

“GOD’S MERCY IS FOR ALL WHO REPENT”

The Book of Jonah

Who wrote The Book of Jonah?	The author of the Book of Jonah is unknown.
How did The Book of Jonah get its name and/or what does that name mean?	The Book of Jonah is named after the main character in the book, the prophet Jonah.
When did these events take place?	Evidence suggests that The Book of Jonah was written during the post-exilic period probably between 400 and 500 B.C. Jonah lived in approximately 580 B.C.
For more about The Book of Jonah:	See page 961 in the <u>Fireside Catholic Youth Bible</u> .

Sometimes, don't you just get tired of responsibilities? Even the little things like daily chores around the house or honoring that commitment to take care of your grandmother's yard just wear you out. Even though people are counting on you, you've probably been tempted from time to time to "cut out" in an attempt to get away from the task at hand. You figure, "Maybe no one will notice or care anyway." Unfortunately, when you get back, all you've proven is that the chores are a little bigger and the grass is even longer making it harder to cut.

The prophet Jonah learned this lesson - and more. Even after he ran from his responsibilities to God, Jonah found out that when he returned and accomplished them, great things could happen. God had sent Jonah, a Hebrew, to Nineveh, the capital city of Syria, a long-time enemy of the Israelites. But rather than being responsible, Johah jumped ship and tried to run away from God. Instead of freedom, Jonah found himself in the belly of a "big fish," – a horrible place to contemplate your fate. Eventually, Jonah did as he was instructed and brought God's message to Nineveh, and, to his surprise everyone there listened. They repented of their sins and avoided being destroyed for their sinfulness.

The second lesson we learn in The Book of Jonah is that God's forgiveness is not just reserved for us. Every person, regardless of their background, color, race religion or creed will be saved by God if they honestly repent of their sins and turn their lives over to him. Like Jonah, we may not think that is fair. But this story proves that God is much more than fair, he is infinitely merciful and forgiving.

Interesting Fact: The three days Jonah spent in the belly of a big fish is often used in the New Testament as a foreshadowing of Christ's time in the tomb after his crucifixion

Bonus Point: How did God destroy Jonah's "magical giant bean stalk"?