

Jonah was swallowed by a whale – Every child knows this story

Bible never says Jonah swallowed by a WHALE – Big Fish!!

Bible does not say much about this fish – FOCUS is on BIG GOD

Theme verse – “Salvation comes from the Lord” 2.9

Jonah – one of 12 MINOR PROPHETS – NOT in importance – LENGTH

Unlike other Prophetic books – MOSTLY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

REAL MAN – TRUE STORY – FISH – // REAL AS RESURRECTION

God’s Call / Man’s Conflict / Sin’s Consequences / God’s Character

1. God’s Call

1.1 “word of the Lord came” – 100 X’s in OT

Usually followed by the specific message from God – Go! Preach!

DUTY OF GOD’S PEOPLE NOT CHANGED – almost 3000 years

1) GO 2) PREACH // marching orders King Jesus gave to His Church

GO – lit. in Hebrew “get up and go” – i.e. Do not delay, let nothing stop you

Jonah did not do so well – How about us?

Visited Churches in Dozens of Countries Around World

Lots of GOING – not always for right reasons or to the right places

Not always PREACHING – want to be understood, accepted, popular, SAFE

TODAY’S CHURCH – less preaching, more entertainment, therapy, aerobics class

GO – to place He has called – ex. Nineveh / PREACH – Eternal, Inerrant Word

Jonah’s RESPONSE is IMMEDIATE – Got up RIGHT AWAY -- WRONG WAY

Shocking response – Amos – a Contemporary Prophet of Jonah
“The lion has roared – who will not fear? The Sovereign Lord has spoken – who can but prophesy?” Amos 3.8 NOT JONAH!

JOPPA – modern day Jaffa – only natural harbor on coast of Palestine

TARSHISH – known today as south-western Spain– AS FAR AS POSSIBLE!

2. Man’s Conflict

Why did Jonah take this ship to Nowhereland?

Modern Theory – Circumstantial Reasons // Many Christians live this way today
Just happened to be hanging out at Joppa – looked at watch 2.45 – saw on notice board – ship for Tarshish leaves at 3 o’clock – THIS IS GOD’S WILL FOR ME!
People are following God as they think, feel, and experience – not Scripture

SHIP TO SPAIN MAY HAVE BEEN LEAVING THEN

GOD HAD ALREADY BOOKED JONAH ON CAMEL TRAIN TO NINEVEH
MODERN THEORY DOES NOT FIT THIS ANCIENT MAN – then, why??

DIFFICULT MISSION – Nineveh was FAR – Journey long, tiring, expensive

Nineveh was BIG 4.11 120,000 little kids, perhaps a MILLION PEOPLE

1.2 “great city of Nineveh” 3.3 “very large city, 3 days to go all through it”

Such a mission was IMPOSSIBLE and RIDICULOUS – what could 1 man do?

Nineveh was DANGEROUS 1.2 “wickedness has come up before me”

Prophet Nahum – whole book describes the wickedness of Nineveh

“Woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims! The crack of whips, the clatter of wheels, galloping horses and jolting chariots! Charging cavalry, flashing swords and glittering spears! Many casualties, piles of dead, bodies without number, people stumbling over the corpses” Nahum 3.1-3

PERHAPS JONAH THOUGHT HIS BODY WOULD BE THROWN ON PILE

// God called a Tutsi in Uganda: Go & Preach to Hutu in Rwanda in 1994

WE COULD UNDERSTAND SUCH IDEAS – Bible never gives such Reasons

JONAH GIVES OWN REASON --

Jonah had received Word of God and obeyed before – 2 Kings 14.25

8th C – King Jeroboam 2 - godless king, mission was difficult and dangerous

“the word of the Lord, spoken thru his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet”

LESSON – CANNOT LIVE ON YESTERDAY’S OBEDIENCE, SUCCESS

JONAH’S HEART HAD GROWN COLD – FAR FROM GOD

4.2 Why ran away? – “I knew you were a gracious and compassionate God”

The Missionary Heart of God

Assyrians / Ninevites – Mortal enemies of the Jews

If warned of Divine Judgment – They would repent – God would Forgive – Mercy

God should bless Israel – But Jonah would go to hell before Nineveh got Heaven

How about us? – We are sent to Nineveh – INTO WHOLE WORLD BY JESUS

WHAT IS RESPONSE OF OUR HEART? – mission difficult and dangerous

Heart of JONAH or Heart of JESUS > Runs INTO Jerusalem to DIE for Them?

