



WHO CARES?

A STUDY IN
THE BOOK
OF JONAH

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

01 FLEXIBLY

- This study is divided into 4-weeks but not into specific days. This format makes it so you can work a little or a lot depending on how much time you have on different days of the week.

02 INDIVIDUALLY OR WITH OTHERS

- However you chose to do this study, any time in the Word is worthwhile! You may be at a point where you want to keep your reflections personal and take things at your own pace. Or, you may prefer asking a few friends to join you for some Christian fellowship and accountability.

03 PURPOSEFULLY

- Let the Word speak for itself.
- Ask God to prepare the soil of your heart before you study so you can receive the Word (the seed) with humility and understanding. Then, expect it to bear fruit! In Matthew 13:23, the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the Word, understands it, and produces a harvest.
- Regularly share with others what you're learning and how God is speaking to you through the study.
- Remember - more worship and loving obedience are the results of good time in the Word, not only more knowledge.
- Enjoy it! If the Word really is sweeter than honey, get excited about diving into it like you would your favorite food!

**TAG @TEAMEFFORT_MISSIONS AND LET US
KNOW WHO YOU'RE STUDYING WITH AND
WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING!
#WHOCARESJONAH**

WEEK 01

GETTING STARTED

How many people are in your life who you can say really care about you? Take some time to think and list them below.

How do you know they care about you?

Whether that list is long or short, you can probably think of more people who don't care deeply. There are people you rub shoulders with all the time, but who aren't really invested in the details of your life. Sometimes, even if people say they care, their actions betray otherwise. And of those who care the most, even they have their limits because no one knows all the needs you have and exactly how best to care for and meet those needs.

When even the best intended people let us down, we can at least count on God. What are some circumstances you've experienced where you felt God caring for you?



Other times, though, when we need Him most, it seems like He is nowhere to be found. Our darkness becomes unbearably darker when God seems far away.

Has there been a time when you prayed, desperately crying out to God through a difficulty, and it seemed that even He didn't care? Write a little about that circumstance and how that made you feel.

If that time is in the past, looking back now, what did God teach you in the darkness?

If we have no doubt that God cares for us, everything in the world can be wrong and we can still make it as long as *that* is right.

Wherever you are now, in the light or darkness of experiencing God's care, there is good news in this study. Because, believe it or not, *the book of Jonah was written to remind us how much God cares*. I don't know how familiar you are with Jonah, but if you've heard the story before, you're probably asking yourself what a big fish and a disobedient preacher have to do with God's compassion. Let's jump in and see how God's caring heart is a big theme running through this little book.

