

PRAY

intro: You know what I love about the story of Jonah? Most people may say because we witness a miracle. I mean, assuming you know the jist of the story, a fish swallows a man. That is pretty intense.

Today if someone claimed such a feat, we would not believe them. It is worse than those people who claim they went to heaven or hell. It is an impossible (in our minds) thing that took place in Jonah's life.

But this is not my favorite.

While today we are only going to look at Chapter 1, Jonah reminds me a lot about myself. Jonah is a prophet. Yet, we often can look at Jonah and think *This is not what a prophet should do. He is an awful prophet.* Yet, how many times could that be said of us? *This is not what a Christian should do...*

I am thankful that we have a record of someone in the Bible who is not the perfect example of following God but someone who fails miserably...because that is just like me.

Read Jonah 1:1-6

1. Jonah Flees

I don't know if you know this or not, but following God is always a good idea. **Going against God is never a grand idea.** Verse 2 is a command of God. The very next verse is Jonah doing the opposite. Come on Jonah! The very next verse he plans to go against God, the creator, the Sovereign Ruler.

Let me ask you guys a question, how many of you guys like to be deceived?

Most of us would say, "Well no, no one likes to be deceived." I recently made a purchase on Amazon and I was deceived with the product. They said the cell phone case would have all these features and even the pictures shown had what I wanted the case to do, but upon receiving it, it was a different item (well, very similar). Actually, this is more an example of lying.

Some of you know that I like to perform Magic Tricks.

Can you believe people PAY money to go see these "Magic Shows" which are really deception shows! Inconceivable!

Yet, this shows people like to be deceived. It is a form of entertainment.

-Kidney Stone story.

How does this relate to Jonah?

Jonah is deceived. He actually deceived himself here. I am sure many of us would ask Jonah, "What were you thinking?" Yet, if Jonah has a written copy of our poor choices, what would he ask us?

Thankfully, if you are a Christian, we have **Jesus who has covered our wrong doing. My "right" actions do not justify my wrong actions.** It is only thru Jesus I can stand before God declared "Right." That's Romans 5 if you are wondering.

So, here we have Jonah sailing away from God. Trying to run away from God, like it is attainable. Verse 5 says Jonah is asleep. Yet, there is a mighty wind against the boat. Who can sleep on a boat with a mighty wind. I would be so sick, but Jonah is sleeping.

Explain how the people would have felt! AHHHH!!! Dump everything. We are going to die! ETC

If I was on this boat and I found Jonah sleeping, I would be very understanding to him, right? NO! EXplain this! YELL AT HIM!

Through this all, the crew is open to any god. What one is real? Asking Jonah to call out to his “god.” Notice the small g. They do not believe in Him yet. The KJV does capitalize God, this is because they are still referring to the true God. Yet, they still say, “Thy God” which shows that the crew does not believe Jonah’s God is really the God.

Jonah deceived himself and fled from God, and second

2. God revealed Jonah’s sin through lots.

Intro: So, I have a die here. I do not know what kind of lots they used. But normally it would be by what we call “chance.” We experience “chance.” What are the odds if I roll one die, I would land on a 3? $\frac{1}{6}$ are the odds. I would not bet money on that, because it would be $\frac{5}{6}$ chances I am wrong.

Let me grab 2 more dices. Let’s say, the number 3 is Jonah. Anyone know the odds now? Let’s see if I get all 3! Nope! if you are not a math whiz, no shame, I had to call my sister for help. **The odds are 1/216. Like I said, this not necessarily what they did. But, the odds that they fell on Jonah is not likely.**

First off, if someone cast lots and said, “Justin, why has this evil come upon us. What have you done?”

I would be like, “Dude, bad things aren’t always a result of sin. Lay off. And just because your lots say one thing does not mean it is true.”

Yet, Jonah says, “Read 1:9-10”

Let's keep reading, 1:11-13"

I want you to see this. Despite Jonah's wrongdoing to flee from God, **God used Jonah to accomplish His mission. Jonah evangelized to these men.** Pretty nifty if you ask me.

