

Where Are You Going?
Leader Guide
(NASB and ESV)

A STUDY OF JONAH
KINGS & PROPHETS SERIES
COURSE 5

Where Are You Going? Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)
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USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out

When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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**WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 1**

Lesson emphasis:

- Jonah 1–2
- Jonah tried to run away from God’s presence
- God sent a calamity—He is sovereign
- Jonah prayed, cried out to the Lord—God answered

You might begin with the question from the end of Day Five in the lesson. Do you think that Jonah is a true story? Why?

Matthew 12:39-41; 16:4; and Luke 11:29-32

Jesus confirmed Jonah’s message to Nineveh and even that the fish swallowing Jonah for three days was an actual event.

Jesus Himself stated the event as historical fact. He compared Jonah being in the fish three days and nights with Him being in the heart of the earth for the same time. Jonah was a sign of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

JONAH 1

Ask your group what they noted on their At a Glance chart as the theme of this chapter.

Jonah fled God’s presence; swallowed by great fish

Verses 1-3

How does this book begin?

God’s word came to Jonah, Amittai’s son

Compare this with the cross-reference from 2 Kings in Day Five. Tell your group to look at “The Historical Chart of the Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah” as a visual aid.

2 Kings 14:25

This is the only other mention of Jonah in the Old Testament which tells the time when he lived and prophesied.

Jonah lived during the reign of Jeroboam, King of Israel. He prophesied to the king the restoration of Israel’s borders from Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah.

He was called the Lord’s servant in this passage. There is no way to know for sure if this prophecy was before or after the events recorded in Jonah.

Lead your discussion back to Jonah 1:1.
What did the Lord say to Jonah? And what did Jonah do?

Go to Nineveh.

The wickedness / evil in the great city of Nineveh had come up before the Lord.

He fled in the opposite direction from Nineveh. He went to Joppa to get a ship for Tarshish. For some reason he thought he could flee from God's presence.

Let your group discuss if any of them have ever thought that.

Tell them to look at their map as a visual aid. At the end of this lesson's guide there is a short list of the main points in Jonah 1-2 which you might also use as a visual aid for the discussion.

This would be a relevant point to discuss the cross-references in the lesson about the presence of the Lord. Ask what your group learned from the Scriptures in Day Three of the lesson.

Genesis 3:1-18

After Adam and Eve sinned, they hid themselves in the garden of Eden from the Lord's presence. They were afraid of Him because of their sin.

Genesis 4:1-16

Cain worked the ground, while his brother Abel was a shepherd. After Cain killed Abel and the Lord punished him by cursing him from the ground, it would no longer produce for him; he became a wanderer which he said was too great a punishment to bear. Instead of repentance for his sin, Cain chose to leave the presence of the Lord, to walk away from His influence on his life.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10

This tells about the unsaved, those who don't know God and don't obey the gospel, who will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord. Relate this to Cain.

Sometimes people try to hide from the Lord's presence because of their sin, and if it lasts their whole lives, then they'll eternally be away from His presence. Some, like Jonah, get back where they should be by turning and doing what the Lord says.

Exodus 33:12-16

God's presence in one's life indicates His favor. Moses said that His presence was to distinguish God's people from all the other people on the earth. He didn't want to move unless the Lord's presence went with them.

Psalms 16:7-11

There is fullness of joy in the Lord's presence.

He leads those who are His.

His presence gives counsel, instruction, and security to His people.

There is no reason to be shaken when realizing the presence of the Lord.

You might ask your group if they relate more to the Psalmist and Moses or to Jonah, but don't wait for them to answer; they just need to think about it.

This part of your discussion can be an eye-opener for some who might have thought that they could actually hide from God their sin or unwillingness to obey Him.

Ask about the events after Jonah got on the ship for Tarshish.

Verses 4-14

What happened in these verses?

Jonah couldn't flee from the Lord's presence, even though on the sea.

The Lord hurled a great wind on the sea to the degree that the ship was about to break up. But it didn't because He controls even the wind and the sea.

It must have been one of the worst storms / tempests the sailors / mariners had been through because of their reactions.

They:

Were afraid

Cried to their own gods

Threw the cargo overboard

Cast lots to learn who caused the calamity / evil

Ask your group what they learned about casting lots.

Leviticus 16:8

Aaron the priest used lots to choose between two goats.

Joshua 18:6

Joshua cast lots for the land to be divided and apportioned to the twelve tribes of Israel. The lots were cast before the Lord.

1 Samuel 14:24-45

The lot revealed what Jonathan had done.

