

## SESSION 5: STRANGERS NO MORE

### JONAH 1:1-3; 3:1-5 AND 4:1-11

READERS: NARRATOR, GOD, JONAH

**NARRATOR:** <sup>1:1</sup>Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying,

**GOD:** <sup>2</sup>Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me.

**NARRATOR:** <sup>3</sup>But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

*Jonah's escape is thwarted by a storm and then a large fish. After some time to reflect in chapter 2, Jonah is given a second chance:*

**NARRATOR:** <sup>3:1</sup>The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying,

**GOD:** <sup>2</sup>Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.

**NARRATOR:** <sup>3</sup>So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.

**NARRATOR:** Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. <sup>4</sup>Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out,

**JONAH:** Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!

**NARRATOR:** <sup>5</sup>And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

*Everyone in Nineveh responds to Jonah's less than stellar sermon.*

**NARRATOR:** <sup>4:1</sup>But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup>He prayed to the Lord and said,

**JONAH:** O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. <sup>3</sup>And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.

**NARRATOR:** <sup>4</sup>And the Lord said,

**GOD:** Is it right for you to be angry?

**NARRATOR:** <sup>5</sup>Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

**NARRATOR:** <sup>6</sup>The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. <sup>7</sup>But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. <sup>8</sup>When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said,

**JONAH:** It is better for me to die than to live.

**NARRATOR:** <sup>9</sup>But God said to Jonah,

**GOD:** Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?

**JONAH:** Yes, angry enough to die.

**GOD:** <sup>10</sup>You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. <sup>11</sup>And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?