



D-Group Study on
JONAH

Week 1: Jonah

An Introduction of Jonah

Welcome to our D-Group Curriculum on the book of Jonah!

For the next several weeks, we will journey through the book of Jonah together as a church and in our D-Groups. This *sermon-based* D-Group curriculum is designed to aid us in understanding and applying the book of Jonah in our personal lives. While it is not mandatory, we encourage you to view the previous Sunday's sermon in preparation for each weekly lesson.

In this introductory lesson, we will watch a video from the Bible Project in order to get familiarized with the book of Jonah. As you watch the video, record what stands out to you about the book and be ready to discuss with your D-Group.

1. Take a few minutes to watch the Bible Project's overview of the book of Jonah:

<https://www.freedomchurchbaltimore.org/dgroupsstudy>

2. Answer the following questions:

Have you ever read the book of Jonah before? If so, what was your impression of this book?

What captured your attention the most in the video overview of Jonah?

Based on what you observed in the video, how might we benefit from reading Jonah?

What are you hoping to get out of the sermon series and D-Group curriculum on Jonah?

Assignment: Watch the sermon on Jonah Chapter 1:1-3 in preparation for Week 2.

Week 2: Jonah

Jonah Chapter 1:1-3

1 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.

Icebreaker

Have you ever felt God personally leading you to talk about Him to someone else? If so, share your experience with the group.

Discussion Questions:

Share one thing that stood out to you the most in the sermon on Jonah 1:1-3. If you did not hear the sermon, share one thing that stood out to you the most about Jonah 1:1-3.

Have someone read the following excerpt from the New American Commentary on Jonah:

"While all sin is abhorrent to God, in some instances a specific group of people had become so wicked that God issued a special call of localized judgment. So it was with Nineveh. Archaeology confirms the biblical witness to the wickedness of the Assyrians. They were well known in the ancient world for brutality and cruelty. Ashurbanipal, the grandson of Sennacherib, was accustomed to tearing off the lips and hands of his victims. Tiglath-Pileser flayed victims alive and made great piles of their skulls."

Based on the excerpt we just read, how would you feel if God called you to go cry out against a city like Nineveh?

Take a look at the map below. What does this visual contribute to your understanding of Jonah's attempt to flee the presence of God? (cf. verse 3)



Based on verses 1-3, make a list of question(s) we should expect to be answered in the rest of the book. From the question(s) we just listed, which one are you most curious to have answered? (For Example: Why did Jonah flee?)

Assignment: Listen to the sermon on Jonah Chapter 1:4-16 in preparation for Week 3.

Week 3: Jonah

Jonah Chapter 1:4-16

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."

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.

Icebreaker

Jonah tried to flee from the presence of God by boarding a ship and going in the opposite direction (1:3). Discuss some other ways that present-day Christians try to flee from God.

Discussion Questions

Share one thing that stood out to you in the sermon on Jonah 1:4-16. If you did not hear the sermon, share one thing that stood out to you when reading Jonah 1:4-16.

In verse 5, the author tells us that Jonah was fast asleep during the storm when everyone else was afraid. What might this reveal about Jonah's mentality at the time?

Does it surprise you that it was the sailors and NOT God's prophet who appear to fear God in chapter 1:4-16? Why or Why not?

In what ways do you see God working in Chapter 1? How has this contributed to your understanding of God?

Assignment: Listen to the sermon on Jonah Chapter 1:17-2:10 in preparation for Week 4.

Week 4: Jonah

Jonah Chapter 1:17-2:10

1:17 And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. **2:1** 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

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

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!"

Discussion Questions

Share one thing that stood out to you in the sermon on Jonah 1:17-2:10. If you did not hear the sermon, share one thing that stood out to you while reading Jonah 1:17-2:10.

Based on verses 2-3, what was Jonah's understanding of his current circumstances?

How did Jonah express hopefulness in his prayer to God? (see verses 4-9) What does this tell us about Jonah?

What did Jonah mean by the phrase "Salvation belongs to the Lord?" (v. 9) What are some practical implications of this statement for us today?

How might Jonah's prayer encourage us in our own relationship with God, especially during the times when we feel his hand of discipline on us?

Assignment: Listen to the sermon on Jonah Chapter 3 in preparation for Week 5.

Week 5: Jonah

Jonah Chapter 3:1-10

1 Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, **2** “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” **3** So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. **4** Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” **5** And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

6 The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. **7** And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, **8** but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. **9** Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”

10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Discussion Questions

Share one thing that stood out to you in the sermon on Jonah 3:1-10. If you did not hear the sermon, share one thing that stood out to you while reading Jonah 3:1-10.

In verses 1-2, we see that God gave Jonah a second chance. Share about a time in your life when God gave you a second chance. How did that impact your relationship with God?

List some of the ways the Ninevites demonstrate genuine repentance. (Verses 6-10) What does their example contribute to your understanding of repentance?

Have someone read Matthew 12:40-41 aloud. How is Jonah similar to Jesus? How is Jesus different from Jonah?

What encouragement can you take away from Nineveh's response to Jonah's preaching in regards to personal evangelism?

Assignment: Listen to the sermon on Jonah Chapter 4:1-5 in preparation for Week 6.

Week 6: Jonah

Jonah Chapter 4:1-4

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. **2** And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. **3** Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." **4** And the Lord said, "Do you do well to be angry?"

Discussion Questions

Share one thing that stood out to you in the sermon on Jonah 4:1-4. If you did not hear the sermon, share one thing that stood out to you while reading Jonah 4:1-4.

In Chapter 4:1-4, we finally begin to understand why Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh. What are some possible reasons for Jonah's anger over the Ninevites' repentance?

Who would be the "Ninevites" in your life? How does it make you feel to know that God desires to forgive and save those people too?

Which one of the descriptions of God in verse 2 resonate with you the most? Explain your answer.

How should the fact that God is "a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster" impact the way we evangelize to lost people?

Assignment: Listen to the sermon on Jonah Chapter 4:5-11 in preparation for Week 6.

Week 7: Jonah

Jonah Chapter 4:5-11

5 Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. **6** Now the Lord God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. **7** But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. **8** When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." **9** But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die." **10** And the Lord said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. **11** And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"

Icebreaker: *Have you ever felt anger towards God? If so, what caused your anger subside?*

Discussion Questions

Share one thing that stood out to you in the sermon on Jonah 4:5-11. If you did not hear the sermon, share one thing that stood out to you while reading Jonah 4:5-11.

Have someone read Jonah's prayer in Chapter 2:1-9 aloud. Based on Jonah's actions in Chapter 4, do you think Jonah was sincere in his prayer? Why or why not?

How does God seek to help Jonah understand the sparing of Nineveh? (see verses 6-11)

What are some practical implications of verses 10-11 in regard to evangelism and salvation?

What is your biggest take away from the book of Jonah?