

JAM JONAH

CALLED, RELOCATED AND SENT



JOURNEY WITH US AS WE MOVE BEYOND BEING PASSIVE OBSERVERS AND BECOME ACTIVE DISCIPLES OF JESUS
6 - 27 September 2026

Johannesburg is a city of opportunity, ambition, diversity, creativity and possibility. BUT it is also a city where many young people experience pressure, inequality, unemployment, loneliness, violence, corruption, injustice and uncertainty about the future. For young professionals' life can easily become a cycle of work, traffic, deadlines, money, social life and survival. While unemployment creates its own issues of hopelessness, withdrawal and financial strain which often leads to mental health issues. Which grew from lives of students that were focusing on passing, graduating on time and finding success. For teenagers they face pressures of finding themselves in this busy, overwhelming and consuming world has led us to a place where even a twelve-year-old can be diagnosed with deep mental health issues. In the middle of all of this, Jesus is still calling young people to "Follow Him".

The story of Jonah is not simply about a man, a fish and a city. It is a story about a person who was called by God to make a difference in the city God had sent him. Jonah wanted to run, and at times we want to run too. Run into our careers, into entertainment, into relationships, into comfort, into busyness, running because we believe that someone else will deal with the ill that young people face in our city. BUT God calls Jonah toward Nineveh! God is calling you to Johannesburg where injustice, hopelessness and brokenness have become normal.

This series invites us to use **youth month** to move beyond being Sunday Christians and passive observers into becoming active disciples of Jesus. To say:

"I am Jonah, I have been called. I may have run. I may have struggled. But God is still sending me." The title invites us to ask deep seeking questions of who we are in relation to Jonah, if we are willing to fully submit to the will of God regardless of our own feelings, boundaries and self-justice. Moving from passive Christianity to active disciples means allowing God to control every aspect of our identity in discipleship, giving away our selfhood to take on our Christhood.

I am Jonah called to be relocated for ministry sent into Nineveh.

Blessings

Lolo: sent to be a pastor to the young flock in Bryanston by the will of God through Jesus Christ.

Called, Relocated and Sent

Series Theme:
From comfort to
calling. From
spectators to
disciples. From
the church
building to the
city

WEEK 1:

I am called

WEEK 2:

I am not too far gone

WEEK 3:

I am sent

WEEK 4:

I am sent to people i
might not choose

Obedience that changes communities.

When disciples obey God, their obedience can become part of someone else's transformation. Jonah entered Nineveh, he proclaimed God's message and the city responded. Young people's ministry is not limited to the pulpit, but their lives need to reflect the mission of God the value of obedience is not only reserved for Sunday morning worship but must be reflected even during Saturday afternoon gatherings. Your profession may be your platform, but Jesus must remain your purpose. Johannesburg does not need passive church members it needs disciples who carry Jesus beyond the building of church. Go and influence someone outside your church environment.

WORSHIP SONG:

As We Pray (Bob Fitts) <https://youtu.be/laR5ijMbhwI?si=guDSNdylN4LZJGJN>

Jonah 3 New International Version

Jonah Goes to Nineveh

3 Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ²“Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.”

³Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. ⁴Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, “Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.” ⁵The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. ⁶When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. ⁷This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. ⁸But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. ⁹Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.” ¹⁰When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

BIBLE READINGS:

WEEK 1:

Jonah 1:1-3

Psalms 139: 7-10

Matthew 28: 18-20

WEEK 2:

Jonah 2:1-9

Psalms 18:6

Luke 15: 11-24

WEEK 3:

Jonah 3:1-10

Psalms 103:8-13

Matthew 12:38-41

WEEK 4:

Jonah 4:1-11

Isaiah 55:6-9

Matthew 20:1-16

REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READINGS written by Tabile Mapekula

Jonah, who is sent by God (Jonah 3:2), has such an admirable and intimate relationship with God. So intimate, that when he (Jonah) utters the message from God, the credibility thereof moves immediate action from the citizens of Nineveh (Jonah 3:4 and 5). We would even be remiss to look past the beginning of this Chapter, where we are informed that this is the second time God is imploring Jonah to make his way to Nineveh and deliver this message! (Jonah 3:1). What a gracious God we serve. With Jonah being moved to obedience the second time God is calling, that obedience leads to the influence of repentance of a city. So influential that a king that sat on his throne, takes off his royal robes, covers himself in sackcloth and sat down in dust. Not an ordinary setting one would find royalty in. But also, an act demonstrative of what was to come, when the True King of Kings, Lord of Lords offers this for all of humanity. Throughout the Bible, people wore sackcloth in times of mourning, humility and repentance – some of these descriptive states of being, one may easily deduce as what is happening with this City. Repentance being a visible act, is one that is emphasised and may be relevant to execution of true repentance.

Today, a simple act of courage under the intense environments we may find ourselves in, invites much scrutiny and discomfort. Yet the conviction from God, whether first, second or third time, is true worship and the idea of being living sacrifice for the Kingdom of God. An idea that can shift many of the ills in society marring God's people, whom He loves. Intimacy with God invites courageous steps, hope, and relentless

execution of change. To focus on the inheritance (salvation), instead of the perceived cost, invites steadfastness in staying true to God's path, and invites a peace in execution of God's will.