Lots were used to distinguish between things and people.

Nehemiah 10:34

Lots were used to select when people, Levites, priests were to bring wood and to burn the sacrifices at the temple.

Proverbs 16:33

The lot's decision is from the Lord.

Acts 1:26

The eleven disciples used lots for selecting who would join them.

Lead your discussion back to Jonah.

What else did the sailors / mariners do?

They questioned Jonah.

They became extremely frightened (ESV—exceedingly afraid) after Jonah told them about the Lord God of heaven who made the sea and land. They saw His power over the sea.

Next they asked what to do to stop the calamity, the storm, because it was getting worse. But when Jonah told them to throw him overboard, they tried to row harder to get to land.

Ask what your group learned from the cross-references about calamity, tempests or disaster.

Jeremiah 18 and Daniel 9

These texts say that God sends calamity or disaster to cause people to turn to Him, to repent and obey Him.

Isaiah 45 and Amos 3

God causes not only well-being, but calamity or disaster as well.
He is the only sovereign God who is over all.

Let your group discuss how they might relate this understanding of calamity to situations in their own lives. Or you might ask if the Lord has ever gotten their attention by bringing calamity into their lives.

Lead the discussion back to Jonah.

What was the sailors' / mariners' response to their situation?

They prayed as they recognized that God was in charge, He did as He pleased.

They asked God that:

They not perish

Jonah's blood not be on their hands

Verses 15-17

How does this chapter end?

They did what Jonah said and threw him into the sea.

When the storm stopped, they feared the Lord, offered a sacrifice, and made vows.
It seems like they recognized and worshiped the God of heaven who made the sea.

“The Lord appointed” a great fish to swallow Jonah.
His deliverance from death was the great fish.

God is sovereign even over the creatures in the sea.

Jonah could have thought that he went from one calamity to another for three days and nights.

Give your group time to discuss any relevant application.

JONAH 2

Ask what they put on their At a Glance charts as the theme for this chapter.

Jonah prayed in the fish’s stomach / belly

Verses 1-9

How do the events continue? Tell your group to look at the chart in the lesson as a visual aid.

Jonah prayed from the fish’s stomach / belly

What do the cross-references teach about prayer and crying out to the Lord?

Exodus 2 and Deuteronomy 26

When Israel was in misery in Egypt, they cried to the Lord.
Their cry rose up to Him, and He heard them.
He delivered them from bondage in Egypt.
He brought them out of their affliction and oppression.

2 Samuel and Psalms

David cried to the Lord when he was in bad situations and times.
God saves, rescues His people from their enemies, afflictions, destruction, sorrow, and distress.

Romans 8:15-17

Believers are children of God and can cry out, “Abba! Father!”

Ask your group if they cry out to the Lord in those kinds of times. Or you could ask if there is any reason not to cry out to the Lord for help.

Jonah prayed although he brought the situation on himself.
He still cried out to the one in whom he could take refuge.

There was a question in the lesson about why God might not answer when one cries to Him.

Micah, Habakkuk, Psalm 66, and Isaiah

They practiced evil deeds: wickedness, iniquity, violence, strife, contention

The law is ignored, and justice is perverted.

1 John 1:9 is the answer.

Confess your sins. He forgives and cleanses.

From Jonah’s prayer in chapter 2 does it seem like he did that?

Yes.

What did Jonah pray?

He was in distress and called out to the Lord.

God answered—just as He had David.

Jonah cried for help, and God heard—just as He had Israel.

2 Chronicles 6

This describes all kinds of situations in which His people Israel might find themselves because of their sin. But in all of the situations if they cried to Him, then He would hear them.

God still responds to cries for help.

Jonah described the point of death; he had almost drowned in the sea before the fish saved him. Verses 3-7 tell of what happened to him in the sea.

Jonah escaped Sheol at that time, and verse 9 indicates that he also changed his mind about obeying the Lord’s word to him.

Psalms 18 and 88 and Isaiah 14

The term “Sheol” seems to be a reference to the place of the dead.

Who else was in similar situations and cried to the Lord?

Isaiah 38

Hezekiah had been a good obedient king of Judah, and he cried to the Lord to heal him.

God answered him and allowed him to live 15 years longer.

His prayer was similar to Jonah’s.

2 Chronicles 32 and 33

Manasseh had been the most evil of all the kings of Judah, but when he was in distress and entreated the Lord, God answered him, too. Then he knew that the Lord is God. His life was turned around; he repented and did what was right.

His prayer was also similar to Jonah’s.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Verse 10

What was the result of Jonah's prayer?

