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Bible Doctrine Presented in Q&A Format

JONAH AND THE BIG FISH

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

1) This material is designed for one session or four sessions.

2) The SET OF COMPREHENSIVE QUESTIONS is designed for one session.

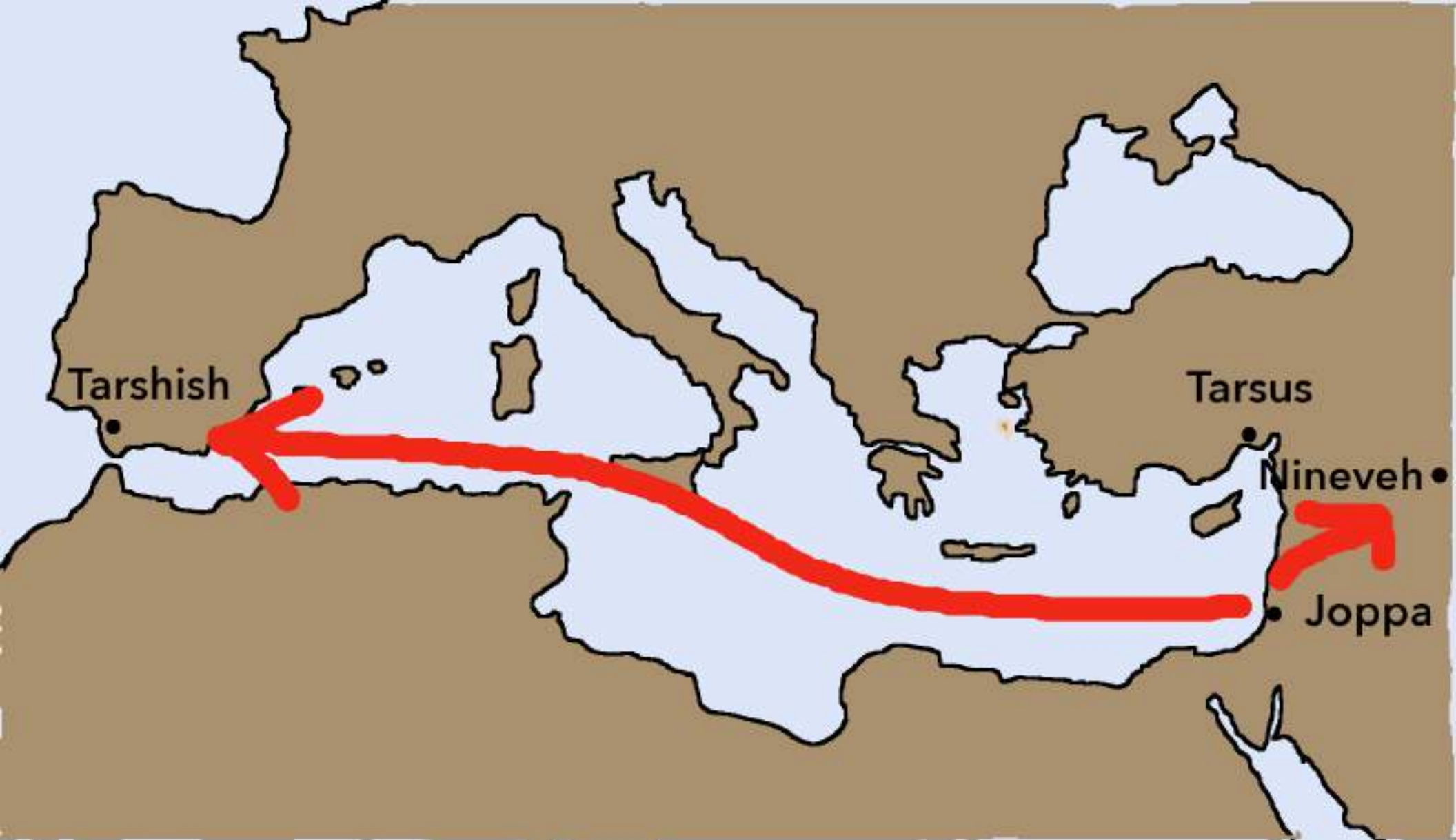
3) You can stretch the lesson into four sessions with the other sets of questions.

4) It is recommended that the teacher is well prepared before class.

5) It is recommended that the students come to class with their answers written out.

6) Answers can be written on the back of the questions page.

7) The teacher can choose a select number of questions or all of them.



Since Jonah was running from God, you can reasonably argue that he tried to flee to a far away location as opposed to a location near Israel. Since the establishment of Israel at Sinai, this was the first time Gentiles were won over by the masses, an event the Old Testament Jews were not acquainted with at all. Today, there is Christianity. When Peter saw the sheet come down from heaven, and he realized the Gentiles could get saved without having to go through Judaism, it ended up being quite the traumatic event for the Jews in that day^A. On round one of the call to Nineveh, God basically gave the task at hand in its entirety, which apparently was a bit much for Jonah to handle. On round two, he first told Jonah to go to Nineveh, and then after arriving, God gave him the message that was to be given. This is not to say that God had made a mistake, but it does go to show us how too much new doctrine can be a bit overwhelming.

