

Bible Stories for Adults

Jonah Jonah

Opening

- Gathering: Who is your greatest enemy today?
How might God want to use you to give them His blessing?
- Today's Focus: Jonah rejected God's call because he didn't want to save his enemy. God called him a second time to show Jonah that he was blessed to be a blessing.
- Key Verses: *The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."* Galatians 3:8
- When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, He had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction He had planned.* Jonah 3:10

Opening Prayer

Lesson

God's Prophets (2 Kings 17:7-15)

- How faithful were God's chosen people – the Israelites?
2 Kings 17:7-12 = They rejected God and worshiped idols
- How did God respond to their rejection?
2 Kings 17:13 = He sent many prophets to call them back to faithfulness in Him
- Did the Israelites return to faithfulness when God sent His prophets to call them back?
2 Kings 17:14-15 = They wouldn't listen and grew more unfaithful

God's People (Amos 7:12-13)

- Why didn't the Israelites listen to God's prophets and follow their call to be faithful?
Micah 2:6 = They believed that *disgrace will not overtake us*
- Why did Israel feel so secure?
Amos 7:12-13 = They were God's chosen, God wouldn't harm them
- How did God respond to Israel's feeling of superiority?
Amos 9:7 = *Aren't you Israelites the same to me as the Cushites?*
- How did Jesus respond to the Jews' arrogance as descendants of Abraham?
Matthew 3:9 = *Out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham*

God's Chosen People (Galatians 3)

- But hadn't God excluded non-Jews from His people when He called Abraham? = all peoples blessed
Genesis 12:1-3 = No, He specially blessed the Jews so they would be blessings to others
- Wasn't God only the God of the Jews?
Romans 3:29-30 (10:12-15) = No, He is the God of all creation and all people
- What about God's promise being specifically for the descendants of Abraham?
Galatians 3:7-9 = *Those who believe are children of Abraham*
- How do we, as non-Jews, receive the promise given to Abraham?
Galatians 3:14, 29 = *If you belong to Christ, then you are ... heirs to the promise*

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News to Christians (*Acts 11*)

How did the early church respond when Peter baptized the Roman, Cornelius?

Acts 11:1-3 = They criticized him for associating with Gentiles

What great understanding did they gain after Peter told his story?

Acts 11:18 = *God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life*

Jonah's Times (*Jonah 1:1*)

Who was Jonah?

Jonah 1:1 = Son of Amittai, From Gath-Hepher in Zebulun, north of Nazareth (2 Kings 14:25)

At what time in Israel's history did Jonah prophesy?

2 Kings 14:23, 25 = During Jeroboam II of Israel, Between Elisha & Amos/Hosea

What world power was Israel's biggest threat? = Menahem ruled 7 months after Jeroboam II

2 Kings 15:19 = Assyria (1000 talents = 37 tons), reputation for incredible brutality

For what did the Israelites dream?

Micah 5:5-6 = Destruction of and deliverance from Assyria

Why is it called *the land of Nimrod*?

Genesis 10:8-12 = Cush's son, Nimrod, built Nineveh (Assyria's capital)

Jonah's Call (*Jonah 1:1-3*)

What was God's mission for Jonah?

Jonah 1:2 = To preach in Nineveh and call them to repentance

What would happen if they listened to Jonah and turned from evil?

Ezekiel 18:21, 23 = They would be forgiven and not be destroyed

You Can Run But You Cannot Hide (*Jonah 1:3-6*)

How did Jonah feel about being God's messenger of grace to Assyria?

Jonah 1:3 = He tried to run away from God, Tarshish (Spain) was western end of the world

How easily could Jonah run away and hide from God?

Jeremiah 23:23-24 = God fills heaven & earth, near & far, no secret places to hide

Did Jonah really feel he could run away and hide from God?

Jonah 1:4-6 = Apparently; he slept while God was getting his attention with a storm

Rough Seas Away From God (*Jonah 1:7-16*)

How did the sailors determine Jonah was responsible for the calamity?

Jonah 1:7 (Proverbs 16:33) = They cast lots to learn God's answer

Were they upset with Jonah when they learned that he was responsible for this trouble?

Jonah 1:8-10 = No, they were afraid & wondered what he could have done to draw God's wrath

How would they be able to calm this storm?

Jonah 1:11-12 = Throw Jonah into the sea

How quickly did the sailors follow Jonah's instructions?

Jonah 1:13-15 = First tried to row to land, prayed for innocence before throwing Jonah in

What effect did this event have on the sailors?

Jonah 1:16 = It built their faith, they sacrificed & made vows

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The Fish (*Jonah 2*)

How did God protect Jonah from the sea to be able to fulfill his mission?

Jonah 1:17; 2:10 = *The Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah*, Spit him out on land

Fish Notes:

Not a whale - Extremely rare in Mediterranean, throat too small to swallow a man

Probably a *Requin* shark - Common in Mediterranean to 25' long, large throat

Deep water, Very voracious, swallows everything it finds; Whole horse was found in one
1758 - One swallowed an overboard sailor, captain shot with cannonball, man vomited up alive

What was significant about the time Jonah remained in the fish?

Matthew 12:38-40 (16:4) = Christ to lie 3 days in heart of earth

How did Jonah pass the time in the fish? = Concluded that *Salvation comes from the LORD*

Jonah 2:1 (2-9) = He prayed prayers of thanksgiving for rescue

Jonah's Mission (*Jonah 3:1-4*)

How did God's mission for Jonah change after his display of faithlessness?