God commanded the fish.

Jonah was on dry land again.

What would he do with his extension of life? Would he keep his vow?

Ask if any in your group have made vows in times of distress. Did they keep them?

How would they handle an extension of life?

JONAH 1–2

The Lord told Jonah to go to Nineveh

Jonah tried to flee God’s presence

The Lord sent a calamity

Jonah prayed

God answered

**WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2**

Lesson emphasis

- Jonah 3–4
- Jonah and the Lord

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, tell your group to look at their At a Glance charts and “The Historical Chart of the Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah.”

Ask about the historical setting of Jonah.

2 Kings 14:23-25 says Jonah was a prophet to Israel during the reigns of Jeroboam king of Israel and Amaziah king of Judah. Jonah is described as a prophet through whom the Lord spoke to Israel, and he’s described also as God’s servant.

This is the same Jonah from Gath-hepher, the son of Amittai, Jonah 1:1. What is not known is which came first, Jonah’s prophecy regarding Israel’s borders in Kings or the events and prophecy to Nineveh in Jonah.

What are the themes of Jonah 1 and 2?

Jonah 1	Jonah fled God’s presence; swallowed by great fish
Jonah 2	Jonah prayed in the fish’s stomach / belly

You could also ask what your group remembers about God from the first lesson.

He sent His Word to Jonah, telling him to go to Nineveh.
Although Jonah tried to flee His presence, he couldn’t.

He is the LORD God of heaven who made the sea and dry land.
He rules over both the sea and land: the storm at sea, the great fish, and where he vomited Jonah onto the land.

He saved Jonah, delivered him from death in the sea by appointing the great fish.
Then He commanded the fish to vomit Jonah onto the dry land.

JONAH 3

What is the theme of this chapter?

Jonah went to Nineveh and they repented

Verses 1-4

How does this chapter begin? Also ask what your group learned about Nineveh. Tell them to look at the map as a visual aid.

The Lord's Word to Jonah the second time was still to go to Nineveh and proclaim what He said (ESV—call out against it).

Nineveh was an exceedingly great city of 120,000 people (Jonah 4:11), and it took three days to walk through it. It was located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River.

“Occupying a central position on the great highway between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, thus uniting the East and the West, wealth flowed into it from many sources, so that it became the greatest of all ancient cities . . . the city reached the height of its fame at the turn of the eighth century B.C., when Sennacherib made Nineveh the capital of the expanding Assyrian Empire.”¹

The present site of the ancient city is in north Iraq opposite Mosul on the Tigris River.

Genesis 10:11-12

Nineveh was one of the cities in Assyria built by Nimrod. He also built Babel and was possibly a leader in the tower of Babel incident. From its beginning the city has housed anti-God people.

2 Kings 19:36

This gives the biblical account of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, living in Nineveh, his capital city.

NOTE: Approximately 50-60 years after Jonah, Assyria took the northern kingdom of Israel captive from 732 to 722 B.C. God used them to judge His people. God sent another prophet, Nahum, to speak about Nineveh approximately 100 years after Jonah, and that was about 80-90 years after Assyria took Israel captive. In 612 B.C. Nineveh fell to the Babylonians, and by 609 B.C., Babylon conquered all of Assyria.

Nahum

The Lord described Nineveh as idolatrous and contemptible.

They had wealth from every kind of desirable object, but God was against them to cut them off and devour them.

He would make them a spectacle; Nineveh would be devastated.

They had an incurable wound of evil, and God would punish them.

You might ask your group if they understand a little better why Jonah might not have wanted to go to Nineveh when God first spoke to him in chapter 1.

Lead your discussion back to Jonah 3.

¹ M. Easton, *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (Oak Harbor, Washington: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996, c 1987).

What did Jonah proclaim / call out to the people of Nineveh?

Jonah proclaimed / called out to Nineveh what God told him.
The message was that in 40 days Nineveh would be overthrown.

How do Ezekiel 3 and Acts 20 relate to this?

Ezekiel 3:16-21

God told Ezekiel that he was to warn those he saw doing iniquity; and if he didn't, then he would have their blood on his hands. But if he warned them, then he'd done what he should have even if they continued in their sins.

Acts 20:17-27

Paul said that he was innocent of the blood of all men because he had declared, taught, testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance and faith in Jesus.

Verses 5-10

What happened in Nineveh after Jonah gave the message?

The people of Nineveh “believed” in God.

aman—to confirm, support, be established, be certain²;
providing stability and confidence³
“Metaphorically . . . faithfulness and trustworthiness, such that one could fully depend on Therefore . . . certitude or assurance”⁴

Their behavior indicated true repentance and belief.

