

JOURNEY'S IN JONAH

(CHAPTER 2)

OUTLINED NOTES

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Journeys in Jonah (2)

Introduction:

1. Whereas chapter one could be entitled "Jonah's journey away from God," chapter 2 could be Jonah's journey to God.
2. In chapter one Jonah defied the Lord's command, was chastised in a storm, rebuked by heathens and cast into the sea. We left him in the sea, but the Lord didn't as we shall now see.

Discussion:

I. God's Providence (1:17)

- A. God was not done with the prophet but gives a miraculous deliverance.
 1. God provided Samson a jawbone (Jud. 15:15-20), Elijah was given ravens (1 Kin. 17:6), and Jonah a fish. He prepared a body for His Son to provide us sanctification and atonement (Heb. 10:5, 10, 14). In essence He provided us His son (Jn. 3:16).
 2. We see that God prepared and provided a way of escape. He does that for us in temptation too:

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

3. Is it not true that God makes preparations in response to our decisions?
 - a. On an ultimate basis, He has prepared or is preparing a place for the righteous (Jn. 14:1-3).
 - b. He has also prepared a place for disobedient sinners, the devil and his angels in eternal fire (Matt. 25:41).
- B. It is no strange thing to see the Lord deliver men from disastrous odds.
 1. Peter spoke of how the Lord saved Noah from a world-wide flood and of delivering Lot from the upheaval and ash of Gomorrah (2 Pet. 2:5, 6).
 2. We could also think of how God delivered the Israelites from Pharaoh; how He delivered Samson from the Philistines, David from Goliath, and of course Jesus, from the bonds of death.
- C. I want to look at Jonah's deliverance from three viewpoints.
 1. First see Jonah's deliverance as a *miracle*.
 - a. Jonah's salvation was clearly outside of the natural arrangement.
 - 1) He was swallowed by a giant fish (KJV says "Whale" in Matt. 12:40) which by unnatural law swallowed him without crushing him. He remained alive, able to breathe and reason in its stomach contrary to natural law. The great fish, with all natural improbability spew him out on dry land.
 - 2) This was a miracle, make no mistake about it. People do not suffer shipwreck today and by chance get swallowed by a sea monster and live to tell about it.
 - b. What a lesson exists that if we can believe in Genesis 1:21, that God is creator of all sea creatures, then we can believe that if God wants to prepare and summon one for this task then He can do it.
 - c. Some may doubt the historicity of Jonah because we do not see men getting swallowed by large fish today and living to tell about it. Actually, there are records of men being swallowed.

- 1) “Nierembergius speaks of a fish taken near Valencia in Spain, so large that a man on horseback could stand in its mouth; the cavity of the, brain held seven men; its jaw bones, which were kept in the Escorial, were seventeen feet long; and two carcasses were found in its stomach: he says it was called "piscis mularis"; but some learned men took it to be the dog fish. . .”¹
 - 2) The Pulpit commentary mentions a shark in the Mediterranean Sea, *Carcharias vulgaris*, which has reached lengths of 25 feet and have swallowed a man whole and even a horse.²
2. Next see Jonah’s deliverance as a *type*.
- a. Jonah’s name appears nine times in the New Testament in three passages (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32). This shows that Jesus accepted Jonah as accurate and true, not fictional
 - 1) Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days; Jesus was in the grave three days.
 - 2) Jonah came forth and so did our Lord. Both Jonah and our Lord were in their respective graves because of sin (The Lord because of our sin; Jonah because of his own).
 - 3) Both men saved men from death. The type suffered for his own sins, the Antitype for the sins of others.
 - 4) The type saved men from bodily death. The Antitype saved men from spiritual death. Jesus’ words could be no more fitting, “*indeed a greater than Jonah is here*” (Lk. 11:32).
 - b. There may be more involved in their relationships. When Jonah came up from the sea, which he calls “sheol” (Jon. 2:2), he was fit to take the word of the Lord to a great many Gentiles, Nineveh. When Jesus arose from the grave, he opened the way for a wider scale salvation of Gentiles than of Nineveh.
 - 1) “*Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life*” (Acts 11:18; cf. Matt. 12:41).
 - 2) Paul speaks of the Gentile conversion in Ephesians 2:11-17.
 - a) Who preached peace to these Gentiles (v. 17)? How did Christ preach peace to them?
 - b) These people found peace through “one body” (v. 16) which is the church (1:22-23). They have never seen Jesus’ person, yet Jesus preached to them. How? It was through hearing the word of truth, the gospel, which Paul preached (cf. Eph. 1:13).
3. See the deliverance of Jonah as a *sign* (Matt. 12:39).
- a. A sign is a supernatural event which evidences, clothes, and confirms the claims of another.
 - 1) Jesus said they were evil and adulterous because He had been performing signs right and left and they still disbelieved; they challenged his power as being of Satan (Matt. 12:24).
 - 2) They were so busy being faultfinders that they failed to see what or who was before them (12:10ff).
 - b. A sign directs. Our literal street signs help with direction. So when Jesus performed miraculous signs it directed the people to believe in his claims (Jn. 11:45-48).
 - c. A sign confirmed what was said to be true (cf. Mk. 16:19-20). Once something is confirmed, it doesn’t need to be reconfirmed. When you have a document notarized today, you do not need to notarize it again

¹ John Gill’s Expositor

² Vol. 14, *Jonah*, p. 5.

tomorrow. God's word was notarized by God in the first-century "once" and for all. God's word has been authenticated, why would there be signs today?

