

Living the Story



Bible Adventures for
Kids in Communities

GOD'S POWER to Change a Community



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Context:

This story happened when God was speaking to his people through the prophet Jonah.

What's on the cover?

It's not always easy to be friends. Think about your community. How can you and your friends help each other change and become stronger and better?

The kids
in
El Salvador



Around the World

Hello, we live in San Vicente, El Salvador. In our city, there aren't many churches. Many grown-ups do not know about Jesus. But we are trying to change that!

Our pastor teaches us about Jesus and how much God loves each one of us. Then we go tell our friends and our parents. We invite them to come to church with us so they can hear the stories about God's love, too. We are so happy because some of the grown-ups have decided to follow Jesus.

We hope everyone in our city gets to hear about Jesus and his love.

—The kids of San Vicente



Questions:

How are the San Vicente kids taking God's message to their community?

What do you and your friends do to take the message of God to your community?

Pray for the kids of San Vicente

- *that they will be a great example of God's love.
- *that the pastors of San Vicente will be wise and humble teachers of God's Word.
- *that the Christians of San Vicente will bless their community.

El Salvador

population: 6,822,378

language: Spanish, Nahua

good food: beef pie with pickled cabbage

interesting animal: jaguar

The Story

The Life of Jonah (part 3)

Reading the Story Together

narrator—black Jonah—red

King of Nineveh—purple LORD God—green



A message came to Jonah from the LORD a second time. He said, "Go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce to its people the message I give you."

Jonah obeyed the LORD. He went to Nineveh. It was a very important city. In fact, it took about three days to see all of it. On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He announced, "In 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed."

The people of Nineveh believed God's warning. They decided not to eat any food for a while. All of them put on black clothes. That's what everyone from the least important of them to the most important did.

The news reached the king of Nineveh. He got up from his throne. He took his royal robes off and dressed himself in black clothes. He sat down in the dust. Then he sent out a message to the people of Nineveh. He said,

"I and my nobles give this order.

"Don't let any person or animal taste anything. That includes your herds and flocks. People and animals must not eat or drink anything. Let people and animals alike be covered with black cloth. All of you must call out to God with all your hearts.

Stop doing what is evil. Don't harm others. Who knows? God might take pity on us. He might turn away from his burning anger. Then we won't die."

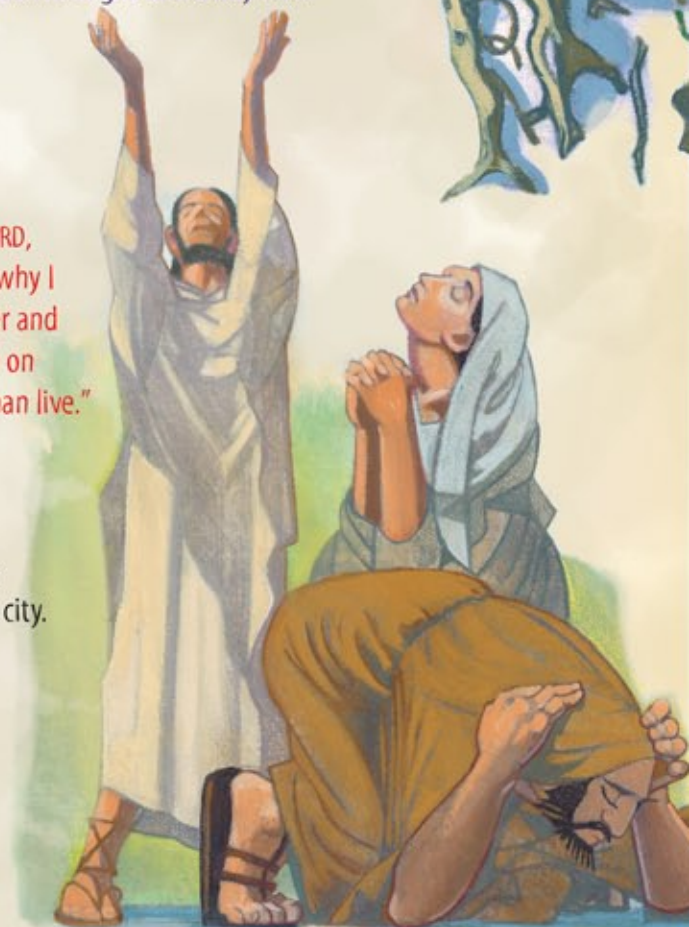
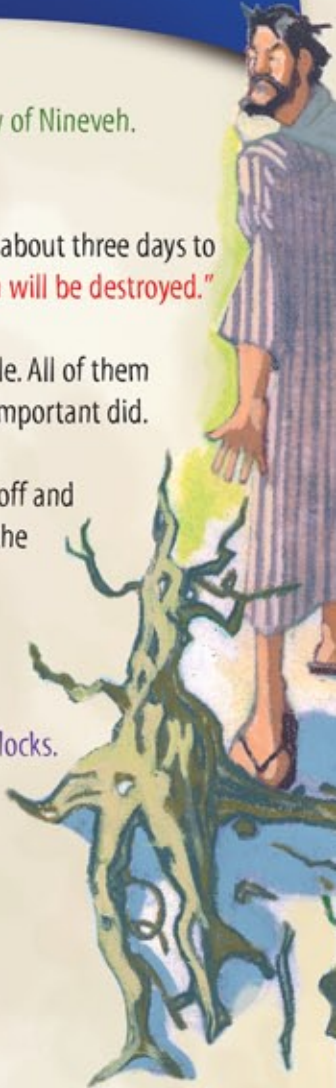
God saw what they did. They stopped doing what was evil. So he took pity on them. He didn't destroy them as he had said he would.