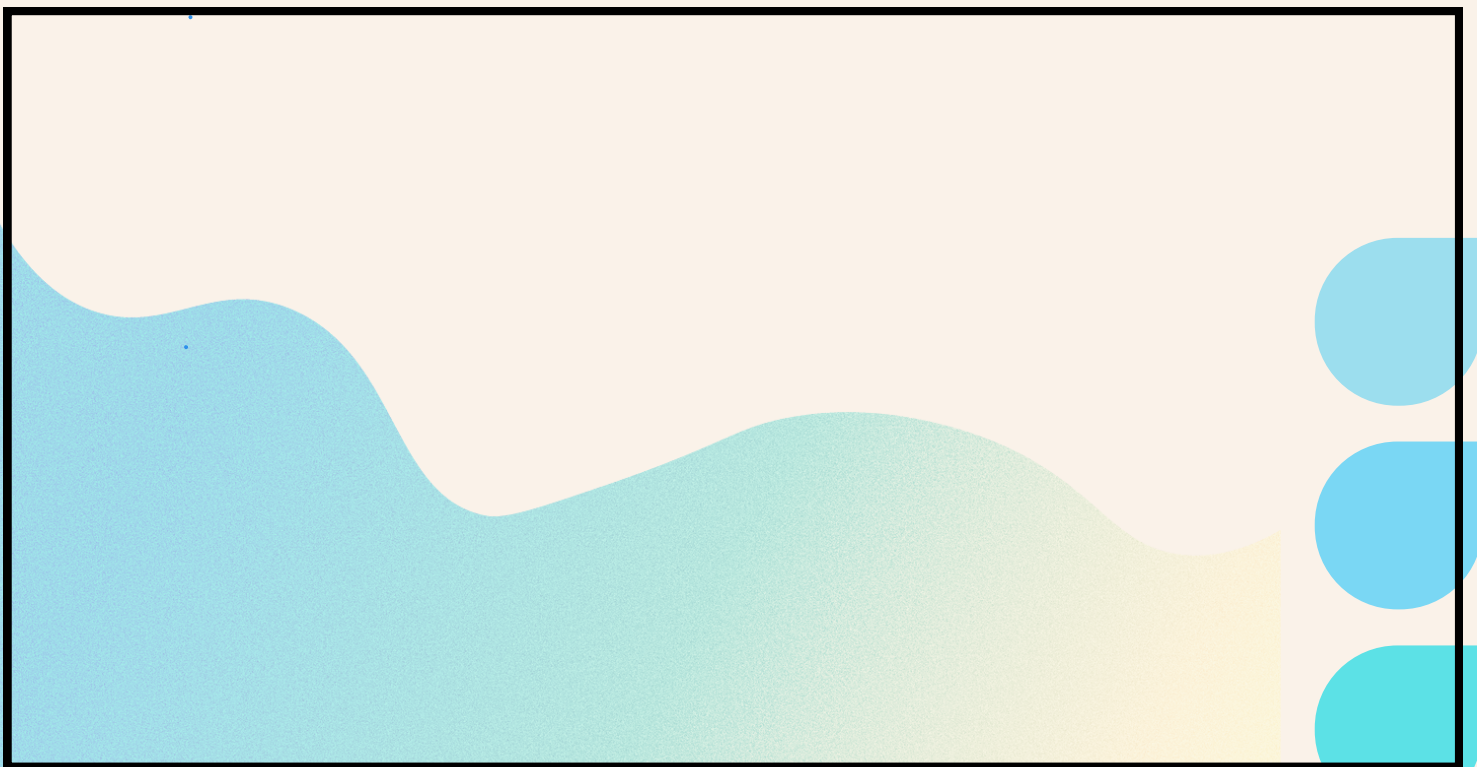
“The book of Jonah] pleads [with you to] look out at...God’s world. See it through God’s eyes. Let your new vision overcome your natural bitterness, your hardness of soul. Let the divine compassion flood your own heart.

See God’s heart - he cares for all creatures great and small. His is a heart that yearns and a hand that tends.

-Commentator, Leslie C. Allen

Take a moment now to pray that God would open your eyes to see His world this way.

Did you grow up going to Sunday School or Kids’ Church hearing the story of Jonah? If you didn’t grow up in the church, have you gathered bits and pieces of who Jonah is in some other context? If you’ve never heard of Jonah, that’s great too. For those who have, in the space below write words or phrases that you know or think you know about Jonah and his story.



GETTING TO KNOW JONAH



Jonah can be a pretty familiar character in Scripture and, as much as possible, we want to approach our study of Jonah without some of the preconceived ideas we could carry into it. Try to leave what you dumped right where it is, in the box on the previous page.

Read 2 Kings 14:25. This passage tells us Jonah was the son of (a)_____. It also indicates that Jonah spoke for God. Do you know what this office (job) is called in Scripture? (b)_____.

(a) Son of Amatti. Jonah's dad was Amatti whose name means "truth." It is interesting that as we get to know Jonah better, we see that while he might have 99 problems, telling the truth isn't one of them!

(b) A prophet.

Read Exodus 4:12, Deuteronomy 18:18, and Ezekiel 2:7. List what you learn from these verses about the office of a prophet.

Read Proverbs 29:18. Why is being a prophet such an important job?

WHO CARES?

Jonah cares for Israel by obeying God and prophecying to them.

▶ The book of Jonah is in a section of our Old Testament known as the Minor Prophets. This section of Scripture isn't called Minor because it's not as important as the other prophetic section (the Major Prophets), but because the books contained in it are shorter in length. ◀◀

GETTING TO KNOW THE HEART OF GOD



Read 2 Kings 14:25 -27. God restored the borders of Israel like He said He would. He keeps His promise to His people. What motivates God to do this?

WHO CARES? God cares for Israel by keeping His promise.

Jonah obeyed and spoke for God to His people, Israel. But, as we'll see in Week 2, Jonah, like all of us, had his struggles.

REFLECT 

What is a big theme running through the little book of Jonah?

What is something you hope to learn in the weeks ahead?

