

# Jonah

the story series

Women's Bible Study // Christian Assembly Church



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# Introduction

Jonah is one of those stories that everyone has probably heard at some point in their life, whether you grew up in the church or not. The story is commonly depicted as an epic tale about a big whale, a classic childhood favorite, whose message is often overlooked by the fairytale portrait of a great big fish taking center stage. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fish is in fact not the star of the story, but rather Jonah's attitude towards the Lord's majestic compassion and mercy. In this story we learn about how Jonah's disobedience leads him away from the Lord's plans, and requires the Lord to chase after him with a steady faithful grace.

It's the story of us all.

If you've ever found yourself running away from God, or from His calling on your life, or wrestling with what you think seems fair or unfair, this story is for you. I imagine each of us will find some aspect of ourselves in this narrative, and I look forward to hearing where you encounter yourself in this great display of God's epic love for all of humanity.

May you be honest about your journey with God and your true obedience to Him with your WBS community throughout our time together. Quite often we don't sense the resistance in ourselves to God's plans, or the lack of belief in His goodness, or the diminished faith we have that He is actually writing a better story than the one we are trying to write. May we be fully humbled and surrendered to Jesus through the book of Jonah, that we might be used as vessels of His endless love for all people here on earth.

*"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

- Matthew 6:10

Much love,  
Colie Cabalatungan

# **Week I: Jonah Introduction**

Notes from Teaching Time

*What does obedience mean to you?*







- How can you best encourage one another during this time together?

- Pray for one another. Write any prayer requests here.

## Week II

Jonah 1:1-6

*The great call and the great flight*

Jonah 1:1-6 (ESV)

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.” 3 But Jonah rose 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, away from the presence of the Lord.

4 But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up. 5 Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried out to his god. And they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep. 6 So the captain came and said to him, “What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish.”



- What do you learn about God and His character from His response to Jonah fleeing?
  
- What did Jonah do when the storm came? What does this show us about his character?
  
- Has the Lord ever called you to do something that you didn't want to do? What was your response?
  
- What is the effect of Jonah's actions on those around him? Can you think of any area of your life right now, where your response (or lack of) to God's commands might be affecting other people?
  
- In light of Jonah's story today, how would you like your group to pray for your own obedience in this season?

## **Week II: The great call and the great flight**

Notes from Teaching Time

*What do you do when your life doesn't go the way you thought it would?*



## Week III

Jonah 1:7-17

*The great storm and the great solution*

Jonah 1:7-17 (ESV)

7 And they said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. 8 Then they said to him, “Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” 9 And 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, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing 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 quiet down for us?” For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. 12 He said to them, “Pick me up and hurl me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you, for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you.” 13 Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get back to dry land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them. 14 Therefore they called out to the Lord, “O Lord, let us not perish for this man’s life, and lay not on us innocent blood, for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you.” 15 So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. 16 Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

17 And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.







- In verse 17, we read that Jonah was in the belly of the whale for 3 days and 3 nights. What does this allude towards?
  
- Where do you witness the grace of the Lord in this passage?
  
- Have you ever tried to get out of doing something you knew the Lord was asking of you? How did you feel afterwards?
  
- In this story, Jonah's disobedience resulted in a storm. This is a good metaphor for what sin and disobedience look like in our lives. Spend time in prayer about what steps of obedience the Lord might want you to take to get out of any current storms in your life.

# **Week III: The great storm and the great solution**

Notes from Teaching Time

*Have there been any storms in your life that God has saved you out of?*



## Week IV

Jonah 2:1-10

*The great prayer and the great vomit*

Jonah 2:1-10 (ESV)

1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying,

“I called out to the Lord, out of my distress,  
and he answered me;  
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,  
and you heard my voice.

3 For you cast me into the deep,  
into the heart of the seas,  
and the flood surrounded me;  
all your waves and your billows  
passed over me.

4 Then I said, ‘I am driven away  
from your sight;  
yet I shall again look  
upon your holy temple.’

5 The waters closed in over me to take my life;  
the deep surrounded me;  
weeds were wrapped about my head

6 at the roots of the mountains.  
I went down to the land  
whose bars closed upon me forever;  
yet you brought up my life from the pit,  
O Lord my God.

7 When my life was fainting away,

I remembered the Lord,  
and my prayer came to you,  
into your holy temple.  
8 Those who pay regard to vain idols  
forsake their hope of steadfast love.  
9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving  
will sacrifice to you;  
what I have vowed I will pay.  
Salvation belongs to the Lord!”

10 And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

## Week IV

### *Questions from Jonah 2:1-10*

- What do you imagine it was like for Jonah to be in the belly of the whale after the sailors threw him over on his command? Write down what your emotions might have been.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- How does God respond to Jonah's cry for help (v.2)? Have you ever cried out to God in your distress? What was the response?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Do you notice any repeated words in this chapter?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- How are verse 1 and 10 different from the rest of the verses in this chapter?

- Verse 6c says, “yet you brought up my life from the pit.” How is this a prophetic foreshadow to Jesus?
  
- How does the Lord answer Jonah’s prayer (v.10)?
  
  
- In life, how does God normally get your attention? Have there been ways that you have avoided God when He might be trying to get your attention?
  
  
- Hebrews 3:15 says, “*As it is said, “Today, if you hear [God’s] voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”*” How can you attune your heart to God’s voice today? Spend a few minutes quieting your mind and heart right now. Write down anything that you sense the Lord imprinting on you.



- Prayer is all about aligning our heart with God. Read Jonah's prayer again and then write your own prayer to God in the space below.

# **Week IV: The great prayer and the great vomit**

Notes from Teaching Time

*Where do you turn when garbage hits the fan?*



# Week V

Jonah 3:1-10

*The great renewal and the great repentance*

Jonah 3:1-10 (ESV)

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: 2 “Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.”

3 Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. 4 Jonah began by going a day’s journey into the city, proclaiming, “Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.” 5 The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

6 When Jonah’s warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. 7 This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

“By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. 8 But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. 9 Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

10 When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

# Week V

## *Questions from Jonah 3:1-10*

- How many times did the word of the Lord come to Jonah? Is it the same message as the time before? How many times does God need to speak to you before you respond?
  
- Look at the message God asked Jonah to preach. How many words total are in it? Write out his mini sermon below.
  
- What was the result of Jonah's message in Nineveh?
  
- Describe the King's response when he hears Jonah's message. What did he then command the city to do?

- How is the King's response different from Jonah's response to the Lord's call?
  
- What is God's response to the Ninevites when they repent?
  
- Do you remember when you first heard about Jesus? How did you respond?
  
- The people of Nineveh repented from their sin, and God spared them from destruction. Sin is always seeking to destroy our lives and the Lord is always looking for our repentance and faith in Jesus to set us free from sin's consequences. In what areas might the Lord be inviting you to repent from sin in this season, so that you aren't destroyed by it?

# **Week V: The great renewal and the great repentance**

Notes from Teaching Time

*Do you believe that God's plan is better than yours?*





# Week VI

Jonah 4:1-11

*The great anger and the great question*

Jonah 4:1-10 (ESV)

But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the Lord, “Isn’t this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. 3 Now, Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

4 But the Lord replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

5 Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. 6 Then the Lord God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. 7 But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, “It would be better for me to die than to live.”

9 But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?”

“It is,” he said. “And I’m so angry I wish I were dead.”

10 But the Lord said, “You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. 11 And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and

twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?”







# **Week VI: The great anger and the great question**

Notes from Teaching Time

*How do you respond when God does not act the way you want Him to?*



