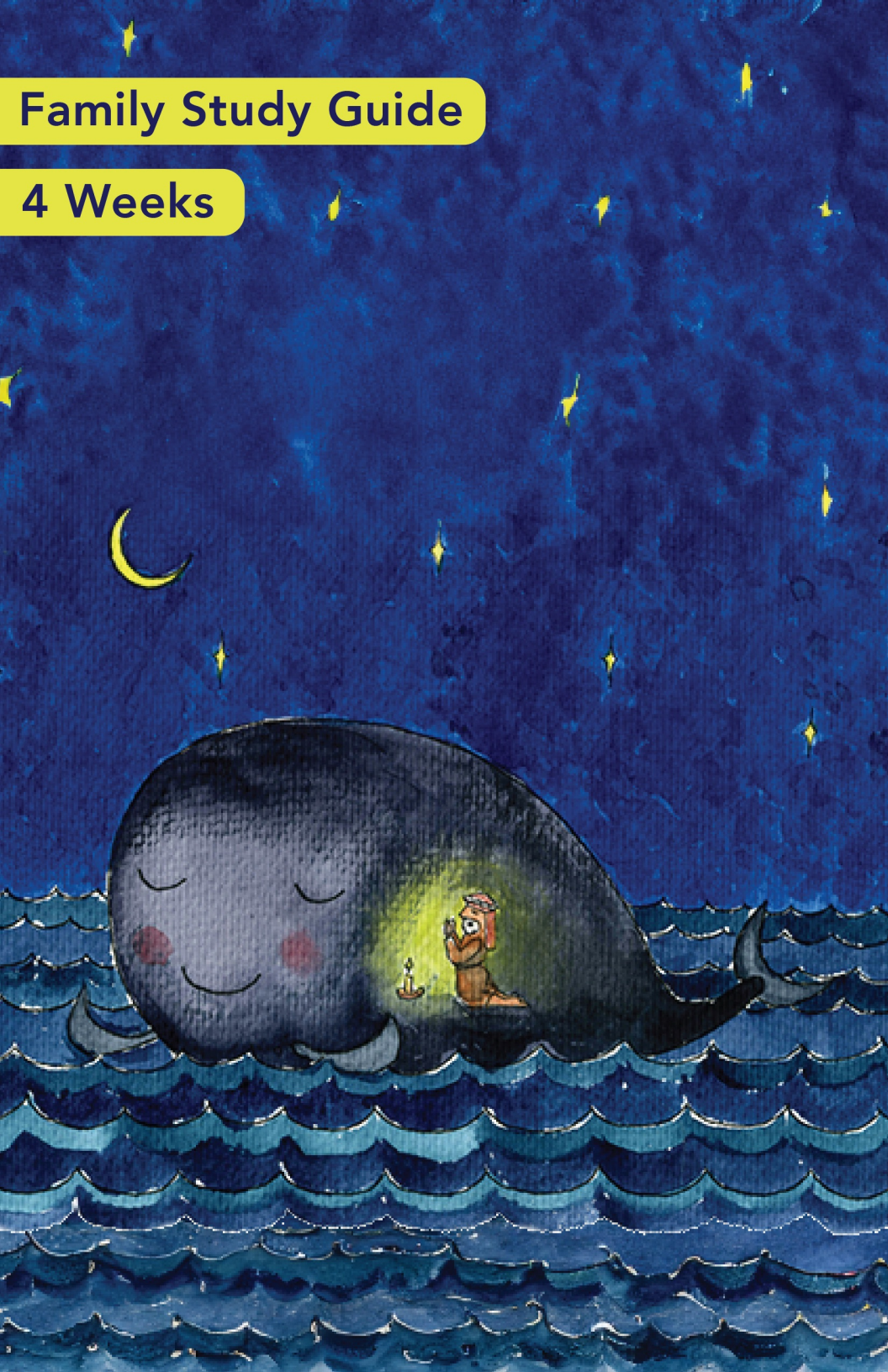


# Family Study Guide

4 Weeks



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## **Hey families!**

Have you ever been in need a second chance in life, or have you ever needed a reminder of God's limitless grace? Who hasn't? If you have ever felt like this, the Book of Jonah is for you and your family! This short story about a bad prophet and big fish might seem strange, but it has a lot to say about the changing power of God's love. As you read Jonah, you'll see examples of God's love and second chances. If you've ever messed up, made a choice you regret, or wished you could have a do-over, this book is for you. So, let's dive in together and be reminded that God is not done with anyone yet.

