

Lessons from Jonah (Slide 1)

Reading: Jonah 3

The life of Jonah is as much a testimony for God and His grace and forgiveness as it is a testimony against those today who say Jonah is a mystical figure and the Pharisees of Jesus time who declare in:

John 7:52b (Slide 2)

"Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee."

Did Jonah come from Galilee?

2 Kings 14:23-25 (Slide 3)

23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. 24 He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, (Slide 4) which he made Israel sin. 25 He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which He spoke through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher.

"Jonah the son of Amittai" (2 Kings 14:25 and Jonah 1:1) came from *Gathhepher*. *Gathhepher* was a town in Lower Galilee approximately 5 miles from Nazareth.

So, yes, Jonah was from Galilee!!

A great many Christians and non-Christians are familiar with the story of *Jonah* and the "great fish." Yet, using the entirety of the Bible we learn that *Jonah* was God's Prophet to the Israelites as well those in *Nineveh*.

Jonah is a significant figure in the New Testament because of his time in the belly of a great fish. The remarkable circumstance is compared to the burial of The Christ. Jesus draws this comparison in:

Matthew 12:38-41 (Slide 5)

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." 39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; (Slide 6) 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, (Slide 7) and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

Proof positive that Jonah was a real person with a real encounter with a great fish.

The book of *Jonah* confirms that God is willing and able to forgive even heathen nations who would repent. Just as today, *ALL* people can experience God's saving forgiveness through Christ! He is not a respecter of persons.

Acts 10:34-35 (Slide 8)

34 Opening his mouth, Peter said:

"I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, 35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

Running from Responsibility

We've already learned that Jonah was the Prophet called by God to work. He was called to preach to a Heathen nation in which he despised and chose to run from his responsibility.

Where would one run and hide from God?

Hebrews 4:13 (Slide 9)

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Jeremiah 23:24 (Slide 10)

"Can a man hide himself in hiding places

So I do not see him?" declares the LORD.

"Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" declares the LORD.

Jonah found out he could not run and hide from God. Wouldn't it be wonderful if people today would realize that they cannot hide from God and that this understanding would cause them to meet out their responsibilities?

Mark 4:22 (Slide 11)

For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light.

Yet today, many expend a great deal more energy abandoning responsibility than what they would by simply doing what they know they should do.

For Jonah it took something physically "*catastrophic*" for him to realize his mistake.

Jonah 2:7-8 (Slide 12)

7 When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

8 They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

We are often our own worst enemy! We don't recognize our own peril until we see life slipping (*fainting*) away. Then we call on God-Rescue me!!

Stay near to God in good times, sadness and until the end.

We cannot outsmart God. God preserved Jonah in the belly of the great fish and Jonah had a change of heart.

Jonah 2:8-9 (Slide 13)

9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.

10 And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

Speak only what God directs!!

Jonah 3:2 (Slide 14)

Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

Somehow and in so many ways, many in the religious world today have gotten off track. They have interjected what they believe is reasonable and according to "truth."

Change is always subtle until it becomes dramatic.

Jeremiah 26:2 (Slide 15)

"Thus says the LORD, 'Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship in the LORD's house all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. Do not omit a word!

It goes without saying that if we are not to omit anything from God's word that we are not to add anything!!

Yet, day after day, in today's religion much has been omitted and added!!

Paul tells Timothy in:

1 Timothy 2:1-4 (Slide 16)

1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. (Slide 17) 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Finally, If God forgives we should forgive.

Jonah didn't like going to the people of Nineveh nor did he like the people of Nineveh.

What did God tell him to say;

(Slide 18) **"Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown."**

The city of Nineveh had great leadership. The people repented of their evil ways and because of that they were not destroyed:

(Slide 19) **When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.**

Hard to believe but Jonah was displeased with their repentance. He despised them so much that he could not see straight, think straight with any sort of rationality.

This is truly a despicable human characteristic that we see played out over and over again in so many circumstances.

Listen to the conclusion of the matter:

Jonah 4:1-11 (Slide 20)

1 But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, (Slide 21) slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. 3 Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." 4 The LORD said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?"

(Slide 22) **5 Then Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. 6 So the LORD God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head (Slide 23) to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant. 7 But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day and it attacked the plant and it withered. 8 When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, (Slide 24) and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life."**

9 Then God said to Jonah, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" (Slide 25) And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death." 10 Then the LORD said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. (Slide 26) 11 Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"

With eyes to see and ears to hear, Jonah was both blind and deaf. He cared more about a tree and his own comfort than the souls of more than 120,000 persons.

So what have we learned? (Slide 27)

1. Jonah was from Galilee: refuting the hypocrisy of the Pharisees!
2. Jonah was a real person and the account of Jonah is true: Jesus compares His death, burial and resurrection with Jonah in the great fish's belly!!
3. You cannot escape your responsibility by trying to hide from God!!
4. Speak only what God has spoken: Don't add to it or take away from it.
5. When God forgives, we forgive!

Invitation

We have a beautiful book within our hands and in our possession. The Holy Word of God. In it are all of this life's answers to every possible question and preparation for the Eternal life to come.

Which side of Biblical Truth are you on? The side of the knowledge of truth: Baptized and added to the Lord's church by Christ Himself or on the outside in falsehood with no hope or a false hope. Hear the Gospel call today and be baptized into Christ Jesus for the remission of sin.

Have you been crucified with Christ but somehow some way followed a different path? Let us help you restore your way by praying for you and with you.

Until the Lord comes: make your wish known before He returns.

Reading

Jonah 3

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days' walk. 4 Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. 6 When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. 7 He issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. 8 But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. 9 Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish."

10 When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

Please visit our website for the full audio of this study:

Shelbyvillechurch.com

Shelbyville Church of Christ