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# Jonah And The Whale



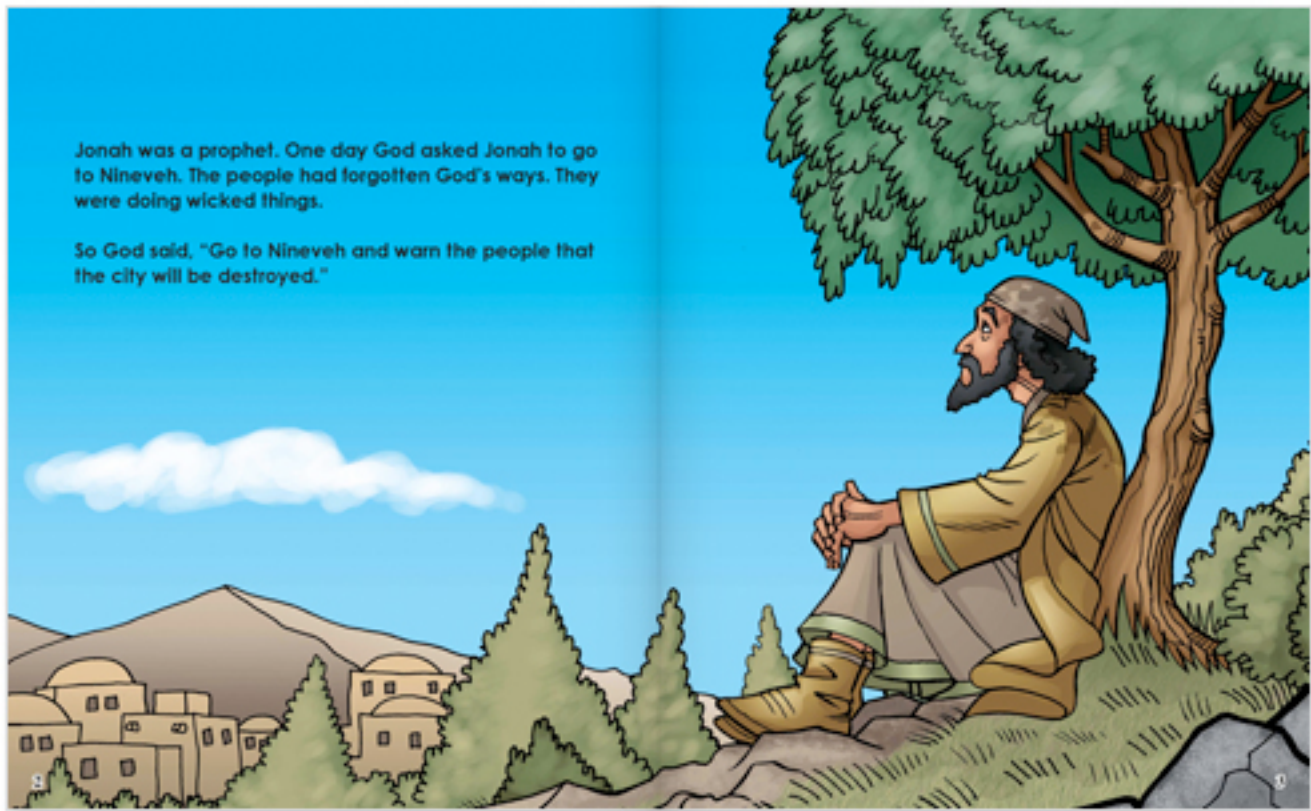
# Jonah And The Whale

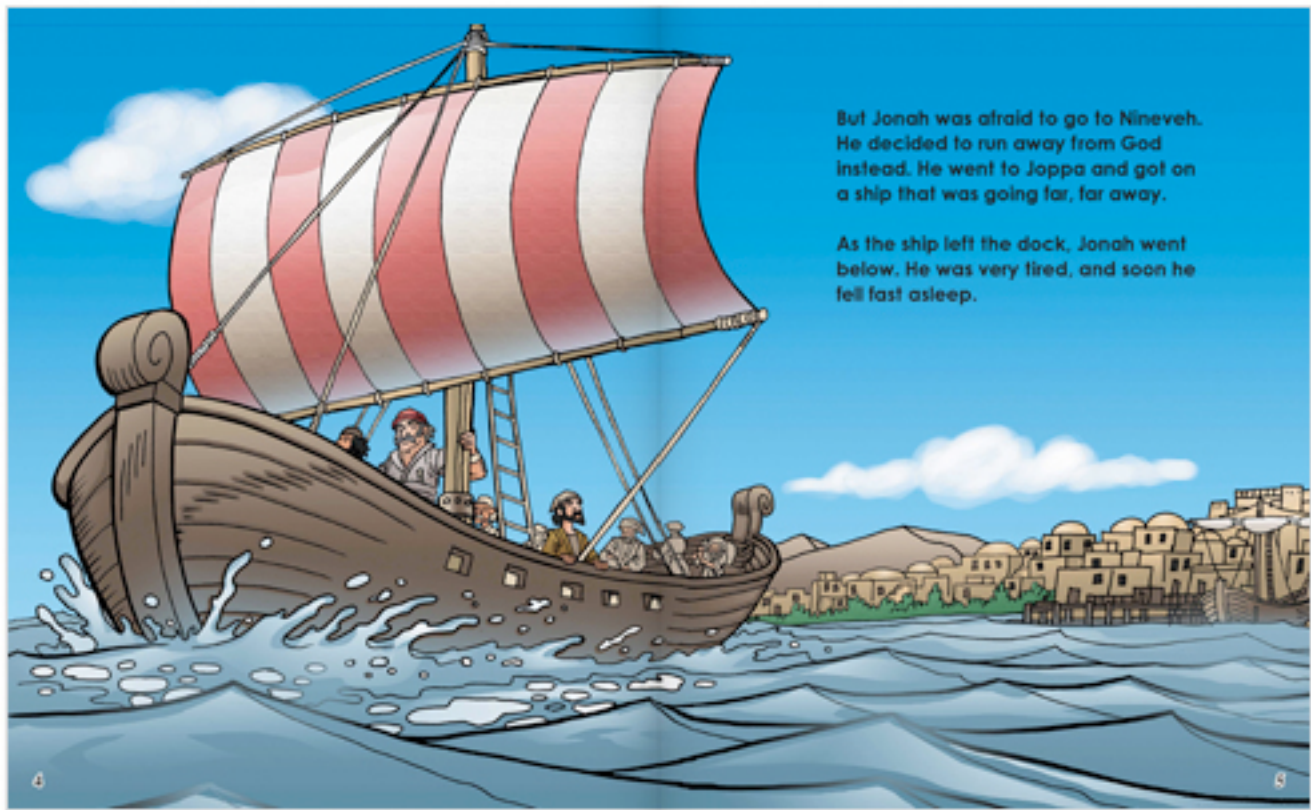


Storyline Iveth Nino, Louise Moon, & Shirley Freed  
Illustrations Steven Butler

Jonah was a prophet. One day God asked Jonah to go to Nineveh. The people had forgotten God's ways. They were doing wicked things.

So God said, "Go to Nineveh and warn the people that the city will be destroyed."



