

JONAH: Week 1 - The Rebellion

Open in Prayer

Welcome/Introductions/Cast Vision

Remind the Grow Group of the ground rules

Share context of the story (*Provide context by sharing the information below*)

Jonah appears in II Kings 14:25 as a prophet in the territory of Zebulun in northern Israel. He witnessed firsthand the restorative compassion of God that was extended to His wayward people. As we know, God called Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh. Nineveh was a major city of the Assyrians who were known for being cruel and warlike. Throughout the book of Jonah, we see evidence of God's grace and His love for all people.

Tell the story - Jonah 1 (*Have someone tell the story.*)

Rebuild the story (*Group members tell the story together based on what they remember.*)

Read the story out loud (*Read the scripture passage to see if anything was added or omitted.*)

Discuss these questions:

- 1. What do we learn about God from this passage?** (God invites us to join Him on mission; God's presence is always with us (Psalm 139:7-10); God does not force us to follow His will; God is all powerful; God is very patient with us; God desires for everyone to come to faith in Him (I Timothy 2:3-4); God is the Creator of the world; God's Word commands us to listen and obey; God will equip us with what we need to accomplish His work; even in our rebellion, God doesn't desert us; etc.)
- 2. What do we learn about Man/Us from this passage?** (I don't always think that God's ideas are good ideas; I can foolishly think that I can run to where God can't see me (Proverbs 15:3); even in my disobedience, God can be glorified (v16); I sometimes forget that it is a privilege to be a servant of the Most High God; sometimes I pray only out of desperation; it is possible to be out of the will of God and experience circumstances that appear to be working on my behalf; etc.)
- 3. What is God saying to you specifically through this passage as it pertains to your life, marriage, family, and work?**
- 4. In light of what you've learned today, what do you need to do to obey God?**

Other questions specific to this passage:

- 1. Have you ever had a wrong attitude about God's will because you thought what God wanted was impossible? If so, what was the thing that seemed impossible to you?**
- 2. Jonah did not want to see God's mercies extended to his enemies. Do you?**

Assign next week's passage - Jonah 2 (*Ask someone to tell the story next week*)

Close in Prayer

JONAH: Week 2 – Jonah's Prayer

Open in Prayer

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Share context of the story *(Provide context by sharing the information below)*

In Jonah chapter 1, God directed Jonah to go to Nineveh. However, Jonah disobeyed boarding a ship that was headed for Tarshish. The sailors of the ship became concerned because of the great storm that brewed. Jonah explained that God was bringing judgment upon him. The sailors threw him into the sea where he was swallowed by an enormous fish. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Tell the story - Jonah 2 *(Have someone tell the story.)*

Rebuild the story *(Group members tell the story together based on what they remember.)*

Read the story out loud *(Read the scripture passage to see if anything was added or omitted.)*

Discuss these questions:

- 1. What do we learn about God from this passage?** (God always hears our cries for help; God answers our prayers; God is a Rescuer, delivering us from our own destruction; God brings His truth to our remembrance at the most critical moments; salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone (John 14:6); it is the goodness of God that brings us to repentance (Romans 2:4); God knows the motives behind my prayers; God disciplines us so that we might grow in righteousness (Hebrews 12:11); etc.)
- 2. What do we learn about Man/Us from this passage?** (I often see prayer as my last resort; I grow weary in following the Lord; the idols that I follow are only full of empty promises; I suffer the consequences of my sinful actions; I can sometimes cry out to God because I'm in danger, not because I delight to spend time with Him; I have forgotten what it feels like to be lost and hopeless without Jesus; I struggle with surrendering certain areas of my life to the Lord; etc.)
- 3. What is God saying to you specifically through this passage as it pertains to your life, marriage, family, and work?**
- 4. In light of what you've learned today, what do you need to do to obey God?**

Other questions specific to this passage:

- 1. When have you felt like you were in a deep, dark pit either physically, emotionally, or spiritually? Why do you think we have to sink so low before we remember God?**
- 2. At what point in your life were you closest to turning away from following the Lord?**

