

BIBLE RUNAWAYS

There were at least 11 Bible characters who “ran away” when things got tough. They are: Adam, Jonah, Elijah, Mark, Onesimus, Moses, Gideon, Prodigal Son, David, Judas Iscariot, and Peter.

Runaway #2 - Jonah

- Jonah 1:1-2 *The word of the LORD came to Jonah saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.*
- Jonah 1:3 *But Jonah arose 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 the fare and went DOWN into the ship, to be a passenger to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD*
- Jonah 1:5 *(During a horrible storm) - But Jonah had gone DOWN into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down and slept.*

1. What could Jonah not face in Jonah 1:1-2? _____



Some Facts to Consider:

- *Jonah lived in Gath Hepher near Nazareth.*
- *Nazareth was 90 miles from Jerusalem.*
- *Nineveh was the capital of Assyria.*
- *Nineveh was 500 miles from Jerusalem.*
- *Even without TV, internet, and newscasts, Jonah knew about Assyria 500 miles away.*
- *Assyria was a powerful, evil empire that took over every nation in its path.*
- *Assyria's invasions were heading toward Jonah.*
- *Jonah was not a bold man; he was afraid.*

2. What do you think Jonah was the most afraid of? Rank them 1 to 5 (1 being worst).
- ___ “Arise” and go do a job that is going to be very difficult.
 - ___ Go to “Nineveh” - an empire with a reputation that terrified everybody.
 - ___ A country boy going to that “great city” where the enemy lived.
 - ___ To be asked to speak against this evil empire than no one could stop.
 - ___ For a godly man to have to face the wickedness of this empire.
3. Which of these reasons for running away could apply to Jonah?
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. ___ Cannot face a situation | e. ___ A deep spiritual problem |
| b. ___ Feelings of powerlessness | f. ___ Overwhelming danger |
| c. ___ Overwhelming anger | g. ___ “I refuse to do this” |
| d. ___ Feelings of past failures | h. ___ Absolute fear |
4. ___ Yes ___ No Do you think Jonah loved God?
5. ___ Yes ___ No Do you think that Jonah agreed with God & hated evil?
6. ___ Yes ___ No Do you think Jonah wanted his nation (Israel) to honor God?
7. ___ Yes ___ No Do you think that Jonah knew Israel needed to be judged?
8. ___ Yes ___ No Do you think God had confidence that Jonah could do the job?
9. ___ Yes ___ No Do you think that God expected total fearless perfection?

10. Explain how Jonah could have had feelings of powerlessness. "What can I do to make a difference here?" _____

11. Have you ever faced this type of thing? Yes No

12. Briefly describe the issue you were facing. _____

13. Did you: Reject all people? Run away? Face it & win? Face it & fail?

14. Did you: Thank God for it? Become angry at God? Start hating yourself

15. Look at Jonah 1:3 at the beginning of the lesson.

a. Who did Jonah flee from? (See underlined) _____

b. This fleeing took Jonah which direction? (See capitalized word) _____

c. Since he was sleeping, could he had been depressed & suicidal? Yes No

16. Jonah exerted a lot of time and energy to do the wrong thing. (Jonah 1:3)

a. "He went DOWN to _____." (Jonah travelled 70 miles in 3 days)

b. "He found a _____." (Jonah had to search for transportation)

c. "He paid the _____." (Jonah spent money for an unnecessary trip)

d. "He went _____ into the _____." (Jonah didn't get the best cabin)

17. In the process of running from God, how were his actions hurting others?

a. (1:4) "The ship was about to be _____ up."

b. (1:5) "The mariners (sailors) were _____."

c. (1:8) "For whose cause is this _____ upon us."

d. (1:11) "What shall we do that the _____ will be _____ for us?"

18. (1:10) How do you explain to unbelievers that you are running from your God?

Jonah 4:2 (After the Assyrians repented, Jonah ran away again) "LORD, I knew when I was still back home that You are gracious, merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness."

Jonah 4:3 Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better that I be dead."

19. Yes No We already know the right answer, yet we still run away.

20. Yes No We know what is important to God and we reject it & run away.

21. Yes No When we run away, we do not care about the people we hurt.

22. When I run away, am I ashamed of myself; angry at God; being selfish

When backed into a corner, we don't think straight; it's only about us. Jonah said to God, I know you are loving & merciful & do not want to harm anyone. Now, would You please kill me?"

23. Yes No Did Jonah's attitude improve before the book of Jonah ended?

24. Yes No Are you personally coming back from running away?

Hopefully, when you ran from God or people, you learn from that & turn back to God. He is waiting.