

Suffering from Near-Sighted Vision, Pt. 2
Mercy for the Disobedient Prophet
Jonah 2

JONAH'S PROBLEM: NEAR-SIGHTED VISION

It seems hard to believe that God's choice spokesman should try to flee from His presence!

What would motivate him to do that?

- Assyria was causing problems for Israel.
- To preserve it was to preserve a potential enemy.

God's judgment was coming against Nineveh due to exaggerated perversion.

God sends His prophet to warn them

The result: the preservation of Nineveh, and probably all Assyria
Assyria was later used by God to destroy Israel.

Jonah, as a faithful Israelite, living in a period of increasing nationalism, didn't favor saving Nineveh.

Purpose and theme of JONAH'S MESSAGES were directed toward Nineveh,

The theme of the book is directed to Israel:

It presents a practical lesson on **THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S MERCY**.
God forgives repentant sinners who seek to obey Him.

God's mercy extends to rebellious preachers who repent, as well as to the pagan nations of the world.

–to disobedient prophets as well as to depraved peoples!

God is no respecter of persons.–He seeks *sinners* who turn from sin to Him.

Two distinct demonstrations of God's mercy: [see dgm.]

- I. God's mercy towards Jonah, His disobedient prophet (1-2)
- II. God's mercy toward Nineveh, the depraved pagan nation (3-4)

1. GOD'S MERCY TOWARD JONAH, A DISOBEDIENT PROPHET
1-2

a. Jonah's disobedience 1:1-16

i. Commission from God 1:1-2

Jonah's orders are contained in the opening verses.

He is to proclaim judgment on Nineveh for its wickedness.

The source of his orders is not in question; *God sent him!*

ii. Response by Jonah 1:3

The prophet, wishing the destruction of their enemy, departs in the opposite direction.

iii. Correction from God 1:4-16

God executes a three step plan to halt Jonah's flight and return him to the original plan (1:4-2:10):

First corrective step: He sent out a great wind (1:4-16)

The wind produced a storm which would have destroyed the ship.

(1) God's storm 1:4

(2) Sailors' fear 1:5a *What three things did they do?*

They cried out to their own gods.

They threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship

They cast lots to find out who's responsible for this 7

(3) Jonah's solution 1:5b-12

What did Jonah do? Jonah went down to "sleep it off"

He tried to escape by going to sleep.

Result of the storm: Jonah's guilt was revealed to men on board.

What was inconsistent about Jonah's testimony?

1:9–

1:10–

What would they have to do to save themselves? 12

(4) Sailors' efforts 1:13 *What did they want to do?*

(5) Sailors' resignation 1:14-15a

What did they ask from Yahweh?

What did they learn about God's will?

After trying everything to keep from throwing Jonah overboard, they finally threw him into the sea.

(6) God's peace 1:15b

Once Jonah was off the ship, God calmed the sea.

Imagine their surprise!

They were scared to death

Suddenly it's totally quiet. The storm has stopped!

(7) Sailors' response 1:16

What did their fear cause them to do?

Can you imagine what their future memories would cause them to say to each other about this: "Do you remember that time when . . . ?"

What do you think they would say to each other about it?

[Meanwhile, back in the ocean, Jonah still has a problem!]

The sailors' problem is solved, but Jonah's isn't.

So we leave the sailors and join Jonah in the depths of the sea.

b. Jonah's salvation 1:17-2:10

What did God do about Jonah's predicament?

i. God's fish 1:17

Second corrective step: God prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah and to save him from certain death in the sea. 1:17-2:9

2. **Jonah's praise 2:1-7**

Where was Jonah when he made this prayer?

Notice the time element!

HIS PETITION 2:2 & 7 *What was his prayer request?*

- "I called out of my distress to Yahweh."
- "I cried for help from the depth of Sheol (the grave)."
- "While I was fainting away, I remembered Yahweh."
- "My prayer rose to You"

GOD'S ANSWER 2:2 & 6 *What was God's answer?*
(Where was he?)

- "He answered me."
- "You heard my voice."
- "You brought up my life from the pit."

DESCRIPTION OF HIS PROBLEM 2:3-6

Description fits his situation in *the sea*—NOT in the fish.

He almost died there and then called out to God for salvation.

He praises God for saving him from the sea.

He is praying from inside the fish (1) and praising God for salvation.

Jonah's response:

- 1) He recognized his dependence on God;
- 2) He praised Him for His deliverance;
- 3) He promised to fulfill his commission.

3. Jonah's promise 2:8-9

Now, safe in the belly of the fish, he makes a promise to God.

Notice the contrast between those who cling to empty, worthless, things (= idols ??)
 and himself!

2:8 "Those who regard (cling to) empty vanities [lit.] . . ."

2:9 "But I"

He makes **two promises**: *What are they?*

He promises to present a sacrifice to God, with a song of thanksgiving (of acknowledgment)

He promises to fulfill His vow: to tell his story; to share his testimony of what God has done for him:

What is his testimony? "Salvation comes from Yahweh."

What did Jonah learn about God's mercy and love?

4. **Jonah's liberation 2:10** THEN, *following the prayer*, the fish vomited.

Third corrective step: God spoke to the fish.
It vomited him out on dry ground.

Did you notice how far God will go to get us back in line with His plan?

Just how far does the grace of God extend?

In Jonah's case?

In ours?

2. **GOD'S MERCY TOWARD NINEVEH, A DEPRAVED PEOPLE**
3-4

**WHAT LESSONS DO WE LEARN FOR OUR OWN LIVES FROM JONAH'S
EXPERIENCE IN JONAH 2?**