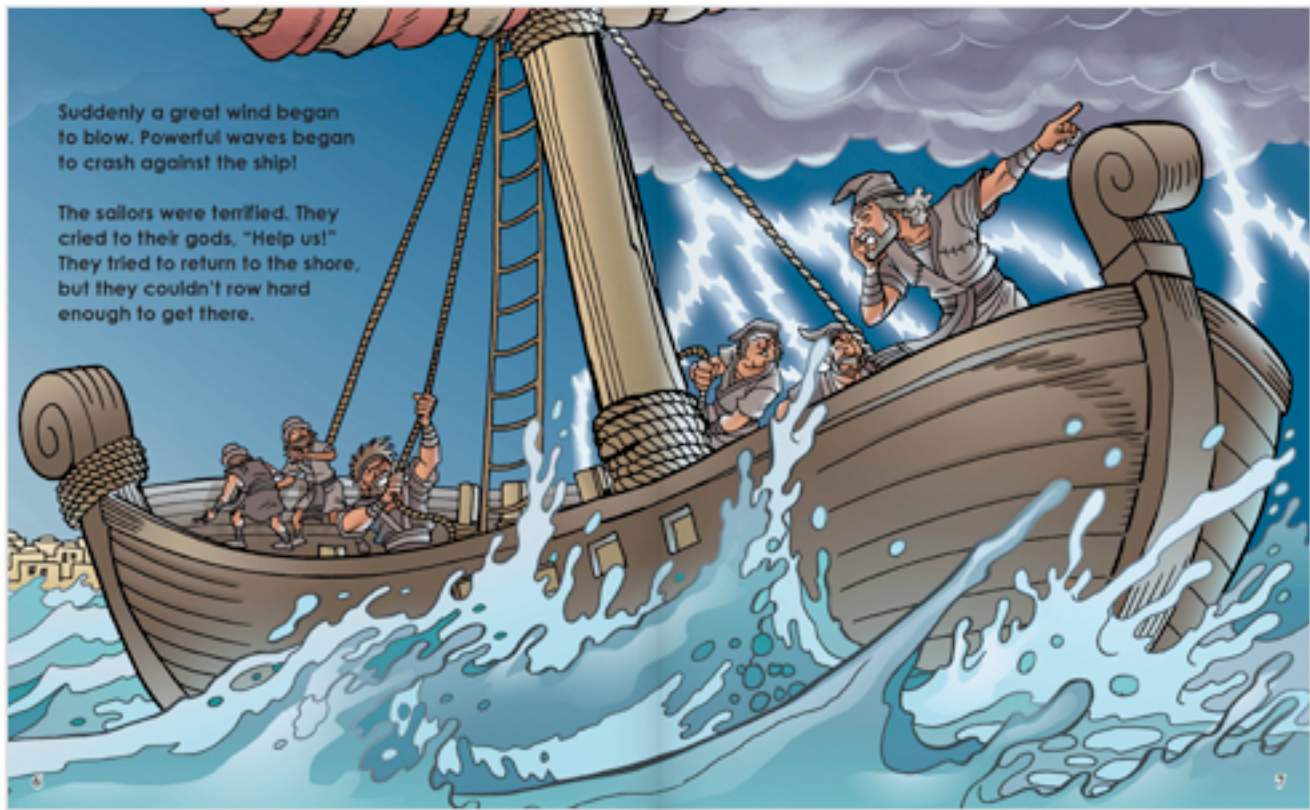


But Jonah was afraid to go to Nineveh. He decided to run away from God instead. He went to Joppa and got on a ship that was going far, far away.

As the ship left the dock, Jonah went below. He was very tired, and soon he fell fast asleep.

Suddenly a great wind began to blow. Powerful waves began to crash against the ship!

The sailors were terrified. They cried to their gods, "Help us!" They tried to return to the shore, but they couldn't row hard enough to get there.







The captain went down and found Jonah. "How can you sleep when we are all about to die?" he shouted. "Pray to your God to see if he will have mercy and save us!"

