

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2021: *Rest in Christ*

### Lesson 12 “The Restless Prophet”

#### Read for this week’s study

Jonah 1–4; Jeremiah 25:5; Ezekiel 14:6; Revelation 2:5; Luke 9:51–56; Jude 1–25.

#### Memory Text

“ ‘And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?’ ” (Jonah 4:11, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Running Away
- III. A Three-Day Rest
- IV. Mission Accomplished
- V. An Angry, Restless Missionary
- VI. A Two-Way Street
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week, let’s look at Jonah and what we can learn from his restlessness and lack of peace.” (Sabbath afternoon) What is unique about the book of Jonah? Why would the Bible use a subversive story that is actually a satire? Why would God use extreme circumstances, humor and irony to teach us a valuable spiritual lesson?
2. Sunday’s lesson deals with Jonah running away from God. Can you name ways in which we try to run away from God? Running away from God requires that we attempt to not think about him, and eliminate the awareness of his presence, character, will, and even his holiness from our life. Yet we all do that at times. What are the lessons of the first chapter of Jonah?
3. Monday’s lesson points to Jonah’s prayer in chapter 2. Is there anything more to be learned from this chapter other than a three-day rest from his activities allows Jonah to view the situation from a different perspective?

4. What is the role and purpose of third-day stories in the Bible? See for example: Genesis 22:4; 42:18; Joshua 2:16; Esther 5:1; Hosea 6:1-2, etc.
5. Tuesday's lesson is about the success of Jonah's mission. "What lessons can we take from this story for ourselves in our attempts to witness to others?" What does it tell us about God that Jonah is successful in his preaching in spite of the fact that he does not put much effort into his sermon (just five words [in Hebrew])? Jonah mentioned nothing about Nineveh's sin, nothing about how to respond, nothing about God! Obviously, he did not want his sermon to succeed! Yet, it did, as the city was "turned over" (1 Samuel 10:6) and not "overthrown" Genesis 19:21). 😊
6. Wednesday's lesson asks: "What lesson can we learn from Jonah's rather faulty character?" What is the significance of the story in Luke 9:51-56 for Jesus' ministry and the way he teaches his disciples? What is the danger of using "proof texts" rather than focusing on understanding the storyline of the Bible?
7. In what way is mission a two-way street? "Nineveh was dangerous, but in the story of Jonah the Ninevites don't seem to be the problem. They understand the message and quickly repent. Jonah, the missionary, seems to be the weak link in this mission story. In this account, God pursues a reluctant prophet because He knows that Jonah needed the missionary trip to Nineveh as much as the Ninevites needed to hear the missionary's message." (Thursday's lesson)
8. What lesson(s) can we learn from Jonah 4? Jonah goes outside the city and camps on a nearby hill to watch and wait. It seems clear that he hoped the Ninevites would re-think their repentance and suffer the same fate that Sodom and Gomorrah did.
9. Is it possible that the purpose of the mission is not to save others, but to 'save Jonah from Jonah'? Does God send people our way that help us to save us from ourselves? Is it possible that the purpose of missionary activity is more 'transformation' than 'salvation'?
10. "Jonah had no idea of how much he hated the Assyrians or the extremes he would go through in order to avoid them, even after he got the call. Jonah wasn't ready to have a Ninevite as a next-door neighbor in heaven. Jonah hadn't learned to love as God loves. God calls Jonah to go to Nineveh because God loves the Ninevites and wants them in His kingdom. But God also calls Jonah because God loves Jonah. He wants Jonah to grow and become more like Him as they work together." (Thursday's lesson)
11. What are Jonah's last words in the story (after he ignored God's searching question; 4:4, 9)? What are God's final words in the book? How did Jesus pick up on that? How is that connected with the point of the whole book? What does the fact that God loves your enemy do to you? How can a better understanding of God's character generate humility and gratitude in us that God would love even our enemies and put up with the 'Jonah' in all of us?

## Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

But what do you think of a man who is embarrassed to know God so well? Paul says, in Romans 1, “I am not ashamed of the good news about God and his righteousness.” But Jonah was ashamed. But what was it that he was ashamed about, really? Isn’t it that he would be discredited as a prophet? He’d gone in there and said, “Forty days,” and he was afraid it wouldn’t happen anyway, and it didn’t. So he says, “God, You’ve absolutely ruined my reputation. Who’ll believe me now?” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Obadiah, Jonah, & Micah, recorded March 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/45MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/46MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

The appeal at the end is so moving in Jonah. “Don’t you care that there are 120,000 people in that city that don’t know right from wrong, and there are even a lot of cattle? Don’t you care, Jonah?” But he didn’t care about God’s reputation, at all. So maybe that would be one lesson. As we study the prophecies here, what do they say about God? Do the prophecies even leave room for delay, by the way? Well, the book of Revelation certainly does, doesn’t it? It even speaks of it. “Hold! Do not let these events occur until my servants are sealed in their foreheads.” It’s hard not to get into Revelation when we’re reading Daniel. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Daniel, recorded February 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/39MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/40MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

## Further Study with Ellen White

God is not dependent upon men for the advancement of His cause. He might have made angels the ambassadors of His truth. He might have made known His will, as He proclaimed the law from Sinai with His own voice. But in order to cultivate a spirit of benevolence in us, He has chosen to employ men to do this work. {CS 20.1}

All heaven is interested in the work going on in this world, which is to prepare men and women for the future, immortal life. It is God’s plan that human agencies shall have the high honor of acting as co-workers with Jesus Christ in the salvation of souls. {5T 573.3}

God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and learn of Him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their imperfections, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image.

{DA 294.4}

God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, blessings flow out from Him to all the creatures He has made. In His infinite love He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature, and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those are brought nearest to their Creator who thus become participants in labors of love. {CS 23.3}

Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with Him who made them all. {SC 85.1}

The glory of heaven is in lifting up the fallen, comforting the distressed. And wherever Christ abides in human hearts, He will be revealed in the same way. Wherever it acts, the religion of Christ will bless. Wherever it works, there is brightness. {COL 386.1}

Through the gospel, souls that are degraded and enslaved by Satan are to be redeemed to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. God's purpose is not merely to deliver from the suffering that is the inevitable result of sin, but to save from sin itself. . . . Eternity alone can reveal the glorious destiny to which man, restored to God's image, may attain. {MB 60.3}

All heaven is interested in our salvation. The angels of God, thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, are commissioned to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They guard us against evil and press back the powers of darkness that are seeking our destruction. {MH 253.3}

Christ gives them the breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls. Through cooperation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence. {ML 49.4}

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He

has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men. {SC 10.3}

If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy. {MH 249.1}

It is no part of Christ's mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, who seek to compel the conscience. Under a pretense of zeal for righteousness, men who are confederated with evil angels sometimes bring suffering upon their fellow men in order to convert them to their ideas of religion; but Christ is ever showing mercy, ever seeking to win by the revealing of His love. He can admit no rival in the soul, nor accept of partial service; but He desires only voluntary service, the willing surrender of the heart under the constraint of love. {AA 541.1}

Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of the gifts of heaven, and to exclude the rest of God's family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth. {RC 27.2}

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life. {RC 27.3}

He passed by no human being as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself, He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every neglect or insult shown by men to their fellow men only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might

become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them manifest as the children of God. {RC 27.4}

As the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. {AG 26.3}

Though He was a Jew, Christ mingled with the Samaritans, setting at naught the Pharisaic customs of His nation. In face of their prejudices, He accepted the hospitality of this despised people. He slept under their roofs, ate with them at their tables, partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands—and taught in their streets, and treated them with the utmost kindness and courtesy. {3SM 238.2}