

PRECEPT
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*Where Are
You Going?*

A STUDY OF JONAH

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®
KINGS AND PROPHETS SERIES
Course 5
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
A STUDY OF JONAH

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—New American Standard Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000

Hebrew Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

KEIL, C. F.; DELITZSCH, F.

Commentary on the Old Testament

Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1996

SMITH, B. K.; PAGE, F. S.

The New American Commentary, Vol. 19B

Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995

WALVOORD, JOHN F., ZUCK, ROY B., EDS.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures

Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985

LESSON ONE

Chapters One and Two

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES Cross-references
Word studies
The following located in the Appendix:
Observation Worksheets of Jonah 1-2
“Jonah’s Journey” map

Was there ever a time when you wanted to run away from the will of the Lord, even die, because it seemed easier, *your* way out? Many have been there at one time or another.


What’s the answer? What are we to do? And what if we don’t?

The book of Jonah has answers. It’s far more than a whale of a story!

DAY ONE

1. The book of Jonah is just four chapters long; it can be read in minutes. If it were a New Testament epistle, we would suggest you sit down and read it to familiarize yourself with the content. However, because its historical content took place over a period of time, we think it’s better for you to study it event by event. Therefore, may we ask you to restrain yourself and experience the adventure chapter by chapter.

Read the first chapter of Jonah and stop. Then go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to show you His purpose in including this account in His book, the Bible. What has He ordered written and preserved all these millennia for the world, particularly for the nation of Israel, and for the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ? Seek His face in this matter every time you begin your study.

2. There are Observation Worksheets on Jonah in the Appendix so you can freely mark the text. Read Jonah 1 again. This time mark references to *Jonah* including pronouns in a color of your choice. When you finish, list everything you learn about Jonah that answers one of the 5 Ws and H: who, what, when, where, why, and how. If you come to references to time—anything that tells you “when”—mark it in a distinctive way. Many of us mark it with a green clock like this: 

3. As you observed the text, you read where Jonah was, where he went, and why, but can you find them on a map? Geography is important when you study the Bible; it tells you “where.” Double underline each geographical location in chapter 1 in green. There’s a map in the Appendix. Follow Jonah’s adventure by drawing arrows from one location to another. This will give you a better perspective on the events in this chapter.
4. Read Jonah chapter 1 again, but not beyond! This time mark every reference to the *LORD*. List what you learn from this chapter about God. It’s rich.
5. Two final questions and we will call it a good day’s work:
 - a. Do you believe what you’ve observed about Jonah? Do your observations give you any problems? Raise any doubts? Write out your thoughts—be honest (you can be with God)!
 - b. Do you believe what you’ve just learned about God? Does it give you any problems? If so, what? If not, why?

May we suggest you bring today’s lesson to a close by meditating on Psalms 95 and 96, and memorizing Psalm 95:3-7a. To memorize a passage simply read it aloud three times in a row, three different times a day. Soon it will be yours.

DAY
TWO

1. Let's begin our study by returning to our observations of Jonah. There's a lot of information here that God wants us to know. By the way, begin with prayer...it makes such a difference.

Read chapter 1 again. If you read it aloud, you'll soon have it memorized. As you read, note who besides Jonah plays a significant role in this account. Mark every reference to this group of men including the captain. Then list what you learn about them.

2. Now read the chapter again. What words or phrases repeated in this chapter are significant? These are called key words. Key words and phrases are repeated in order to communicate the author's main point and reason for writing. Key words unlock meanings. They help us interpret the text.

When you mark a key word, do so in a distinctive color, series of colors, or with a symbol. Keep it simple—marking is not intended to be a burden; rather, it's a way of quickly spotting important words and phrases. By the way, make sure you mark synonyms and pronouns in the same way.

You might consider making a bookmark for your Jonah study, putting your key words (with the way you're going to mark them) on it.

Some people prefer to directly mark their Bibles. We encourage you to consider investing in *The New Inductive Study Bible (NISB)*. You will benefit greatly from making it your primary study Bible!

Kay's book, *How to Study Your Bible*, has helped over half a million people (in English alone) to study the Bible inductively.

Now, diligent one, see what you can discover on your own. List key words and phrases you see in this chapter.