⁴ ^AStern, David, *Restoring the Jewishness of the Gospel: A Message for Christians*, (city: Messianic Jewish Communications, 2010), 171.

COMPREHENSIVE SET OF QUESTIONS (Jonah 1-4)

1. To where was Jonah called? To where did he flee? Did he think he could outrun God?	21. What was the difference between Jonah's first and second call to Nineveh?
2. Why do you think God did not get in the way of purchase of the ticket to Tarshish?	22. What are differences between the difficulties of following God's call or another one?
3. What is the meaning of the presence of God? Were those in Tashish not in God's will?	23. What is one aspect of fasting that gets God's attention? (See Isaiah 58:5-6.)
4. How can God's judgment be justified when sin effects others? (Josh 22:20; Rom 5:12)	24. Why do you think there aren't more stories like Nineveh surfacing more often?
5. How could Jonah say he feared the LORD when he was running from the LORD?	25. In the process of executing a city-wide fast, what were they thinking? (Jonah 3:9)
6. What was about the storm that made them think the storm was judgment from God?	26. What was God's response once he saw their sincere repentance? (Jonah 3:10)
7. What proved that the storm was due to Jonah's rebellion?	27. Does God operate differently today than how he operated in that day?
8. Why does the text not specifically say why Jonah ran from God?	28. Is it difficult to link up the chastisement of God to real life?
9. Are believers adept at discerning what is the chastisement of God?	29. How is the story of Jonah about God's mercy and grace?
10. How would a strong prayer life help with diminishing judgment from God?	30. What is unique to the account of Nineveh's repentance?
11. Was Jonah's time in the fish's belly related to New Testament doctrine? (Matt 12:40)	31. Should Jonah have been pleased at Nineveh's repentance?
12. Was Jonah's intent to pull the plug? Why didn't God allow Jonah to take his own life?	32. Do you think Jonah was secretly hoping that Nineveh would be destroyed?
13. Without distress, had there been a prayer of repentance?	33. Why do you think Jonah was chosen for this ministry?
14. Can you speak on Psalm 130:4 in relation to Jonah's story? (See Genesis 38:7, 10.)	34. What did Jonah's happiness over a plant as a shade reveal about himself? (Jonah 4:6)
15. What do people do who pursue vain idols? (Jonah 2:8)	35. Did all the animals obey God's instructions? Are there any exceptions?
16. What happened right after Jonah acknowledged that salvation belongs to the LORD?	36. Can you discuss the difference between pity for a plant and pity for people?
17. Did this account actually happen? What part of it if not all?	37. Had destruction come upon the city, would the small children have been involved?
18. What does it mean when you say a believer ends up in the belly of a great fish?	38. Should a believer be happy to hear of the salvation of their enemy?
19. What is the first thing you should do if you end up in the belly of a fish?	39. Would you lead your enemy to Christ if given the opportunity?
20. Why do you think God does not always block the road to temptation and sin?	40. What does the account of Jonah going to Nineveh say about the time of the Gentiles?

THE CALL TO NINEVEH (Jonah 1:1–17)

1. To where was Jonah called? To where did he flee? Did he think he could outrun God?	21. How is God's mercy shown after the men offered sacrifices to the God of Israel?
2. Are Nineveh and Tarshish in the same direction or in opposite directions?	22. What are two ways Roman's 8:28 plays out in this account?
3. Why do you think God did not get in the way of purchase of the ticket to Tarshish?	23. Can you name a number of ways God's sovereignty is implemented in this account?
4. Why does God not send prophets today with a threat to destroy cities?	24. How did God keep Jonah alive out in the treacherous sea?
5. What is the meaning of the presence of LORD? Were those in Tashish not in God's will?	25. Did all the seamen end up worshipping the one, true God? Please explain.
6. How could Jonah sleep through the ordeal? (Jonah 1:5; Proverbs 3:24)	26. Why does the text not specifically say why Jonah ran from God?
7. Who threw Jonah into the sea, God or the mariners?	27. What do you think that Jonah was thinking that made him try to run?
8. How can God's judgment be justified when it effects others? (Josh 22:20; Rom 5:12)	28. What was the gospel that Jonah was supposed to give to the Ninevites?
9. Do you think the cargo was compensated for? Maybe by Jonah or the shipping firm?	29. Have you ever been chastised by God? Is all pain chastisement from God?
10. How could Jonah say he feared the LORD when he was running from the LORD?	30. Are believers adept at discerning what is the chastisement of God?
11. Did Jonah actually believe the LORD created the heavens and the earth?	31. When a calamity takes place in your life, can you discern why the calamity happened?
12. What did the seamen do to find out wherein was the problem? (cf Joshua 7:14)	32. How do you know you are enjoying the presence of the Lord? How could you prove it?
13. Why did those seaman fear greatly after finding out Jonah was a Hebrew?	33. Is today's unsaved world adept at discerning the judgment of God?
14. How did Jonah convey that he had left the presence of the LORD? (Jonah 1:9-10)	34. How have overall societal values changed from Jonah's day to now?
15. Does God always judge this quickly? Why did God chastise Jonah this quick?	35. Will your sin effect others in your life? (Joshua 7:1; 22:20)
16. What was about the storm that made them think the storm was judgment from God?	36. How would a strong prayer life help with diminishing judgment from God?
17. Why do you think Jonah was bent on running from God's call to Nineveh?	37. Have you ever run from God? When? In what context? Did you acknowledge it?
18. What did Jonah's call to Nineveh have to do with the time of the Gentiles?	38. Is repentance a one-time occurrence or an ongoing exercise?
19. What proved that the storm was due to Jonah's rebellion?	39. Does God get what he wants? What did he want from Jonah?
20. Could Jonah connect the reason of the storm to his rebellion?	40. Does God reward on the same level as he punishes, or are his rewards even better?