Yet, even after Jonah tells these men to throw him in the sea, there is like this brotherhood. "Nah Jonah, come on men, ROW! ROW! We got this! ROW!" They did not want to abandon Jonah.

With how bad the storm is, they would have felt like they committed murder by throwing Jonah in the sea. So, they did not want to give up and *kill* Jonah.

Despite the fact that Jonah was the reason behind this storm (we only know that because God's word tells us this) and putting their lives in danger, they do not want to put Jonah's life in danger.

So, we have seen Jonah Flee, God exposed Jonah through "Chance," and thirdly,

3. God's grace reached sinners

Let's read 1:14-17

Enough is enough. Either, they were all going to die or they had to throw Jonah in the water. I wonder why Jonah just didn't jump off. I mean, if it were me I don't think I could force myself off the ship to my death. So, the men jumped on Jonah (demonstrate) throwing Jonah into the water. Yet, they asked God to not hold them guilty of Jonah's death because God was carrying out His will. It pleased God.

Jonah is thrown in the water. Then a huge fish (maybe a whale) swallowed Jonah. The storm ceased.

Let's pause here. What just happened. (explain your thought process. Sick stomach maybe, etc)

Imagine if there were other boats nearby. "HEY! Who did this. What Happened?!? No storm!!! Woo hoo!!"

Notice verse 16, these men feared God and offered sacrifice to God. They feared the LORD. It is capitalized. They became Christians. Wow! **What grace of God's to use Jonah's sin to save other sinners. What in the world! Praise be to God!**

"The mariners were hereby more confirmed in their belief that Jonah's God was the only true God"-Matthew Henry

"Then the men feared the Lord See note on v. 5. The word yire'u, meaning "feared," is used here in the sense of worship. Jonah claimed to fear Yahweh, but the non-Jewish sailors are the ones who actually show Him proper reverence."-Faithlife Study Bible

We are going to end at verse 17, where it says Jonah was in the fish for 3 days. That is another miracle. Why did Jonah not die? Was he hanging on for dear life to the fish's uvula (dangly thing in your throat)? Or did you find a place in the fish's gum to sleep? No. The fish swallowed Jonah. He was in the belly for 3 days and 3 nights.

This is God's goodness and grace towards Jonah. God has every right to terminate Jonah for **committing treason against God. That is what sin is.** But God wants to still use Jonah. So, Jonah did not die here. God has plans for Jonah yet. Which we will explore at a later time.

It would be wrong of me to be up here and say, "This is what happens when you sin." Or, "Better obey God or you may be swallowed up by a fish." I mean, it could but this is not a truth that is being communicated here.

God's plan is accomplished through our wrongdoing and our right doing. God is in complete sovereign control over our lives.

God is gracious to Jonah. Why didn't God move to come another prophet to accomplish His will. God does not need a human to fulfill His wishes, but yet He chooses to use a sinful man. Much like myself, much like you. God uses sinful humans to accomplish His will. What a blessing and a privilege. How much grace can God give? He has given me way more than I deserve and this is awesome!

God's plan will be accomplished and He has chosen to use us in His plan but in different ways! This is awesome and shows how good and patient God is!

Jonah points us to Christ. 3 days in the belly of the whale. Jesus died and came back 3 days later. Jonah continued his mission 3 days later, Jesus finished his 3 days later. Jonah was asleep in the boat, Jesus was asleep in the boat. All Jesus had to do was speak and the storm ceased.

"Why does this comparison between Jonah and Jesus matter? It matters because it points us to our perfect Savior, a Savior who willingly died for our sins (rather than his own) and was then raised from the dead by God into unimaginable and eternal splendor. He was rejected by many of his own generation, but will be praised forever by his people. This is the gospel according to Jonah."-Stephen Witmer TGc Blogpost

Let's pray!

Additional Resources

1. [Gospel Coalition](#)
2. [Missed Parallel](#)