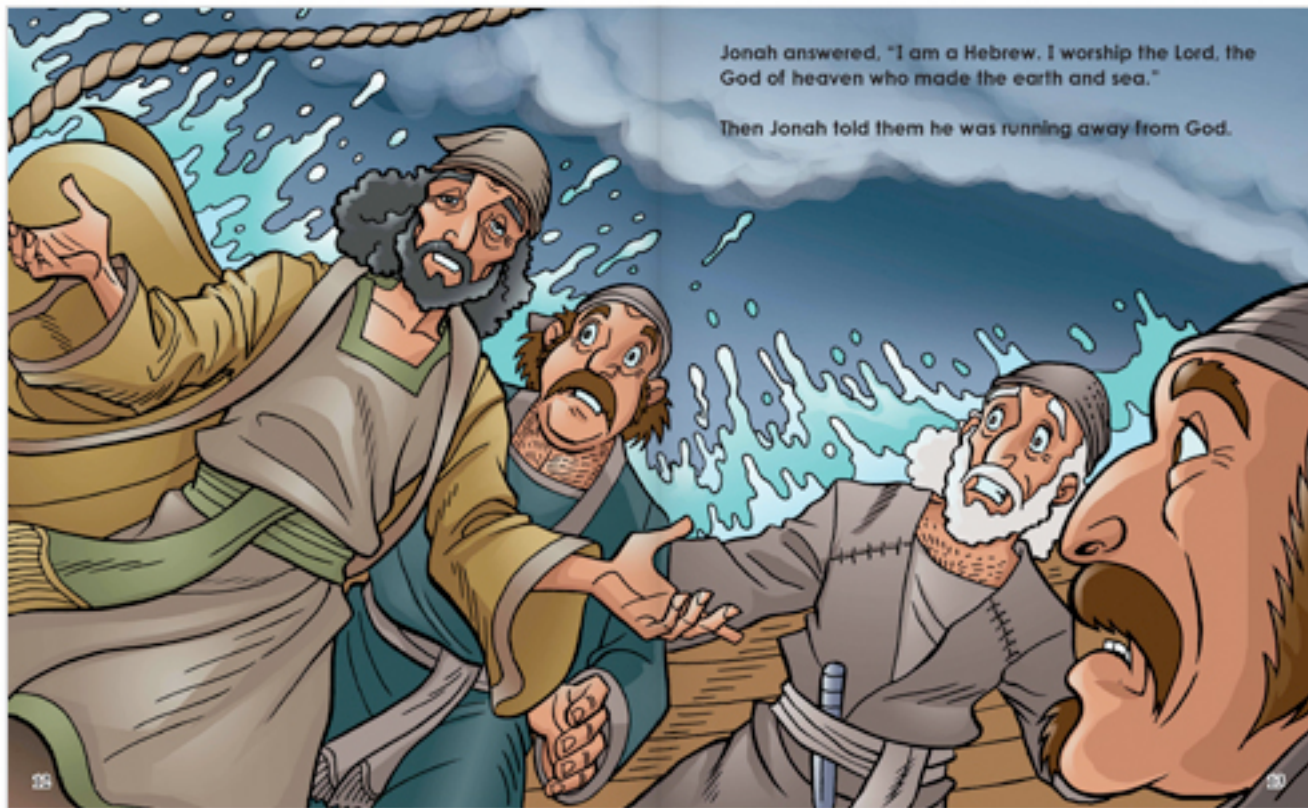
The sailors believed an angry god was causing the storm. They cast lots to find out whose fault it was, and the lot fell on Jonah.

"Who are you?" they cried. "Where do you come from? What have you done to cause this awful storm?"



Jonah answered, "I am a Hebrew. I worship the Lord, the God of heaven who made the earth and sea."

Then Jonah told them he was running away from God.



