

“The Gospel According To Jonah!”
Jonah 1:1 - 4:11

Introduction:

1. The Bible Is A Wonderful Book!
 - In Fact - It Has Often Been Described As:
 - A Library Of Inspired Books!
 - Because, Although It Is One Large Book:
 - With One Main Theme:
 - The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - The Bible Consists Of 66 Smaller, Individual Books:
 - Written In Several Different Styles!
 - One Special Style Is Found In The New Testament:
 - Which We Call A: “Gospel!”
 - A Gospel Is A Book:
 - That Tells Us The “Good News” Of The Life And Ministry Of Jesus Christ!
 - And God Has Blessed Us With 4 Of These Gospels In The New Testament:
 - Matthew, Mark, Luke, And John!
2. But, As We’ve Been Going Through:
 - The Old Testament Book Of Jonah:
 - I Have Become Convinced That Jonah Was Not Written:
 - Primarily As A Biography Of:
 - A Man Named Jonah, A Prophet Of God!
 - But That The Book Of Jonah:
 - Is Primarily A Book About God Himself!
 - Even If You Just Look At How Many Times God’s Name Is Used In This Book!
 - Jonah’s Own Name Is Mentioned:
 - Just 16 Times!
 - But The Lord Is Specifically Referred To:
 - No Less Than 36 Times!
 - 21 Times As The LORD!
 - 15 Times As God!
 - The Book Of Jonah Is A Book About God!
 - And Through This Book:
 - We Actually Hear More Good News About God:
 - Than Bad News About Jonah!
3. And In Jonah - We Learn So Much About His Gospel!
 - The Good News That God Is: “Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance!” (2 Peter 3:9)
 - So This Morning:
 - We Are Going To Look At The Book As A Whole, To See What God Shows To Us:
 - About Himself And His Good News!

* The First Thing We See Very Clearly In The Book Of Jonah Is:

1. ***The Power Of God!***
 - God’s Power Is Clearly Seen:
 - All Throughout The Book Of Jonah!
 - His Power To Create – Is Clearly Seen!
 - In 1:9 - When Jonah Finally Tells The Sailors Who He Actually Is - He Tells Them This About God - “I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land!”
 - And When Jonah Told Them This, The Sailors Became “Exceedingly Afraid!”
 - Because It Meant That God Was In Charge Of Everything That They Were Going Through!
 - Which Leads Us To The Fact That:
 - His Power To Control – Is Also Clearly Seen!
 - Everything God Creates:
 - He Controls!
 - Like The Storm He Sent After Jonah:

- In 1:4 - “But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken!”
 - “The Lord Sent!”
 - God Was In Complete Control!
- Like The Peace He Gave The Sailors:
 - In 1:15 - “So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging!”
 - This Reminds Us Now Of The Same Control & The Same Peace Jesus Gave To His Disciples On The Sea Of Galilee!
 - In Mark 4:39, Where Jesus: “Arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm!”
 - And Further:
- His Power To Choose – Is Clearly Seen!
 - First Choice We See Is:
 - God’s Choice Of Jonah In 1:1!
 - Why Jonah, We Wonder?
 - Especially After What We Learn About Jonah!
 - Second Choice We See Is:
 - God’s Choice Of Nineveh 1:2!
 - To Warn Of His Judgment & To Offer His Mercy!
 - Why Nineveh, We Wonder:
 - Especially Since They Were So Wicked!
 - God’s Choices Often Baffle & Perplex Us!
 - Which Is Why It Is Good For Us To Remember Deuteronomy 29:29 - “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law!”
 - Then We See Some Other Choices God Made:
 - When He “Prepared A Great Fish To Swallow Up Jonah” In 1:17!
 - When He “Prepared A Gourd” In 4:6!
 - When He “Prepared A Worm” In 4:7!
 - When He “Prepared A Vehement East Wind” In 4:8!
 - In All Of These Cases:
 - God Chose, And “Prepared,” The Right Instrument, At Just The Right Time, And In Just The Right Place, To Fulfill His Purpose!
- God Is A Very Powerful God!
 - And His Power Is Sovereign!
 - The One Who Created All Things, Has The Power To Control Everything, And Has The Right To Choose Anything / Anyone He Desires To Fulfill And Accomplish His Own Will!
 - Even The Sailors Recognized This In 1:14, When They Said In 1:14 - “For thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee!”
 - God Is Absolutely Sovereign In His Power!
 - To Create! To Control! To Choose!
 - And Don’t We See The Same Power In The Life Of The Lord Jesus Christ?
 - His Power Shows Us That He Is God In The Flesh!
 - We Needed God In His Power To Come To Us, Because We, In Our Weakness, Could Never Have Gone To Him!

