

OVERBOARD

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
Jonah 1.4-6 | January 12, 2020
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I. Introduction to this Study

This week we continue our series Overboard, engaging the Old Testament Book of Jonah. Last week the prophet heard God's voice but ran the other direction. This week, God acts! The verses before us paint a vivid reminder that our sin prompts storms. And not only for ourselves, but for those around us, too!

II. Connecting with One Another

When have you experienced storms of life?
How did you feel God's presence through them?

III. Study the Text

a. Reread **Jonah 1.1-3**.

What do you notice about these verses now after engaging last week's study and hearing last Sunday's message? How do you mirror Jonah's actions in your own life? How do you run from Nineveh? What is your "Tarshish"?

b. Read **Jonah 1.4** aloud, in as many translations as you have available.

What differences do you notice?

c. Perhaps the closest English word to God's action in sending the storm is "hurled." In the Hebrew Scriptures, it's also used for throwing a weapon, like a spear.

What do you think prompted God to send the storm? Was it God's punishment against Jonah? Or was it God's way of getting the prophet back on the right track?

How do you think Jonah understood it?

d. Timothy Keller writes that every act of disobedience to God has a storm attached to it. Do you agree? Why or why not?

e. Some translate verse 4 as saying "the ship expected itself to break up" or that the ship was a "nervous wreck"!

When have you felt like a storm was hurled toward you? When have you felt like your ship was about to break up?

Why do you think those things happened? How did God use them for your good?

f. Read **Jonah 1.5**.

Jonah and these sailors were all in the same boat, literally. How do the sailors respond? How does Jonah respond? Why do you think Jonah was so calm while the sailors were so fearful?



How are we “in the same boat” with those around us, despite our differences?
How should Christians live and look differently from others?

- g. What is the significance of the sailors hurling their cargo overboard?
- h. It’s been said that Jonah was in “the sleep of sorrow,” not praying, preaching, or prophesying about God to these sailors.

Have you ever experienced “the sleep of sorrow”? What prompted it? Did God use it or redeem it in any particular way? If so, how?

- i. Read **Jonah 1.6**.

In the Hebrew, the first word the captain says is “Arise,” which is the same word God says to Jonah.

Why does a pagan call Jonah to do the same thing that God calls him to do!? How is our world calling Christians to do the same thing God calls us to do!?

- j. The author doesn’t tell us whether or not Jonah called out to God at all. Maybe he didn’t want God’s help or was still attempting to flee from God’s presence.

Have you ever avoided asking God for help? If so, why? Consider your reasons for doing so, then bring them to God. How can you turn to Him in a time of need?

- k. We wrongly assume that the way we live and the choices we make don’t affect others. How do Jonah’s choices affect these sailors? How do your choices today affect your family, friends, and church community?

- l. Read **Mark 4.35-41**. What are the connections between Jonah and Jesus?

How would it transform the storms of your life to know that Jesus is in the boat?

IV. Pray

- a. Ask God to give you clarity in your storms of life – that you might see His presence (and maybe even His purpose for you) in them,
- b. Lift up those you know who are calling out “to an unknown god” and ask God to encourage you to share the gospel with them,
- c. Pray that God would wake you up to the wind and the waves of the world around us, that you might respond with the love of Jesus.

V. Digging Deeper

- a. Reflect on **Psalms 139.1-12**. How does this psalm describe God’s knowledge of our actions and attitudes? Do you find that comforting or intimidating? Why?
- b. Read **Hebrews 12.5-11**. How have you responded to God’s discipline?
- c. Read **Acts 17.16-34** for another example of religious faith in a pluralistic society. How does Paul respond differently than Jonah?