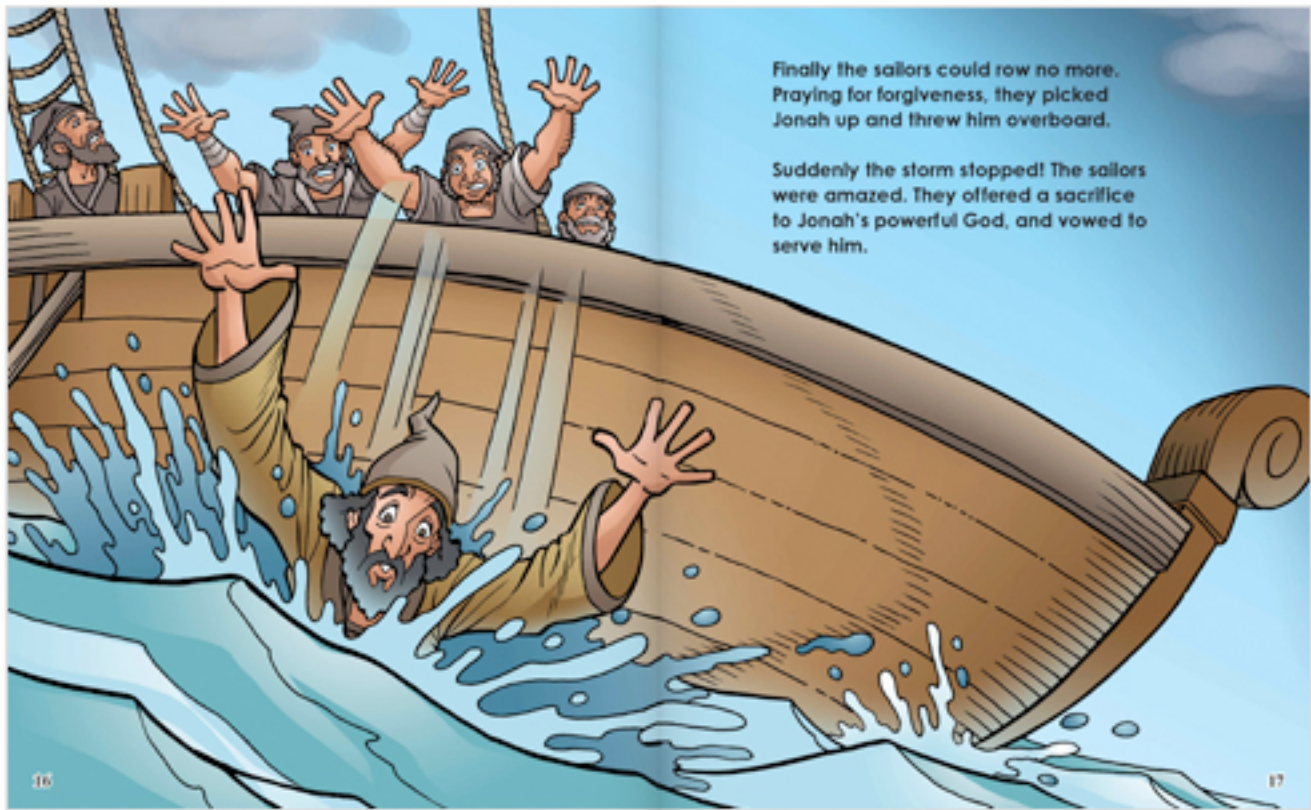




The sailors were terrified. "What must we do to make this storm cease?" they asked.

"You must throw me into the sea," said Jonah.

But the sailors did not want Jonah to die. They tried harder to row to shore, but the storm grew even worse.