* The Second Thing We See In The Book Of Jonah Is:

2. *The Purity Of God!*

- That God Is Completely Perfect & Righteous!
 - Habakkuk 1:13 - “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity!”
- He Is Pure In His Heart!
 - The Reason God Sent Jonah To Nineveh In The First Place Is Found In 1:2 - “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me!”
 - The Character & Conduct Of God Was The Complete Opposite Of Nineveh!
 - They Were Wicked!
 - But He Is Pure!
- And Their Sin:

- “Came Up Before” God, Even “Getting In His Face,” And Grieved His Pure Heart!
- He Is Pure In His Holiness!
 - God Cannot Ignore The Sinful Acts & The Wicked Hearts Of Man!
 - He Has To Judge Them, Because He Is Holy!
 - Psalm 7:11 Tells Us That: “God is angry with the wicked every day!”
 - And The Ninevites Learned This:
 - After Jonah Finally Arrived And Preached God’s Word To Them!
 - And Through His Word:
 - God Opened Their Eyes To See That:
 - He Was Holy!
 - And That They Were Wicked!
 - So, In 3:9, The King Of Nineveh Says:
 - “Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?”
 - God Had The Right To Be Angry With Them, Because He Is Holy & Pure!
 - And Psalm 5:4 Tells Us - “For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee!”
- God Is A Very Pure God!
 - And His Purity Is Comprehensive!
 - Nothing / Noone That Is Wicked Can Dwell With Such A Pure & Holy God!
 - The Only One Who Can Approach Such A Pure God Is A Pure Man!
 - And Isn’t This What Jesus Is For Us? 1 Peter 1:19 Describes Him As: “A lamb without blemish and without spot!”
 - It Is Only Through The Purity Of Jesus That We Can Enter God’s Holy Temple!

* A Third Truth We Learn In Jonah Is:

3. ***The Passion Of God!***

- For Sinners – Like Nineveh! Like Jonah! Like Us!
 - In Ezekiel 33:11, The Lord Says: “As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?”
 - What Passions Does God Have Toward Sinners?
 - Jonah Himself Describes God’s Passions In 4:2 - “For I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil!”
 - These Passions Are Found All Throughout The Book Of Jonah!
- God Is Gracious!
 - Grace Is God’s Gift To The Undeserving!
 - God Showed His Grace To The Sailors & To The Ninevites, But Especially To Jonah!
 - In Chapter 4: God Gave Jonah A Plant To Deliver:
 - Him From The Heat Of The Desert!
 - Even When Jonah Was Angry At God For Not Judging & Destroying Nineveh! Grace!
- God Is Merciful!
 - Mercy Is God’s Deliverance From His Own Judgment!
 - In Chapter 3: God Was Merciful To:
 - The Ninevites When They Repented From Their Wickedness, And Turned To & Trusted In The Lord!
 - 3:10 - “And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.
- God Is Slow To Anger!
 - He Is Long-Suffering!
 - How Long Did The Lord:
 - Put Up With Jonah & With Nineveh?
- God Is Of Great Kindness!
 - He Has A Great & Fervent Love & Commitment To Those Who Belong To Him!
 - Which Is Why In 3:1 That: “The word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time!”
 - He Also Has A Kind Heart Toward All That He Created!
 - Both Man & Beast! See This In 4:11 - “And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left

- hand; and also much cattle?”
- God Is A God Of Great Passion & Love:
 - We See This Especially When God Sent The Fish:
 - To Deliver Jonah From Drowning In The Sea!
 - Even After Jonah Tried To Flee “From The Presence Of The Lord!” Grace!
 - But Remember What Jonah’s Time In The Fish Was Really All About?
 - It Was A Picture Of The Time When The Lord Jesus Would Die For Our Sins, Be Buried In A Tomb For 3 Days & 3 Nights, And Then Rise Again!
 - Matthew 12:40 - “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth!”
 - God’s Love & Passion For Us Is Seen In Jesus!
 - Romans 5:8 - “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!”
 - God’s Love & Passion For Us Is Great & Is Fervent!

* The Fourth Truth We See Is:

