

Jonah - A Lesson in Obedience

Pastor Kelly Word

Jonah Chapter 1

"NOW THE word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me. [Gen. 10:11, 12.] But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from being in the presence of the Lord [as His prophet] and went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish [the most remote of the Phoenician trading places then known]. So he paid the appointed fare and went down into the ship to go with them to Tarshish from being in the presence of the Lord [as His servant and minister]. [Gen. 4:16; Job 1:12; 2:7.] But the Lord sent out a great wind upon the sea, and there was a violent tempest on the sea so that the ship was about to be broken. [Ps. 107:23-27.] Then the mariners were afraid, and each man cried to his god; and they cast the goods that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep. So the captain came and said to him, What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call upon your God! Perhaps your God will give a thought to us so that we shall not perish. And they each said to one another, Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us. So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. Then they said to him, Tell us, we pray you, on whose account has this evil come upon us? What is your occupation? Where did you come from? And what is your country and nationality? And he said to them, I am a Hebrew, and I [reverently] fear and worship the Lord, the God of heaven, Who made the sea and the dry land. Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, What is this that you have done? For the men knew that he fled from being in the presence of the Lord [as His prophet and servant], because he had told them. Then they said to him, What shall we do to you, that the sea may subside and be calm for us? For the sea became more and more [violently] tempestuous. And [Jonah] said to them, Take me up and cast me into the sea; so shall the sea become calm for you, for I know that it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship to the land, but they could not, for the sea became more and more violent against them. Therefore they cried to the Lord, We beseech You, O Lord, we beseech You, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for You, O Lord, have done as it pleased You. So they took up Jonah and cast him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. Then the men [reverently and worshipfully] feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows. Now the Lord had prepared and appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. [Matt. 12:40.]"

- When God asks us to do things, many times, our reaction is to run. Jonah went in the total opposite direction from the will of God for his life.
- There are consequences for walking away from God's directions. When he tells us to do something, if we don't there will be consequences.

Jonah Chapter 2

"THEN JONAH prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly, And said, I cried out of my distress to the Lord, and He heard me; out of the belly of Sheol cried I, and You heard my voice. [Ps. 120:1; 130:1; 142:1; Lam. 3:55-58.] For You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the floods surrounded me; all Your waves and Your billows passed over me. [Ps. 42:7.] Then I said, I have been cast out of Your presence and Your sight; yet I will look again toward Your holy temple. [Ps. 31:22.] The waters compassed me about, even to [the extinction of] life; the abyss surrounded me, the seaweed was wrapped about my head. [Ps. 69:1; Lam. 3:54.] I went down to the bottoms and the very roots of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me forever. Yet You have brought up my life from the pit and corruption, O Lord my God.

When my soul fainted upon me [crushing me], I earnestly and seriously remembered the Lord; and my prayer came to You, into Your holy temple. Those who pay regard to false, useless, and worthless idols forsake their own [Source of] mercy and loving-kindness. But as for me, I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed. Salvation and deliverance belong to the Lord! And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.”

- Sometimes it takes hitting rock bottom for God to get your attention.
- Notice, in the belly of the whale when everything looked bad, Jonah praised God.
- He realized that He didn't want to do life without being in the will of God.

Jonah Chapter 3

“AND THE word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach and cry out to it the preaching that I tell you. So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city of three days' journey [sixty miles in circumference]. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown! So the people of Nineveh believed in God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth [in penitent mourning], from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came to the king of Nineveh [of all that had happened to Jonah, and his terrifying message from God], and he arose from his throne and he laid his robe aside, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he made proclamation and published through Nineveh, By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed nor drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and let them cry mightily to God. Yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell, God may turn and revoke His sentence against us [when we have met His terms], and turn away from His fierce anger so that we perish not. [Joel 2:13, 14.] And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God revoked His [sentence of] evil that He had said that He would do to them and He did not do it [for He was comforted and eased concerning them].”

- One person can be the catalyst for a move of God! People wonder what it takes to get God to make a move? One person, completely surrendered to the will of God, can absolutely bring a move of God. See, God is ready to move.... He's waiting on us.
- When the people heard the truth, they realized how wrong they have been, and they repented of all their wrong-doing.
- 2 Chronicles 7:14 AMP
- “If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves, pray, seek, crave, and require of necessity My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.”