Jonah 3:1-2 = It didn't. Shows God's patience & grace; man can't harm God's plan

How did Jonah respond this second time? = Greater Ninevah was 60 miles circumference (3 days walk)

Jonah 3:3-4 = *He obeyed and went*, warned of destruction in 40 days

How did Jonah know what to say?

Jonah 3:2 = God told him, just like all of God's other prophets

Jonah's Impact (*Jonah 3:5-10*)

How had the Israelites treated God's prophets who called for repentance?

1 Kings 19:10 = They rejected and killed them

Did the evil Ninevites reject Jonah's message and attempt to harm him?

Jonah 3:5 = No, they believed, fasted and humbled themselves before God

How seriously were the Ninevites in responding to God's warning?

Jonah 3:6-9 = Even the king responded and issued a decree for all to repent and turn to God

How did God respond to their acceptance of His call?

Jonah 3:10 = *He had compassion & didn't bring upon them the destruction he had threatened*

Jonah's Celebration of Success (*Jonah 4:1-5*)

How thrilled was Jonah that his mission had been successful?

Jonah 4:1 = *Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry*

Why did he react this way?

Jonah 4:2 = He was afraid this would happen; he didn't want Nineveh to be saved

What did he do?

Jonah 4:3-5 = Made a lean-to on a hill hoping to see destruction

Jonah's Object Lesson (*Jonah 4:6-7*)

What miracle did God perform to teach Jonah a lesson?

Jonah 4:6-7 = Made bush grow to give shade, then had worm kill it

Probably *Elkeroa* - Common shrub in Palestine, grows in sandy places

Broad vine-like leaves with dense shadow; Grows very quickly in matter of days

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Jonah's Misplaced Concern (*Jonah 4:8-11*)

How did this affect Jonah?

Jonah 4:8-9 = He became very angry and even wished to die

What was God's message through the vine? = God is concerned & gives His grace to His creation

Jonah 4:10-11 = Jonah was much more concerned over vine than innocent in city

Note: *Cannot tell their right hand from their left* is a phrase that referred to small kids
120,000 innocent kids under 7 leads to around 600,000 people in city

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I acted like God's rules didn't apply to me?
(*Psalm 119:43-48; Matthew 5:17-19; 28:19-20; Luke 11:28; John 14:15; Romans 6; 1 Timothy 1:9*)
2. How have I acted superior or more important than others?
(*Proverbs 8:13; Matthew 23; John 13:1-17; Romans 12:3-8; Galatians 6:3-5*)
3. How do others recognize that I am part of God's chosen family?
(*Exodus 19:4-6; Matthew 27:69-75; Romans 11:13-14; Gal. 5:22-25; 1 Peter 3:1-2; 1 John 4:2-6*)
4. How has God rescued me in ways that didn't seem like salvation at the time?
(*Jonah 1:17; 2:10; Genesis 50:20; Esther 4:14; Isaiah 55:8; Hebrews 12:5-11*)
5. When have I been jealous of or upset with the success or blessings of others?
(*Jonah 4:1-4; Proverbs 23:17; Matthew 20:1-16; Mark 7:20-23; John 21:20-22*)

Minor Prophets Timeline

Date (B.C.)	Bible Book	Meaning of Name	Chapters	Audience	Major Sins
840-830	Obadiah	Worshipper of YHVH	1	Against Edom	Edom had continual violence toward Jacob. Edom cheered when Judah taken captive.
830-750	Joel	YHVH is God	3	Israel, Northern Kingdom	Adultery, drunkenness, idolatry, licentiousness.
780-740	Jonah	Dove	4	Nineveh, implications for all peoples	Cruelty of the Assyrians
765-725	Hosea	Salvation	14	Israel, Northern Kingdom	Adultery, drunkenness, idolatry, licentiousness.
760	Amos	Burden Bearer	9	Israel, Judah and Benjamin. All Nations.	Oppression of the poor, Sexual Immorality, Wanton Luxury, Corruption of law & men
740-700	Micah	Who is like YHVH?	7	Samaria, Jerusalem and then the whole earth	Lack of justice in the land, injustice, oppression
640-620	Nahum	Consolation	3	Assyrians, primarily the city of Nineveh	Cruelty of the Assyrians, overstepped boundaries
640-609	Zephaniah	Hidden by YHVH	3	Judah, Jerusalem, Israel and all peoples, warning them of the Day of the Lord	Spiritual fornication
608-605	Habakkuk	Embrace	3	Babylon, implications for all peoples	Aggression/plunder, Greed/self-assertion, Graft/violence in building Inhumanity, Idolatry
520	Haggai	Festival	2	Zerubbabel, Joshua and the returned remnant	Neglect in building God's House. Procrastination.
520-480	Zechariah	Remembered by YHVH	14	Zerubbabel, Joshua and the returned remnant	Joshua had filthy garments. Lack of Judgment, mercy & peace. Living in evil ways.
420-400	Malachi	My Messenger	4	Israel (12 tribes) and Israel of God today (Church)	Priests neglecting duties. People chided for divorce, adultery, robbing God and criticizing.

from www.biblestudy.org/prophecy/minor-prophets.html