

JONAH

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Welcome & Introduction

Jonah in Overview

***Do you have a BIG enough concept of God?
...Jonah's real problem***

BIG – city, wind, storm, fear, fish, Jonah's anger & joy: this is 'cosmic geography'

East – West

Up (God) – DOWN:

- ☘ To Joppa
- ☘ Into the boat
- ☘ Into the hold
- ☘ Into the sea
- ☘ Into the fish...

1:4: YHWH '**CHUCKS**' or 'LOBS'

“such a BIG storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up”

(The sea's anger, 1:15 or silence 1:10)

YHWH's authority over

- ☘ people
- ☘ animals
- ☘ inanimate objects

Q: How does reading Jonah like this shape your vision of God?

Q: How does (or, could) your vision of God shape the way you approach the year ahead?

Jonah in Old Testament Context

Jonah knows God, 1:9 – *I am a Hebrew, I worship YHWH, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.*”

Jonah 4:1-2 - *O YHWH! Is this not what I said while I was still in my home country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning. That is, this is the very problem which has brought this whole peculiar set of circumstances about. For I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing.*

Covenant God

Exodus 34:6-7 – *A God who is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abundant in faithfulness and truth, one who remains loyal to thousands, who forgives iniquity and sin and transgression and one who will by no means acquit the guilty.*

... The Golden Calf (Exodus 32)

- 🌿 Nineveh BIG, Israel BIG
- 🌿 Nineveh cattle fast, Israelite cattle don't graze

yet

- 🌿 King of Nineveh in sackcloth, Israelites lay aside jewellery
- 🌿 Nineveh all fast, Israelites moan and Moses (alone) fasts

Jonah vs Pagan Sailors

- 🌿 they fear first (1:5 vs ?1:9)
- 🌿 they pray first (Jonah not until ch 2)
- 🌿 they try to avoid loss of life (1:13; where Jonah is the cause of the danger)
- 🌿 they pray to YHWH! (1:14)
- 🌿 they sacrifice and make vows (1:16)...

Q: How does this sense of reading Jonah in the context of the Old Testament shape your understanding of the book?

Q: What is your belief about who God should work amongst – are you being true to the God of Scripture, or just the god of your own making?

Jonah in Reality

Jonah knows God, 1:9 – *I am a Hebrew, I worship YHWH, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.*”

The category-busting God

- 🌿 The rest of Jonah: Ninevite repentance, God’s relenting, the plant, the worm...the true nature and action of God
- 🌿 A God who *always* busts our categories – not least in sending his Son...

Jonah 2

Q: What have you learned from the book of Jonah?

Q: How can you approach Jonah’s prayer in chapter 2 as a way of exploring your own place before such a very BIG God?