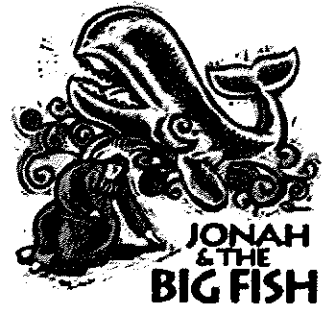


Jonah

"The limitless mercy and grace of God"

Week 2 -Jonah 1:17-2:10



The Great Fish Story!

In the Hebrew text, 1:17 is the first verse of Chapter 2

- The Hebrew word "MANAH" means "to assign" or "to appoint", meaning that the LORD had specially appointed this great fish for the unique task with Jonah

Jonah Prays from the Inside of the Great Fish: Chapter Two

- Though Jonah had fled from the LORD, he now turns to the LORD in prayer. Prayer can be offered from any place (1 Timothy 2:8 - Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.)
- Jonah is alive and conscious in the belly of the fish.
When he says "out of my distress" he recalls the anxiety and anguish he experienced during the storm, the distress of the sailors, the sailors hurling him into the angry sea...when he went down into the water, the text says he prayed. And God answered!
- The promises of God's Word:
 - Proverbs 11:8 The righteous person is rescued from trouble, and it falls on the wicked instead.
 - Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
 - Psalm 50:15 and call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me
- SHEOL can mean grave (Gen 37:35), state of death (Ps. 116:3) or hell (Is. 5:14). It could be simply used here to describe the extreme nature of his distress as a parallel word in this verse
- Vs. 3-4: Jonah recalls his feelings as he was sinking in the sea. He had deliberately tried to run away from God's service, but now he desperately longs for God's care.
- Vs. 5: With obvious reference to Psalm 88:3-4 (see also Psalm 18:4-8, Psalm 69:1-2) Jonah describes further his helplessness in the sea. He went down as far as where the sea rested on the mountains – the very depths.
- Vs. 6: It seemed as though the whole earth had closed in upon him. There was ONE Who was mightier than the sea, the mountains, or the earth. It was the LORD, YAHWEH, his God. He brought Jonah from "The Pit," (Job 33:22-28)
- Vs 7: When Jonah despaired of any help in himself, the God of love was there. Jonah thought of God, prayed to God, and God's ear and God's temple were open to Jonah. God did not cast him off.
- Vs. 8: Worship or service to "idols" amounts to nothing. (Psalm 115:2-8). God shows real mercy, Psalm 115:2-8
- Vs. 9: Jonah has learned his lesson, he says. His life shall henceforth be wholly dedicated to God. He sees God as his only Deliverer. Emphatically and wholeheartedly, Jonah is saying "YES" to God. The words of the prayer are so beautiful that questions have been raised whether Jonah really spoke them. He says by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that he did.



- There are many references to the Psalms:
 - Psalm 18:4-6, 30:3; 120:1 (Jonah 2:2)
 - Psalm 42:7 (Jonah 2:3)
 - Psalm 31:22, 5:7 (Jonah 2:4)
 - Psalm 18:7, 29:1f (Jonah 2:5)
 - Psalm 18:16, 30:3, 103:4 (Jonah 2:6)
 - Psalm 142:3, 43:4, 18:6, 5:7, 88:2 (Jonah 2:7)
 - Psalm 31:6 (Jonah 2:8)
 - Psalm 42:4, 50:14, 23, 116:17 (Jonah 2:9)
- Vs. 10: After this prayer in which Jonah said "YES" to the LORD, God saw Jonah's readiness to return to His service. God directed the fish to "deliver" Jonah to dry land so he could go on the mission to which God had originally called him. (God is still in control of His Creation: remember the fish stories with his disciples??)



OUR JOURNEY

1. What lesson do we learn from Jonah's journey? (What "fish" are you traveling in right now?)
2. How do you get out of such a "vessel"?
 - a. James 4:7-10, ⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.
 - b. 1 John 1:8-10, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.
3. Obedience isn't always our first choice.
 - a. Read Matthew 21:28-32
 - i. One son said _____ and then _____
 - ii. The other said _____ and then _____
 - iii. Which one was obedient?
 - iv. Which are we the most like?
 - b. Luke 15:11-32: The Prodigal Son/Loving Father
Our focus is usually on the younger son who went "prodigal".
However, what about the older son who stayed home?
4. In time of trouble, what is our normal choice?
 - a. To run away from the Lord?
 - b. To run towards the Lord?
5. God's promise: *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you and you will honor Me!* (Psalm 50:15)