Assign next week's passage - Jonah 3 *(Ask someone to tell the story next week)*

Close in Prayer

JONAH: Week 3 – Nineveh Repents

Open in Prayer

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Share context of the story *(Provide context by sharing the information below)*

Chapter 2 of Jonah is packed almost completely with a prayer connected to Jonah's experiences in the belly of the great fish. The primary tone of the prayer is one of thankfulness for God's salvation. Even as Jonah reflected on the seriousness of his situation, he still felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude to God. Jonah had cried out to God, and God had answered. Then the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Tell the story - Jonah 3 *(Have someone tell the story.)*

Rebuild the story *(Group members tell the story together based on what they remember.)*

Read the story out loud *(Read the scripture passage to see if anything was added or omitted.)*

Discuss these questions:

- 1. What do we learn about God from this passage?** (God doesn't desert us during our rebellion (Hebrews 13:5); God has called us to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others (Matthew 28:19-20); God gives us the words to say at the very moment we need them (Luke 12:12); God calls us to obedience, living by faith (II Corinthians 5:17); God calls us to repentance (Acts 3:19); God works through us, giving us the desire and power to do what pleases Him (Philippians 2:13); etc.)
- 2. What do we learn about Man/Us from this passage?** (I can be stiff-necked, refusing to follow the Lord's leadership for my life (Acts 7:51); my heart is joyful when I allow the Lord to use me for His glory; I can enjoy an intimate and personal relationship with Jesus; I can be forgiven by a gracious and loving God, but still experience the painful consequences of my sin; I can faithfully share my faith with others, but it is the Lord who draws them to a relationship with Him (John 6:44); etc.)
- 3. What is God saying to you specifically through this passage as it pertains to your life, marriage, family, and work?**
- 4. In light of what you've learned today, what do you need to do to obey God?**

Other questions specific to this passage:

- 1. God never deserted Jonah, even in Jonah's rebellion. What evidence of this promise have you personally seen and experienced? How does this truth bring you comfort?**
- 2. Have you ever seen someone cruel and hardhearted quickly turn to the Lord?**

Assign next week's passage - Jonah 4 *(Ask someone to tell the story next week)*

Close in Prayer

JONAH: Week 4 – An Unhappy Servant

Open in Prayer

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Share context of the story *(Provide context by sharing the information below)*

In chapter 3 of Jonah, God calls the prophet once again to speak His Word to the people of Nineveh. This time, Jonah delivers the message bluntly and to the point. We're told that Jonah's message spread even to the king of Nineveh, who issued an executive order for the people to repent and cry out to God. The great news of this chapter is that God saw Nineveh repent, and He responded with His grace.

Tell the story - Jonah 4 *(Have someone tell the story.)*

Rebuild the story *(Group members tell the story together based on what they remember.)*

Read the story out loud *(Read the scripture passage to see if anything was added or omitted.)*

Discuss these questions:

1. What do we learn about God from this passage? (The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unending love (Psalm 145:8); God looks beyond our actions and sees our heart (I Samuel 16:7); God exposes and weighs the motives of our heart (I Corinthians 4:5); even in our selfishness and pride, God is patient with us (II Peter 3:9); God gives us the freedom to follow or reject His leadership; God offers everyone grace and salvation through His Son, Jesus (John 3:16-17); etc.)

2. What do we learn about Man/Us from this passage? (I struggle when the people I dislike receive blessings from the Lord (Psalm 73:3); I must not only do the will of God, but do the will of God from my heart (Ephesians 6:6); my anger will never achieve the righteousness of God (James 1:20); just like the prodigal's elder brother, I struggle with selfishness and pride (Luke 15:28); I am more concerned with being comfortable than seeing the lost come to faith in Jesus; etc.)

3. What is God saying to you specifically through this passage as it pertains to your life, marriage, family, and work?

4. In light of what you've learned today, what do you need to do to obey God?

Other questions specific to this passage:

1. In what situations have you had to struggle with wanting people to like and respect you more than you wanted to please God and exhibit godly character?

2. How has God shown you patient tenderness? How can you reflect that to others?

Close in Prayer