3. Did you mark the word *calamity*? What was the calamity? It should be marked the same way. If you didn't mark *storm* and *calamity* the same way, do it because they are key words. As you just saw, the unrelenting storm prompted the sailors to do what they did to Jonah.
 - a. Did you note *who* caused the calamity? Did it become more calamitous?
 - b. What stopped the calamity?
4. What do you do when big or small calamities come your way? What's your first move? Second? Go down the line.
5. Now, let's take a few minutes to look at other passages that deal with calamity. As you look up each reference, note what you learn about calamity and what a person should do when it happens. Also, if the passage tells you, note who or what causes the calamity.
 - a. Isaiah 45:7
 - b. Jeremiah 18:7-11 (Jeremiah has much to say about calamity, which you will see when you study this timely prophet. It will be an incredibly awesome study.)

c. Daniel 9:11-14

b. Amos 3:6-7 (If you have studied Amos with us, you'll find this section to be familiar territory that will confirm and encourage you in the discipline of inductive Bible study.)

6. Finally, is there anything practical we can learn about calamity? Will it change how you respond to it?

Wonderful job! You are off to such a good start.

DAY
THREE

1. When you marked your references to *Jonah* and then listed what you observed, according to Jonah 1:3,

a. where did Jonah go with respect to the Lord?

b. How many times is this phrase repeated in this chapter?

c. Do you think it is a key phrase? Why?

2. The Word of God makes it clear that God is omnipresent; as Psalm 139 says, there is no hiding from Him. Therefore the statement that Jonah went “from the presence of the LORD” is interesting, isn’t it? What does it mean? Is it possible for someone to do this today? If so, how?

Look up the following passages and see what you learn about moving from the presence of the Lord. While there are far more references to the presence of the Lord in the Bible if you care to look for them, we believe these will be sufficient to understand what this phrase means with respect to Jonah.

- a. Genesis 3:1-18. Note what the man and woman do, why they do it, and how God responds.

- b. Genesis 4:1-16. Observe Cain’s actions and attitude carefully.

- c. 2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 (Note how this differs from the other two passages.)

- d. From all you have seen, what do you think it means when it says Jonah went from the presence of the Lord? How was this done? Is there any application in this for us?

c. 1 Samuel 14:24-45

d. Nehemiah 10:34

e. Proverbs 16:33

f. Acts 1:26

6. Who controlled the lots cast by the sailors? Explain your answer.

Don't you just stand in awe of all you have learned these past three days? You've learned what it means to move from the presence of the Lord; you've seen God's unwillingness to let Jonah depart in disobedience; and you've observed what He worked in the lives of the sailors! Is this the God you know? Does He change—or is the God of both Testaments the God you love and serve today?

Put your pen down, read Jonah 1 again, and let it go deep into your soul.

The Latin phrase, "Coram Deo," means "before the face of God." Living life "Coram Deo" means we live our lives in light of the truth that we are in the presence of a Holy, Sovereign God!! Thus we live under His authority, in constant awareness of His character, and in obedience to His Word. O precious one, what a privilege we have! Don't take it lightly! Don't believe the enemy's lies. When you sin, when you disobey, God is not finished with you, as you are about to see. He longs for you to return.

DAY
FOUR

1. Today we move into Jonah chapter 2, a touching chapter as you will see. In the Hebrew Bible, verse 1 of chapter 2 is really verse 2, as they divide chapter 1 right after 1:16. Therefore begin reading with 1:17, which will put you into context.

Continue to mark the references to *Jonah* and to the *LORD*. Watch for additional key words. Mark references to time and sequences. Double underline geographical locations.

2. Now, what is Jonah chapter 2 about? Describe it in one brief sentence.

3. List what you learn about Jonah and the Lord from this chapter.

Jonah

The Lord

4. When you looked for key words, did you mark references to *prayer*? If not, stop and do so now, but begin in chapter 1. Mark synonyms for *prayer* such as *calling* on God and *crying* to Him. When you finish, list everything you learn

from marking *prayer* in Jonah 1 and 2. Note *who* prays, *what* they pray, *when* they pray, *where* they pray, and *why* they pray.

5. Let's take a few minutes and examine some scriptures dealing with calling upon the Lord and crying out to Him in prayer. Look up the following passages and record your insights, asking the 5 Ws and H. Take special note of what God does when we cry out to Him and what we receive when He hears.