But Jonah was very upset. He became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "LORD, isn't this exactly what I thought would happen when I was still at home? That's why I was so quick to run away to Tarshish. I knew that you are gracious. You are tender and kind. You are slow to get angry. You are full of love. You are a God who takes pity on people. You don't want to destroy them. LORD, take away my life. I'd rather die than live."

But the LORD replied, "Do you have any right to be angry?"

Jonah left the city. He sat down at a place east of it. There he put some branches over his head. He sat in their shade. He waited to see what would happen to the city.

Then the LORD God sent a vine and made it grow up over Jonah. It gave him more shade for his head. It made him more comfortable. Jonah was very happy he had the vine. But before sunrise the next day, God sent a worm. It chewed the vine so much that it dried up.



When the sun rose, God sent a burning east wind. The sun beat down on Jonah's head. It made him very weak. He wanted to die. So he said, "I'd rather die than live."

But God said to Jonah, "Do you have any right to be angry about what happened to the vine?"

"I do," he said. "In fact, I'm angry enough to die."

But the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this vine. But you did not take care of it. You did not make it grow. It grew up in one night and died the next. Nineveh has more than 120,000 people. They can't tell right from wrong. Nineveh also has a lot of cattle. So shouldn't I show concern for that great city?"

Jonah 3:1–4:11

Exploring the Story

Number the events of Jonah's life in the order they happened.

Super Words

A **community** is a group of people with common interests or living space. People who love God are a special kind of community.

God asked Jonah what right he had to be angry.

God decided not to punish the people of Nineveh.

God compared his concern for the people of Nineveh with Jonah's concern for the vine.

1
God told Jonah to go to Nineveh.

Jonah became very angry with God.

The people of Nineveh changed the way they lived.

Once again, God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh.

A vine grew, giving Jonah shade.

Jonah bought passage to Tarshish.

Sailors threw Jonah overboard and a giant fish swallowed him.

The vine was chewed and dried up.

Jonah cried out to God from the belly of the fish.

A great storm came up.