Jonah Chapter 4

“BUT IT displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was very angry. And he prayed to the Lord and said, I pray You, O Lord, is not this just what I said when I was still in my country? That is why I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and [when sinners turn to You and meet Your conditions] You revoke the [sentence of] evil against them. [Exod. 34:6.] Therefore now, O Lord, I beseech You, take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord, Do you do well to be angry? So Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city, and he made a booth there for himself. He sat there under it in the shade till he might see what would become of the city. And the Lord God prepared a gourd and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his evil situation. So Jonah was exceedingly glad [to have the protection] of the gourd. But God prepared a cutworm when the morning dawned the next day, and it smote the gourd so that

it withered. And when the sun arose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah so that he fainted and wished in himself to die and said, It is better for me to die than to live. And God said to Jonah, Do you do well to be angry for the loss of the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die! Then said the Lord, You have had pity on the gourd, for which you have not labored nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons not [yet old enough to] know their right hand from their left, and also many cattle [not accountable for sin]?"

- Jonah wanted the people of Nineveh to get what they had coming to them. He got mad that God's plan worked. Many times we get mad when people don't get what we think they have coming to them.
- The Lord delivered him even after he ran from God. Then, there was a great revival because of Jonah's obedience.

Jonah 2.0 - A Lesson In Forgiveness

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Jonah Chapter 4

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Why Was Jonah SO MAD that Nineveh was Saved?

The people of Nineveh were sworn enemies of Israel. Jonah wanted them to be destroyed because they wanted to destroy Israel. These people were not the quote-unquote “children of God.” They were gentiles. God was using their deliverance as a type and shadow of things to come when God would tell the apostles to share the Gospel of Jesus with the gentiles.

What Can We Do When We Feel Like God Didn't Do What We Wanted?

Habakkuk 3:17-19 AMP

Though the fig tree does not blossom and there is no fruit on the vines, [though] the product of the olive fails and the fields yield no food, though the flock is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls, 18 Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the [victorious] God of my salvation! [Rom. 8:37.]

19 The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]! For the Chief Musician; with my stringed instruments.

Rejoice in the Lord

James 5:13-15 AMP

13 Is anyone among you afflicted (ill-treated, suffering evil)? He should pray. Is anyone glad at heart? He should sing praise [to God]. 14 Is anyone among you sick? He should call in the church elders (the spiritual guides). And they should pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Lord's name.

15 And the prayer [that is] of faith will save him who is sick, and the Lord will restore him; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Romans 5:3-6 AMP

Moreover [let us also be full of joy now!] let us exult and triumph in our troubles and rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that

pressure and affliction and hardship produce patient and unswerving endurance.

4 And endurance (fortitude) develops maturity of character (approved faith and tried integrity). And character [of this sort] produces [the habit of] joyful and confident hope of eternal salvation.

5 Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.

- It's going to require an intentional shift! We must draw different lines to different conclusions.

Philippians 4:4-8 AMP

Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, gladden yourselves in Him]; again I say, Rejoice! [Ps. 37:4.]

5 Let all men know and perceive and recognize your unselfishness (your considerateness, your forbearing spirit). The Lord is near [He is coming soon].

6 Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God.

7 And God's peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall

garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

8 For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them].

Isaiah 65:18-19 AMP

But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a rejoicing and her people a joy.

19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and the sound of weeping will no more be heard in it, nor the cry of distress.

Learn to Be Content

Phillipians 4:10-14 AMP

I was made very happy in the Lord that now you have revived your interest in my welfare after so long a time; you were indeed thinking of me, but you had no opportunity to show it.

11 Not that I am implying that I was in any personal want, for I have learned how to be content (satisfied to the point where I am not disturbed or disquieted) in whatever state I am.

12 I know how to be abased and live humbly in straitened circumstances, and I know also how to enjoy plenty and live in abundance. I have learned in any and all circumstances the secret of facing every situation, whether well-fed or going hungry, having a sufficiency and enough to spare or going without and being in want.

13 I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency].

14 But it was right and commendable and noble of you to contribute for my needs and to share my difficulties with me.

Matthew 6:14-15 AMP

"For if you forgive people their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses."