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Jonah and the Big Fish

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Jonah 1:1- 2:10 (NRSV)



MINIATURE - Erevan, Matenadaran, MS 979, Lectionary of Het'um II, Cilicia, 1286, “Jonah spat out by the whale”. Photo: Dickran Kouymjian

# The Word of God:

“Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, “Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me. But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord . But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. The captain came and said to him, “What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought so that we do not perish.” Then they said to him, “Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” “I am a Hebrew,” he replied. “I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” Then the men were even more afraid, and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them so. Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?” For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. He said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you.” Then the men feared the Lord even more, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows. But the Lord provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon the dry land.”

Jonah 1:1-6,8-12,16-2:1,10

## Ice Breakers:

1. If you could know one thing about your future, what would you want to know? Why?
2. Say one kind thing about each person around you now.
3. What do you want to change about the world?
4. What is the weirdest thing you’ve ever seen, tasted or smelled!

### Why do you think Jonah didn’t “go directly to Nineveh” as the Lord had asked him to do?

* 1. The city was too far away.
  2. Jonah didn’t agree with the Lord’s plan to go there.
  3. Jonah didn’t know where Nineveh was.
  4. Jonah was busy with other responsibilities and couldn’t go.
  5. Jonah couldn’t afford the trip to Nineveh.
  6. Other

### What were some of the consequences Jonah faced for not obeying the Lord?

* 1. A great storm formed on the sea.
  2. He put the lives of the mariners in danger.
  3. The mariners had to throw out their cargo.
  4. Jonah got thrown overboard the ship.
  5. Jonah had to live inside the guts of a fish for three days.
  6. Other

### Talk about a time when you were asked to do something you didn’t want to do.

* 1. Why was it hard to just do the task? Explain.
  2. Did you have to face any consequences for not doing the task promptly?
  3. Did you end up having to do the task anyway?
  4. Was anyone else impacted by your decision?
  5. Other

### Old Testament stories often point to Jesus’ life as explained in the New Testament. What if any parallels or similarities do you see between Jonah and Jesus?

* 1. They both had names starting with the letter “J”.
  2. Both were encased for three days left to die.
  3. God brought both Jonah and Jesus out of the place of death. (God made the fish spit Jonah out and God made the tomb “spit” Jesus out via the Resurrection).
  4. Both Jonah and Jesus prayed, “Your will be done, not mine” before their grand mission.
  5. Other

## Commit:

Which of the following will I commit to do this week?

1. Pick a task (such as cleaning your room, helping someone, doing homework, reading a book, etc.) that you’ve been putting off and commit to completing it this week. Set a timer or dedicate a specific time to get it done.
2. Pray for God’s wisdom for an important decision you need to make.
3. Help complete a chore for someone else. No questions asked.
4. Read the entire passage of Jonah found in chapters 1-3.
5. Pray for others who are impacted by the tasks you do. (Pray for your friend who you help with his/her homework or pray for your parents’ who enjoy receiving your help with household chores).
6. Other

### Prayer:

1. Share and pray for the individual needs of the group.
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