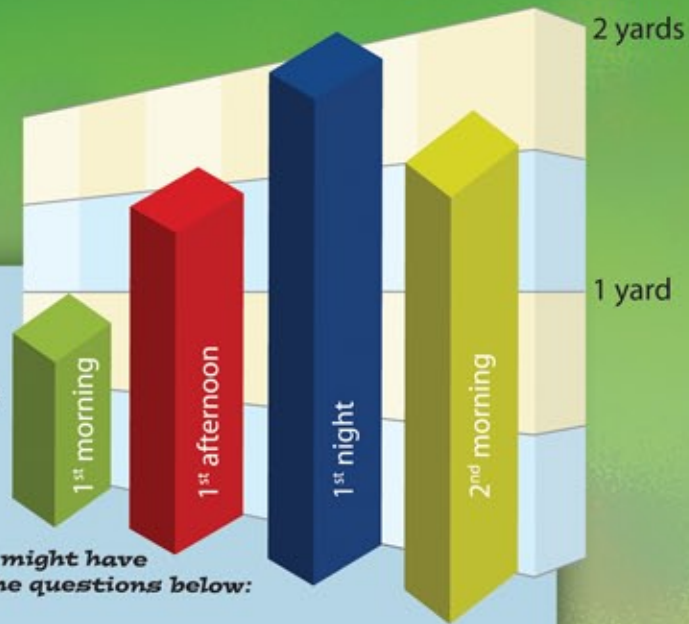
You're

a Botanist

What do botanists do?

Botanists study all types of plants. They watch how the plants grow, reproduce and die. They use their discoveries to find ways to improve crops, heal illnesses, and grow beautiful flowers.

The graph shows how Jonah's vine might have grown. Use the graph to answer the questions below:



1. How tall did Jonah's vine grow?

2. A worm ate the vine and it dried up. According to the graph, when did the vine to dry up?

3. If the vine wasn't eaten, what would you expect to see on the second morning?

Go outside and find an interesting leaf. Tape or glue the leaf here:

Look at your leaf carefully. How many parts does your leaf have?

Is it long or short? Is it wide or narrow?

What color is your leaf?

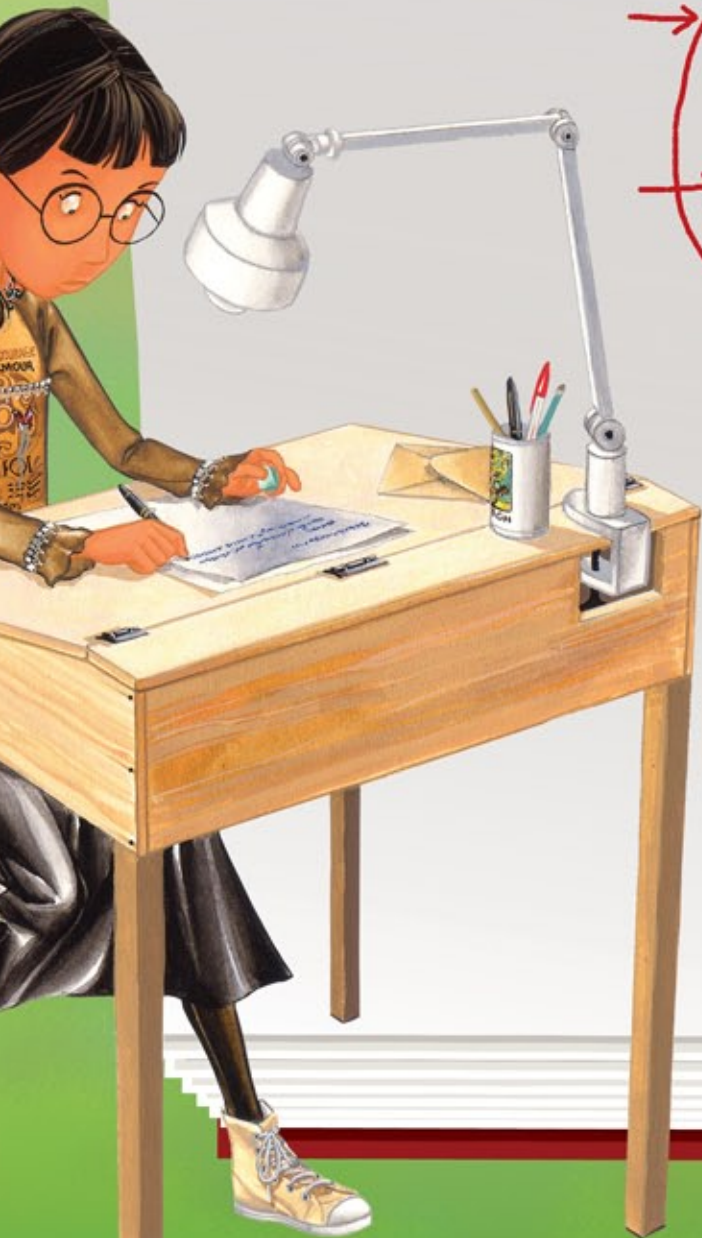
Carefully draw your leaf here with all of its details.

