

Jonah: A Prophet on The Run

"The book of Jonah shows that the Bible is not afraid of _____. It portrays one of God's prophets, warts and all. The book does not end on a happy note but concludes with God continuing to probe Jonah: *'And should I not pity Ninevah, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle'*" (Jon. 4:11)?

The book of Jonah may be the best _____ and least _____ book of the Bible. Many professors in secular universities treat the book of Jonah as part of mythical _____, not as historical _____. God's Word (all sixty-six books) is alive, inspired, relevant, and useful (Is. 55:11; 2 Pt. 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 3:16; and Heb. 4:12).

Jonah was a historical _____ and is mentioned in other places in _____. 2 Kings 14:25 describes Jonah's life and ministry. Jesus used Jonah as an illustration to talk about His death and resurrection. In Mt. 12:40, Jesus said, *"For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* If we question the historical accuracy of Jonah, then we question the truthfulness of Jesus.

What do we know about Jonah from the opening words of the book? Jonah 1:1-3 declares, *"Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.' But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord."*

- God _____
- God _____
- God _____
- People _____
- Satan _____
- Sin _____

It's possible to _____ God well and still be _____. Jonah 1:9 says, *"And he said to them, 'I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.'"* Jonah's _____ and _____ didn't match. Many people in today's culture reject or disbelieve the gospel because of the inconsistency they see in the lives of believers. A believer that lives _____ and remains _____ indicates a life that's on the run from God's redemptive plan. How does God deal with believers who run from Him?

- Pays _____
- Allows _____
- Uses _____

- Hears _____
- Practices _____

Jonah 1:17 – *And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.* “The Hebrew term *fish* is not used in a modern, biological sense here. Rather, it refers to a large marine creature-and there are certainly known monsters of the deep large enough to swallow a man whole.”

The book of Jonah records the importance of _____ and the fact that God is _____. Jonah 2:1 says, “*Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish.*” Jonah prayed because of his _____ (Jon. 2:2). What leads you and me to pray?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Does God ever change His mind? The doctrine of _____ says that God is unchanging. How does Jon. 3:10 relate to that doctrine? That verse says, “*When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.*” From a human perspective, it appears that God changed. However, when we see God’s response from His perspective, we find the consistency that we trust of Him and His Word. God is sovereign; He has a redemptive mission; and He initiates change in people, churches, and nations.

What will God do and use to reveal and accomplish His will? The book of Jonah shows that God used a runaway prophet, a group of mariners, a fish, the wind, a nation, a plant, and a worm to accomplish His will. May you and I never underestimate the creativity and power of God! Our God is awesome!

The book of Jonah shouts God’s grace and His offer of a second chance. God forgives and is willing to hear and respond to prayers of repentance. Jonah 3:1-3 teaches, “*Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.*” The biblical word repentance applies to _____, _____, and _____. Therefore, repentance is a lifetime invitation, not a one-time event.

Is there a little of _____ in all of us? “We go north when God says go south; we harbor ill feelings toward certain people in the world; we’re more interested in our comfort than God’s compassion; or we spew anger when God’s ways are different than our ways.”

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The book of Jonah may be the best **known** and least **understood** book of the Bible. Many professors in secular universities treat the book of Jonah as part of mythical **literature**, not as historical **truth**. God’s Word (all sixty-six books) is alive, inspired, relevant, and useful (Is. 55:11; 2 Pt. 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 3:16; and Heb. 4:12).

Jonah was a historical **person** and is mentioned in other places in **Scripture**. 2 Kings 14:25 describes Jonah’s life and ministry. Jesus used Jonah as an illustration to talk about His death and resurrection. In Mt. 12:40, Jesus said, *“For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”* If we question the historical accuracy of Jonah, then we question the truthfulness of Jesus.

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- God **speaks**
- God **calls**
- God **confronts**
- People **disobey**
- Satan **provides**
- Sin **costs**

It’s possible to **know** God well and still be **disobedient**. Jonah 1:9 says, *“And he said to them, ‘I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.’”* Jonah’s **belief** and **behavior** didn’t match. Many people in today’s culture reject or disbelieve the gospel because of the inconsistency they see in the lives of believers. A believer that lives **inconsistent** and remains **silent** indicates a life that’s on the run from God’s redemptive plan. How does God deal with believers who run from Him?

- Pays **attention**
- Allows **storms**
- Uses **people**
- Hears **prayers**

- Practices **discipline**

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The book of Jonah records the importance of **prayer** and the fact that God is **approachable**. Jonah 2:1 says, “*Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish.*” Jonah prayed because of his **distress** (Jon. 2:2). What leads you and me to pray?

- **Relationship**
- **Need**
- **Request**
- **Crisis**
- **Burden**

Does God ever change His mind? The doctrine of **immutability** says that God is unchanging. How does Jon. 3:10 relate to that doctrine? That verse says, “*When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.*” From a human perspective, it appears that God changed. However, when we see God’s response from His perspective, we find the consistency that we trust of Him and His Word. God is sovereign; He has a redemptive mission; and He welcomes change in people, churches, and nations.

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Is there a little of **Jonah** in all of us? “We go north when God says go south; we harbor ill feelings toward certain people in the world; we’re more interested in our comfort than God’s compassion; or we spew anger when God’s ways are different than our ways.”