

Some Possible Answers for Week 3 of the Jonah Study

Week 3: God's grace has been, and is, shown towards Jonah in many ways.

Day 1- Overview - Read Jonah 2:1-10 (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. *Where is Jonah when he finally decides to pray to the Lord?*

- Jonah 2:1 "...inside the fish"
- It may be asked, "How could Jonah either pray or breathe in the stomach of the fish?" Very easily, if God so willed it. And keep this in mind; the whole book is a miracle, from Jonah's being swallowed by the fish till he was cast on shore by the same animal. It was God that had prepared the great fish. It was the Lord that spoke to the fish, and caused it to vomit Jonah upon the dry land. ALL of this is a miracle.

2. *How might you relate to Jonah?*

- Answers will vary.

3. *From reading Jonah's prayer, do you think he was repentant for his disobedience? Explain.*

- Jonah finally prays and thanks God for his deliverance even before he is delivered. This shows that he is convinced God answers prayer. At this point, some think that at this point Jonah is repenting. Support for this is the fact that he went on and preached in Nineveh.
- There are other thoughts regarding Jonah's repentance and they are based on his prayer. Nowhere in his prayer does he mention his own rebellion and sin, it seems there is no real confession going on in his prayer.
- Remember, Jonah probably considered himself better than the pagans (2:8-9) in Nineveh.
- Scholars who say Jonah didn't repent point out how ironic and sad it is that we've seen the sailor's seem to come out of this experience looking better than Jonah.
- Scholars often use Scripture to prove Scripture and they allude to Jonah's actions in chapter 4 support their opinion that he didn't really repent.
- Other scholars have different views. R. C. Sproul says, "We should emulate Jonah not in his sin but in his repentance" as he refers to Jonah 1:12 where he says "I know that it is my fault..."
- Nelsons Bible Dictionary's definition of repentance is: "*A turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God (Matt. 9:13; Luke 5:32). In a more general sense, repentance means a change of mind (Gen. 6:6-7) or a feeling of remorse or regret for past conduct. True repentance is a "godly sorrow" for sin, an act of turning around and going in the opposite direction.*"

4. *Briefly, how do you see God's grace in all this?*

- Answers will vary.

Day 2 – Gods grace in providing a fish. Read 2:1-2

1. *Did God provide the great fish as a punishment or salvation for Jonah? Did God's grace first come before or after Jonah cried out for help?*

- One could view the great fish as a form of God's discipline of Jonah in that He wasn't finished with Jonah.
- Another view could be that God sent the great fish to save Jonah.
- God's grace was first shown Jonah when He called him. His grace continues throughout Jonah's entire period of rebellion towards God. Thank God that He doesn't give up on us easily!
- Answers will vary.

2. *Where was Jonah when he finally prayed to the Lord? How would you relate Jonah to the prodigal son parable in Luke 15:11-18?*

- He was inside the great fish (2:1)
- The prodigal son ran from his father – Jonah ran from God.

Some Possible Answers for Week 3 of the Jonah Study

- He thought things were fine – Jonah probably thought things were fine when he found a ship going his way.
- Soon the prodigal son ran out of resources – Jonah’s ship ran into a terrible storm.
- When the prodigal son was about to starve, he came to his senses and decided to return to his father – Jonah was cast into the sea, swallowed by a great fish, he came to his senses and prayed to the Lord.

3. *How might you personally relate to Jonah’s hesitation to pray?*

- Answers will vary.

4. *Where do you see God’s grace in these two verses?*

- Answers will vary.

5. *What was Jonah’s emotional condition when he finally called out to God? Why do you suppose we wait so long before calling out to God?*

- *“In my distress I called to the Lord”* – Jonah was distressed to say the least.
- Answers will vary.

Day 3 – God’s grace brings Jonah from the pit. Read 2:3-6

1. *Who would you say hurled Jonah into the sea?*

- Physically, it was the crew members.
- But here it seems Jonah has realized the true source of his being hurled into the sea. It was the result of his disobedience to God. Thus it was by God’s *hand* (plan) that he was hurled into the sea.

2. *Some of Jonah’s prayer comes from the Psalms. See for Jn. 2:2 - Ps. 120:1; Jn. 2:3 - Ps. 42:7; Jn. 2:4 - Ps. 31:22; Jn. 2:5 - Ps. 69:1; Jn. 2:8 - Ps. 31:6; and Jn. 2:9 - Ps. 116:17-18. What does this say to you about memorizing scripture?*

- Ps. 120:1 – *“I call on the LORD in my distress, and he answers me “*
- Ps. 42:7 – *“Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me “*
- Ps. 31:22 – *“In my alarm I said, “I am cut off from your sight!” Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help “*
- Ps. 69:1 – *“Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck “*
- Ps. 31:6 – *“Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O LORD, you preserve both man and beast“*
- Ps. 116:17-18 – *“I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the LORD. ¹⁸ I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people“*
- Answers will vary

3. *From verses 3-6, would you say Jonah actually died (note: “the pit” refers to the grave)? See Ps 18:5; 28:1; 30:3; 116:3*

- Answers will vary.
- Some scholars believe the following is a possibility: Reading through Jonah’s prayer it seems he went to the bottom of the sea. Such phrases as “currents swirled,” “waves and breakers swept over me,” “deep surrounded me,” “seaweed was wrapped around my head,” and “to roots of mountains.... sank down.” These scholars say this indicates Jonah was not grabbed by the great fish immediately after being thrown into the sea. Rather, he actually drowned, thereby becoming a true “type” of Christ who died and was resurrected. They claim that at some point after the great fish swallowed Jonah, God brought him back (resurrected) to life. It was then that Jonah prayed this prayer from within the great fish. Some references used are: Zondervan Reference Software; Bible Explorer Software; and www.biblestudysite.com.