3. Sin's Consequences

JONAH – 1.3 “He went DOWN to Joppa” – geographically AND SPIRITUALLY

THE WAY AWAY FROM GOD IS ALWAYS DOWN

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. Proverbs 14.12

For the wages of sin is death... Romans 6.23

1.3 Jonah PAID THE FARE

SAILORS DID NOT RETURN JONAH'S \$ BEFORE THROWING HIM IN SEA

Story of Moses – Mother loved him, but could not keep him, basket in Nile River

Found by Pharaoh's daughter – as his sister Miriam watched – she asked Daughter

“Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?”

Moses mother would have done anything to get her son back – scrubbed floors...

Amazing words “Take this baby and nurse him, AND I WILL PAY YOU!” Ex 2.9

Donald Grey Barnhouse “When you run away from the Lord you never get to where you are going, and you always pay your own fare. But when you go the Lord's way you always get to where you are going, and He pays the fare”

How can a prophet of God imagine He can run away?

Very probable that as a Prophet – Jonah memorized these inspired words:

“Where could I go to escape from you? Where could I get away from your presence? ... If I flew away beyond the east or lived in the farthest places in the west, you would be there to lead me”

Psalm 139.7-10

Disobedient Believers bring DANGER TO THE WORLD

Achan stole some treasure from Jericho, all Israel was defeated at Ai

David took a census, 70,000 of his people died in the Pestilence

Jonah ran from God – Now a ship is about to sink – Sailors will Drown

GREAT STORM – these men had seen great storms before, but not like this

v. 5 “all the sailors were afraid”

// Disciples in boat – Great Storm / Fear --- But Jesus was in Boat

He calmed the wind and waves

But Jonah was in their boat – HE CAUSED THE WIND AND WAVES!

SAILORS // LEADERS OF THIS WORLD – Trying their BEST

Human plans to guide and control outworking of Divine Events in this World

Conferences – Meetings – Treaties – Even Wars – ALL MAN CAN DO

DO NOT BLAME THE SAILORS – OR LEADERS OF THE WORLD

Many times problems come when the Church is asleep during the Storm

World dying outside the Church – We argue about VOLUME of Worship Music

SO THE SAILORS TRY ALL THEIR WORLDLY WISDOM ALLOWS

v. 5 RELIGIOUS RITUAL – God help us, whoever you are, any god will do!!

SCIENTIFIC ENTERPRISE – lighten the load so the ship will float more easily

Jonah ASLEEP – NOT TROUBLED BY CONSCIENCE OR THE STORM

WORLD REBUKES THE BELIEVER – Captain to sleepy head

v. 6 How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god – WISDOM FROM GOD!!!

Captain wonders whether God will have mercy / Jonah running because He does

SAILORS ON DECK REALIZED THIS STORM WAS SUPERNATURAL

v. 9 He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land."

Jonah was preacher in sin/ but he was still a preacher – NO ESCAPE

GIFTS AND CALL OF GOD ARE IRREVOCABLE

JONAH WILL PREACH TO SINNERS EVEN IF HE DROWNS WITH THEM

Perhaps there were even Ninevites among the Crew

v. 5 Sailors AFRAID of the storm

v. 10 TERRIFIED to learn Jonah was Hebrew running from His God

Word was well known about the God of the Hebrews

Sent the plagues upon Egypt to set His people free

Opened the Red Sea upon His people / Closed it upon Pharaoh and his troops

He stopped the River Jordan and toppled the walls of Jericho

THEY RIGHTLY ASK THIS REBEL PROPHET "What have you done?"

"What can we do to quiet the storm?" EASY AND SAFE ANSWER

TURN AROUND AND LET ME GO TO NINEVEH

STUBBORNESS OF SIN //

HARDNESS OF HARD // STRENGTH OF REBELLION

Question of Disobedient JONAH: "SUICIDE OR SERVICE?"

JONAH "I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN SERVE GOD" – can you relate??

