

"Jonah: The Repentant Prophet of God" Jonah 2

God places His servants in distressing situations in order to draw them back into His will. Such discipline seems unpleasant in the moment, but ultimately it is a great gift from our heavenly Father, driving us to repentance, obedience and blessing.

Jonah is in a very bad place. Chapter 2 is a turning point in the story. It is about **repentance**.

Define "repentance" in OT/Hebrew

- *Shuv* = To turn toward or away from something; toward or away from God
- God loves Jonah too much to allow him to run forever; God chases him down
- Places obstacles in his way so that he will return to God

God moves Jonah to repentance...

I. Through distressing circumstances;

2) a clear realization of his own sin

3) a fresh vision of God's character – 1:17-2:6

2:2; "Distress" = strait; tight confining place

Description – like death

2:2,5,6; *sheol*, water, pit. Water a symbol of death. Cp. Noah's flood
This is what it must feel like to die.

Amos 4:6-9; to drive men back to him; life doesn't work "our way"

What would you pray if God put you in such circumstances? Bitter? God, fix my circumstances?

Should not be surprised THAT Jonah prays, rather look at HOW he prays and WHAT he prays

Words borrowed from Psalms

Word of God was a part of him; spontaneously came out

Form borrowed from Psalms

- Poetry used to capture the intensity of the moment
- 2 primary forms – lament and praise. NOT lament, but praise

- What appeared as his greatest distress was actually his perfect deliverance.
- Heb 12:11 conforming us to His character.

II. Through a clear realization of his own sin – 2:7-9

A. It is foolishness – 2:8

- Why does Jonah bring up idolatry?
- What is idolatry? Not just a statue or carved image. An idol is anything that encourages us to look for life outside of God
- Jonah had become no better than an idolater

Three Characteristics of Idols:

1. Finite. Created by man; finite gods; limited

"I was going through a rough time with my relationship...and I began to cry...I looked in the mirror and caught a glimpse of myself whimpering like a baby wearing a shirt that said I AM GOD. [That] put a lot of things in perspective."

—Dave Navarro, Rolling Stone, March 19, 1998 (guitarist for Red Hot Chili Peppers/Jane's Addiction)

So, why do we create our own gods in our own image? CONTROL

2. Deceitful

- "idol" = lit. "falseness, lie, deceit"
- make great promises; we want much from them

3. Empty - they really offer nothing

lit. "breath, vapor," emptiness or vanity; figuratively, something transitory and unsatisfactory

What are your idols? Though we do not face a pantheon of false gods like the Israelites did, we face pressures from a pantheon of false values--materialism, love of leisure, sensuality, worship of self, security, and many others... [Idolatry] may be something that most of us can't relate to--unless we include life goals that revolve around something other than God Himself. What is the object of our affections, our efforts, and our attention? Where does the majority of our time go? On what do we spend the greatest amount of our resources?

—Today in the Word, June 14, 1989

B. It is unfaithfulness – 2:8

– forsake their faithfulness; "loyal love"

Relationship with God like a marriage

III. Through a fresh vision of God's character – 2:7

"I remembered the Lord"

A. He is everywhere – 2:7a

Heard Jonah even from the belly of the fish. Ps. 139

B. He is unchanging – 2:7b

- Prayer came into God's temple; God had not changed positions
- His will for Jonah has not changed
- Doesn't allow disobedient prophets to go undisciplined
- More severe discipline on His own; 1 Peter 4:17

Man saw 2 boys throwing rocks at cars in the park; only spanked one boy; other man said, that's partiality, unfair treatment; Why did you spank only one? Only one boy is my son.

C. He is good – 2:9

- Deliverance is from the Lord; God was waiting
- 2:2 - "I cried, You heard" verbs juxtaposed to imply immediate answer ex - prodigal son (recklessly extravagant father; went out to BOTH sons)

D. He is powerful – 2:10

- Commanded sea; commanded fish

Why run? Why doubt His goodness?