

RUNNING FROM GOD

A FOUR-WEEK BIBLE STUDY FOR ATHLETES THROUGH THE BOOK OF **JONAH**
ON OBEDIENCE, PRAYER, MERCY, AND GOD'S PROVISION

WEEK 1 // GOD USES PEOPLE TO REACH PEOPLE (JONAH 1)

WEEK 2 // YOU CAN PRAY ANYWHERE (JONAH 2)

WEEK 3 // NOBODY IS TOO FAR FROM GOD'S GRACE (JONAH 3)

WEEK 4 // GOD PROVIDES, EVEN WHEN IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE (JONAH 4)



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GOD USES PEOPLE TO REACH PEOPLE

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JONAH 1

Before jumping into Jonah, it's important to remember that this is not a fish story—it's a story about God's heart for all people

Read Jonah 1 together

What specific instruction does God give Jonah in verses 1–2?

How does Jonah respond to God's call? What direction does he choose instead?

Why do you think Jonah runs? What fears or assumptions might be driving his disobedience?

Who is affected by Jonah's decision to run from God (v. 4–10)?

God could have spoken directly to Nineveh. Why do you think He chooses to use Jonah instead?

APPLICATIONS FOR ATHLETES

GOD USES PEOPLE
TO REACH PEOPLE
JONAH 1

Where has God placed you right now (team, school, locker room, training group)?

In what ways might God want to use you to represent Him there?

Have you ever resisted God's prompting because it felt uncomfortable, inconvenient, or costly?

What would obedience look like for you this week—specifically as an athlete? What about other areas of your life?

What's your one takeaway from today's study?

God has you where you are for a reason. Part of His purpose for your life as an athlete is to use you to reach others. Championships and records may come and go, but obedience to God's call lasts forever. God uses people to reach people—will you say yes?

YOU CAN PRAY ANYWHERE

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JONAH 2

REVIEW OF LAST STUDY

Throughout Scripture, God consistently chooses to work through people to reach people. He sends ambassadors—not because He needs them, but because He desires for us to have a small role in the process of people coming to know Him.

Read Jonah 2 together

Where is Jonah when he prays in chapter 2? Why do you think that is significant?

What does Jonah's prayer reveal about his desperation and dependence on God?

What do you learn about God's willingness to hear Jonah—even after his disobedience?

How does Jonah's situation challenge the idea that prayer must happen only in “spiritual” places?

APPLICATIONS FOR ATHLETES

YOU CAN PRAY
ANYWHERE
JONAH 2

Have you ever felt pressure to separate your faith from your sport? Where do you think that comes from?

What would it look like for you to pray during practices, competitions, injuries, or tough seasons? If you already do this, what do you pray about or pray for?

What are some situations where you might rely more on your ability than on prayer?

Is there anyone in your life who models a prayer life worth emulating?

If you could put together a training plan to strengthen your prayer life, what are some things you would include?

If Jonah can pray from inside a fish, you can pray on the field. Prayer is not confined to locker rooms or pregame circles—it belongs everywhere you go. God hears you in every circumstance.

NOBODY IS TOO FAR FROM GOD'S GRACE

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JONAH 3

REVIEW OF LAST STUDY

Prayer is not location-dependent. It's not reserved for church buildings or quiet moments. God hears His people anywhere.

Read Jonah 3 together

How does Jonah respond to God's second call compared to the first?

What stands out to you about the Ninevites' response to Jonah's message?

Why would Nineveh have been considered an unlikely—or undeserving—recipient of God's mercy?

What does verse 10 reveal about God's character?

How would you define the word "mercy"?

APPLICATIONS FOR ATHLETES

NOBODY IS TOO FAR
FROM GOD'S GRACE
JONAH 3

Have you ever witnessed someone release the error of their ways, repent, and turn back to God?

What about you, if you have surrendered your life to Jesus, what were the circumstances around that decision?

Is there someone in your life you've quietly written off as "too far gone"?

How might God want to use you as a conduit of His grace to that person?

What fears or prejudices might keep you from being obedient in moments like this?

How can sports potentially play an important role in helping us realize that God's way is best?

Nobody is outside the reach of God's mercy. The teammate, rival, or coach you think would "never turn to God" may be exactly who God wants to reach—through you. Obedience matters, because lives are at stake.

GOD PROVIDES, EVEN WHEN IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE

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JONAH 4

REVIEW OF LAST STUDY

Jonah's story is less about Nineveh's repentance and more about God's mercy. God's grace reaches farther than human categories ever would.

Read Jonah 4 together

Why is Jonah angry after Nineveh repents? What does this reveal about his heart?

What repeated word do you notice in verses 6–8? Why might that be important?

How does God use both comfort (the plant) and discomfort (the worm and wind) to teach Jonah?

What does this chapter reveal about the difference between God's priorities and Jonah's?

If you were in Jonah's shoes (or sandals!) how would you have reacted?

APPLICATIONS FOR ATHLETES

GOD PROVIDES, EVEN WHEN
IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE
JONAH 4

How do you typically define “God’s provision” in your athletic life? In other words, what does it mean for God to bless you in and through sport?

How have wins, losses, injuries, teammates, and coaches shaped your faith?

Can you recall specific moments (or teammates) in your athletic life that have formed you into who you are today?

On a scale of 1-10, how challenging is it for you to trust that God is working even when your circumstances are difficult?

How has this study on Jonah shaped your view of God and how He wants you to live faithfully for Him?

God provides all along Jonah’s journey—but not always in ways Jonah enjoys. God’s provision is meant to shape Jonah’s heart, not just his comfort. God provides everything—success and struggle alike. He may use winning seasons to draw you closer, or He may use setbacks, injuries, and adversity. Either way, His goal is not just your happiness, but your holiness. Through it all, God provides.