- d. How was Jonah going to be their sign?
 - 1) As Jonah came out of his virtual grave in three days, so Jesus would be put to death and burst forth from the grave in three days. *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"* (Jn. 2:19).
 - 2) This would be a sign that confirmed every word and every claim of Jesus. It confirmed that He really was the Son of God (Rom. 1:4).

II. Jonah's Prayer (2:1-9).

- A. Jonah's prayer speaks of faith mixed with fears, hope mixed with disparity. Here are some immediate questions and answers to consider:
 1. When did Jonah pray (v. 1)? He prayed when swallowed. In affliction he went to the Lord in prayer (v. 2). Jonah's example shows us what to do in affliction-pray. Is it not interesting how affliction can open the mouth that sin has shut?
 2. Where did he pray (v. 1)? In the bowels of a fish he prayed.
 - a. No place is improper for prayer. *"Pray without ceasing"* (1 Thess. 5:17). *"I desire that the men pray everywhere. . ."* (1 Tim. 3:8).
 - b. Wherever God may cast us, we can find a place for prayer in this life. Since man is to be the temple of God, he can carry this privilege with him wherever he may be.
 1. Samson, though his eyes were put out, saw the power of God and appealed to it through prayer among the enemy and was answered (Jud. 16:28).
 2. Nehemiah prayed to the God of heaven while in conversation with a king (Neh. 2:4).
 3. Jesus prayed on mountains, in gardens, and on the cross.
 4. Paul and Silas prayed in prison (Acts 16:25).
 5. Here we see Jonah praying from the depths of the deep in the entrails of a great sea creature.
 3. To whom did he pray (v. 1). He prayed to God, the creator of sea and dry land. The one Whom he had fled from he now petitions.
- B. What did Jonah recall and record of his prayer
 1. That God answered his earnest prayer (v. 2).
 - a. Note, Jonah "cried out" and God answered.
 - b. Jonah cried out from "Sheol" [*hell*, KJV] and God heard.
 - c. Lesson: Many pray not in prosperity but only in affliction. God allows affliction is that it might drive man to God (Job. 36:13-15).
 - d. Matthew Henry pondered concerning Jonah:
*"There is a hell in the other world, out of which there is no crying to God with any hope of being heard; but whatever hell we may be in the belly of in this world, we may thence cry to God"*³
 2. How low he was thrown (vv. 3-6).
 - a. Into the heart of the seas (v. 3)
 - b. Out of your sight (v. 4)
 - c. He went to the bottom before being saved (v. 5-6). He was not swallowed up by the fish immediately when he hit the waters, as some stories portray it. He had sank like fish bait to the bottom and felt as if this was the moment in which he would die.

³ Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary: Isaiah to Malachi*, Vol. IV. P. 1288.

3. How high his thoughts ascended (7).
 - a. Jonah's mind went back to God and the temple. Though he lived in the northern kingdom, he remembered the holy place in Jerusalem and the name of the Lord. His thoughts were no longer toward Tarshish but to the temple. In the same passage that relates his lowliness we also find where his soul reached.
 - b. Jonah's mind was set on things above for he recalled the words of scripture, of David, a man after God's own heart (v. 3, from Ps. 42:7). Where David spoke of the billows and the waves in a figurative sense, Jonah realized God's billows and waves in a very literal one. They were God's because God commissioned them against Jonah.

4. How vain idolatry is (v. 8).
 - a. Idols are worthless.
 - b. Idols forfeit the mercy of God. Those who forsake the Lord or replace Him with something else place themselves where mercy is not.

5. How good God is (v. 9).
 - a. In the midst of Jonah's chastisement he perceived God's mercy and rejoiced.
 - b. He speaks of thanksgiving. There are times when it is easy to be thankful, but what is impressive is when someone can be thankful in the middle of adversity. In Jonah we see what the Hebrew writer was speaking about in Hebrews 12:5-11.
 - c. He speaks of sacrifice. Jonah could not wait to sacrifice to the Lord. The mercy of God should compel us to sacrifice to God. Jonah deserved to die, but he didn't receive what he deserved. Therefore he wanted to sacrifice to the Lord.
 - d. We also see praise, "Salvation is of the Lord." *Thanksgiving* looks to all the benefits we receive from God. *Praise* focuses on the Bestower of all the blessings.

III. God delivered (v. 10).

- A. It is a good thing the fish listened better than Jonah did. What if the fish decided to flee from God's presence and have Jonah for a snack? We see that when God speaks to other things, He speaks once and it obeys. When he speaks to man, he has to speak again and again to get him to listen.
- B. But the fish did obey and Jonah was discharged onto dry land. Never had a man been so buried alive as Jonah. He sought to use the sea to escape God but found the sea to swallow him by God. Now in the land of the living God has a work for Jonah to do.

Conclusion:

1. As God used the fish to swallow up Jonah for three days and at His command the fish vomited out Jonah onto dry land. So God uses the earth to receive our bodies when we die, "from dust we are and to dust we shall return." But at a given time He will speak to the earth, indeed, He shall descend with a shout and the dead will rise (1 Thess. 4:16).
2. Are you ready? Are you journeying with Jonah away from God or to Him? Obey today.