Finally the sailors could row no more. Praying for forgiveness, they picked Jonah up and threw him overboard.

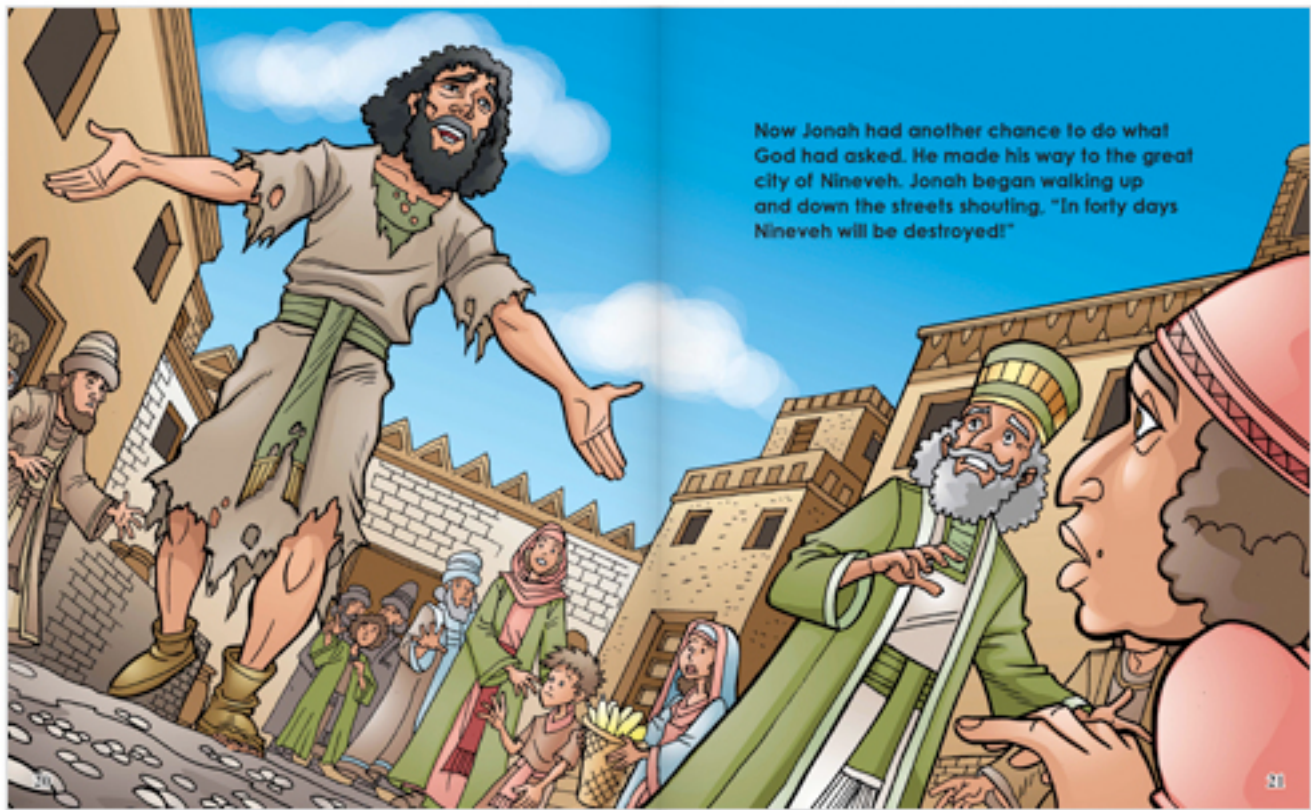
Suddenly the storm stopped! The sailors were amazed. They offered a sacrifice to Jonah's powerful God, and vowed to serve him.