-Sunnybrook Family Ministry Team



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# Week 1

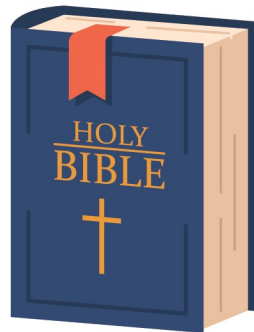
**START SHARING:** What is your favorite water adventure story? (Examples: Titanic, Little Mermaid, Pirates of the Caribbean)

**BIG IDEA: God sees you.**

**START THINKING:** Jonah is a little book in the Old Testament. It's only four chapters, but it tells us a lot. It even gives a glimpse of what Jesus will come to do later, so keep your eyes and ears open for signs of Jesus.

**START READING: Read Jonah Chapter 1**

This story begins with God asking the prophet Jonah to do something important. (Most people think a prophet is a fortune teller, but their real job is to be a truth teller. In the Bible, prophets were people that had promised to speak the truth that God told them to share.) Jonah made a mess when he disobeyed, but God still used that mess to bring glory to His name. This means that God is sovereign. He is over all things and allows all things to work together for our good.



## START TALKING:

In Jonah 1 we learned about Jonah's disobedience to God and how Jonah landed in a dangerous & wet situation. Go over these questions as a family:

- What was Jonah's "job"?  
Prophet of God
- What is a prophet? A prophet is a messenger of God--a truth-teller.
- What did Jonah do when God told him to go to Nineveh? Disobeyed God and ran the opposite direction. He thought he could run away from God.
- God gave Jonah a chance to obey, and he blew it. God told him to go east to Nineveh, and Jonah ran to the west. Have you ever been told to do something and you did the complete opposite?
- What happened when Jonah disobeyed? God sent a storm and Jonah was tossed overboard.
- What does this chapter tell us about God? God wants us to obey. God always knows where we are--we can never outrun or hide from Him and His love. God is sovereign.
- What does "sovereign" mean? Sovereign means that God is over all things and allows all things to work together for our good.
- How was God still sovereign in this chapter? The sailors saw what

God did and worshiped him. God used this great big mess to show sailors that He is the one, true God.

- How do we see Jesus in today's chapter? Jonah sacrificed himself to save the sailors and ship. Jesus sacrificed himself to save us from our sins and an eternity away from God.

God knew where Jonah was and never stopped loving him. We can't run from God either. He sees our every move. God is always with us and God is sovereign. Even when we sin and disobey, God's plan still reigns.

## START DOING:

- Play a game of Hide and Seek. Jonah ran away and tried to hide from God. After you finish, talk about how you had to look for each other. Can you think of places to hide where no one would find you? God knows where everyone is. Check out Psalm 139:1-14.

**START PRAYING:** Thank you, God, for all the second chances You have given us. Please show us what You want us to do and give us the courage to do it. Amen!



# Week 2

**START SHARING:** Has someone ever rescued you? Share about someone helping you in a time of need.

**BIG IDEA: God sends a Rescuer.**

**START THINKING:** We are just like Jonah, drowning in our sin. We keep making the wrong choices over and over, but God gives us a Rescuer to save us from our sin. Just like God sent the fish to save Jonah, He sent us Jesus. Jesus came to earth, lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and then rose again three days later. God loves us so much, just like He loved Jonah.

**START READING:** We left Jonah in chapter one being tossed off a ship and into a stormy sea. Let's find out what happened next to our runaway prophet.

