

Jonah 1.17-2.10

A Good Time to Pray

Jonah - NAME MEANS = DOVE, flew far away from God Called by
God > Preach to Nineveh // Instead > Tarshish / Spain?

Tried to LEAVE God FAR Behind > WISH Came True

When the gods wish to punish us they answer our prayers. Oscar Wilde

1. Miracle OF the Fish

Secular Thot > Anti-Supernatural > “If miraculous, then NOT True!”

Fish Swallow Man/ Entire City Repent / Plant Grow Overnight NOT!!

Use E-mail -- ?? How msg goes up to Moon & Back in Seconds

Understanding & Experience is NOT Reliable STANDARD of Truth

1. 17 And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Matter-of-fact description 1.17 “And the LORD appointed a great fish...”

“Fish” just 3 vs. NO Attempt to Convince or Persuade Reader

NO Exaggeration – How BIG was FISH – How MANY People in Nineveh

Encyc Britannica- “Sign of Prophet Jonah & Modern Confirmations” SOME believed =

GREENLAND WHALE – Critics LAUGHED!!

Throat so small it would choke on an Orange

Perhaps SPERM WHALE? – Hebrew Text only says “great fish”

Adult Sperm Whale: Mouth – 23 feet long, 16 ft high, 10 ft wide

BIGGER than our APARTMENT IN Beijing

Feed on Squid – Much larger than a man – Often swallow them Whole

Inside SPERM Whale – Uncomfortable, but Survivable

“There would be air to breathe, of a sort. It is needed to keep the animal afloat. But there would be great heat, up to 110 degrees F Unpleasant contact with the animal’s gastric juices might easily affect the skin, but the juices would not digest living matter; otherwise they would digest the walls of the creature’s own stomach”

LIFE in the BELLY – Just like our Apartment in Beijing in Summer

What we Believe – Matter of FAITH – ULTIMATE LOYALTY

My College BIOLOGY PROFESSOR – Ph.d. in Evolution

Young Xtian went to talk with her “Why do you believe in Evolution?” Darwin – why? –

Archeology finds – why? – carbon dating – why? ----

I BELIEVE IT BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT --- Faith Commitment

Prof stood by Faith Interp. Darwinian SCIENCE / I Faith Scripture/Right Science

Do we INTERPRET Bible LITERALLY? – NOT ALWAYS

Interpret Bible like Literature: History, Poetry, Song, Apocalypse, Law

Author of TELEPHONE Directory > Expects Absolutely Literal Interp

IF you get NUMBERS WRONG – Phone Book waste of LOTS of Paper

Parts of Bible NOT claim be LITERAL as Phone Book > All of it is WORD of God

Interpret it WAY the Literature was Written > Author’s INTENT

v. 6 “the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit”

POETRY – Figure of Speech – NOT LITERAL > Scarry TRUTH

Lost, Hopeless, Beyond Rescue, Surely a Gonner!

Jesus: “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep” John 10.7

NOT a PIECE of WOOD – 80 inches by 36 inches

Bible collection Writings – 66 Bks X 40 Authors written 1000 year Span GREATEST

MIRACLE – Unity of Theme and MESSAGE

POETRY, PROPHECY, HISTORY, LAW

REQUIREMENT Identify Style for Proper INTERPRETATION

Ch 2 of JONAH > Mostly POETRY // Like Book of PSALMS

MOST > Historical > Names & Places “Jonah son of Amittai”

“great city of Nineveh” “port of Joppa” “city of Tarshish” ALL on Map

For Xtian Most Important Proof – Witness of JESUS

Man NEVER LIED / Even Enemies could NOT find Fault w/ Him God in Human

Flesh – INCARNATION of Truth and Wisdom

Jesus: “Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites... The men of Nineveh... repented at the preaching of Jonah”
 Luke 11.30,32

Jesus: “For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Matthew 12.40

Jesus Believed JONAH – and the FISH – as HISTORICAL FACT

It must be the most criticized fish that ever swam in the Mediterranean. One sometimes hopes that there may be provision made for fish to speak in heaven, so that this poor creature can have the opportunity to answer its critics!
 Sinclair Ferguson

I BELIEVE IT BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT --- Faith Commitment

I Believe in GOD of BIBLE – Maker of Heaven and Earth

I Believe in RESURRECTION of JESUS from the GRAVE

I Believe JONAH was Swallowed by a GREAT FISH

I Believe in the MIRACLE OF the FISH – Best of All Miracle IN Fish!

2. Miracle IN the Fish

Men have been looking so hard at the great fish that they have failed to see the great God.
 G. Campbell Morgan

Jonah found God’s MERCY in the MIDST of his MISERY

Miracle IN Fish – Jonah’s Change of Heart – Work of Grace

a. Man in Panic

1) Sinking

FORSOOK God –Paid the Way- Went Down – Way, Way, Down!