We are reminded, through Jonah and his influential message for the city, firstly of a God that is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love (Psalm 103:8). Secondly, that reverence for God invites an outpouring of a great love (Psalm 103:11). Part of being sent, is to exude Love. Lastly, thinking on being purposely positioned as establishers/change makers, I'm drawn to Paul in His letters to the church in Philippi. He encourages them in Chapter 4: *"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."* Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

GROUP AND CLASS QUESTIONS to take the reflection deeper

1. What previous experience has shown you the grace of God (*can be through someone else or yourself*)
2. Which acts, in your present day, would equate to moving from your comfort zone and challenging society norms that in fact marginalise the vulnerable?
3. Which characteristics should the Body of Christ be unified in as change makers/influencers for a Heaven on Earth mandate.

DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYERS

MONDAY

Verse: *"Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time."* — Jonah 3:1

Prayer: Lord, thank You for second chances; help me respond to Your call with obedience.

TUESDAY

Verse: *"Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh."* — Jonah 3:3

Prayer: Lord, give me a willing heart to obey You even when the task feels difficult.

WEDNESDAY

Verse: *"The Ninevites believed God."* — Jonah 3:5

Prayer: Lord, help me to believe Your word and turn my heart fully toward You.

THURSDAY

Verse: *"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love."* — Psalm 103:8

Prayer: Lord, let Your compassion and grace shape the way I live and treat others.

FRIDAY

Verse: *"As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."* — Psalm 103:12

Prayer: Lord, thank You for Your forgiveness; help me walk in freedom and gratitude.

SATURDAY

Verse: *"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* — Matthew 12:40

Prayer: Jesus, help me see the hope of Your death and resurrection in every part of Scripture.

SUNDAY

Verse: *"The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah."* — Matthew 12:41

Prayer: Lord, give me a humble and repentant heart that responds quickly to Your truth.

KIDS AND TEENAGER SECTION: Family Time Devotion: I Am Jonah
Written By: Children & Youth Intern: Kele MASHILOANE
Week 3- I Am Sent

Obedience that changes communities

Jonah 3:1-10

Have you ever been asked to do something you really didn't want to do? Sometimes obeying God can feel difficult, especially when we don't understand why He is asking us to do something or when it takes us outside of our comfort zone. Jonah's story reminds us that God can use our obedience to bring about change—not only in our own lives, but in the lives of those around us.

As we begin this week's family time, we will explore what it means to be "Relocated and Sent" and how obedience can change communities. Let's think about the ways God may be asking each of us to listen, respond, and make a difference right where we are: at home, at school, at church, and in our community.

Scripture Reading:

3 Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ² "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." ³ Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. ⁴ Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." ⁵ The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. ⁶ When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. ⁷ This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. ⁸ But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. ⁹ Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." ¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

Reflecting Together

Jonah 3:1–10 shows us that obedience to God can change an entire community. God sent Jonah to Nineveh with a message, and although Jonah had previously run away, he chose to obey this time. His simple act of obedience led the people of Nineveh to listen, repent, and turn away from their wrong actions. Jonah's obedience became the starting point for change in a whole city.

This reminds us that our obedience matters too. We may not always see the impact of our choices, but when we listen to God and do what He asks, our actions can influence the people around us. Choosing kindness instead of anger, forgiving someone, standing up for what is right, helping someone in need, or sharing God's love can create change in our families, friendships, schools, churches, and communities.

As a family, take a moment to think about where God may be asking you to obey Him. What could change in your home or community if each of us chose to listen to God and act on what He is asking us to do? Like Jonah, we can be sent by God, and our obedience can make a difference.

Discussion Questions for Teenagers (Ages 12–18)

1. Why do you think Jonah struggled to obey God at first, and what are some reasons we sometimes struggle to obey God?
2. Can you think of a time when someone's positive or negative choices affected the people around them? How can one person's actions influence a family, friendship group, school, or community?
3. Jonah had to go to a place he may not have wanted to go. What does courage and faith look like when God asks us to do something uncomfortable?
4. What is one practical way you could choose obedience this week—in your relationships, at school, at home, or in your community?
5. The people of Nineveh listened and changed their ways. Is there an area in your own life where you may need to take responsibility, change your behaviour, or make a better choice? What could that change look like?

Discussion Questions for Younger Children (Ages 4–11)

1. How do you feel when someone asks you to do something you don't really want to do?
2. What did Jonah notice about the people of Nineveh when they heard God's message? How did they respond?
3. Imagine you were in Jonah's place. How could you help the people around you make good choices?
4. What would you do if God asked you to help someone you didn't like or didn't know?
5. What does Jonah's story teach us about God? How does God show us that He cares about people and gives them opportunities to change?

Family Activity: The Ripple Effect

You will need: A bowl of water and a small stone or pebble.

Place the bowl where everyone can see it. Explain that the bowl represents a community, and each person in the family is like a person within that community.

Drop the stone into the water and watch the ripples spread across the bowl. Explain that one small action can influence many people. Jonah's obedience may have seemed like one simple act, but his obedience helped bring change to the entire city of Nineveh.

Take turns naming one act of obedience that could make a difference in your family, school, church, or community. After each person shares, they can drop the stone into the water again.

Ask:

- "Who or what does the bowl represent?"
- "What do the ripples represent?"
- "How does this connect to what we read about Jonah?"
- "How can one person's obedience affect other people?"

Prayer

Dear God, Help us to listen when You call us and give us courage to obey You. Show us how our choices and actions can bring positive change to the people around us. Help us to be willing to go where You send us and love those You place in our lives. May our obedience bring hope, kindness, and change to our families and communities. Amen