But Jonah did not die. As he began to sink into the stormy sea, God sent a huge fish to swallow him. Jonah was stuck inside the fish for three days and three nights.

"Please forgive me, God," prayed Jonah. "I am sorry I ran away from you." God heard Jonah's prayer and after three days the fish spit Jonah out on the beach.





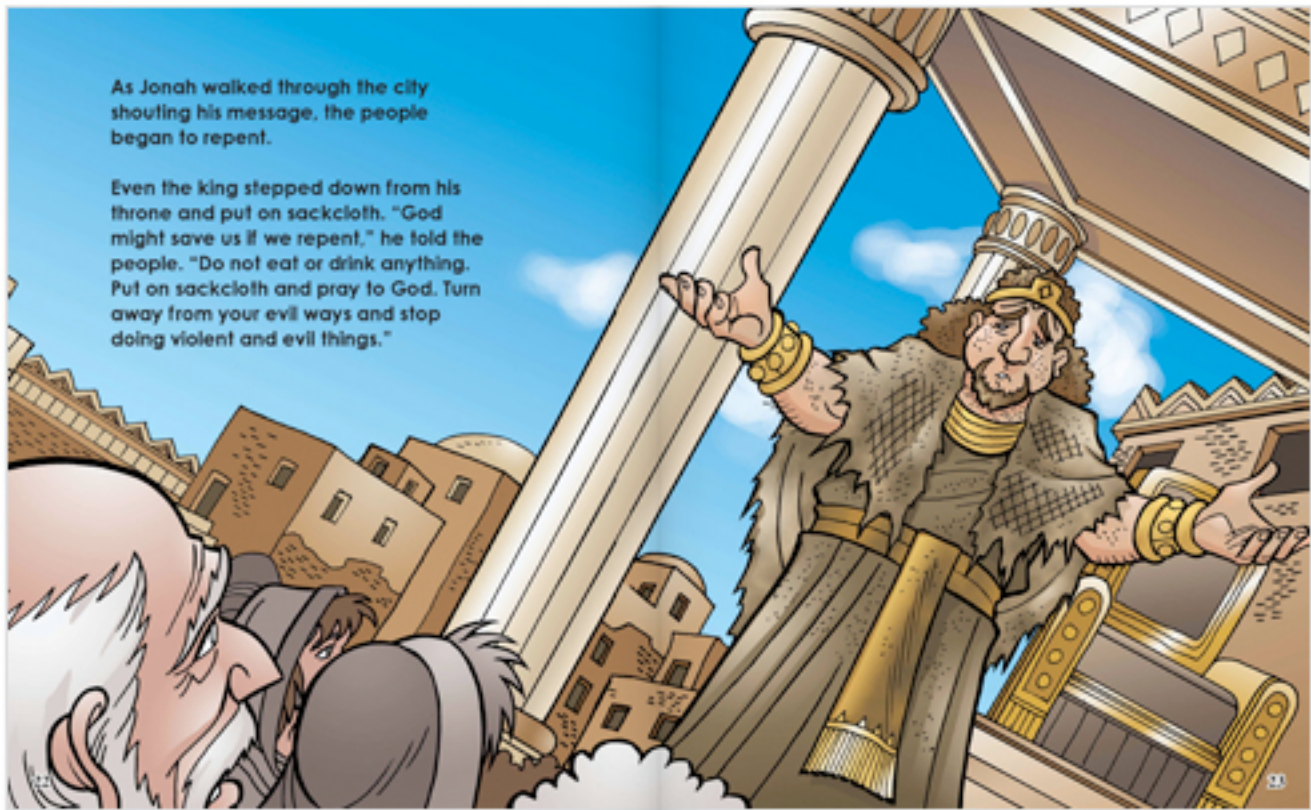


