

*Made Some Mistakes?
God is Willing to Give You Another Chance*



Inspiring Bible Characters

Jonah

Scripture reminds us that, “*we all like sheep have gone astray.*” The story of Jonah reveals one man’s experience of rebellion, punishment, repentance and obedience.

Most of us can relate to a time in our lives when we disobeyed God and there were consequences for our actions. Follow Jonah’s inspiring story as he endures punishment, but gets a second opportunity to do the will of God. Jonah’s experience shows us that our God is stern, yet merciful, patient and willing to give us another chance.

Jonah flees from the Lord...

- Jonah 1: 1-3
 - The Lord gives Jonah an important assignment. He was to go to Nineveh, a city that was engaged in plotting evil against the Lord, cruelty and theft in war, prostitution, witchcraft and other sins. The Lord wanted him to rebuke and correct the Ninevites, but Jonah disobeys God and instead goes his own way.
 - Jonah is headed to a place he has no business going. The Lord told him to go to Nineveh, but instead he goes to Tarshish.
 - Question for Thought: Where are you going in your life that is against the will of God? Are you headed in the direction that he wants you to go, or are you headed your own way?

Jonah is punished by the Lord...

- Jonah 1: 4-7, 11-15, 17
 - The Lord sends a storm to punish Jonah.
 - The men who are on the boat with Jonah are also reaping the consequences of his actions. They throw Jonah overboard to save themselves.
 - Life Lesson: Sometimes, when we rebel and are headed in the wrong direction, the Lord sends a storm our way. Our storm may not literally be wind and rain, rather we might experience personal difficulty meant to help us “wake-up” and change our course.
 - Life Lesson: There are times when we might reap the punishment that was intended for others who are close to us. Depending upon who that person is, you might have to distance yourself from them to save yourself.

Jonah is punished, but the Lord has mercy on him...



Jonah seeks God and obeys Him...

- Jonah 2: 1-2, 10
 - After enduring his storm, Jonah reaches out to God in humble submission. The Lord responds by releasing Jonah from the giant fish.
- Jonah 3: 1-5
 - Jonah gets his second chance to do what the Lord asked of him. Jonah responds in obedience and leaves for Nineveh to fulfill God's mission for him.

The Lord forgives Nineveh

- Jonah 3: 10
 - Nineveh turned from their evil ways and God gave the Ninevites another chance.
 - God is consistent. Just as He gave Jonah a second opportunity, he also was patient with Nineveh and he is patient and merciful with us too. No matter how we have failed in the past, if you change your ways, God will give you a chance to get it right.

Jonah questions God...

- Jonah 4: 1-2, 4
 - Jonah doesn't agree with the Lord letting Nineveh off the hook. He is angry with God for being patient and compassionate with the Ninevites. Jonah forgets that the Lord allowed him a second chance too. **We all need forgiveness from God. We shouldn't wish the Lord's wrath on anyone.**

Jonah

- The story of Jonah should inspire us to be obedient to the will of God. When we go our own way, we eventually end up in trouble. Where is it that the Lord wants you to go? Are you headed in that direction, or are you going somewhere else?
- Jonah also reminds us that God is forgiving, loving, and slow to anger. He is willing to give us another opportunity when we seek Him...and that's inspiration we all need...