



## Lesson 142.5

# Jonah and the Whale

### Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Text:</b> <b>Jonah 1:1-4:11</b></li> <li>• <b>Setting:</b> circa 760 BC, in Joppa and Nineveh</li> <li>• <b>Main Characters:</b> God and Jonah</li> <li>• <b>Plot:</b> Jonah flees from the call of God, but three days in a whale's belly sets him back</li> </ul> | <p>on right track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key word(s):</b> “ _____ ” (1:2, 6; 3:2; 4:8)</li> <li>• <b>Climax:</b> <i>Jonah 1:15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.</i></li> </ul> |
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## Great Commission

1. According to 2 Ki. 14:25, Jonah was a native of Gath-hepher, a city of \_\_\_\_\_ near Nazareth (which refutes the Pharisee’s false notion expressed in John 7:52).
  
2. (1:1-2) God called Jonah to preach repentance to Nineveh.
  - (a) Nineveh was so large a city that it took three days to traverse it on foot (approximately \_\_\_\_\_ miles in circumference).
  - (b) The city had about 120,000 young children (Jon. 4:11). Some estimate Nineveh’s population to have approached \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>1</sup>
  - (c) Why do you think Jonah refused to go to Nineveh? \_\_\_\_\_
  
  - (d) (1:3) Instead of obeying God's commission, Jonah boarded a ship bound for Tarshish, a \_\_\_\_\_ seaport 2,500 miles in the opposite direction – he was trying to get as far away from Nineveh as he possibly could.
  
3. (1:4-16) *En route* to Tarshish, Jonah's vessel was pummeled by a fierce storm.
  - (a) The sailors feared for their lives, tossed cargo overboard, and fervently prayed to their gods. Jonah knew the storm was from God on account of his disobedience, so he told the sailors to cast him overboard. Initially, they refused, but as the storm raged, they relented and tossed the wayward prophet into the sea. Immediately the raging storm was \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) Jonah knew the storm was God's judgment against his disobedience. Why do you think Jonah asked to be thrown overboard instead of just repenting and asking God for forgiveness? \_\_\_\_\_

## Great Fish

4. (1:17) Jonah was swallowed by a great fish that had been prepared for him. Many have speculated as to what exact sea creature swallowed Jonah, but it is important to understand this was a \_\_\_\_\_ wrought by the providential hand of God.
  - (a) (2:1-10) While in the fish's belly, Jonah prayed to God. Verses 1-10 is a psalm-like recounting of Jonah's prayer. Notice he described his situation as “the belly of hell” (v 2) – by “hell” is not meant that he died and went to hell, rather “hell” (Heb: sheol) is here used to describe his tortuous, dark, would-be tomb of the fish’s belly – a fitting object lesson of eternal \_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005) p 1008.

- (b) (2:9-10) In Jonah's prayer, we see him \_\_\_\_\_ of his sin and submitting to God's commission. The LORD had mercy on Jonah and caused the fish to vomit him out on the shore.

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## Great Revival

5. (3:1-10) After being vomited out on the shore, Jonah traveled over \_\_\_\_\_ miles inland to Nineveh.
- (a) Once in Nineveh, Jonah preached a message of \_\_\_\_\_, which was overwhelmingly received by the populace.
- (b) Even the king of Nineveh repented of his sin and proclaimed a national day of prayer and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. (4:1-4) Jonah regretted that his people's enemies, the Assyrians, had repented and found God's mercy.
- (a) He pouted outside the city, hoping for God's wrath to fall on them, and enjoyed the shade of a divinely prepared, fast-growing \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) (4:5-10) God caused Jonah's shade plant to wither away, angering the prophet. The LORD used Jonah's interest in the plant to contrast his \_\_\_\_\_ for the Ninevites.

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## Application

7. Jonah demonstrated an unwillingness to share God's compassion and mercy with the Gentiles. God's dealings with Jonah, especially considering the coming conquest of northern Israel by the Assyrians, show that God is more interested in our spiritual condition than our \_\_\_\_\_ pedigree.
8. Jonah's story is illustrative of two prominent Bible themes: Israel's judgment and Christ's resurrection.
- (a) Jonah's disobedience and judgment portrays Israel's:
- Both Jonah the prophet and the nation of Israel failed to be a \_\_\_\_\_ unto the Gentiles.
  - Both were then cast into the sea as punishment (tumultuous seas are symbolic of warring Gentile \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>, and northern Israel was scattered among Gentile nations by the warring Assyrians).
- (b) Jonah's three days and nights in the fish's belly foreshadowed the Savior's three days and nights in the tomb – Jesus called this the “\_\_\_\_\_ of Jonas.” (Lu. 11:29-30)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer Key:** Key word(s): “arise” • 1. Galilee • 2. a) 60; b) 600,00; c) Jonah knew preaching repentance was an expression of God's mercy, and he did not want to share God's mercy with the enemies of Israel; d) Spanish • 3. a) quieted; b) Jonah would die than go to Nineveh. Jonah's desire to go overboard was still disobedience. • 4. miracle; a) torment; b) repenting • 5. 500; a) repentance; b) fasting • 6. a) gourd; b) ill will • 7. racial • 8. a) i) light; ii) nations; b) sign

**How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study:** (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

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<sup>2</sup> cf. Revelation 17:15