JONAH'S PRAYER OF REPENTANCE (Jonah 2:1–10)

1. Was Jonah's time in the fish's belly related to New Testament doctrine? (Matt 12:40)	21. How did God speak to the big fish? How would you prove your conclusion on this?
2. Was Jonah's intent to pull the plug?	22. Did this account actually happen? What part of it if not all?
3. Why didn't God allow Jonah to take his own life?	23. Based on other miracles in the Bible, can you conclude that this actually happened?
4. Did Jonah pray because he had hit rock bottom? Did good decisions come from this?	24. How do you think God had prepared Jonah to go to Nineveh?
5. Was Jonah repentant because he got caught?	25. How do you think Jonah made it back after getting vomited out on dry land?
6. Without distress, had there been a prayer of repentance? Did the LORD hear his prayer?	26. What does it mean when you say a believer ends up in the belly of a great fish?
7. What do you think would have happened had Jonah not repented?	27. Have you ever been in the belly of the fish? literally? spiritually?
8. What were the multiple distresses that Jonah was dealing with?	28. What should you do if you crossed the line and end up in the belly of a fish?
9. Do you think Jonah prayed toward the beginning or near the end of his ordeal?	29. What is the first thing you should do if you end up in the belly of a fish?
10. What does it mean that Jonah would look upon God's holy temple again? (Jonah 2:4)	30. Supposing you want to help, how would you approach such a person?
11. What was the main reason God wanted to bring Jonah up from the pit?	31. How can you use basic needs as a motive to repent and turn to God?
12. Can you speak on Psalm 130:4 in relation to Jonah's story? (See Genesis 38:7, 10.)	32. What is the significance of salvation belonging to the LORD?
13. What do people do who pursue vain idols? (Jonah 2:8)	33. How do you stay out of the belly of the fish?
14. How did Jonah breathe while he was in the belly of the big fish? ¹	34. What are some things we should be thankful for while in the fish's belly?
15. What happened right after Jonah acknowledged that salvation belongs to the LORD?	35. What are some things we should be thankful for after repentance?
16. What kinds of physical challenges was Jonah dealing with in the fish's belly?	36. What are some vain idols in the 21st century?
17. In terms of the location you can pray, what does this passage say about that?	37. Why do you think God does not always block the road to temptation and sin?
18. What happened to Jonah's relationship with God during this time?	38. Spiritually speaking, do you know anyone who is in the belly of a fish right now?
19. What needed to happen to Jonah before God had the fish vomit Jonah out on land?	39. What are some ways to diminish the number of temptations in your life?
20. Where do you think the dry land was?	40. Can a strong prayer life keep you out of the belly of the fish?

¹<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/lifestyle/viral-and-trending/050416/swallowed-alive-man-survives-inside-whale-s-stomach-for-three-days.html>

JONAH PREACHES IN NINEVEH (Jonah 3:1–10)