“he went down to Joppa” Jonah 1.3

“he went down below deck” Jonah 1.5

“they threw him overboard” Jonah 1.15

v. 3 For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me.

vs. 5,6 The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head at the roots of the mountains.

Situation HELPLESS & HOPELESS > Falling to Bottom of the Sea

Terrifying Words: Surrounded, Closed IN, WRAPPED his Head

2) Separation – DEATH means Separation > 3 Kinds of Death in Bible

v. 4 I said, ‘I am driven away from your sight...’

v. 7 my life was fainting away...

When Jonah was turning his back on God, it did not bother him at all that he abandoned God. But suddenly, when Jonah was thrown overboard to his death, he found himself in a position of apparently being abandoned by God, and he did not like this at all. James Boice

a) Spiritual Death > Occurred in GARDEN of EDEN >

ATE Forbidden Fruit: Not NEED God “I know better...IN Charge!”

Fellowship Broken / Harmony btwn God & Man, HIDING from God

“Where are you Adam?” **Spiritually Dead** > still LIVED to 930!

b) Physical Death > Separation of Body/Spirit > Lifeless CORPSE

Body Remains like Shell > Looks like US > Nobody Home > Gone!

c) Eternal Death > a.k.a. The 2nd Death > Terrible, Horrible, Forever Spirit & Resur Body (ALL Get) Forever Separated from Holy God

3) Sheol > for Jonah: Death NOT Annihilation – Life beyond DEATH

Reason FEAR of Death > If Lights Out – Finished – No WORRIES

FEAR Death > Doorway into Eternity > Forever with God or in Hell

v. 2 “I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried...”

SHEOL: Place where DEAD Remain until their FINAL Judgment

v. 6 “I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.”

Jonah views the underworld as having a gate which was locked secure by bolts and bars: there could be no escaping from it...It is not annihilation in death that Jonah fears here, but rather the prospect of being abandoned in Sheol, and consequently separated thereafter from God. Desmond Alexander

College Summer worked Factory Zeke's Floating Bait – Pomona, CA
 Small Crew > 5, I was only Christian > Other 4 guys let me Know It!
 Boss ED 'Big Ed' – A Bit Overweight > A LOT INTIMIDATING
 One Day LAUGHED at Me for Wanting to Go to Heaven
 Me and Guys going to Hell > We'll have Great Time TOGETHER
 Later Year ED shot Dead by Jealous Husband > in Bed w his WIFE!

Hell is Complete Absence of God > All GOOD comes from God
 Light, Love, Joy, Friends, Fun from God, Hell utterly ALONE
 If Friends & Family There > Bible offers No Hope you'll See Them

In the water and then in the great fish, he learned what hell was like, and it was there in his misery that he repented and turned to God again. James Boice

Clear Teaching of Bible – HELL is Real, Eternal, Forever, Horrible
 Jesus talked More about HELL than Heaven > Warn World from Going!
 He DIED to Keep People OUT > Came into World to SAVE Sinners

b. Man in Prayer

Jesus "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray" Matt 6.6
 Jonah's PRAYER CLOSET – TOMB OF BLUBBER –
 No Interruptions GOOD MODEL of PRAYER

1) Thankful Prayer

v. 9 "song of thanksgiving" Belly of Fish / Singing in the SHOWER
 Prayer of THANKSGIVING Thankful in all things – even Fishy Smells
 Paul & Silas had this hope in a Philippian jail as they Prayed & SANG
 Shadrach, Meshach Abednego hope w Jesus walking in Neb's Fire
 Abraham had this hope as he looked for a permanent city to come
 Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Paul, Silas, Jonah –
 COMMON LOT They had NO IDEA what would Come Next – DEATH??
 All had Same GUARANTEE – God holds Them & FUTURE

Have WE become TOO Concerned to KNOW Future
 & NOT Confident enough that GOD Holds US & FUTURE
 WE know Jonah got OUT of Fish – HE did Not know it Then
 Basis of Thanksgiving was NOT Physical DELIVERANCE

Basis was God’s Salvation – 2.9 “Salvation comes from the Lord”
 GRACE does NOT Fail even when There is NO Evidence for It
 Because we are IN CHRIST – Forever, Eternally, Inseparably

“My dear friends, we are now God’s children, but it is not yet clear what we shall become.
 But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he
 really is. Everyone who has this hope in Christ keeps himself pure, just as Christ is pure.”
 1 John 3.2,3

2) Biblical Prayer

Jonah: Good Jewish Boy – Synagogue Kid– Son of Law: Barmitzvah
 School of PROPHETS – studied and memorized the Scriptures
 Hebrew Prayer Book PSALMS > This PRAYER sounds like Psalm
 When you SQUEEZED Jonah – Scripture CAME OUT – also 4.2

