

NOT YOUR AVERAGE JOES

A study of the lives of Joseph, Jonah and Job

Jonah - Chapter 1

Lesson 1

For many, when they hear the name Jonah, the first thing that comes to mind is a really big fish. If that were all we remembered, we would miss the intention of the book. For this is the story of a God we cannot run from; a God who desired to reveal through Jonah that He is a *gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness. One who relents from doing harm* (Jonah 4:2). Like Jonah, we all too often desire Him to be this for us, but not for others. May we learn Jonah's lesson as we study this short, little book.

OBSERVATION: Read Jonah 1

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God* or *Jonah*.

Key Words: *God (LORD), Jonah, and trouble*

Underline the *phrase from the presence of the LORD*
3. Several questions were asked of Jonah by his shipmates. Circle each ? mark.
4. The contrasting words *but* and *nevertheless* are used in verses 3, 4, 5, and 13. Mark the words. Choose one instance of their use and record what is being contrasted.

JONAH'S DISOBEDIENCE: Read Jonah 1:1-3

1. The book of Jonah begins when *the word of the LORD came to Jonah, the son of Amittai*. What did God tell Jonah to do?
 - a. *Nineveh* was a Gentile city. Jonah also spoke *the word of the LORD* to his own people, Israel. According to 2 Kings 14:25, what did he prophesy?
 - 1.) Define the word *prophet*.
2. Why was Jonah to *cry out against* Nineveh? Jonah 1:2
 - a. Approximately 100 years after the preaching of Jonah to Nineveh, Nahum spoke a prophecy against this great city. We find this prophecy in Nahum 3:19. Using Nahum 3:1 and 4, describe her *wickedness*.
3. Jonah 1:3 begins with the contrasting word, *but*. Rather than obey *the word of the LORD*, what did Jonah do?
 - a. What phrase is recorded two times in this verse?
 - 1.) What question did David pose in Psalm 139:7 about God's presence?
 - a.) What was David's conclusion? See verses 8-12
 - b. What are some examples of attempts people make to *flee from God's presence*?
4. Reflect upon the contrasting word *but*. It follows an instruction of God. Why might this word, when it follows an instruction of God, indicate disobedience?
 - a. What are some reasons people disobey God?
 - 1.) One reason for disobedience is fear of the cost of obedience. Share a time when your disobedience was more costly than obedience.
 - b. Explain 1 John 5:3 in your own words.

THE STORM AT SEA: Read Jonah 1:4-9

1. Jonah 1:3 began with the contrasting phrase, *But Jonah*. Jonah 1:4 begins with the contrasting phrase, *But God*. What might this indicate about God's sovereignty?
2. What did God do? Verse 4
3. *Then the mariners were afraid*. What did they do?
 - a. Where was Jonah and what was he doing?
 - b. What did the *captain* tell Jonah to do?
 - 1.) What did the *captain* hope Jonah's God would do?
4. The *mariners* believed that the *trouble* was because of someone on the ship. *So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah*. They asked him several questions about himself. How did Jonah identify himself? Verse 9.
5. Jonah stated that he *feared the LORD*. What do the following verses from Deuteronomy (some of God's first commandments to His people) teach about the *fear of God*?

Deuteronomy 5:29

Deuteronomy 6:2

Deuteronomy 10:12

 - a. Explain the *fear of God* in your own words.
 - b. What relationship does the *fear of God* have with obedience to God's commandments?
6. Jonah was asked to identify himself in Jonah 1:8. How did he identify his God? Verse 9
 - a. Why do you think Jonah chose to use this description of God?

- b. We often choose a characteristic of God that fits our dilemma. List a few characteristics that you have used?

- 1.) How does it help you to remind yourself of God's characteristics?

JONAH THROWN INTO THE SEA: Read Jonah 1:10-16

1. According to Jonah 1:10, what was the men's response?

- a. What information is revealed at the end of verse 10 that would indicate why the men were *exceedingly afraid*?

- b. Record the words of Hebrews 10:31

- 1.) However, according to Hebrews 12:5,6, what truth should the believer always factor in when fearing God's punishment?

- 2.) How does this help you understand God's intention for Jonah?

2. What question did the mariners ask Jonah? Verse 11

- a. What was Jonah's response?

3. What contrasting word in verse 13 reveals the mariners' reluctance to execute Jonah's suggestion?

- a. Although they *rowed hard to return to land*, what happened?

- b. Who was in charge of the *sea*?

4. What do the following verses indicate about God's power over the *sea*?

Psalm 107:25

Nahum 1:4

Mark 4:39

- a. Return to Jonah's description of God in Jonah 1:9 and record its significance to the mariners as they attempted to row to dry land.
5. Jonah 1:14 begins with the word *therefore*. This word refers back to the previous statement that *the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them*. What are some synonyms for the word *tempestuous*?
- a. The men first sought Jonah's solution. Then they sought their own solution. Then they *prayed*. Why do believers often wait until man's solutions fail and the situation *grows more tempestuous* before they pray?
 - 1.) Record the words of Philippians 4:6.
 - 2.) What is the glorious assurance of Hebrews 4:15,16?
6. Record the last phrase of Jonah 1:14.
- a. Reflect upon the words of Psalm 135:6. What is your response?
 - b. Why do we need not fear a God who *does* what He *pleases*?
Challenge: Use Scripture to support your answer.
7. What did they do AFTER they *prayed*?
- a. What was result?
 - b. Share an example of what happened after you stopped seeking your own solutions and *prayed*.

JONAH'S PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE: Read Jonah 1:17

1. God is executing His plan to “encourage” Jonah to obey Him. What had He *prepared*?
 - a. What did the *great fish* do?
 - b. How long was Jonah *in the belly of the fish*?
 - 1.) Record the words of Matthew 12:40
2. God *prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah*. God *prepares* many things. Meditate on the encouraging words of Psalm 31:19 and record your impressions.

REVIEW: Read Jonah 1

1. Sadly, we have all found ourselves attempting to *flee from the presence of God*. What has this lesson taught you about that?
2. Our lives sometimes *rage* unnecessarily because we do not pray. What can we learn from the example set forth in this lesson?
3. Although there is certainly a lesson set forth in this lesson, what encouragement did you glean?

*“Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?” says the LORD;
“Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the LORD.
- Jeremiah 23:24*

Observation Worksheet

Jonah 1

¹ Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ² "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." ³ But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. ⁴ But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up. ⁵ Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep. ⁶ So the captain came to him, and said to him, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish." ⁷ And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸ Then they said to him, "Please tell us! For whose cause *is* this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" ⁹ So he said to them, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." ¹⁰ Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "Why have you done this?" For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. ¹¹ Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?" --for the sea was growing more tempestuous. ¹² And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me." ¹³ Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them. ¹⁴ Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, "We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You." ¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows. ¹⁷ Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.