What did Jonah learn from the vine?

Your Part in the Story

When the people of Nineveh heard that God was angry with them, they repented. "Repenting" means asking for forgiveness and changing the way you act and live.

To live in relationship with God, a person must be willing to listen to him, to change the way he or she behaves, and to live the way God says to live. Repenting can change an entire community.



→ Can you remember something you have stopped doing because you wanted to obey God?

→ What do you do differently now?

If we ask him, God gives us the strength to live a new life. We still struggle sometimes to do what is right. Paul, one of Jesus followers, said this:

I don't understand what I do. I don't do what I want to do. Instead, I do what I hate to do. Romans 7:15

Find out what God is calling you to do. He wants to free you to live fully. He will help you turn away from the bad in life and choose the good. Ask him.

Do it!

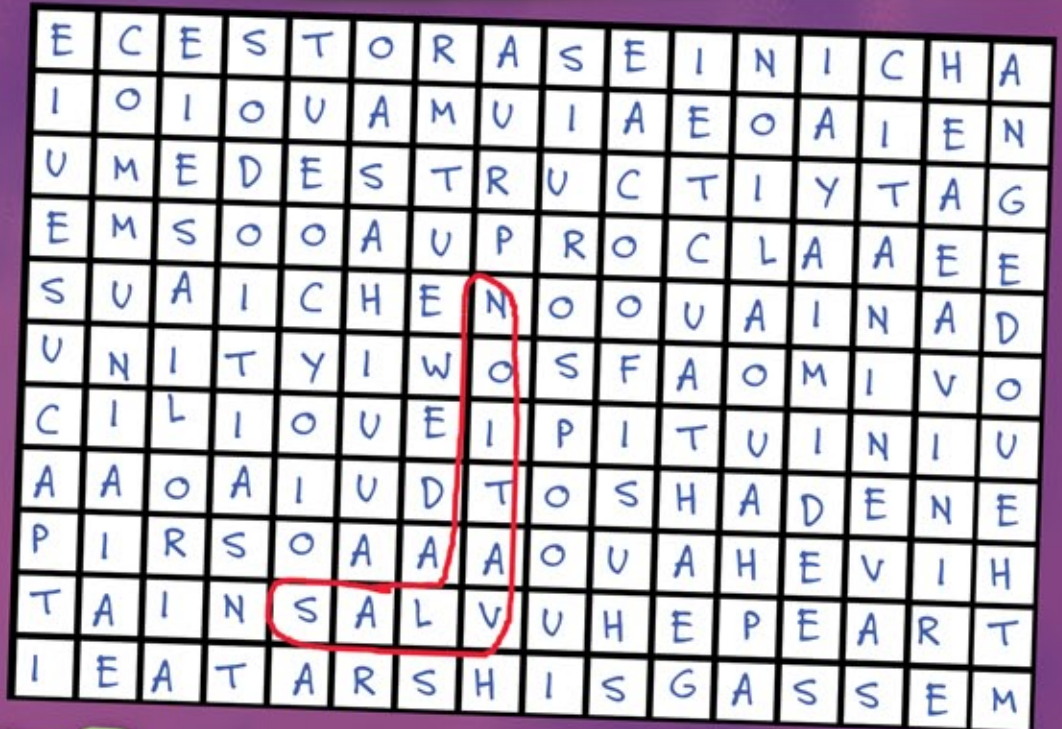
In Jonah's story we saw many changes of direction. God showed his power to change circumstances, individuals and whole communities!

Draw a vine that connects all the leaves. Make your vine squiggly or fancy or twisty or wild. Use your imagination.



Find the words below. Each word changes direction once.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------|
| STORM | SUN |
| CHEWED | CAPTAIN |
| SPIT | EARTH |
| PROCLAIM | CHANGED |
| COMMUNITY | NINEVEH |
| SAILORS | TARSHISH |
| SALVATION | CITY |
| DESTRUCTION | MESSAGE |
| DEEP | SEA |
| FISH | VINE |



Know it!

I will change their hearts. Then they will know that I am the LORD. They will be my people. And I will be their God. They will return to me with all their heart.

Jeremiah 24:7