## Read Jonah Chapter 2

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from inside the fish. In **Jonah 2:2** he said, "I cried out to the Lord in my great trouble, and he answered me."

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

**John 14:6**

**START TALKING:** We learned about God rescuing Jonah and Jonah admitting he was wrong (repenting from his disobedience) in chapter 2.

- What did God use to save Jonah? A big fish

- What did Jonah do after he was saved? Pray to God

- What did Jonah think would happen to him after he was tossed overboard? He would drown and die

- What does this chapter tell us about God? God loves us and wants to rescue us like He rescued Jonah.

- What does salvation mean? Salvation means being saved, specifically from our sins. God is the only one who can give us salvation.

- How did God give us salvation? Through His son Jesus on the cross.

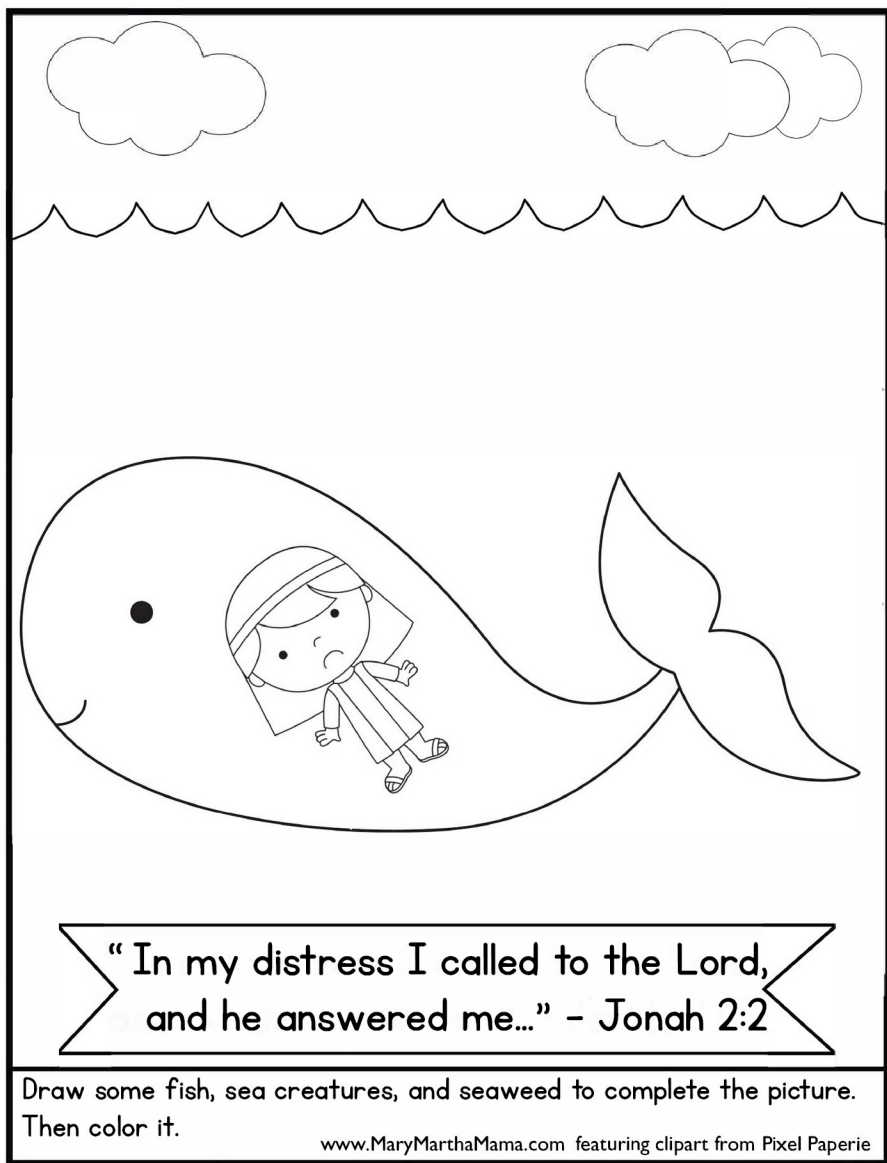
- How do we see Jesus in today's chapter? Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days like Jesus was in the grave for three days. Jesus is our salvation and rescuer.

