

Remnant Life Church
July 24, 2016
Sunday School Stories Retold:
Jonah – A Prayer of Faith – Part 2
Jonah 2

- Jonah makes an unusual observation that is actually very relevant to the change in his heart and demonstrates the depth of God's love
 - *Seaweed was wrapped around my head. (2:5)*
 - Again in **Psalms 18:4-5** - *The cords of death entangled me; the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me. The cords of Sheol coiled around me; the snares of death confronted me.*
 - In the original language the word for plant or seaweed (NIV) is *cuwph* (soof) means water plant or, more commonly, reed
 - + even though it is a word of Egyptian origin it allows us to see God's powerful hand at work
- See the parallel being presented...
 - The reed was the most common plant along the banks of the Nile
 - It is through these same reeds that Moses as a baby floats in a basket of God's protection
 - It is through the Red Sea (the literal translation of that name is Sea of Reeds) that Moses leads the children of Israel
 - But Jonah's experience is very different
 - + He is not floating gently through the reeds
 - + He is not walking on dry ground like the Israelites being delivered from bondage
 - + He is facing the very real possibility of drowning just like Pharaoh's soldiers while the pagan idol worshippers in the boat above are allowed to live
 - We are shown here through Jonah's situation the Messianic picture of a chosen one who dies while others, not at all deserving, are spared and given life
 - It is in fact the very heart of God's plan of redemption revealed
 - + Jesus – the chosen one who would die and descend to Sheol (*the depths of the grave – v 2*) so that the sinful people of the world – that's you and me - might have life
 - + This is why Jesus chose to identify himself with Jonah in **Matt. 12:40**
- We then arrive at the very center of the entire story – the center because everything prior to this point is leading up to this sentence and everything after it is a result of it – it is Jonah's confession...
 - *But you, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit. (2:6b)*
 - It is the first time that he uses the words "my God"
 - **Psalms 30:3** - *You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.*
 - This revelation demonstrates that what needed to be done in Jonah's heart was accomplished

- The time Jonah was in the fish was the time needed for him to have his heart and his mind adjusted
 - How long will take you for God to get your attention?
 - The fish's belly that you may find yourself in will last, in part, as long as you determine it needs to
- For Jonah it was a change in a man who once slept in the midst of his sin but now realizes that there is no place that God is not present – even from the deepest pits of our lives
- The change in Jonah is further demonstrated in the last stanza of his prayer
 - **Jonah 2:9** - *But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, 'Salvation comes from the LORD.'*
- But up until this point this revelation and declaration has been made only in the depth of the sea in the belly of a fish where no one can hear
 - Will Jonah still confess this before men?
 - The very men he was so afraid of that he would rather defy God?
 - God is ready to release Jonah from his unique one-room schoolhouse but...
- (REPEAT FROM LAST WEEK) The last slap on the back of the head
 - God tells the fish to spit (or vomit) Jonah back onto the land
 - The 8th and last time that this word is used in the Bible means exactly what you think and know it means
 - This time was not going to end with a dramatic, supernatural rescue – just a bit of indigestion
 - Can often be one of the same reasons a parent spansks a child – it says, “Remember this!”
- The first half of the account of Jonah is filled with the power of God over multiple aspects of our world
 - + The weather
 - + The lots that were cast
 - + The fish
 - Because when God speaks all His creation immediately obeys from the winds of the heavens to the fish in the sea
 - All except his most loved creation – people
- To disobey God and God's Word invites ways that God will get your attention that you many times will not want to face
- Encourage you to never lose sight of the awesomeness of our God and the incredible depth of love that He has for you and for all His creation – even those who defy Him

Jonah's Change of Direction - **READ Jonah 3**

- **Jonah 3:1** – one of my favorite verses in all the Bible - *Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time:*
- As with all things in the love, mercy, and grace of God – it is never too late!!!
- The first part of verse **3** shows that the change in Jonah was genuine, *Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh.*
- God was not only giving Jonah a second chance but that's exactly what He was doing for the people of Ninevah as well

- Forty more days and Ninevah will be overturned! (3:4)
 - Forty is a powerful number in the Bible (numbers are of God) as it represents a time of trial or testing that leads to holiness, renewal, homecoming, and salvation
 - The waters of Noah's flood lasted for 40 days (Gen 7:1)
 - The children of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years
 - Moses is on the mountaintop with God for 40 days (Ex 24:18)
 - Jesus, after His baptism, was in the wilderness fasting and praying for 40 days before He was tempted by satan (Matt 4:2)
 - God mercy extends to all of His creation
 - + It did then and it still does today
 - + That is why we can NEVER stop praying for someone, declare them a lost cause, or judge other people
 - God's presence and power was upon Jonah as he spoke
 - The words he spoke had no authority in and of themselves (not eloquent or particularly powerful)
 - The power and the authority was put there by the presence of Almighty God
 - That same all-powerful God is your God, He is my God, He is the God of everyone who calls on His name!
 - Psalms 27:1 - *The Lord is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?*
 - What is there for us to be afraid of?!?!
 - There is nothing that can separate us from God's love
 - Rom 8:38-39 - *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
1. Sometimes a crisis is exactly what you need to drive you to your knees but does it have to be that way?
 2. God will hear our prayers from anywhere in any circumstance using any words – Jonah's prayer by and large was not original in its wording but it was in the sincerity in which Jonah was praying
 3. While God saved Jonah's life and allowed him to minister to the Ninevites there was still consequence for his disobedience. Never allow the lies of satan to delude you into thinking you can just ignore God without paying a price
 - But God's judgment is just, it is filled with His love and mercy, and it is always to benefit us in ways that will ultimately bless us and bring glory and honor to Him.
 - Deut 32:4 - *He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.*