

# Jonah Discovery Study Facilitator's Notes

## Desired Outcome:

The hope is that after reading Jonah and discussing the questions, participants will have had a chance to look deeper into their own attitudes and narratives about not only people from a Muslim background, but any people who are different from them and especially those they may consider "the enemy". Will they have a Jesus attitude or a Jonah attitude?

## Materials Needed:

- Each participant will need their Bible, a pen and the [participant worksheet](#). You can easily do the activity without the worksheet. Just write the questions on a whiteboard or have participants copy them down.

## Instructions:

There does not need to be much of an introduction to this activity. It works best to divide the participants into groups of 3-5 people. Hand out the worksheets or give them the instructions.

It takes about 8-10 minutes to read the four chapters of Jonah. Have one person read it aloud in each group. The others should follow along.

Then have the group walk through each of the questions. They can each fill out their own worksheet or you can have one person take notes for each group. This should probably take another 10 minutes. Give the groups a five minute and then a two minute warning to help them keep track of time.

When the groups are all done, debrief the study as a large group. Have groups share their answers and the reasons behind their answers. If an answer to the first three questions is not based on the actual scripture of Jonah, ask them to tell you where they found their answer in the story.

You will find an answer key on the next page for your use.

### **What do we learn about Jonah in this story? About the sailors? About the Ninevites?**

- Jonah - he is disobedient and then reluctant. He doesn't agree with God's will. He has contempt for the Ninevites.
- Sailors - by the end of their story, they have become God worshipers (1:16)
- Ninevites - they are quick to repent and fast and dress in sackcloth and ashes and call on God (3:6-10)

### **What is Jonah's motivation behind his running away?**

- He knows that God is merciful and will save the Ninevites but he doesn't want God to do that (4:1-2)
- Oftentimes participants will say that Jonah was afraid or that Jonah didn't trust God. Neither of these ideas are anywhere in the book of Jonah. If someone says this, gently ask them to show you where it says that in the passage.

### **What can we learn about our own attitudes toward people of other religions or groups (Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Animists, LGBTQ, White Supremacists, Atheists, Conservatives, Liberals) from the story of Jonah?**

- It's good to let the group wrestle with this one. God is merciful and wants everyone to turn and call on Him. Are we okay with that? Jonah was not. It's a good thing to wrestle with our own hearts - do we have a Jesus attitude or a Jonah attitude?
- The Ninevites were evil beyond measure. God was not okay with that. He was going to destroy them. But he loved them and wanted to give them every chance to repent and turn to him. And so he sent Jonah to them.

### **What have been the things shaping your worldview/narrative about Muslims?**

- Ideas: the people we are with; radio shows we listen to or TV programs we watch. Books we read. Facebook, Instagram, etc.
- A helpful article: [EVERYONE IS BEING DISCIPLINED BY SOMETHING](#)

**What are your/our personal “plants” that we are angry about losing or afraid of losing? (From Jonah 4:5-11)**

- Example answer: *One of the "leafy plants" I often hear about as I talk with people in churches is the loss of our religious liberty. It is super nice to have it, but it isn't necessary. No one in the first century church had it. The church in most of the world today is growing despite no real religious liberty. It's not the gospel. It's not something that God needs to have in place before He can work. Should someone fight to protect it - certainly. But if we get distracted by the loss of it and keep our eyes focused on what we are losing rather than on the abundant harvest and our King Jesus, then Satan wins.*

**Who will I share what I learned from Jonah with this week?**

- Encourage everyone to think about a person or a group of people who they can take through the Jonah Discovery Study. This will help train them to be disciples who are making disciples. It may be helpful to give everyone an extra worksheet they can use for this.