



JONAH: GOD OF 2ND CHANCES

“Dealing with the Jonah Inside Each of Us”

Jonah 4 May 25, 2014

1. God Listens to Jonah

- Jonah prayed
- Jonah was mad
 - + The people listened and responded
 - + Jonah didn't get his way
 - + Jonah couldn't control God
 - + Jonah was worried about what his fellow Jews would think of him
- Jonah had a heart problem

2. God Comforts Jonah

- God asks him a question
- God sends him shade in a vine & takes it away

3. God Teaches Jonah

- He is a God of compassion & mercy to all people
- God leaves the book open ended for us to finish for ourselves

Our “2nd Chance”

- Let's be certain that we have **truly surrendered** our will to Him & that He is truly in control of our lives.
- Let's allow God to deal with our personal “Ninevites” / “Samaritans” – **the people we don't like** in our lives and to give us a God-sized love and compassion for them.
- Let's ask God to give us a **fresh burden for the lost** in our community and to the ends of the earth.
- Let's be so moved & touched by God's grace & mercy in our lives, that we can't help but share it with others.

Write their name down here:

Commit to pray for them, for an opportunity to share with them and for you to be bold enough to share.

- The book of our lives is still open, how will it end? What will be written about the rest of your life?
- Are you and I willing to be obedient to God's call on our lives, to go where He tells us to go, and to do what He tells us to do? We must! **Let's go!!**
- **Let's pray** and get on our face before God for revival for ourselves and pray for an awakening for our community, our state, nation, and world.
- Maybe today or this week or this month someone has been God's messenger to you and you need to respond to His loving Call in your life! **Let's respond to God's call to believe!** It's as simple as ABC! **Admit** you are a sinner, **Believe** that Jesus is God's Son, **Confess** Him as Savior and **Commit** your life to Him as Lord for the rest of your life!!
- **Let's be willing to be obedient** and Be willing to step over the line this morning in what He is calling you to do. Maybe it is join this church family and honor Him by not attending but joining His family and being a part of bringing the good news to our community and to the ends of the earth!

JONAH: THE GOD OF 2ND CHANCES

“Dealing with the Jonah Inside Each of Us”

Jonah 4

May 25, 2014 AM Service

Brief Review

One would think, I can't imagine how great chapter 4 will be, the party that must be happening, Jonah must be thrilled, had to go home and tell everybody, before he left he rejoices with the people of Nineveh! Not a chance, Jonah witnesses an incredible miracle of an entire city turning to God, and Jonah is upset, angry and walks out of the city. We will find he was just like the prodigal son's older brother!

Notice though, God does not give up on Jonah, remember, God gives us those second chances, and still does the same for Jonah. Jonah is His child just as you and I are, and most of the time, I need more than three times to get it through my thick skull, and sometimes I still don't get it. Notice what God does with Jonah.

1. God listens to Jonah

Shouldn't we be so grateful that we know God listens to us?!

- **Jonah prayed**

We have to give him some credit, he does pray and talk to the Lord. He is honest about what he thinks and how he is feeling. However, as we see he is completely wrong in the way he feels. He prayed his best prayer in the worst place (the belly of the whale) and prays his worst prayer in the best place. (Nineveh were God was mightily at work!) God doesn't beat him up. He listens and lovingly responds to Jonah, pointing out to Him his heart problem

- **Jonah was mad**

Jonah makes it clear he is upset, he is mad. How could this possibly be? What was he mad about?

- + **The people listened and responded**

Jonah was mad because the people repented, they listened the message and responded as God called them to.

- + **Jonah didn't get his way**

Jonah did not get what he wanted. He wanted to see these people destroyed, and if not he sure did not want to be the one to present the opportunity to repent. Aren't we just like that? We think that the bad should be the only ones that suffer and not the good. That's not our call to make! We are the clay and He is the potter.

+ **Jonah couldn't control God**

Notice what Jonah says, Lord I knew that You were a compassionate and gracious God, and one who will relent. He could not get God to change his mind neither about his situation nor about those Ninevites whom he hated.

Jonah thought he knew what was best, not God. Let's be honest, we certainly think the same thing even if we don't say it.

