



## Commentary

### Jonah

Jonah is probably the best-known yet least understood book in the Bible.

The true message of this story is found in the last two chapters of this short book. What made Jonah so anxious to avoid this calling? Why did he not want to go to Nineveh? Why did he flee from God? The answer is that Jonah knew God too well. Jonah wanted to see this city destroyed. This was the great enemy of his people. They were brutal and godless and sinful---and Jonah hated them. When God told him to go announce to Nineveh its destruction, he said, "I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people." So he fled to Tarshish.

What a revelation of the knowledge of God and the character of the God of the Old Testament!

This city would take an average of three days to cross. A day's journey was about twelve miles, so a three days' journey would be thirty-six miles. And Jonah came to declare the message that God gave to him. Crying: "Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!" (3:4)

The people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least. (3:5) And when the king heard about it ...he arose from his throne, removed his robe, and covered himself with burlap and sat in ashes. The king and his nobles sent a decree throughout the city to fast, wear garments of mourning, and pray to God. They must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence. And they did it: When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it. (3:10) This city was spared.

The message of this book, of course, is not so much what happened to Jonah, but the results in Nineveh when Jonah rose up to preach. If Jonah's face and body confirmed the remarkable story that this man had just gone through the harrowing experience of being swallowed alive by a fish and later vomited out and that God had sent him to proclaim this message, you can imagine the effect upon the city. Jonah was living evidence that God meant what he said and would do it. The city repented and the city was spared. And not until more than a hundred years later did God carry out his judgment on Nineveh and destroy it. But they were spared for now by their repentance at Jonah's preaching.

In the last chapter, then, we have the encounter between Jonah and God. One might think the story would be over with chapter 3, the great city in burlap and ashes, repentant before God. But this is not what this story is after. It is trying to get us into the very heart of God. So we read that Jonah was angry with God. And God asks him, "Is it right for you to be angry about this?" (4:4) Jonah did not even answer. He sat down on the rock above the city and waited to see what God would do. I don't know how much time had gone by, but he must have waited out there a few days.



## Commentary

### Jonah

The first day ...the Lord God prepared a plant...(4:6) And the plant grew up and covered Jonah's head, evidence of God's gracious provision. But on the second day, God prepared a worm that ...ate through the stem of the plant so that it withered away." (4:7) When the sun came up God prepared an east wind that blew the heat of the desert in upon Jonah until he fainted and asked that he might die.

And God said again to him, "Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?" "Yes," Jonah retorted, "even angry enough to die!" (4:9)

You know, it is easy to point the finger at Jonah, but haven't you ever said that to God, too? Haven't you ever said to him, "I want what I want. I don't care what you do. Of course, I'm angry. I don't like the way you're running things."

Now notice what God said:"You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly. But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?" (4:10, 11)

And the book ends abruptly. Why? Because that is where it is supposed to take us---to the revelation of the heart of God.

God loves everyone, just as he loved the enemies of Israel and would spare them whenever they repented.

Do you see how the Holy Spirit has insinuated us into this picture? There is a lot of Jonah in all of us and around us are a lot of unsaved people.

He has sent us people to be a sign to this generation. And what is that sign? It is the sign of Jonah, the sign of resurrection, the sign of people who once were dead who have been made alive in Jesus Christ. Isn't that why the Lord said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. 12:40)

Isn't that the heart of our proclamation, that here is a God who can bring life from death, who can resurrect those who are swallowed up in the belly of a whale or fish---lost, hopeless---but redeemed? And the witnesses to this proclamation are the resurrected lives of those of us who, like Jonah, declare this message in our day.

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## Introduction

### Jonah

Welcome to the INTRUTH Bible Study on Jonah.

### **Studying the Word of God transforms lives!**

The Bible is God's message of redemption, as well as our instruction book for life. God wants us to search the Bible so we can understand the TRUTH of His character and His desire for us. Jonah shows us the heart of God: verse 4:2: "You are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people."

This study includes 5 lessons, a cover sheet and a dictionary. Each lesson has a memory verse, 15-20 questions, a Take Away and a Blessing. They are written with the New Living Translation (NLT), but any translation will add to your experience.

These lessons are beneficial to anyone but are geared toward 10-15 year olds. This age group is experiencing major changes developmentally - physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. It is a time of having questions about God, about self and about where they fit in the world. These lessons were created to help students think critically and wrestle through who they are and what they believe.

Teenagers are inundated with technology but starving for relationships. If possible, complete the lesson on your own and then discuss it together to learn from each other.

Jonah is probably the best-known yet least understood book in the Bible. God called Jonah to go to Nineveh. This assignment would have taken him to a hostile land. Jonah went in the opposite direction. Jonah must have thought his way was best. But God knew better. God intervened. It can be difficult to obey God unconditionally. To trust that He knows best. We all have our own plans. There are things we don't want to do. But God knows us better than we know ourselves. And He knows that we never will find true peace and fulfillment apart from serving Him.

May the Lord use these lessons to help you develop a personal, life-long love for God's Word and encourage you to connect in a community that prays, supports and shares life together!

Enjoy!



## Jonah



THEME VERSE: "I cried out to the Lord in my great trouble, and He answered me. I called to You from the land of the dead, and Lord, you heard me" Jonah 2:2

## Author

Jonah

## Dates

Around 760 B.C.

## Written

Israel and God's people everywhere.

## Purpose

To show the extent of God's grace - the message of salvation is for all people.

## Themes

1. God's concern for all peoples.
2. God's desire to send individuals to preach his Word.
3. God's use of nature in miraculous ways to fulfill his purposes.
4. God's role as Judge but his preference to act as Savior.
5. God's yearning to show mercy and love to any and all people.

## Lessons

- Lesson 1: God Is In Control (Jonah 1:1-15)  
Lesson 2: God Is Always With You (Jonah 1:15-2:10)  
Lesson 3: God's Word Is For Everyone (Jonah 3:1-10)  
Lesson 4: God Is Full Of Love And Mercy (Jonah 4:1-11)  
Lesson 5: God Will Bring His Plan To Completion



## Dictionary

### Jonah

<b>ambassador</b>	messenger; representative; Christians are ambassadors for Christ.
<b>anger</b>	feelings of hostility toward a person or something that has wronged or injured you.
<b>attitude</b>	what someone feels inside about a person or thing; typically reflected in a person's behavior.
<b>authority</b>	right to exercise power over someone else; Jesus is the ultimate authority in any Christian's life.
<b>believe</b>	to accept as true or real; trust; have confidence in; have faith in; make a commitment to. Faith.
<b>Bible</b>	God's autobiography; God's plan for the world; a love letter to us; an instruction manual on how to act and live.
<b>blessing</b>	made content by God; divine favor or heavenly reward.
<b>burlap</b>	rough clothing worn as a sign of grief.
<b>call</b>	appointment from God to serve Him in a specific way for a specific purpose.
<b>Christ</b>	Jesus Christ; anointed Son of God; the Savior of the world. Paid the complete penalty for sin for the whole world.
<b>compassion</b>	sharing the hurts of another and wanting to help.
<b>condemnation</b>	declare guilty.
<b>confess</b>	openly admit wrongdoing to God; ask for forgiveness; commit to not let it happen again.
<b>conform</b>	agree, follow, act according to socially acceptable standards; become similar in character.
<b>covet</b>	want something that belongs to another.
<b>disciple</b>	"student"; a learner. Disciples of Jesus Christ want to think and live like Him.
<b>envy</b>	feelings of discontent and resentment over the desire for possessions or qualities of another.
<b>eternal life</b>	life that begins when a person turns from sin in commitment to Jesus. Supreme quality of life on earth as well as unending life with God.
<b>eternity</b>	forever; time without a beginning or an end.
<b>faith</b>	trust, loyalty, belief; accepting God's Word as fact; deciding to surrender and live your life to follow Jesus.
<b>fasting</b>	to go without food or drink for a certain length of time as a way to focus on and draw closer to God.

<b>fear of the Lord</b>	to respect who God is, what He says, and what He does; a respect that leads to obedience and love of God; profound reverence and awe toward God; true honor, devotion, obedience and love of God.
<b>forgiveness</b>	to pardon sins; ceasing to demand punishment.
<b>glorify</b>	praise; worship; glorify God by obeying Him and living His way.
<b>glory</b>	divine quality; splendor, beauty and radiance of God's presence.
<b>God</b>	The One who is all-powerful; all-knowing; present everywhere at once; unchanging; above the bounds of time; absolutely right to govern His creation; Holy.
<b>Good News/ gospel</b>	"good news"; story of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. The message that God sent His Son Jesus to take away our sins by dying on the cross and resurrecting to life again to save all who trust in Him
<b>grace</b>	God's free and undeserved love toward sinful humans that never quits. God's favor. God's power to help us do whatever we need to do.
<b>guard your heart</b>	keeping your heart pure and safe by protecting it from evil and focusing on God.
<b>heart</b>	inner thoughts and feelings; the real me living inside that thinks, feels, and decides; my character or personality.
<b>heaven</b>	God's home and where those who have believed in Jesus as their Savior go when they die.
<b>hell</b>	a place of punishment for those who die without believing in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
<b>holy</b>	set apart for use by God; a continual work by the HS in the lives of Christians. A life like God wants you to live.
<b>Holy Spirit (HS)</b>	God's Spirit. Lives within all Christians to help them, communicate God's truth to them, convict them of sin, convince them that God's ways are right, empower them to obey Jesus and comfort them when sad.
<b>honor</b>	show highest respect for.
<b>hope</b>	believe with confidence that God will accomplish what He has promised; that God will be faithful to do what He said He would do; that we trust God even if we never find out why something happens.
<b>humility</b>	a modest view of one's own importance; seeing ourselves as God sees us; recognizing that all we have comes from God.
<b>idols</b>	anything that is more important to us than God.
<b>Israelites</b>	God's chosen people; Jews; God promised the land of Israel to these people.
<b>Jesus</b>	The Christ; anointed Son of God; true Messiah; Savior of the world. Paid the complete penalty for sin for the whole world.
<b>judgment</b>	act or process of judging - only God's to decide and carry out.
<b>Kingdom of God</b>	Jesus' reign now and a future time when Jesus will rule over all humanity. Jesus has come but He will come again.
<b>law</b>	God's rules for living; commandments; makes people aware of sin and their sinfulness.
<b>mercy</b>	deep caring, loving, forgiveness, and kindness when it is not deserved.

<b>miracle</b>	wonderful happening that cannot be explained by nature or science; demonstration of God's power.
<b>missionary</b>	person sent by God to tell people who God really is - around the world and in your neighborhood.
<b>Ninevah</b>	the last and most important capital of Assyria, located on the Tigris River.
<b>obey/obedience</b>	believing and doing what God says; living like Him; pleasing Him; serving Him; getting to know Him better. Obeying God shows our trust in Him and His will.
<b>patience</b>	the ability to bear problems, annoyances, or pain without getting angry.
<b>peace</b>	God-given contentment which results in total confidence in God for everything.
<b>perish</b>	to be lost or destroyed; to die especially in a violent or untimely manner.
<b>prophet</b>	a person who speaks for God to His people; one who gives God's message to the people.
<b>persecution</b>	treating someone in a cruel way because he is different; mistreatment of an individual or group by another group.
<b>reconciled</b>	restored relationship.
<b>redeem/ redemption</b>	buy back; to rescue with a ransom; Jesus paid the price for our release from sin - He redeemed us.
<b>repent</b>	regret something you have done; ask God to forgive you; and want to change your ways; turn away from sin.
<b>righteous/ righteousness</b>	being in a right relationship with God; without guilt or sin. God declares believers not guilty/righteous because of their faith in Jesus.
<b>salvation/saved</b>	rescued or delivered from the penalty and power of sin in your life because you believe that Jesus, God's Son, came to earth and died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins. He resurrected to life again to save all who trust in Him. Saved.
<b>Satan</b>	God's enemy; powerful angel who rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven; tempts people to sin.
<b>Savior</b>	Jesus Christ is "The Savior" because He delivers us from being punished for our sins.
<b>Scripture</b>	God's Words; the Bible.
<b>sin</b>	any action or attitude that falls short of God's perfect standard; separates us from a holy God. When we sin we show contempt for God. Sin keeps the world from working as God originally intended it to.
<b>sovereign</b>	having complete power and authority.
<b>submit</b>	to submit to others means respecting a person's authority; to submit to God means surrendering our own will to His; submitting is ongoing with every choice.
<b>temptation</b>	anything that attracts a person to do something unwise, wrong, or opposed to God's will.
<b>testimony</b>	to witness about what you know about God; what God is doing in your life.
<b>transformation</b>	God's promise and His work in believers' lives - radical and thorough change, both outward and inward, to be more like Jesus.

<b>trials/troubles</b>	struggles or hard times that all Christians go through. God can use these hard times as opportunities to strengthen and mature our faith by causing us to depend more fully on Him.
<b>Truth</b>	God's Word is truth. It comes from God and can be trusted; genuine; honest; reliable; Jesus is called the Truth.
<b>wisdom</b>	God-given understanding; the ability to distinguish between right and wrong; comes from God.
<b>Word, The</b>	God's Words; includes God's directions, purpose, will and plan; "the Word" refers to Jesus.
<b>worship</b>	giving reverence and honor to God; expressing our love and praise to Him.
<b>world</b>	the values and ways of life found in the world that oppose the ways of God. People who live as though there is no God.
<b>wrath</b>	anger; God's consistent attitude and response to sin.



## God Is In Control



MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord is close to all who call on Him in truth... He hears their cries for help and rescues them."  
Psalm 145:18-19

Nineveh was the capital city of the nation of Assyria, a longtime enemy of Israel. The Assyrians tortured and killed the people they defeated. Jonah grew up hating and fearing the Assyrians.

### DAY 1 JONAH 1:1-3 — Jonah Called by the Lord

1. What did God tell Jonah to do? Why?
2. How did Jonah respond to God's command?
3. What are the various ways God speaks to us today?
4. Is it possible to run from God? What are ways you are running from God?

### DAY 2 JONAH 1:4-6 — God Brings a Violent Storm

5. What did God do? How did the sailors respond? vv. 4-5

6. What did the captain say to Jonah? vv. 5b-6

7. What do you think Jonah thought now?

8. Why is it hard to pray when we are living in blatant disobedience to God?

### DAY 3 JONAH 1:8-9 — Crew Confronts Jonah

9. What do the sailors do? Who did the lots fall on? v. 7

10. How did Jonah answer the sailors' questions?

11. What does this tell you about Jonah and his relationship with God?

### DAY 4 JONAH 1:10-16 —

12. What did Jonah tell the crew to do? Why do you think this is the answer Jonah gave?

13. What do the sailors do instead? What happened? v. 13

14. To whom do the sailors pray? What do they pray? v. 14

15. How did the sailors respond to God stopping the storm? vv. 15-16

16. What do you learn about God from these verses? What do you learn about the sailors?

## **DAY 5** JONAH 1:1-16 — Wrap Up

17. What do you think the important lessons are in chapter 1?  
God will call you to do hard things. How will you answer?

18. How do you see yourself in Jonah?

### **TAKE AWAY**

This week, look for how God is in control of everything- life, nature, and circumstances.  
Share your thoughts with your group next week.

### **BLESSING**

God had big plans for Jonah. God has big plans for YOU!

God wanted to send Jonah to Nineveh, but Jonah ran from God.

Jonah knew that we cannot run from God's presence. He is everywhere. Running from God was Jonah's way of telling God he didn't want to obey Him.

So God sends a storm.

Even when all the sailors pray to their false gods, and even when the captain pleads with Jonah to pray to his, we do not see him doing so.

When we are living in blatant disobedience to God, and we know it, one of the hardest things to do is pray.

When you are having trouble praying, ask God to reveal any sin in your life, ask Him to search your heart, so that you can confess it and repent of it, and get back into right fellowship with Him.

## God Is Always With You



MEMORY VERSE: "For my salvation comes from the Lord alone."  
Jonah 2:9

### DAY 1 JONAH 1:17 — Jonah Is Thrown Into the Sea

1. What happened to Jonah? What do you imagine this time was like?
2. What did Jonah's experience of 3 days and nights in the belly of the fish predict?  
Refer to Matthew 12:39-40.
3. God could have rescued Jonah in any number of ways. Why do you think God chose this way?

### DAY 2 JONAH 2:1-7 — Jonah Prays to God

4. What is your impression on what Jonah's prayer to God?
5. What causes you to pray? Do you believe that God hears you?  
Have you ever found yourself feeling far from God, unseen and forsaken.