Now Jonah had another chance to do what God had asked. He made his way to the great city of Nineveh. Jonah began walking up and down the streets shouting, "In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed!"



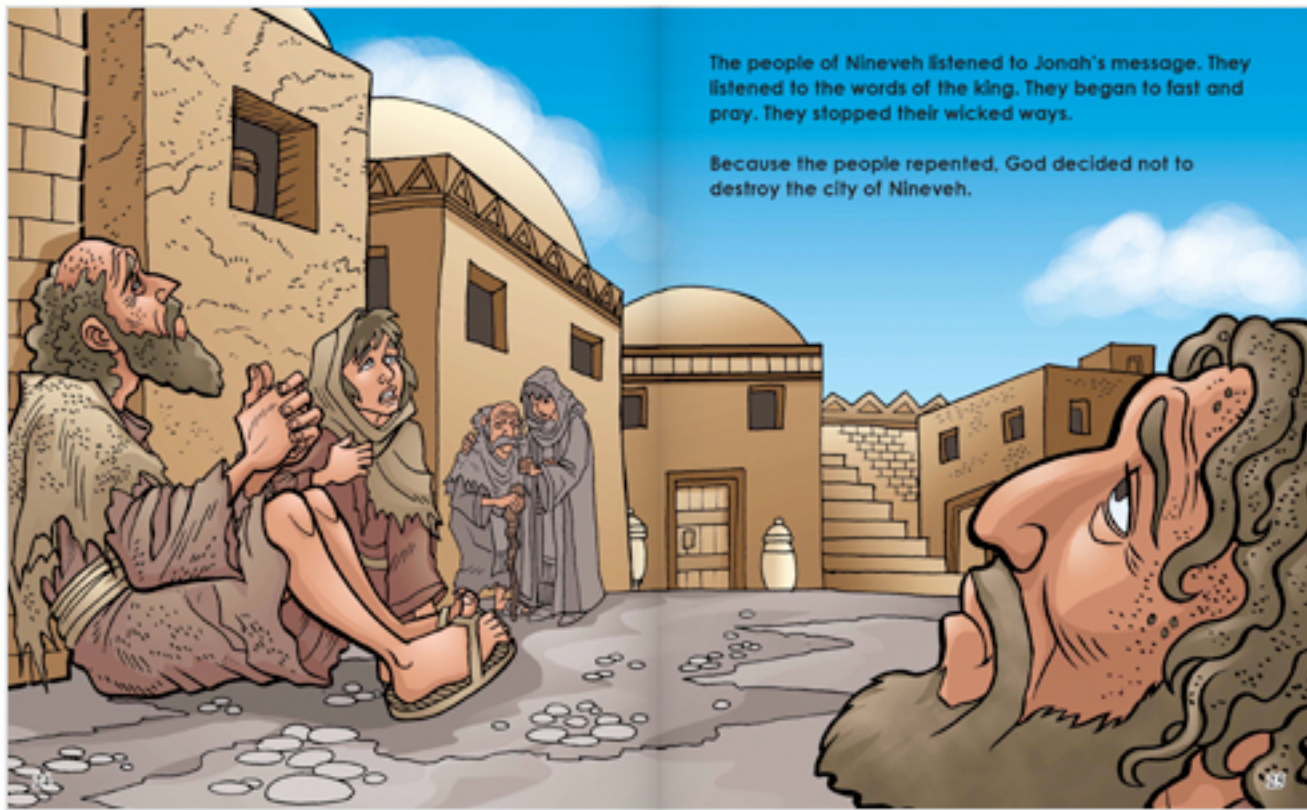
As Jonah walked through the city shouting his message, the people began to repent.

