



# jonah

## SERIES OVERVIEW

The book of Jonah is unique among the so-called minor prophets. Unlike, say, Micah or Amos, which are collections of those men's prophecies, the book of Jonah reads more like a narrative satire or parable, setting up Jonah as a type of anti-hero who consistently fails in his mission. This is no accident. Although the book of Jonah is often simply remembered because of the big fish incident, the book has far deeper implications. This cautionary tale is meant to draw God's people into introspection about His merciful character and our own willingness to respond to the call of the Lord on our lives.

## WEEK 1 - JONAH RUNS FROM THE LORD

### OVERVIEW

The book of Jonah opens with a very odd sight: a prophet of God who so dislikes the prophecy he is tasked with giving that he attempts to sail to the ends of the known earth to get away from him. Of course, God is not limited by geography. As the Creator of "the sea and the land" (v.9), he has power to bring Jonah back into line with his intentions. As we will see, God's plans involve giving a wicked Gentile nation an opportunity to turn back to him, just as the Gentile sailors on Jonah's boat do when faced with the power of the Lord.

This first chapter of Jonah's over-the-top journey raises compelling questions about our own willingness to respond to the call of God. The Lord harnesses the sea, the storm, and even a beast from the deep to get Jonah back on track. Are we willing to surrender everything to the God who made it all? Or would we still prefer to be the masters of our own destiny?

*"Throw me into the sea," Jonah said, "and it will become calm again.  
I know that this terrible storm is all my fault."*

Jonah 1:12

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever experienced a time when you felt God calling you to something that was scary or out of your comfort zone? What did you do?
2. How would you describe the role of a prophet in the Old Testament?
3. Read [Jonah 1:1-3](#). Why do you think Jonah *went in the opposite direction to get away from the LORD*?
4. Read [Jonah 1:4-17](#). What is the significance of the sailors in this story?
5. How does this story show God's mercy and compassion and grace up to this point?
6. What is your posture toward God's call on your life? Are you willing to go where God sends you, or are you running the other way?