6. What do think God wants you to learn from Jonah's life and prayer here?

### DAY 3

#### JONAH 2:8-9 — Salvation Comes from the Lord

7. Read verse 8. Why do you think Jonah compared his running from God to worshiping "false gods"?  
How can you apply this to your life?

8. What does Jonah tell God? v. 9

9. What does "Salvation comes from the Lord alone" mean? Refer to Romans 10:9-10.  
Have you received the Lord's salvation?

### DAY 4

#### JONAH 2:10 — God Ordered the Fish to Spit Out Jonah

10. What does God do?

11. How do you think you would have handled being inside the fish?

12. Who made the fish spit Jonah up (2:10)? Who appointed the fish to swallow Jonah (1:17)? Who brought the storm upon the ship (1:4)? What does this tell you about God and the physical world?

## DAY 5 JONAH 1-2 — Wrap Up

13. What does the fact that Jonah survived for three days and nights in the belly of a fish tell you about God?

14. Being in the fish's belly got Jonah's attention. Is God trying to get your attention? Explain.

15. God could have chosen someone else to do what Jonah ran away from. God could choose others to do what we run from. Why do you think He chose Jonah? Chooses us?

### TAKE AWAY

Start a prayer journal - a place to keep track of your prayers and God's answers.

### BLESSING

Your sin is never too great, your situation is never too difficult for God.

Jonah was disobedient, rebellious, and selfish. He had run from the Lord. He had endangered the lives of those on the ship where he had tried to hide. Jonah was swallowed by a fish, and he was inside its belly for 3 days.

If you are in rebellion or if you are hiding from God for some reason, please know the Lord wants to restore you!

God truly is faithful. He never gives up on us.

God will go to great lengths to get your attention because He loves you,

And as soon as Jonah prayed, God heard and responded.



## God's Word Is For Everyone



MEMORY VERSE: "Everyone must pray earnestly to God. They must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence."  
Jonah 3:8

### DAY 1 JONAH 3:1-3—Jonah Goes to Nineveh

1. What does God tell Jonah to do a 2nd time? What does Jonah do this time?
2. What does this tell you about God?
3. What do you learn about Nineveh in these verses?

### DAY 2 JONAH 3:4-5 — Jonah Gives the People of Nineveh God's Message

4. What does Jonah tell the people of Nineveh? How did the people react?
5. How do you think it was possible that the people believed God and repented after hearing this message?

6. Why do you think fasting and wearing burlap helped show their sorrow?  
How do you show God that you are sorry for disobeying Him?

### DAY 3

#### JONAH 3:6-9 — The People of Nineveh Give Up Their Evil Ways

7. What did the King tell the people to do? What did he hope would happen if the people did these things?
8. Why do you think as we turn more toward God, we turn away from the things that displease God?  
Can you think of an example of this from your life?
9. When we give excuses and reasons why we have sinned, what is this telling God?

### DAY 4

#### JONAH 3:10 — God Spared Nineveh

10. What did God see and do?
11. What is God's heart for your city? Do you have such a heart?

12. How open are you to changing your ways when God brings it to your attention? Explain.

## DAY 5 JONAH 3 — Wrap Up

13. What has this lesson showed you about God?

14. What do you think God wants you to learn from this chapter?

### TAKE AWAY

If you shared what God is doing in your life, how do you think your friends/family would react? This week keep your eyes open for the little things God is doing in your life. Tell your friends/family what you see!

### BLESSING

God loves everyone AND wants everyone to know HIM personally!

In chapter 3, Jonah goes to Nineveh and does everything that the Lord commanded him to do. God frequently asks us to do things that we don't really want to do. How will you answer God?

God was giving them an opportunity to change - to repent. There would be no disastrous judgment. The possibility of God's mercy became a reality. Do you believe that God can powerfully work in you? in others?

## Notes

## God Is Full of Love and Mercy



MEMORY VERSE: "You are a merciful and compassionate God,  
slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love..."  
Jonah 4:2

### DAY 1

#### JONAH 4:1-2 — Jonah's Anger at God's Mercy

1. How would you describe Jonah's attitude about God not destroying Nineveh?
2. What would happen if God treated Jonah the way Jonah wanted God to treat the people of Nineveh? What does this tell you about God's mercy and grace?
3. How do we sometimes act just like Jonah?
4. What does Jonah tell us about God?  
Which of these truths mean the most to you today? Why?

