

What did the outcome of casting lots reveal about God's character and power? V7

What was the sailor's response to the outcome of the lots? V8

What did their response reveal about their beliefs? V8

What was Jonah's response to their questions? V9

Why was it strange that Jonah claimed to worship and fear God? How were his actions in opposition to that? V9

Reflect on this story in the light of your own life.

Truth: You can't run from God. Comment:

Truth: No one is more special to God than anyone one else. Comment:

Close in prayer

Pray for each other as we are reminded of the outrageous mercy of God. Pray for the people that God might be leading us to love and share with.



JONAH

God's Merciful Steadfast Love Growth Group Study Guide

Week 1

4 September 2022

Jonah Chapter 1

Series Overview:

Jonah is the central character in the Book of Jonah, in which God commands him to go to the city of Nineveh to prophesy against it for their great wickedness against him. However, Jonah instead attempts to run from God by going in the opposite direction and sailing towards Tarshish. The main message from this book is God's merciful, steadfast love. Jonah was a prophet, and even though he had let God down in numerous ways, he was still forgiven because God showed him unlimited love and compassion. Through the five weeks of this sermon series, our prayer is that we, as imperfect people may also experience God's amazing mercy and love, not through our obedience, but through God's grace in Christ.

Read Jonah Chapter 1

Notes:

- Nineveh was located 800 kms northeast of Samaria. This would have required Jonah to travel more than a month, if he journeyed the usual 25-30kms a day. So not only was the city the largest in the world at the time (second only to Babylon; probably with a population of ~600,000), and known for violence, but it was also quite a lengthy journey from where he was. Jonah had numerous reasons for not wanting to go, but none were GOOD reasons.
- This is the only recorded instance of a prophet refusing God's commission. If the location is as suspected, it was as far west of the opposite direction as possible. Definite rebellion. H.C. Woodring says of it- "God wanted him to go to Nineveh, 800kms northeast of Palestine. Instead of going east, Jonah went 3000kms to the west. God wished Jonah to take an overland trip via the Fertile Crescent. Instead he took a distasteful sea voyage (the Jews hated the sea). God sent him to the greatest metropolis of the day. Instead Jonah headed for a remote trading post on the fringes of civilization. The Lord wished to go with His prophet. Instead Jonah tried to flee from the presence and power of God."
- The sailors were probably Phoenicians, who believed in many gods, but not the true God. Phoenicians were known for their multi-theism and skill at sea. Note that the storm must have been very severe if such seasoned sailors were afraid because of it.

What did God command Jonah to do? V2. Why?

What was Jonah's response? V3

Why do you think he responded in this way? V3

Did he succeed in fleeing from the presence of the Lord? V3

What was the Lord's response to Jonah's disobedience? V4

What did this display about the Lord's character and His power? V4

How did this endanger others traveling with him? V4

What were the sailors' three responses to the storm? V5

What does this say about the severity of the storm? V5

What was Jonah's initial response to the storm? V5

What does the sailors' response indicate about their character and beliefs? V5

What does Jonah's initial response indicate about his character? V5

Why did the captain approach Jonah? V6

What did the captain's question reveal about his faith in his people's gods? In Jonah's God? V6