



JONAH

The Book of Jonah

The city of Nineveh was wicked from rooftop to footpath. The Lord called to Jonah, a prophet. "Go to Nineveh. Warn them that I have seen their wickedness, and tell them to repent."

Jonah hated the Ninevites. "They deserve to be punished," he grumbled, and instead of going to Nineveh, he got on a ship sailing to Tarshish.

He fell asleep on the boat and did not wake up until someone shook him.

"How can you sleep in this storm?" the sailor demanded. "Wake up and pray to your God. If the storm does not stop, we'll all drown!"

"I think we should find out whose fault this storm is," said another sailor. The sailors cast lots – and the lot fell to Jonah!

"Who are you?" the sailor demanded.

"I am Hebrew. I worship the Lord, but I have tried to run away from him. If you want to save your ship, throw me in the water," Jonah told them.

"But you will die!" The sailors kept trying to row back to the land, but the storm grew worse. Then they knew what they must do. "Lord, please don't punish us for killing this man," they said, and with a splash, Jonah was in the water and the sea became calm.

But God did not let Jonah drown. A big fish swallowed Johan, and Jonah stayed inside the fish's belly for three days and nights. Jonah thanked God for the fish sent to keep him safe. Then God caused the fish to spit out Jonah on the shore.

“Jonah, go to Nineveh and give the people a message from me!” God told him once more. And this time Jonah listened. He told the people in Nineveh that if they did not repent, they would be destroyed. They repented! Jonah was furious!

“How can you forgive these terrible people, God?” Jonah asked.

“Nineveh is a large city, filled with people who cannot tell right from wrong without my help,” God said. “Shouldn’t I care about them, too?”