4. The Pursuit Of God!

- After Sinners!
 - God Takes His Passion And Puts It Into Action!
 - In 1:3, After Jonah “Rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD!”
 - God Went After Him!
 - Not To Destroy, But To Deliver Him From His Own Stubborn Will!
 - And God’s Pursuit After Jonah:
 - Was Relentless!
 - And In The Most Literal Sense, God Moved Heaven & Earth To Bring Jonah Back To Himself!
 - How Did God Pursue Jonah?
 - With A Storm!
 - In 1:4 - “But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea!”
 - Then, After Jonah Was Thrown Overboard:
 - God Kept Pursuing Jonah:
 - With The Fish!
 - In 1:17 - “Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights!”
 - This Fish Was Sent To Deliver Jonah From Death & To Preserve Him For His Mission!
 - And When Jonah Was Back On Dry Land:
 - God Pursued Him:
 - With His Word!
 - 3:1 - “And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time!”
 - And His Word Was Irresistible!
 - Jonah Finally Obeyed The Voice Of The Lord & Went To Nineveh, Even Though His Heart Was Not Fully Engaged!
 - But God Was Not Yet Done With Jonah!
 - He Still Pursued Him & His Heart!
 - With His Chastening!
 - All Throughout Chapter 4!
 - One Thing That Is Evident Throughout, Is That Wherever Jonah Is, God Is Already!
 - Whether In Israel, Or In Joppa, Or In The Ship, Or In The Fish, Or In Nineveh, Or In The Desert!
 - We See The Effortless Presence Of The Lord! Everyone Else Is Moving, But Not God!
 - He Couldn’t Flee From God’s Presence Even Though He Tried! Neither Can We!
 - God Was Relentless:
 - In His Pursuit Of Jonah!
 - God Is, As A Poet Once Described, The “Hound Of Heaven!”
 - Going After The Heart & Life Of The One He Had Chosen – Jonah!
 - With: “Unhurrying Chase, And Unperturbed Pace, Deliberate Speed, [And] Majestic Instancy!”
 - And God Would Not Give Up:
 - Until He Got His Man!
 - God’s Pursuit Of Jonah Is A Great Illustration Of:

- The Ministry Of Jesus Himself!
 - When He Said In Luke 19:10 - "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost!"
- Jesus Came To Relentlessly Pursue & Seek & Then Save Those Who Are Lost! You & Me!
 - And Once He Sets His Sights On You, He Will Never Take Them Off!

* But A Fifth And Final Truth We See In Jonah Is:

5. *The Purposes Of God!*

- His Purpose To Save!
 - God Was Deliberate In His Rescue:
 - Of The Sailors! Of The Ninevites! But Especially Of Jonah!
 - This Was Why God Sent That Fish!
 - Not To Destroy Jonah, But To Deliver Him!
 - To Rescue & To Save Him!
 - What Does Jonah Say From The Belly Of The Fish In 2:9?
 - "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD!"
 - "Salvation Is Of The LORD!"
 - Salvation Is The Great Purpose Of The Lord!
 - To Save Jonah & To Save Nineveh!
 - And To Save Us & Others!
 - This Is The Gospel! The Good News!
 - 1 Timothy 1:15 - "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief!"
- His Purpose To Sanctify!
 - God Was Not Through With Jonah:
 - And God Is Not Through With Us!
 - God Knew That Something Was Still Missing In Jonah's Heart:
 - So He Kept Working!
 - Like Philippians 1:6 Tells Us - "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ!"
 - God Started Something In Jonah:
 - And He Was Not Yet Finished! So:
 - He Kept Speaking To Him!
 - He Kept Showing His Goodness To Him!
 - He Kept Chastening Him!
 - God Kept Dealing With Jonah As With A Son!
 - Whom He Loved!
 - Isn't This Also Why Jesus Came?
 - Not Just To Save, But To Sanctify & Purify Our Hearts?
 - Titus 2:14 - "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works!"
- His Purpose To Show!
 - His Own Heart & His Own Character!
 - And God Initiates This On His Own!
 - It Is Important To Note In 1:1:
 - That God "Came Unto Jonah" And Not The Other Way Around!
 - God Wanted This Book:
 - To Show Us Himself!
 - And That He Is A God "Ready To Pardon!" (Nehemiah 9:17)
 - God Pardoned:
 - Jonah & The Sailors & The Ninevites!
 - For Their Sins & Rebellion Against Him!
 - And He Can Even Pardon Us!
 - "Who Is A Pardoning God Like Thee? Or Who Has Grace So Rich And Free?"
- And All Of These Purposes Of God:
 - Shall Stand!
 - Noone Can Stand In His Way!

- Nothing Can Frustrate His Purposes!
- To Save! To Sanctify! And To Show Himself As A Pardoning God!

Conclusion:

1. How Well Do You Know The God Of The Book Of Jonah?
 - Another Thing We Learn About The Lord:
 - Is That He Is Accessible & Approachable!
 - The Sailors Went To The Lord In Prayer:
 - In Chapter 1!
 - Jonah Himself Went To The Lord In Prayer:
 - In Chapter 2!
 - And The Ninevites Went To The Lord In Prayer:
 - In Chapter 3!
 - And All Went To The Lord:
 - In Faith!
 - Turning To & Trusting In Him!
2. We Can Receive The Good News As Well!
 - Through Faith!
 - Turning To & Trusting In The Lord Jesus!
 - Who Is Far “Greater” Than Jonah! (Luke 11:32)
 - Because, As God Tells Us 1 John 1:9 - “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!”
3. So Let The Book Of Jonah:
 - Point You To God!
 - And His Gospel – The Good News:
 - Of The Lord Jesus Christ!

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