

This resource is designed to allow your family to have time in God's Word **BEFORE** your children attend church. Because God's plan is for **parents to be the primary spiritual nurturers** of their children's faith, *we want YOU to be the one to introduce* this part of The Big God Story to them.

HomeFront Magazine: A Spiritual Parenting Resource This monthly magazine gives your family ideas for creating fun, spiritually forming times in your home—setting aside sacred space in the midst of your active, everyday lives. Visit www.HomeFrontMag.com to subscribe to the print edition or to have a digital copy sent directly to your inbox.

GOD IS MERCIFUL

Part of The Big God Story

Jonah

God calls Jonah to speak to the Ninevites. Jonah runs from God's call, but he doesn't get far! God makes a giant fish swallow him and then spit him out onto dry land. Finally, Jonah goes to speak to the Ninevites, and they repent! God shows mercy on them and doesn't destroy their city.

JUST FOR FUN

Play "Peak and Pit." Allow each person to share the "peak" (best part) of her day and then her "pit" (worst part of her day). After everyone shares, explain that you want everyone to identify the "pit" and "peak" as you **read Jonah 1 and 2**. Then ask each person to share his thoughts. Explain the meaning of *mercy*—compassion or forgiveness toward someone who deserves punishment. Ask everyone how God showed mercy to Jonah.

YOUNGER KIDS

Mercy can be a difficult concept for your younger child to grasp. At times it's good to show mercy as you deal with small discipline issues. Practicing mercy and forgiveness in your home is the best way for your child to learn this concept.

OLDER KIDS

Your older child can learn to administer mercy in her friendships. Remind your child that our God is a God of second chances. There are times when mercy and forgiveness are much more desirable than swift justice.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Ninevites were a particularly brutal and pagan people.
- Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, one of Israel's biggest enemies.
- God showed mercy to Jonah even though he initially ran away from the task God gave him to do.
- After Jonah's experience in the great fish, he did go to Nineveh where the people believed what he said about God. God, in His mercy, spared the city because of their repentance.

REMEMBER VERSE

*Let them know that you, whose name is the Lord—
that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.*

Psalm 83:18

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

After reading Scripture, discuss the following together:

- How would you have felt if God had chosen you to speak to the Ninevites?
- What does the word mercy mean?
- How has God shown mercy to you?

BLESSING

For more information about blessing your child see the Blessing section in **HomeFront: A Spiritual Parenting Resource**.

A blessing to pray over your child:

(Child's name), **may God show you mercy and grace every time you need it. May you rejoice and worship God when God shows mercy to those around you.**