

## 6. Philosophies, Stories, and Examples

### The Assignment

#### Review Step 5

Write between 250 and 300 words that include these elements:

- “Their Town.”\* Determine the meaning of your one to three verses, using 1) your word study, 2) your subsection study, and 3) your understanding of the theme of the book as a whole.
- Crossing the “Principlizing Bridge.” Answer the question: What is your primary takeaway?
- “Own Town.” Apply the meaning to our world today.
- Your life. In one sentence that begins with “I will . . .” answer the question: What is God asking me to do as a result of this study? If God speaks, listen and obey.

#### Example of Exegesis and Application

##### Jonah 4:10–111

*10 But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. 11 But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?”*

Jonah, as a representative of the Jews, had been running from God physically and in his heart, because he categorically rejected Gentile inclusion into the covenant faithfulness of God. In Jonah 4:10–11, God challenges Jonah one last time on this, ending with a question not only to Jonah but apparently also to the reader. The vine, a likely symbol for Israel, represents Jonah’s immediate physical comfort but also God’s covenantal provision for Jonah and his people. *But Jonah didn’t plant, grow, or demolish the plant, nor did he do those things for ethnic Israel!* God cares about the plant, sure, but he also cares about the people in Nineveh and their thriving represented by their cattle (see Ezekiel 36:9, which handles God’s concern to revive mountains of Israel as they come home to be covenantally restored). Jonah was concerned about a plant, when at least he could be concerned about the cattle, let alone the people! By implication: God cared about those, and so should Jonah and his people.

Further, Jonah should know that God’s concern was particularly covenantal in orientation. A word study on “concerned” in the NIV reveals as much. This word is used 21 times in the NIV Bible as a whole and 12 times in the Old Testament. Generally, “concerned,” when used to denote a person’s concern about an issue, it’s used in a covenantal context about the

people of God (Gen. 21:11; Exodus 2:24; 3:7; 4:31; Ezekiel 36:9). When not used about the people of God, it's still used about concern of or about the physical well-being of God's anointed leaders (1 Sam. 22:8; 2 Sam 13:33; Ps. 142:4). So it's generally used in a covenantal context about Israel, Israel's leaders, or Israel's land, to express care primarily for their physical and perhaps implicit for their spiritual life as well.

When you look at God's care and compassion in contrast with Jonah's lack thereof for people in the book of Jonah with a focus on these final verses, Jonah's problem is that he didn't care about pagan's perishing. He slept during the storm at sea, even though in Jonah 1:6 they were going to perish. He was willing to perish, but God saved him into the fish (2:6). Then his heart began to change toward the other—but not fully. Like the sailors, the Ninevites had hoped they would not perish (3:9). Jonah knew what was at issue was God extending his covenant faithfulness to non-Jews (4:2). He cared so much about his own life that his concern for Nineveh was below zero. God challenges Jonah to care for the Ninevites like he does.

We see God challenging and calling up Jonah to his compassion from the opening of Jonah in 1:1–3. God's trying to bestow upon Jonah his covenantal faithfulness throughout, but Jonah runs (1:4–16). Then, we see Jonah repent of his disobedience (still hardened heart toward the Ninevites) in 1:17–2:10, and we see the Ninevites repent (3:1–10). This challenges Jonah's presuppositions about God's character and ways toward the gentiles of whom the Ninevites were among the worst. Then in the climactical scene of Jonah, we see Jonah's anger exposed and challenged (4:1–4) and then his anger metaphoricalized (4:5–11). Jonah would have rather died than seen God relent on the Ninevites, but he knew better. He knew that God would extend his grace, compassion, mercy, and love to the Ninevites, as he implicitly cited Exodus 34:6–7 back to God in Jonah 4:2, but in cutting that citation short, he revealed his refusal of God to extend the covenant faithfulness he expressed to the Hebrews coming out of Egypt to the Ninevites. Instead of finishing Exodus 34:6–7, he left off "and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin." It's as though he doesn't want God's faithfulness and love to extend to thousands—not forgive their wickedness, rebellion, and sin. He wouldn't even say it!

Exodus 34:6–7	Jonah 4:2
<p>“The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God slow to anger abounding in love</p> <p>and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”</p>	<p>LORD, “O LORD, ... a gracious and compassionate God slow to anger abounding in love</p> <p>a God who relents from sending calamity.</p>

Yet God sought to convince him that even the worst can experience forgiveness—even those outside of ethnic Israel. Shouldn't God show concern for those people?

**My primary takeaway, the principle I'm extracting, from this exegesis is that God's people should care about the physical well-being and salvation of nations like he does, even the most sinful people on earth.**

The church today must seek after those far from God for physical well-being and spiritual salvation. That means, we as God's people should seek after the lost—yes, bend heaven and earth—to offer them a message of repentance. And we should not be surprised by their repentance and God's relenting from punishing them. In fact, we should celebrate it not languish it. This means loving the Muslim next door and eventually preaching the gospel of Jesus that involves a message of repentance; this means reaching the drug addict, the pornographer, the adulterer—all in the name of the gospel—to preach repentance; and this means welcoming them joyfully into the family of God.

I will preach the gospel of repentance this Sunday, offering a message of salvation to those at Harpeth!

## Final Exam

- [Explanation]

## Philosophies, Stories, and Examples

- The history of epistemology in short:
  - Pre-modern: Truth comes from up there
  - Modern: Truth is out there
  - Postmodern: Truth is within you
- Interpretation matters: How we interpret the Bible is how we interpret any content; how we interpret any content is how we interpret the Bible.
- A vision for the future of hermeneutics: get ready for being stable in a weak period coming up.

If—

BY RUDYARD KIPLING  
(‘Brother Square-Toes’—Rewards and Fairies)

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,

Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
If all men count with you, but none too much;  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

# If—Exegesis Style

By Chad Harrington

If you can know your stuff when all about you,  
Are forgetting theirs.  
If you can bring your knowledge to the table,  
but not shove it down peoples' throat, appearing unstable.  
If you can make structural divisions and subsections too  
And write your questions and observations in rows of twos.  
If you can do your book study, pick categories—at least two,  
And use data to prove your theme too.

If you can prepare for your preaching, teaching, and discipling  
With adequate study.

If you can keep context king and AIM your goal  
But not act like a bratty king in the process.  
If you can exegete, principalize, and apply any given text,  
Without making a mess or a mockery of yourself.  
If you can keep a text from being a pretext by not taking it  
Out of context to make it say anything you want it to say.

If you hold up the Word of God as holy and relevant,  
And hold it with a humble posture too.  
If you can fill each message you teach  
With sixty minutes worth of exegesis to no end.  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it.

And—which is more—you'll be an exegete, my friend!