James Boice “An apparent illustration of this is the life of the late Bishop James Pike, who rose to national fame through his controversial opinions and frequent denials of church doctrines. At the beginning his denials were not very extreme. He denied the Virgin Birth and had a less than orthodox view of Scripture. But these wrong steps soon led to others... There was an increasing denial of other important doctrines. Even his own relatively liberal church was embarrassed, and there were several charges of heresy...There were also personal tragedies. Pike developed a drinking problem...He had three marriages and two divorces...One son committed suicide. Pike drifted into the occult and said he made contact with his dead son through a medium...Finally, Pike left the church and died in the Judean wilderness while researching a book on the historical Jesus”

FOR OTHERS THEIR DECLINE MAY NOT BE AS DRAMATIC

BUT THE CONSEQUENCES WILL CERTAINLY BE TRAGIC

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” 139.23

God had mercy on the Sailors – Even Rebellious Prophet effective ministry

Like Apostle Paul – rode with pagan sailors through terrible storm near Crete
“Now I beg you, take heart! Not one of you will lose his life, only the ship will be lost”
Acts 27.22

v. 5 they feared something v. 10 they feared the God of Jonah

v. 16 they feared the Lord as their God

SACRIFICES AND VOWS --- AFTER THE STORM WAS QUIET

Not unusual for people to call on God in the midst of terrible storm

AFTER THE STORM – MOST PEOPLE FORGET GOD – NOT SAILORS

Jonah was running from God because he did not want sinners to be saved
EVEN IN JONAH'S RUNNING FROM GOD, SINNERS WERE SAVED

The Missionary Heart of God

4. God's Character

MERCY OF GOD for those we do not Love

NOISY MUKONO Neighbor whose LOUD PARTY Keeps you AWAKE at Night

Person is WRONG – Nationality, Language, Color, Size, or Gender Orientation

MANY OUTSIDE BOUNDARIES OF OUR CIRCLE OF LOVE

BUT THERE IS A WIDENESS TO GOD'S MERCY – UNLIMITABLE

ENDS – God's Question – Echoes through centuries "Should I not be concerned?"

GOD'S SALVATION

Many Christian's think Salvation is Mostly MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY – we do it

All is well as long as WE OBEY – Stop Following, Start Losing Salvation

If that were true – story would end at 1.3 "Jonah ran away from the Lord"

BUT 2.9 "Salvation comes from the Lord" – God has made a Covenant Promise

COVENANT WITH HIS SON – HE DIED FOR US – WE CANNOT BE LOST

1.4 "But God" / "then the Lord" – JONAH RUNS, BUT GOD RUNS FASTER

Phil 1.6 "He who began a good work in you, will carry it out until it is complete..."

EVEN IF WE NEED TO BE SWALLOWED BY A GREAT FISH

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

God will work all things together for the good of those who love Him, who are called by Him

1.4 “the Lord sent a great wind on the sea”

1.17 “the Lord provided a great fish”

4.6 “the Sovereign God provided a vine and made it grow”

4.7 “God provided a worm which chewed the vine”

4.8 “God provided a scorching east wind”

NO PROBLEM WITH GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY IN NATURE – Gravity

PROBLEM – God's Sovereign Will – Conflicts with Human Will

**Two Christians are Married – Bible says forever – ONE FALLS OUT OF LOVE
OR MAYBE INTO LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE**

“I know Bible says God hates divorce – but I do not care about that anymore”

Bible sets forth MEANS OF GRACE to keep us STRONG IN HIS GRACE

**Bible Reading, Prayer, Worship, Witness, Fellowship, Tithing, Repentance, Faith
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE IGNORE THESE THINGS?**

Most of the time NOTHING AT ALL – Slowly Slide into Own Ways and Ideas

GOD COULD CRUSH OUR WILL AND MAKE US OBEY // Pharoah

But God will GET OUR ATTENTION – in small things, and if necessary

IN INCREASINGLY BIGGER THINGS

God took the Election of Jonah so seriously that He would even sink the Ship

THE GREATER HIS DISOBEDIENCE – THE GREATER GOD'S STORM

Book of JONAH Reveals **The Missionary Heart of God**

BOOK Raises QUESTIONS about our OWN HEARTS before GOD

JONAH – SEE OURSELVES AND BE WARNED THAT WE MUST REPENT

SEE LORD - REMEMBER THAT HE IS MERCIFUL, SOVEREIGN, SAVIOR

Jonah 1.1-16 The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: 2. "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." 3. But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD. 4. Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. 5. All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. 6. The captain went to him and said, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish." 7. Then the sailors said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. 8. So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" 9. He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land." 10. This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.) 11. The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?" 12. "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you." 13. Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. 14. Then they cried to the LORD, "O LORD, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased." 15. Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. 16. At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.