- a. Exodus 2:23-25; Deuteronomy 26:6-11

- b. 2 Samuel 22:1-7, 17-25

- c. Psalm 57:1-5

d. Psalm 116:1-13

e. Psalm 145:18-19

f. Romans 8:15-17

6. Are there times when you cry out to the Lord and He does not answer you? Why would this happen? Is there anything we can do to change this?

a. Micah 3:4

b. Habakkuk 1:2-5 (Are God's purpose and timing significant?)

c. Psalm 66:18

- d. Isaiah 59:1-2

- e. 1 John 1:9 (How do you return to God when you have disobeyed Him?)

- 7. Let's stop for a little personal application. How well do you know the God to whom you pray? How important is prayer in your life? Is it an essential part of your relationship with God? The answers to these questions are so important. Why don't you come before God and ask Him to examine your relationship with Him and your prayer life? If you journal, you may want to record what He shows you.

Whether this is your first Precept course or you are a seasoned student, aren't you grateful to the Lord that you can learn how to discover His truth for yourself?

We commend you for your diligence in studying to show yourself approved unto God—a workman who will not be ashamed because you are determined to handle His Word in a worthy manner, accurately.

8. Finally, Beloved, when you made your list on prayer, did you notice two references to “Your holy temple.” To understand why Jonah spoke of praying toward God’s holy temple, read 2 Chronicles 6, which you will find at the end of this lesson. As you read, mark or color every reference to the *house of the LORD* (the temple Jonah is referring to) and then mark in another color every reference to *sin*. When you finish, write out why Jonah says what he says to God in 2:4,7 and what this tells you about Jonah.

DAY
FIVE

We’ve come to our final day of study for this week. By this time next week you will have almost completed your study of Jonah. Now that should give you a sense of achievement, faithful one.

1. Read Jonah 2 again. In 2:2 Jonah says he cried for help from the depth of Sheol. What is *Sheol* and how can you find out? You can begin by using a concordance or a Bible study computer program to see where and how the word is used in the Word of God. Word meanings are derived from the texts in which they are found. Check the following references and note what you learn. If you have these tools, see what you can discover. Record your insights.

a. Psalm 18:4-6

b. Psalm 88:1-6

c. Isaiah 14:11

2. There's a truth in this second chapter of Jonah that we don't want you to miss—one you can cling to in the day of adversity, especially when the adversity is the consequence of disobedience. Look at *nevertheless* in verse 4 and *while I was fainting away* in verse 7. From the depths of Sheol, the watery “grave” prepared by God, Jonah knew where to look for rescue. Jonah knew his God. This is what happens when you study God's Word—because you get to know your God, you learn where to run in the day of trouble—even if the trouble is your own making.

Look up the following passages and record what you learn from them. Note situations, circumstances, actions that are taken, and what happens. Watch God in these passages and you'll get to know Him even better.

a. Isaiah 38:1-20 (Hezekiah is a king of Judah; he rules after Jonah's time.)

b. 2 Chronicles 32:33; 33:1-20 (Note who Manasseh's father is.)

6. Now one last question on this subject: Why do you think people have a hard time believing that the book of Jonah contains historical facts?

When you study the Bible Precept upon Precept, you will sometimes find yourself face-to-face with events that don't seem possible. But if you believe the Bible is God's sovereignly inspired and guarded Word, then you accept it by faith. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. It is realizing God is God and taking God at His Word, even when others scoff. Who would you rather believe, God or man—man whose average life span is threescore and ten and whose knowledge is limited by his experience?

Think about this!

7. Feel free to consult commentaries, but don't go beyond Jonah 2. We have another week to explore the last two surprising chapters and their needful lessons.

Well done, diligent one. Tell others the benefits you're receiving from studying God's Word inductively. It's not hard; it simply takes time, but can you spend your time in a better way? After all, if God gave us sixty-six books in the Bible, He deems each essential or He would not have included it. It is our responsibility, then, to study each book for ourselves so that we have the whole counsel of God.

8. Finally, what truths can you apply to your life from this week's lesson? What are you thankful for? Has God ever rescued you after you sinned? What do you need to say to Him? How important is a thankful heart before a Holy God?