Called a fast, put on sackcloth

The king's proclamation was to all of Nineveh's citizens.

It seems that the whole city believed what God said through Jonah.

Their repentance was real—turn from wicked ways and violence.

Verse 9 tells of their hope that God would “relent,” and He did.

nacham—to be sorry, comfort, console⁵

² R. L. Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed.) (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1999).

³ Baker and Carpenter, #539.

⁴ Baker and Carpenter, #539.

⁵ J. Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (electronic ed.) (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996).

Ask your group what they learned about this from cross-references.

Both Jonah, in 4:2, and Joel in chapters 1 and 2 knew God sometimes “relents” from expected and deserved judgment. His relenting is based on His character—lovingkindness, compassion, gracious, slow to anger.

Exodus 32:11-14; 1 Chronicles 21:14-17; Psalm 106:40-46; and Jeremiah 18:8
These show the same thing about God.

But there are times when He doesn’t relent, change His mind, about coming judgment: Genesis 6:5, 7—the Flood; Jeremiah 15:5-9—Israel kept going backward and didn’t repent; and Ezekiel 24:13-14—they wouldn’t be cleansed. This is also based on His character. Sin must be judged.

Genesis 6:5-7

The Lord was sorry that He’d made man because of man’s continually evil thoughts and ways, but He sent the flood as judgment. The word “*nacham*” is used in a different context in this statement.

Romans

All men deserve the judgment of God because all have sinned, and what we earned, our wages, for our sin is death. But Jesus Christ died in the place of sinners so that they don’t have to. Faith in Him gives the free gift of eternal life.

When a person is saved, then that believer is to walk in newness of life as a slave of righteousness. Repentance is the mark of a true believer—just as it was for those in Nineveh.

Give your group time to discuss any relevant application.

JONAH 4

Ask what they noted as the theme of this chapter.

Jonah’s anger; God’s compassion

What was Jonah’s reaction to Nineveh’s belief in God?

There is a contrast in this chapter between Jonah and the Lord.
Jonah’s anger and God’s compassion are the main points in these events.

Both times that Jonah was angry the Lord asked if he had a good reason.

Help your group realize that they should remember this question from the Lord when they’re angry. People need to evaluate if they have a good reason.

The New Testament passages studied in this lesson are clear that if a person habitually is given to outbursts of anger, then that one is not saved.

Wrath and anger are deeds of the flesh and are to be put away from a Christian's life. It doesn't work for righteousness. Believers are to be slow to anger.

Jonah might have thought that he had good reason to be angry, but he didn't.

Ask what your group learned about God in this chapter.

He's gracious and compassionate, even toward those as wicked as the Ninevites were—they were ignorant people, ignorant of God's Word, so ignorant that they didn't know their right hand from their left, so to speak.

NOTE: Some commentaries say that the 120,000 referred to in verse 11 are only the children of Nineveh.

God is slow to anger, and His children are to be also.

He is abundant in lovingkindness / steadfast love, John 3:16, and relents concerning calamity.

God "appointed" the great fish, the plant, the worm and the scorching east wind.

manah—to count, number, prepare⁶
. . . the sense of consigning or allotting something for some reason.⁷

How does God want His people to behave according to the New Testament references studied on Day Five in the lesson?

God's character is to be evident in His people, true Christians, believers.

He commands believers to love their neighbors and even their enemies—as He is abundant in lovingkindness / steadfast love. If there is no love in a person's life, then he doesn't belong to God.

Don't pay back evil for evil, don't take revenge—overcome evil with good.

Believers should be eager to turn sinners from their sinful ways.

Paul's attitude in Philippians 1:21-26 should be that of all believers.

To live is Christ, necessary for other believers' sake, for their progress and joy in the faith. Paul lived his life for others, willing to lay it down for them.

⁶ Harris, Archer, Waltke.

⁷ Baker and Carpenter, #4487.

Contrast this with Jonah’s anger and self-centeredness. Let your group discuss the contrasts in this last chapter so that they can apply the truth to their own lives. What does Hebrews 12:14-15 say about this?

We are to pursue peace with all men and not let bitterness grow in our lives.

You might ask, “Has God ever asked you to do something you were unwilling to do? Is there anything He’s asked you to do that you have yet to obey?”

You could close by asking if anyone wants to share how this study has ministered to him or her specifically.

GOD

Said, “Go” (twice)

Sent calamity

Appointed

Relented

Compassionate

JONAH

fled

prayed

proclaimed

angry