Some Possible Answers for Week 3 of the Jonah Study

4. *Where do you see God's grace in these verses?*

- Answers will vary.

Day 4 – Gods saving grace. – Read 2:7-9

1. *In Jn. 2:7, what did it take for Jonah to remember the Lord? Do you think Ps. 77:11-12 relates to Jonah's thinking at this time? Explain*

- He was dying when he remembered the Lord.
- Ps. 77:11-12 – *"I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. ¹² I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds"*
- Yes, it seems reasonable that Jonah knew the Psalms. It is during his most desperate time, a time of dying, that he remembers the promises in the Psalms.

2. *According to Jn. 2:8, what do we forfeit when we cling to our idols (see 2 Kings 17:15-18; Jeremiah 10:6-10)?*

- Jonah says we forfeit *grace!*
- 2 Kings 17:15-18 – *"They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, "Do not do as they do," and they did the things the LORD had forbidden them to do. ¹⁶ They forsook all the commands of the LORD their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshiped Baal. ¹⁷ They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sorcery and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger. ¹⁸ So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left"*
- Jeremiah 10:6-10 – *"No one is like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. ⁷ Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like you. ⁸ They are all senseless and foolish; they are taught by worthless wooden idols. ⁹ Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple- all made by skilled workers. ¹⁰ But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath"*
- Worshipping anyone or anything other than God is dangerous! We don't lose our salvation by doing such things we miss blessings and opportunities for serving the Lord (Exodus 20:3; Matthew 5:1-12; Mark 12:28-34; John 13:12-17).

3. *Identify three statements Jonah makes in Jn. 2:9.*

- With a song give thanks.
- Will sacrifice to the Lord.
- Honor his vows to the Lord.
- Note, Jonah has yet to confess his sin of rebellion! He is going to do what the Lord wants him to but he has not confessed nor repented from his rebellion. Pastor Malcolm spoke to this a couple of Sunday's ago. Often our prejudices and self-centeredness keep us from repenting.

4. *What does each of these statements mean to you personally?*

- Answers will vary.

5. *How do you see God's grace in these statements?*

- Answers will vary.

Some Possible Answers for Week 3 of the Jonah Study

Day 5 – By God's grace, Jonah is referred to by Jesus Christ as a sign. – Read 2:10

Read [Luke 11:29-30](#) and then use the following questions to discover the similarities between Jonah and Jesus.

1. *What was Jonah's mission (see 1:1)? What was Jesus' mission (see Matt. 28:18-20)?*

- Jonah 1:2 – *“Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”*
- Matt. 28:18-20 – *“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*
- Jonah was to prophecy to bring the Ninevites to repentance. Jesus came to do the same thing and sent His disciples out to do the same thing.

2. *What was Jonah willing to do (see 1:12)? What was Jesus willing to do (see Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 1:29; 1 Timothy 2:6)?*

- Jonah 1:12 – *“Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.”*
- Matt. 20:28 – *“just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*
- Mark 10:45 – *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*
- John 1:29 – *“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*
- 1 Timothy 2:6 – *“who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time.”*
- Jonah was giving his life up to save the crew and Jesus gave His life up to save all people who would believe.

3. *Where was Jonah entombed (see 2:1)? Where was Jesus placed after His death (see Matt. 27:58-60; Mark 6:29; Luke 23:53)?*

- Jonah 2:1 – *“From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.”*
- Matt. 27:58-60 – *“Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.”*
- Mark 6:29 – *“On hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.”*
- Luke 23:53 – *“Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid.”*
- Jonah was entombed in the great fish and Jesus was entombed in a borrowed grave.

4. *What happened to Jonah on the third day (2:10)? What happened to Jesus on the third day (see Matthew 17:23; 20:19; 28:1-10; Mark 9:31; 10:34; 16:1-7; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7; 24:46)? We will see more similarities in later chapters.*

- Jonah 2:10 – *“And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.”*
- All these reference verses tell of the fact that Jesus Christ would die and on the 3rd day be raised again.
- So Jonah was resurrected by God from the great fish and Jesus was resurrected on the 3rd day just as He foretold.

5. *Identify some attributes of God's that you've seen in this chapter.*

- Omnipotent, sovereign, gracious, patient, responds to prayer, is accessible, caring, loving, wise, omniscient...
- Answers will vary – this is a good question to activate our thinking about who God truly is!