2 CHRONICLES 6

THEN Solomon said,

“The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud.

2 “I have built You a lofty house,

And a place for Your dwelling forever.”

3 Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing.

4 He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled *it* with His hands, saying,

5 ‘Since the day that I brought My people from the land of Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel *in which* to build a house that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man for a leader over My people Israel;

6 but I have chosen Jerusalem that My name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’

7 “Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

8 “But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart.

9 ‘Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he shall build the house for My name.’

10 “Now the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in the place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

11 “There I have set the ark in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with the sons of Israel.”

12 Then he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands.

13 Now Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and

he stood on it, knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven.

- 14 He said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and *showing* lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart;
- 15 who has kept with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him; indeed You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.
- 16 “Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk in My law as you have walked before Me.’
- 17 “Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, let Your word be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant David.
- 18 “But will God indeed dwell with mankind on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house which I have built.
- 19 “Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You;
- 20 that Your eye may be open toward this house day and night, toward the place of which You have said that *You would* put Your name there, to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place.
- 21 “Listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place; hear from Your dwelling place, from heaven; hear and forgive.
- 22 “If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this house,
- 23 then hear from heaven and act and judge Your servants, punishing the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

- 24 “If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and they return *to You* and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this house,
- 25 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You have given to them and to their fathers.
- 26 “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin when You afflict them;
- 27 then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance.
- 28 “If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight or mildew, if there is locust or grasshopper, if their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities, whatever plague or whatever sickness *there is*,
- 29 whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own pain, and spreading his hands toward this house,
- 30 then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know for You alone know the hearts of the sons of men,
- 31 that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways as long as they live in the land which You have given to our fathers.
- 32 “Also concerning the foreigner who is not from Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your great name’s sake and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house,

- 33 then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, and fear You as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.
- 34 “When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name,
- 35 then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.
- 36 “When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to a land far off or near,
- 37 if they take thought in the land where they are taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned, we have committed iniquity and have acted wickedly’;
- 38 if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been taken captive, and pray toward their land which You have given to their fathers and the city which You have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Your name,
- 39 then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.
- 40 “Now, O my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open and Your ears attentive to the prayer *offered* in this place.
- 41 “Now therefore arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your might; let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation and let Your godly ones rejoice in what is good.
- 42 “O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; remember *Your* lovingkindness to Your servant David.”

JONAH 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying,

- 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.”
- 3 But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.
- 4 The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up.
- 5 Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten *it* for them. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep.
- 6 So the captain approached him and said, “How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps *your* god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish.”
- 7 Each man said to his mate, “Come, let us cast lots so we may learn on whose account this calamity *has struck* us.” So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.
- 8 Then they said to him, “Tell us, now! On whose account *has* this calamity *struck* us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?”
- 9 He said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.”
- 10 Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, “How could you do this?” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

-
- 11 So they said to him, “What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?”—for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy.
- 12 He said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that on account of me this great storm *has come* upon you.”
- 13 However, the men rowed *desperately* to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming *even* stormier against them.
- 14 Then they called on the LORD and said, “We earnestly pray, O LORD, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, O LORD, have done as You have pleased.”
- 15 So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging.
- 16 Then the men feared the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.
- 17 And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

JONAH 2

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THEN Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the stomach of the fish,

2 and he said,

“I called out of my distress to the LORD,

And He answered me.

I cried for help from the depth of Sheol;

You heard my voice.

3 “For You had cast me into the deep,

Into the heart of the seas,

And the current engulfed me.

All Your breakers and billows passed over me.

4 “So I said, ‘I have been expelled from Your sight.

Nevertheless I will look again toward Your holy temple.’

5 “Water encompassed me to the point of death.

The great deep engulfed me,

Weeds were wrapped around my head.

6 “I descended to the roots of the mountains.

The earth with its bars *was* around me forever,

But You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.

7 “While I was fainting away,

I remembered the LORD,

And my prayer came to You,

Into Your holy temple.

8 “Those who regard vain idols

Forsake their faithfulness,

9 But I will sacrifice to You

With the voice of thanksgiving.

That which I have vowed I will pay.

Salvation is from the LORD.”

10 Then the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah up onto the dry land.

Jonah's Journey