God loved Jonah and saved him with the fish. Jonah was able to promise God that he would obey Him and do what God asked of him. God loves us and wants to rescue us from our sins. God saved Jonah using a fish and saves us through His son Jesus.



**START DOING:** Color the picture of Jonah.

**START PRAYING:** God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to rescue us from our sins. Please help us to trust You even when life is hard. In Jesus' name, Amen!



# Week 3

**START SHARING:** Have you ever given an activity or food a second chance? How did it go?

**BIG IDEA:** God gives second chances.

**START THINKING:** In the past two chapters, we've seen Jonah run away from God's first request for him to go to Nineveh and then we see God save Jonah even after disobeying. He used that great big fish to rescue him from drowning in the sea. Let's see if Jonah ever gets back on track.

**START READING:** Read Jonah Chapter 3

**START TALKING:**

- Do you ever need a second chance like Jonah did? When have you been given a second chance?
- After Jonah warned the Ninevites, what did they do? They believed God.
- Where did the warning go next? To the king
- What did the king do next? He wanted everyone to fast and wear sackcloth and tell God they were sorry.

- What did God do when he saw their actions? He forgave them and didn't destroy them.

- What does this chapter tell us about God? God is merciful and loving. He doesn't want us to be punished, He wants us to turn to Him and ask forgiveness.

- What does mercy mean? Mercy is kind and forgiving treatment when we deserve much worse.

- How did God show mercy in this chapter? God showed mercy on the Ninevites. They deserved destruction, but God saved them.

- How do we see Jesus in today's chapter? Jonah asked the people to repent, and Jesus wants us to repent and turn to Him.

Jonah used his second chance well and so did the Ninevites. They turned to God and were saved from destruction. They got a second chance. God gave us more than a second chance; He gave us Jesus.

**START DOING:**

- Read the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. Jesus told this parable (a story with a lesson) which is often compared to Jonah's story because it's all about God giving people second chances.

**START PRAYING:** God, thank You for Your patience and mercy toward us. Help us to see the second chances You've given us so we can show mercy to others. Please help us to see what our next steps are and give us the boldness to take them. In Jesus' name, Amen!



# Week 4

**START SHARING:** What is one of your pet peeves—a small thing that makes you mad?

**BIG IDEA:** God's heart is for all people.

**START THINKING:** 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.

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? See how it all ends in the last chapter.

**START READING:** Read Jonah Chapter 4

Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

**Ephesians 4:32**



## **START SHARING:**

- 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 and a 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?

## **START DOING:**

- Play a board game as a family. Play a round where everyone follows the rules and then a second round where one player can ignore the rules. Discuss the difference and how everyone responded.
- Take the Jonah quiz.

**START PRAYING:** God, thank you for giving us chances, grace and mercy, just like you gave Jonah. Your love and compassion are for everyone. It doesn't matter who they are, where they come from, or what they look like, You love everyone. Help us to love others like You do. Amen!

# Jonah Quiz

**What is a prophet?**

- A) A fortune-teller      B) A musical instrument      C) God's truth-teller

**Who did God send to preach in the city?**

- A) Pastor Jeff      B) Moses      C) Jonah

**What city was Jonah sent to?**

- A) Ninevah      B) Sioux City      C) London

**What did God say He would do to the city?**

- A) Build a Legoland      B) Destroy it      C) Flood it

**What did the people wear to show they were sorry?**

- A) Nike hoodies      B) sackcloth      C) animal fur

**How did Jonah feel when God forgave the people?**

- A) Happy      B) He didn't care      C) Angry

**Which animal ate the plant?**

- A) Worm      B) Monkey      C) Bird

**What did God give Jonah?**

- A) Whatever he wanted      B) A whale key-chain      C) Opportunities to obey, 2nd chances, mercy







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