1. What was the difference between Jonah's first and second call to Nineveh?	21. Have you ever repented from sin?
2. Do you think Jonah was tempted to shirk this call also?	22. What is fasting? Have you ever fasted?
3. Are there multiple motives to obedience? What motives to obedience are there?	23. What are some effects that come about due to fasting?
4. What should be the main motive to obedience?	24. Have you ever noticed what fasting does to other people?
5. Are there any vocations without difficulties?	25. Is Nineveh a story about fasting? What is the story of Nineveh first an example of?
6. What are differences between the difficulties of following God's call or another one?	26. Is the purpose of fasting only for repentance, or are there other spiritual benefits?
7. How did God block the way to Tarshish? Did God block the way to Nineveh?	27. How is the story of Jonah about God's mercy and grace?
8. After Jonah got to Nineveh, how long did he wait to actually start preaching?	28. Does God relish in a repentant heart? (Jonah 3:10; Psalm 51:17; Matt 18:12-13)
9. What was the actual message that Jonah was to give to Nineveh? (Jonah 3:4)	29. Is it important to acknowledge that your sin? What is at the core of repentance?
10. How did the Holy Spirit work among the Ninevites?	30. How does this account show how God leads us one step at a time? (Jonah 1:2-3; 3:2)
11. What should be noted about the work of the Holy Spirit in Nineveh?	31. During round two, did God have Jonah go to Nineveh before giving him the message?
12. What is one aspect of fasting that gets God's attention? (See Isaiah 58:5-6.)	32. Can believers spearhead more stories like Nineveh? What can we do in this regard?
13. Was it the king who called for the fast, or did it come from the common people?	33. What would be the first step in instigating more stories like Nineveh?
14. Can you discuss God's choosing of Nineveh rather than another city in that time?	34. Was it easy to link the impending judgment, Jonah's message and Nineveh's survival?
15. Why do you think there aren't more stories like Nineveh surfacing? (Matt 11:23)	35. What has changed in 21st century life that we don't have stories like this today?
16. Was the fast limited to man? (Jonah 3:7) Did they believe Jonah or God? (Jonah 3:5)	36. Does God operate differently today than how he operated in that day?
17. Why was judgment going to come to Nineveh in the first place? (Jonah 3:8)	37. Is it difficult to link up the chastisement of God to real life?
18. In the process of executing a city-wide fast, what were they thinking? (Jonah 3:9)	38. Can you specifically link up catastrophes to chastisement of God to your life?
19. What was God's response once he saw their sincere repentance? (Jonah 3:10)	39. What is the key to linking up the judgment of God to a specific catastrophe?
20. Do you think God relented of the disaster against his own will?	40. What is unique to the account of Nineveh's repentance?

THE AFTERMATH (Jonah 4:1–11)

1. Should Jonah have been pleased at Nineveh's repentance?	21. What kind of value system will be in place to stir up happiness at others' salvation?
2. Why was Jonah not happy to see Nineveh repent?	22. Do you pray for your enemies? Should you pray for your enemies?
3. Did Jonah want to see Nineveh's destruction? Why or why not?	23. Should a believer be happy to hear of the salvation of their enemy?
4. What does the account of Nineveh say about God's character? (Jonah 4:2)	24. Have you ever witnessed an enemy get saved? What was your response to the matter?
5. Now who is needing a spiritual transformation? The Ninevites or Jonah?	25. Would you lead your enemy to Christ if given the opportunity?
6. Why did Jonah want to die?	26. Can you be glad at the judgment of another person or people group? (Proverbs 17:5)
7. What was Jonah thinking in that he went to the east of the city?	27. What did Jesus say about your enemies? (Matt 5:44; Luke 6:35)
8. Do you think Jonah was secretly hoping that Nineveh would be destroyed?	28. How can you apply this passage into the 21st century world?
9. Why do you think Jonah was chosen for this ministry?	29. Did Jonah's value system represent Israel in that day, or did he merely reveal himself?
10. What did Jonah's happiness over a plant as a shade reveal about himself? (Jonah 4:6)	30. What does the account of Jonah going to Nineveh say about the time of the Gentiles?
11. Do you think God specifically chose Jonah for this task to make the story of the fish?	31. Did the Ninevites first convert to Judaism before their repentance?
12. How many animals are involved in the account of Jonah and the great fish?	32. What does the story of Jonah have to say about God working outside of your domain?
13. Did all the animals obey God's instructions? Were there any exceptions?	33. Was Nineveh ready for repentance? What happened that such a story took place?
14. How many small children were there in Nineveh during this time? (Jonah 4:11)	34. Did God take the initiative to set a fire in hearts of the Ninevites?
15. Had destruction come upon the city, would the small children have been involved?	35. How would Jesus describe the prerepentant condition of their hearts? (Matt 12:41)
16. Can you discuss the difference between pity for a plant and pity for people?	36. Was this a temporary repentance or a repentance that led to salvation? (Luke 11:32)
17. What kind of logic did God use with reference to the plant?	37. What is the difference between merely averting judgment and going to heaven?
18. Is it common for such conversations between God and man to be put in the Bible?	38. Do you think Jonah was nervous in the prior hours before beginning to preach?
19. What role did the elements play in the last section of this story?	39. What did Jonah present as his main excuse for his rebellious actions? (Jonah 4:2)
20. Other than pray for death, what are some other requests Jonah could have asked for?	40. What is the main lesson you are taking away from Jonah's story?