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”
 Proverbs 22.6

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRAYER OF JONAH AND THE SAILORS

Both offered in Faith – ONE a Biblically educated FAITH
 Jonah 1.6 Sailors: “call on your god, MAYBE he will take notice of us”
 v. 2 “I called to Lord & He answered, I called for help, and you listened”
 KNOWS the God he Calls / KNOWs Promises of His WORD

3) Repentant Prayer

Repentance is Turning Around – Literal and Spiritual for Jonah Turned around from
 Nineveh to Tarshish / God Turned him Back
 Turned from STUBBORNESS to SUBMISSION
 Repentance is not what especially bad Christians do; repentance is the normal Christian life.
 Bob Flayhart

Honestly faced the Terrible CONSEQUENCES of CHOICES

v. 2 “I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice.”

v. 4 ‘I am driven away from your sight...’

v. 5 “The waters closed in over me to take my life”

v. 6 “I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever”

Bottom of SEA / World of the DEAD / Inescapable

Terrible Freedom of MAN – he can Reject God / Utterly Foolish

“None is righteous, no, not one no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside “No one who seeks God, no one who does good, not even one” Romans 3.10-12

HELL > CHOICE / Total Separation from God / Tragic RESULT ALL Goodness, Light,
Life from God --- Leave God for utter darkness

Jonah had to throw himself on God alone – NO GUARANTEES

Better to be in God’s Hands – Even in Judgment – than be SEPARATED

8 Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love.”

Confession: Jonah= IDOLATOR – Lacked God’s Compassion LOST

Comparison: Ninevites & Sailors IDOLS – I am SO Much Better!

Proving how FAR from God he Still Was > See that in chs 3 & 4

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” 1 John 5.21

Unbiblical Ideas about WHO GOD IS – Miracle man, Mr. Fix-IT

Christians walking around claiming things that God never promised!!

Only way to know true God is through Jesus – only way know Jesus – True Repentance –
Not Ask ANYTHING – Not SAY “Get Me Out!”

4) Confident Prayer

True Repentance brings FRUIT of Righteousness

Confident: NOT in Circumstances: God – In Solid Hands of God When Go So LOW
– Cannot Look anywhere BUT UP

vs. 4,7 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple... When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

Even this Northerner from ISRAEL realized TRUE Temple of God
Located in Southern Kingdom of JUDAH > Capital City of Jerusalem

When King Solomon Dedicated Temple he Prayed:

Listen to the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place... If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried away captive to the land of the enemy... if they repent with all their mind and with all their heart in the land of their enemies... then hear in heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause and forgive your people who have sinned against you... 1 Kings 8.30,46-50

Today NEW Covenant Believers Look Temple not made with HANDS Temple that was
Destroyed > Three Days later was Risen to Life

Temple > Meeting Place of God and Man / Meet God in Jesus Christ

Jesus is Eternal Temple of God > Built into Him by Faith

Look to HIM, Pray to Him - Find MERCY & Forgiveness in HIM

This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.
Psalm 34.6

5) God Centered // Thankful, Biblical, Repentant, Confident...

So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea Jonah 1.15

v. 3 For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas...

Reveals UNSEEN HAND OF GOD behind the work of MAN'S HANDS

BIBLICAL PICTURE OF WATER – always POSITIVE and NEGATIVE

RED SEA – Drowned the Egyptians / Salvation for Israelites BAPTISM – Down into
Death to Sin / Lifting up to Newness of Life JONAH water that DROWNS became
waters of DELIVERANCE

Key Difference – Only FAITH IN GOD – Symbol into Reality

Jonah to God not as Good Jew or Godly Prophet – Common SINNER

v. 9 “I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!” what I have vowed I will make good”

Restored to Pledge of Faith & Obedience / He will Go and PREACH

God lets Jonah experience judgment...peril in the belly of the fish and the threat of death....God wants Jonah to learn that his life is totally in the hands of God. But he also wants Jonah to realize that, above all else, the Sovereign of life is very gracious... It is almost impossible for us to comprehend the “breadth and length and height and depth” of God’s love for the world in Jesus Christ. That love “surpasses knowledge.” But perhaps the charming little story of Jonah can aid us toward that comprehension.

Elizabeth Achtemeier

Elizabeth gets it! > ALL of Scripture is POINTING to Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ went WAY DOWN – Down, Down to the CROSS

Jesus went to Hell to Bring Many Sons to Glory

JONAH: Story of Salvation / JESUS is Source of Salvation

“Salvation is from the Lord – the Lord Jesus Christ”

“Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us”

Acts 4.12

Come to Jesus – Miracle of Grace will be Done IN You

Jonah 1.17 And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. 2:1 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying, “I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. 3 For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. 4 Then I said, ‘I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.’ 5 The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head 6 at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. 7 When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. 8 Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love. 9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!” 10 And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.