+ **Jonah was worried about what his fellow Jews would think of him**

Jonah was also upset because God's judgment did not fall on Nineveh, and his reputation as a prophet was on the line. He had said God would destroy them, and then it did not happen.

“When our reputation is more important than character and pleasing ourselves and our friends is more important than pleasing God, then we're in danger of becoming like Jonah and living to defend our prejudices instead of fulfilling our spiritual responsibilities.”

• **Jonah had a heart problem**

Jonah had gone and been obedient but as we now see, Jonah was not happy about it. Isn't that some of us!

Jonah should have been ecstatic, rejoicing over the fact that this entire city had been saved from destruction and many of them turned to God with their whole heart.

2. **God comforts Jonah**

• **God asks him a question**

God does this for us and it happens throughout Scripture. God already knows the answer, but He gives us the opportunity to verbalize it, to let him hear himself say it. Jonah, why you are so angry? Do you have any right to be angry?

Many times we think we have every right. We take punishment into our own hands, we judge, and we simply run away of God and become the judge. Is that our right? The answer is of course no. It appears that Jonah did not answer, he went out away from the city and sat to watch. Perhaps to see if the people would change and then God would go ahead and destroy them anyway. Perhaps just to have a pity party, to pout outside the city.

- **God sends him shade in a vine and takes it away**

Out of God's compassion for him and also as we will see to teach Jonah, God sends him a vine to give him shade, relief from the heat and scorching wind. His attitude and compassion is no better, although he is happy for the relief, God then sends a worm to kill the plant. God is reminded him of the "hellish" experience from the fish and of God's great compassion for Jonah and all people. Jonah was far more concerned about his immediate comfort than the value of thousands of enemies lives.

3. God teaches Jonah

Although Jonah had given up on God, God had not given up on him. God continues to try and communicate to Jonah and help him see the errors of his ways in love and mercy.

- **He is a God of compassion and great mercy to all people**

It seems that Jonah needed God's compassion than those in Nineveh did! How true this is!

Chapter 1, his mind understood God's will but he refused to obey it and took his body in the opposite direction. – learned the lesson of God's providence & patience – you can't run away from God.

Chapter 2, he cried out for help, God rescued him, and he gave his body back to the Lord. – learned the lesson of God's pardon – He forgives those who call on Him

Chapter 3, he yielded his will to the Lord and went to Nineveh to preach, but his heart was not yet fully surrendered to the Lord.

- learned the lesson of God's power as he saw a whole city humble itself before the Lord.

Chapter 4 – He is learning the lesson of God's great compassion for the lost sinner like the Ninevites and that we are called to have

the same compassion.

Jonah had more compassion on the vine that died than the people of Nineveh who would have died and gone to hell. Yet amazingly God used Jonah to bring a whole city to faith, yet Jonah did not love the people he was preaching to. And by the way, what a great thing because they would not be an enemy for the time being.

- **God leaves the book open ended for us to finish for ourselves**

Illus: Movie ends, don't know what happens. multiple endings

Here is the case, as very few books in the Bible do, we don't know what Jonah did. I like that. We could certainly hope that he was once again repentant and went back home, did what God called him to do there and understood like never before the great mercy and compassion of God.

This morning, our story is open ended, it is not yet complete. One day it will be, but not this morning.

What will you and I do with the rest of our story?

Where are you this morning? Are you in Tarshish a place of escape or in Nineveh in a place of obedience. And if you are Nineveh, what's your heart like. Is soft and moldable, or are you doing it out of duty not calling and passion?

Jonah that the gospel was for him and his people only, and missed the fact that God was blessing him and his people to be a blessing to others. God has blessed us Bethsalem are we being a blessing to others? Are we sharing the good news of what He is doing here and in your life?

Our Response:

- Let's be certain that we have truly surrendered our will to the Lord and that He is truly in control of our lives.
- Let's allow the Lord to deal with our "Ninevites" or "Samaritans"
- Let's ask God to give us a fresh burden for those who are lost
- Let's be so moved and touched by God's grace and mercy in our lives once again that we can't help but share it with others.
- The book of our lives is still open, how will it end? What will be written about the rest of your life?