

## Some Possible Answers for Week 1 of the Jonah Study

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**Week 1: God's love and authority are demonstrated by His call to, and pursuit of, Jonah.**

**Day 1- Overview - Read Jonah 1:1-10** – (All “Application” questions are personal so they are not included in this handout. Answers will vary with all these questions. The answers shown are just some of the possibilities.)

1. *What do you learn about Jonah from these verses: Jonah 1:1, 1:9; 2 Kings 14:25; Matt. 12:39-41)? If you have a Bible dictionary, you may want to see what it says about Jonah.*

- **Jonah 1:1** – he was the son of Amittai
- **Jonah 1:9** – He was a Hebrew, he worshipped God the Creator
- **2 Kings 14:25** – he was a servant of the Lord, he was from Gath Hopher - a town of Lower Galilee, about 5 miles from Nazareth; the same as Gittah-hepher (**Jos 19:13**). It has been identified with the modern el-Meshed, a village on the top of a rocky hill. Here the supposed tomb of Jonah, Neby Yunas, is still pointed out.
- **Matthew 12:39-41** – Jesus said that Jonah was the sign people were given.

2. *While most of the Old Testament prophets prophesied to Israel and Judah, what seems to be different about God's prophetic call to Jonah?*

- Jonah is to preach to a specific group of people, the Ninevites!

3. *What do you learn about Nineveh from these verses: Genesis 10:6-12; 2 Kings 19:32-36; Jonah 1:2; the book of Nahum?*

- **Genesis 10:6-12** – Nimrod built Nineveh in Assyria.
- **2 Kings 19:32-36** – Sennacherib, king of Assyria, stayed at Nineveh.
- **Jonah 1:2** – The people of Nineveh were wicked.

4. *Most prophetic books focus on God's words as spoken by the prophet to the people. How is the book of Jonah different?*

- The book of Jonah demonstrates how God worked in a prophet's life and the book focuses more on the prophet's life than what he said. However, what he said and the results of it are very important for us to understand!

5. *Looking at these verses, who would you say this book is really about: Jonah, Nineveh, or God? Explain.*

- This book is primarily about God and then Jonah, the sailors, and the Ninevites.

**Day 2 – Jonah runs from God. Read 1:1-3**

1. *From 1:1-2, why must Jonah go to Nineveh? Using a dictionary, write the definition of “wicked.”*

- First, because God told him to go, second, because of the “wickedness” of the people there

3. *From verses 1:3, when Jonah started his journey to Tarshish, how did this demonstrate his attitude toward God?*

- Tarshish was in the opposite direction from Nineveh indicating he had no intention of going to Nineveh.
- His actions were blatantly disobedient.

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4. *What were some outward circumstances which might have caused Jonah to think he had made the right decision? What does this teach you about being guided by only favorable circumstances in making decisions?*

- 1<sup>st</sup> part - There was a ship going his way, the winds were favorable, he had the necessary funds to pay his fare, there was room for him, once at sea he couldn't go back, no one would know him....

5. *Have you ever run from the Lord, or are you running from Him now? Explain.*

### Day 3 – God pursues Jonah. Read 1:3-7

1. *What did God send in His pursuit of Jonah? What does this reveal to you about God?*

- 1<sup>st</sup> part – a large fish

2. *Using 1:5, describe who did the sailors pray to and what followed?*

- Each cried out to his own god – they threw cargo overboard – the storm didn't let up

3. *List some of the suffering the captain and crew experienced because of Jonah's disobedience.*

- They were fearful vs. 5; they lost their cargo vs. 5 which meant they lost financially; their lives were at risk; the ship was at risk of being destroyed; the captain's job was probably on the line

4. *Using 1:5b, explain the evidence of Jonah's conscience being dulled by his disobedience? You ever just want to go to sleep to avoid irritating thoughts?*

- 1<sup>st</sup> part - He was asleep below deck away from people

5. *What did the captain say to Jonah and how did they discover Jonah to be the problem?*

- Asked him how he could sleep at such a time; told him to call on his god
- They determined Jonah was the problem by casting lots
- Casting lots was a common practice in the ancient Near East. The Old Testament speaks of it often. See Lev. 16:8; Josh. 18:6-10; 1 Chron. 24:31; Job 6:27; Ps. 22:18; Mark 15:24; John 19:24; Acts 1:26

### Day 4 – Jonah is confronted by the crew. – Read 1:8-10

1. *Read 1:8 – Could you answer the questions Jonah didn't answer? Here they are: What was his occupation? Where was he from (2 Kings 14:25)? What was his country? What people was he from?*

- He was a prophet; he was from Gath Hopher (2 Kings 14:25); His country was Israel; His people were Hebrew's (Jonah 1:9).

2. *What do you suppose Jonah said in 1:9-10 that terrified the sailors?*

- Here are a some possible answers: They had fear because Jonah spoke of one Lord and God, the God of heaven who created all things, and they believed in many gods but not one Creator God.
- Based on the question they asked Jonah in vs. 10, another answer might be that their fear was because they felt Jonah had displeased his god and therefore his god caused the storm.
- Another possible answer could be that God put the fear of Himself in them and they were about to experience His awesome power and authority.

3. *Do you think people would be terrified today at the words of Jonah in 1:9? Explain why or why not.*

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4. Have you ever caused someone to suffer because you decided to disobey one of God's commands?

### Day 5 – God is in the storms of life. – Read 1:1-10

1. *What does Jonah's running from God demonstrate to you regarding both Jonah and God (see Psalm 139:7-14)?*

2. *The crew were probably Phoenicians and therefore probably shared a common polytheistic (many gods) religion. However, after the men prayed to their gods, did the storm subside? What did this demonstrate to the crew about their gods?*

- The storm did not subside.
- It demonstrated to them their gods couldn't do anything about the storm.

3. *The crew knew this was a supernatural and violent storm. Their prayers to their gods hadn't helped. How do you think God might be using this situation to help the crew?*

- God's grace is extended to everyone and He is very efficient in His ways. Could He be using Jonah's experience to not only get Jonah's attention but to also save the captain and his crew spiritually. Sort of a "collateral grace" experience for all.

4. *When storms come in your life, who do you turn to? Do you ask Him to show you how He is working in the situation and what He expects from you? Will you try that prayer the next time?*

- These are personal questions, answers will vary.