#### JONAH 4:3-5 — Jonah Would Rather Die Than See the City Survive

### DAY 2

Does Jonah say to God?

6. What very important question did God ask? What did Jonah do in response?

7. Jonah didn't understand God's heart. What does God want? Refer to 2 Peter 3:9.

8. How would you answer God's question - "Is it right for you to be angry about this" when:  
We don't think the results are fair?

God is generous to those we may consider "undeserving"?

We don't get our own way?

### DAY 3

### JONAH 4:6-8 — God Deals with Jonah's Heart

9. Note the three things God arranges to happen (verses 6,7,8). Why did the Lord do this in this sequence?

10. What did Jonah say when the plant withers away?

11. What is happening in these verses that Jonah is missing?

**DAY 4****JONAH 4:9-11 — God Deals with Jonah's Heart**

12. What was Jonah concerned about? What was God concerned about?

13. What do you think God wanted Jonah to understand?

14. Do you think Jonah grasped the lesson? Why?

**DAY 5****JONAH 4 — Wrap Up**

15. What do you think about God's willingness to individualize this lesson for Jonah?

16. Do you value what God values? What are you concerned about? What is God concerned about?  
Do these match?

**TAKE AWAY**

Are our priorities jumbled and our focus blurred? Talk to God about what is most important to you. Talk to God about re-focusing so that you value what He values!

**BLESSING**

God is the God of all people. God is loving and patient with everyone!

What are you concerned about? What is God concerned about? Do these match?



## God Will Bring His Plan to Completion



MEMORY VERSE: "I know the greatness of the Lord...The Lord does whatever pleases Him throughout all heaven and earth, and on the seas and in their depths."  
Psalm 135:5-6

### DAY 1 JONAH 1-4 — God's Sovereignty

1. Review the following verses:

Jonah 1:4; 1:17; 2:10; 4:6; 4:7; Jonah 4:8

How is God's sovereignty and control revealed in these verses?

2. What did Jonah reveal to you about the measures God will go to to accomplish His purposes?

3. Read Proverbs 3:5-6. How would trusting God and knowing that He is in control change how you live your life?

### DAY 2 JONAH 1-4 — God's Mercy

4. How did God show Jonah mercy to:  
Sailors

Ninevites

Jonah

5. God is concerned about every nation and individual. How does John 3:16-17 add to your understanding of God's mercy?

6. What does Hebrews 4:16 say to you?

### DAY 3 JONAH 1-4 — God's Provision

7. From studying Jonah, what have you learned about:  
God's love? See Romans 8:38-39.

God's power? See Matthew 19:26.

God's faithfulness? See Deuteronomy 31:8.

God's taking care of you? See 1 Peter 5:7.

### DAY 4 JONAH 1-4 — God's Message Is for the Whole World

8. What instructions did Jesus give to His disciples and to us? See Mark 16:15.

9. What does 2 Corinthians 5:20 tell you?

10. How is it easier to love others when you love God?

11. Everyone needs Jesus - Why do we not tell them?

## DAY 5 JONAH 1-4 — Wrap Up

12. Why do you think God reported this true story in the Bible?

13. What part of Jonah made the most impact on you? Why

### TAKE AWAY

Honestly assess how much you allow the Bible to influence the way you live. Make a written commitment to improve in this area. Let God counsel you, and trust his plans for your life.

### BLESSING

“No one is Holy like the Lord! There is no rock like our God!”  
1 Samuel 2:2

When God called Jonah, he could not see beyond his own selfish desire for God to punish the Assyrians. How could God want him to take a message of mercy to such people? He immediately fled in the opposite direction. Through his flight to Tarshish, his shipwreck, and his time in the great fish, Jonah was convinced in a powerful way that all salvation comes from the Lord (Jonah 2:9). And because of God's supreme power, only God decides where to pour out His salvation and His mercy (4:11).

God accomplished His purposes through Jonah even through Jonah's selfish, prideful disobedience.

God wants our desires to align with His. We can even go through the motions of following God's will but that doesn't mean our hearts are aligned with His. God wanted Jonah's actions and his heart. He wants ours as well.