

Jonah Lesson 40

INTRO:

- A. Jeroboam II began his reign around 786 B.C. during the time Jonah prophesied.
- B. 2 Kings 14:25
 - 1. Other than this verse in 2 Kings, nothing else is said about Jonah except for the book of Jonah.
- C. Assyria was in a state of decline in Jonah's day which pleased Israel.
- D. This may be why Jonah put up such a resistance to go to Nineveh and warn them to repent or be destroyed.
 - 1. When told to go, Jonah, instead, went to Joppa where he found a ship going to Tarshish in southern Spain - the opposite direction or as far as you could go away from Nineveh.
- E. Of course, it only natural when we hear the name Jonah to think of the great fish that swallowed him.
 - 1. But there is much more to consider than the fact it makes a good story for children.
- F. Since Jonah is the prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II, that would place him after Elijah but before Amos and Hosea.

I. Summary Of The Book Of Jonah:

- A. Jonah is the only prophet in the Old Testament that God told to preach to a Gentile city and not just any Gentiles but the people of Nineveh; the capital of the Assyrians who were enemies of Israel.
 - 1. These people were extremely cruel towards Israel and caused Israel many problems in the past.
 - a. This might give some insight to help us see the reluctance on Jonah's part to go and preach to Nineveh
 - 2. Add to this the fact that Nineveh is over 500 miles away from where Jonah is.
 - a. Jonah would have to travel by foot, horse, or camel which would obviously take weeks, if not months, to make the journey!
- B. Being given the command to go to Nineveh because God's judgment is about to come upon them, Jonah goes to Joppa to board a ship going to Tarshish. (1:2-3)
- C. The Lord sends a great wind, a mighty tempest, to cause the ship to almost break up.
 - 1. The men, out of fear, cry out to their gods, throw away the cargo in an attempt to lighten the ship all the while Jonah is below asleep. (1:4-5)
 - 2. They decide to cast lots to determine who was the cause of all the trouble and the lots fell on Jonah.
 - 3. Jonah told them he was fleeing from the Lord. (1:10)
 - 4. When they asked what they could do to calm the sea, Jonah stated: (1:12)
 - 5. Instead, the men rowed harder to try and get to land but the storm only got worse.
 - 6. With that we read: (1:14-16)
 - 7. Then the Lord "*prepared a great fish*" that swallowed Jonah and he remained in the fishes belly for 3 days and 3 nights. (1:17)

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- D. Jonah prays a prayer of repentance and the fish “vomited Jonah onto dry land”. (2:1-10)
- E. Now Jonah goes to Nineveh, tells them to repent, and the whole city including the king of Nineveh believes Jonah and repents. (3:1-9)
 - 1. (3:10)
- F. However, Jonah was not happy about the results. (4:1)
 - 1. He was hoping God would destroy Nineveh.
 - 2. So, we might say that Jonah had a pity party.
 - 3. However, God tries to show and teach him His compassion towards mankind by means of a plant that gave Jonah shelter and a worm that caused the plant to wither.
 - 4. The Lord’s reply: (4:10-11)

II. Lessons From Jonah:

A. God May Sometimes Require Us To Move From Our “Comfort Zone”!

- 1. Jonah 1:1-2
- 2. Jonah was no doubt comfortable.
 - a. He was a prophet in a nation of his own people.
 - b. But God came between Jonah and his patriotism and asked him to go where Jonah NEVER wanted to go.
 - c. Jonah has good reasons why not to go, but God was looking beyond the human reasons to something greater - salvation!
- 3. A whole city was ready to repent, but for that to happen Jonah would have to leave his comfort zone.
- 4. Sometimes we may be asked to step out or step up. It’s not always easy or fun, but at the end of it, there is a reward.
- 5. Think about this: Didn’t Jesus leave His ‘comfort zone’ to do what He did for us?

B. We Can’t Run Away From God!

- 1. But Jonah tried. He ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish.
- 2. Did he honestly think he could escape from God’s presence?
- 3. As we know, it didn’t work out too well for him.
- 4. Psalm 139 makes it pretty clear: (vs. 7-12)
- 5. We can try to hide, move, go away, either physically or even internally with our emotions, but it’s useless.
- 6. God sees! God knows! He is always there!

C. Disobedience Makes For Problems!

- 1. Let us learn from Jonah that disobedience is a big deal when it comes to God.
- 2. It has spiritual consequences that affects both our relationship with God and others and it has its consequences in our daily life.
- 3. When we became a Christian we confessed not only Christ to be the Son of God but also as Peter stated in 1 Peter 3:15.
- 4. Christ is going to be “**LORD**” - RULER!

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- a. The word Lord means someone or something having power, authority, or influence; master or ruler.
- b. What that translates to is that when God has spoken for us to do something that should be all the incentive it takes for us to obey.
- 5. Recalling earlier what we read in verses 15-16, it's interesting to realize that even as Jonah was running away from God and the great storm, it resulted in the men *"feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the Lord and took vows"*!
 - a. Even in our failures, God can use it for good!
- D. Following Repentance Must Come Obedience!**
 - 1. In all 4 chapters of Jonah we see the process of sin to obedience:
 - a. Jonah 1-2 Acknowledge our sin.
 - b. Jonah 2 Accept God's Discipline.
 - c. Jonah 2 Repent.
 - d. Jonah 3 Act in accordance with God's instructions.
 - 2. True repentance can only happen when we acknowledge our sins and are willing to do according to God's will.
- E. We Must Learn To Never Lose Sight Of The Big Picture & ,All The While, Have a Soft Heart!**
 - 1. In chapter 4, Jonah is angry because God decided to have mercy.
 - 2. We all have our opinions and ideas about how things should happen or be.
 - 3. But those opinions need to submit to God's ways.
 - 4. Let us realize we don't see it all and we don't understand it all.
 - 5. We **MUST** keep our hearts soft or else anger and bitterness will come in.
 - 6. It's easy to be triggered when things don't go the way we plan, but we need to surrender our will to His will.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Jonah did not weep over the city of Nineveh, but Jesus, the true Prophet and Son of God, wept over the city of Jerusalem. Mt. 23:37-39
- B. With Christ we see a perfect heart:
 - 1. Perfect in love—not excusing.
- C. We can see His resemblance to the Father in Jonah 4.
- D. Jesus did not just merely weep for us; he died for us.
 - 1. Jonah went outside the city, hoping to see its destruction but Jesus Christ went outside the city to die on a cross to accomplish salvation.

LESSON 41

The Prophet Amos

The Book Of Amos