

JONAH: THE WRONG-WAY PROPHET (Part 9)

“Jonah Speaks about God” (Jonah 4:2)

INTRO: We live in a society plagued with ME-it is (the Jonah disease). World says: “Get in touch with yourself. The goal of life is to know and love yourself. Take care of number one.” We do all we can to please, groom, exalt, protect, advance, etc. ourselves. These are telltale signs of man’s most damaging disease – ME-itis. There’s only one sure cure for this malignancy - an honest and diligent pursuit in knowing God. Such a knowledge will enable us to better know ourselves, interpret our world, become like Him, and so on. Jeremiah knew this (9:1-3, 23-24). Jesus (Jn. 17:3). What we know about God impacts everything.

Jonah helps us know God. His teachings about God are so advanced been called “the most Christian book in OT.” In 48 total verses, 40 refer to God in some way. Jonah speaks about God. He is the star character in this work.

G.C. Morgan said, “People are so taken up with the great fish of Jonah that they overlook the great God of Jonah.”

C.H. Spurgeon opened a sermon with these words...

Beginning with Ch. 1 let’s listen as Jonah speaks about God. Jonah teaches us seven (7) truths about God:

I. GOD COMMUNICATES WITH HIS CHILDREN (1:1-3)

- A. God has communicated to man in several ways (directly, dreams, visions, cloud, fire, etc.). He spoke directly to Jonah. We’re not told how He communicated, just *that* He did. Since completion of canon, God communicates mostly through His written Word and by His Spirit. Hearing God’s voice . . .
- B. When He communicates, He *usually commands*, as with Jonah (v.2). He gives directives not suggestions. Stop a sin or step into opportunity.
- C. His commands *can be resisted* (1:3, 10). He will discipline us because He loves us.
- D. He is *willing to reason* with His children (4:4, 9-10), but Father knows best (Isa. 1:18).
- E. Note, *we can also communicate with Him in prayer* (2:1ff; 4:2). We can pray from anywhere and at any time, never needing a human mediator.

II. GOD SEES OUR LIVES (1:2; 3:10)

- A. Nothing is ever hidden from His sight (Luke 12:1-3). All is naked before Him (Heb. 4:13; Psa. 33:13-15; Pro. 5:21). 2 Chron. 16:9
- B. He hates our sinfulness (1:2; 3:8, 10). He loves the sinner.

III. GOD IS SOVEREIGN (in will and power)

- A. He controls *creation and nature* when He chooses (1:4, 9, 14; 4:6, 8). A miracle! He prepares (appoints) the storms, lots, fish, plant, worm, wind.

- B. He controls *His creatures* (1:17; 4:7). Everything in nature obeys God, and man has greatest reason to obey. Jonah learned a great lesson: God blesses obedience and disciplines disobedience, but He will carry out His will.
- C. Jonah was angry he couldn’t control God. He sovereignly controls what goes on in the universe. Yet, He never manipulates or forces His people to act against their own wills. He is not a cosmic puppeteer and we His puppets. Somehow, He holds the reins on creation/creatures without running roughshod over them. Nothing is too hard for Him. His power has no limits. He can do anything He wants to do anytime He wants to do it. Only He is fully free. Only He occupies an unthreatened throne. Tozer . . .

IV. GOD IS RESPONSIVE TO US – HEARS, SEES, CARES

- A. He sees our self-judgment and responds to it (1:12-15). See 1 Cor. 11:28-31.
- B. He accepts our worship, sacrifice, thanksgiving, and vows. (1:16; 2:9)
- C. He responds to our repentance with forgiveness and mercy (3:10).

V. GOD IS A “SECOND CHANCE” GOD (3:1)

God gave Jonah a second chance. There is no such thing as going too far and blowing it so badly that there is no hope. Look at Moses, Peter, John Mark...

VI. GOD SAVES PEOPLE WHO HAVE LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF HIM (3:5).

The Ninevites’ knowledge of God was no doubt limited. Yet, what little they did hear (esp. from Jonah), they believed. You don’t have to be a Bible scholar or theologian to come to God. Only need to know you are a sinner in need of a Savior. John 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:9

VII. GOD IS COMPASSIONATE

- A. Our God is huge-hearted (4:2; cp. Exo. 34:6-7) - “gracious” – graceful; “compassionate” – merciful; “slow to anger” – patient; “abounding in love” - steadfast love, kindness; “who relents” - longs to forgive. Psa. 103:8-15
- B. (4:11) God cares. Swindoll writes...Lam. 3:21-24...

CONC: Hallelujah what a great God He is! We’d hardly expect such a brief book to tell us so much about God. Jonah enhances our understanding of God. We are richer because of Jonah (Psa. 145:3). Let’s review . . .

BUT (Matt. 12:38-42) tells us there is One “greater than Jonah”, named Jesus. Jesus was greater than Jonah in many ways. One stands out - Jesus was the final and fullest revealer of God (John 1:1, 14, 18; 14:9; Heb. 1:1-3).