Even the king stepped down from his throne and put on sackcloth. "God might save us if we repent," he told the people. "Do not eat or drink anything. Put on sackcloth and pray to God. Turn away from your evil ways and stop doing violent and evil things."



The people of Nineveh listened to Jonah's message. They listened to the words of the king. They began to fast and pray. They stopped their wicked ways.

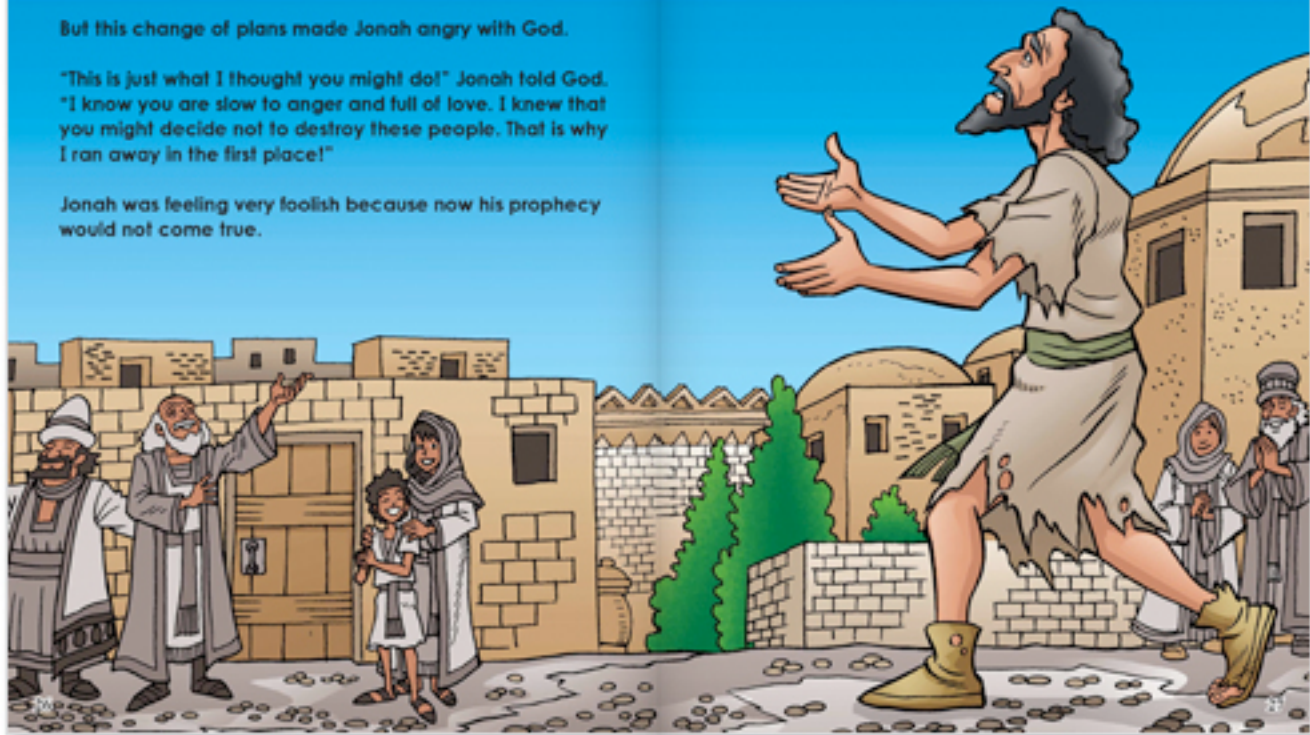
Because the people repented, God decided not to destroy the city of Nineveh.



But this change of plans made Jonah angry with God.

"This is just what I thought you might do!" Jonah told God. "I know you are slow to anger and full of love. I knew that you might decide not to destroy these people. That is why I ran away in the first place!"

Jonah was feeling very foolish because now his prophecy would not come true.







So Jonah went out of the city to sulk. As Jonah sat in the hot sun, God quickly grew a beautiful plant with broad leaves to shade him.

But the next day the plant died and withered away. Jonah was very upset when the plant died.



So God asked Jonah, "Is it right for you to be upset because the plant died?"

Then God pointed out that Jonah felt more sorry about the death of a plant than the death of an entire city full of people!





God wanted Jonah to love others as he did. He wanted Jonah to learn to think about the needs of others instead of just himself.