

Remarkable Grace

An Exposition of the Book of Jonah

Sermon Two: I Remembered the Lord (Jonah 2)

January 17, 2021

Opening ILL: Imagine you show up for class only to find out that there is a test today for which you have not studied. You go to the teacher and say, “I am sorry! I had no idea we had a test today!” Her response is “I told you every day last week that there was a test today. Obviously, you weren’t listening!” You’re stuck. You can’t plead ignorance now...you can only plead guilty. Either you were guilty of not studying or you were guilty of not listening. How would you respond when she says, “I tell you what. You can take the test tomorrow.”?

How do you respond when you experience God’s remarkable grace? What is your reaction when you know full well that you are guilty as sin and you deserve what you are getting? Where do you turn to? What, if anything, gives you any relief?

I hope the answer is that you turn to God. Why? Why would I hope that...what’s the difference? Because God is more willing to forgive you and to extend His grace to you than you are to repent. He is a God of remarkable grace!

I. Introduction/Review

- A. What happened in chapter 1?
- B. What is the main idea of the book of Jonah?

II. God ordained the Protection 1:17 [2:1]

- A. What did God do?
 1. He “appointed” (manach מָנַח) a big fish to swallow Jonah.
- B. Why does this matter?
 1. It reminds us that this was not coincidental.
 - a) A big fish didn’t just happen to swim by.
 - b) There are no coincidences with God.
 2. It reminds us of the graciousness of God.
 - a) After all, God would have been completely justified to simply let Jonah die.

III. Jonah responded in Prayer 2:1 [2:2]

- A. When was this section written?
 1. Jonah probably composed this psalm after he was delivered and then inserted it into his narrative at this point.
- B. What did Jonah do/What did God do?
 1. He cried out in distress...and God answered.
 2. He cried for help...and God heard.

ILL: Poem by Thomas John Carlisle “Inside the Sea Monster” page 20

- C. Why did Jonah do this?
 1. Because he recognized that God was behind the experience of being swallowed by a fish. v.3
 - a) What difference does this make to Jonah?
 - b) What difference does this make to us?
 2. Because he recognized that punishment should move us to look to Him, not away from Him v. 4
 - a) When God is the one punishing, who can rescue us out of His hand?
 - b) What does this tell us about God?
 - c) What does this tell us about how Jonah viewed God?

3. Because he recognized a symbolic relationship between the big fish and the grave vv. 5-7
 - a) See v. 2—crying out from the big fish is parallel to crying out from Sheol.
 - b) Possible double meaning—Weeds wrapped around my head.
 - c) Possible double meaning—I descended to the roots of mountains.
4. Because he recognized that the discipline of the true God is better than the “blessings” of a fake god. vv. 8-9
 - a) What does it mean that those who regard vain idols forsake their faithfulness?
 - (1) It means that trusting in anything but God is disobedient.
 - (2) It means that trusting in anything but God is pointless.
 - b) What does Jonah promise to do?
 - (1) Sacrifice with thanksgiving.
 - (2) Fulfill his vows.

IV. The big fish responded by puking 2:10 [2:11]

- A. What did the fish do?
 1. He vomited Jonah up.
- B. Where did Jonah land?
 1. We are told that the fish vomited him onto dry land.
 2. We are not told exactly where he landed.
 - a) We can assume it wasn't Nineveh because of the command of Jonah 3:1.

V. A Renewed Perspective

- A. Jesus and the sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:39-41)
 1. There is a similarity and parallel with the account of Jonah and the reality of Jesus.
 - a) The fish = the grave
 - b) The time = the same
 - (1) Apparently, some believed that it took the soul 3 days to get to Sheol when you died.

- B. Cry out to the Lord from the belly of the fish!

Point: Jonah was running away from God. He was rebelling against God. He wanted nothing to do with God...until he was in trouble. Then, Jonah remembered God's remarkable grace and cried out. He didn't say, "I burned my bridges with God. I have no hope." No. Jonah understood that you wander so far that He cannot be found. He understood that just as you cannot escape His justice, you cannot exhaust His graciousness.

1. God responds to repentance
 - a) Psalm 51:1-5
2. Even when God afflicts, He will heal.
 - a) Psalm 51:7-9
3. God doesn't give up on His people.
 - a) Compare Luke 15—the prodigal son

- C. Make it your ambition to delight as much in dispensing grace as you do in receiving grace!

ILL: Imagine you are driving along the highway and somebody just passes you like you are standing still. They blast by you weaving in and out of the traffic, and you think to yourself, "This guy is going to kill somebody!" Then, by pure, blessed providence, a few miles down the road you see him pulled over by a police officer. How do you react on the inside? Do you rejoice that he was caught? Do you say to yourself, "I really hope the officer let's that guy off with a warning!" No. You laugh at him and hope for the swift hand of justice. On the other hand, though, how do you respond when you get pulled over? Do you laugh and say, "Officer, stick it to me! I was only going 95 because you stopped me before I hit 100!"

1. Remember the Lord—That He delights to pour His grace upon you.
2. Remember the Lord—That He longs to pour His grace upon others.