



Jonah

Study 1

The One That DIDN'T Get Away!

One of the most well-known stories of the Old Testament and brimstone preaching – it has it all! But it also shows us a lot about God's merciful character and our own potential for disobedience and unmerciful hearts.

ment would have to be Jonah. Man-eating whales, fire, and our own potential for disobedience and unmerciful hearts. Let's meet the main characters...

JONAH was an Israelite and a prophet of God.

Read 2 Kings 14:23-29

The Jonah mentioned in these verses is probably the same one as in the book of Jonah.

· What do we discover here about the situation in Israel at this time?

· Where does this period fit in a timeline of Old Testament events?

The **NINEVITES**

Nineveh was most probably the capital of Assyria, the dominant world power at the time and would eventually take the Northern Kingdom into exile in 722 BC. The Ninevites were known for their wickedness and brutality.

ring Jonah's day – they were Gentiles! They were eventually take the Northern Kingdom into exile in 722 and brutality.

Read Jonah 1:1-3

· What things do we learn about God in verse 2?

· Why do you think Jonah might have run away?
(we actually find out why later in the book)

- Have you ever felt like Jonah when you hear God's word seriously, or obey God's word? d's word? When do you find it difficult to take

Read Jonah 1:4-17

Jonah is on the run! He doesn't want to obey God and proclaim God's judgment. He's staking out on board the ship. nd goto Nineveh to tell them that they are very fin the opposed direction, but God is in control

Jonah thought that he could hide from God in the same way that Adam and Eve tried to hide after disobedying God in Genesis 3. He discovered that you u can run, **but you can't hide!**

• Why is it impossible to hide from God?

• Does this make you feel comfortable or uncomfortable? Why?

• How do the mariners react to the life-threatening storm?



• How do they react to Jonah's words?

• How do Jonah's words in verse 9 contradict his actions in this chapter?

Sometimes it's easy to say you're a Christian but not do things that contradict that.

• Do you ever feel like Jonah in this way?



Just like a good pirate movie, Jonah "walks the plank" (well, thrown overboard actually). Things don't look good. But even though Jonah was disobedient, God still comes to the rescue—in quite an unusual way! But more on that next week.

The mariners come across as a "God-fearing" people, and yet they had no relationship with the true God.

• Are there people you know (friends/family/workmates) who you would say are "God-fearing" people, but not Christians? Spend some time in a minute praying for them that they would come to know Jesus and pray that your words and behavior might be a great witness to them of *your* relationship with Jesus, not a contradiction like Jonah!