

Introduction – If the head gasket in your car’s engine breaks down, you will have oil and the antifreeze/water mixture in the same place. That is not a good thing. Jonah’s mixture of qualities, even in the midst of God’s rescuing of him, was not a good thing either. We need to learn from Jonah’s choices, both good and bad!

I. Jonah Made a Wonderful Confession

- A. He recognized that God’s hand was at work (1:17-2:1)
- B. Jonah had made a terrible decision to run from God’s call and, it seems, another terrible one by choosing to die in the sea rather than repent! But out of these choices came several realizations:
 - 1. He saw his desperate need (v.3), a need that arose from God’s own pursuit of Jonah!
 - 2. His deep helplessness moved him to cry out to God and in his weak faith he looked to God’s temple (vv.4,7) [When you are desperately needy, cry out to God in your need.]
- C. The high point of Jonah’s faith came in the expression that is the high point of any believer’s confession: “Salvation belongs to the Lord”. There is no other and there is nothing that I can contribute!

II. But Jonah’s Understanding Was Still Very Limited! (We might expect this of new followers of Jesus, but how often we find it to be true about ourselves!)

- A. What was wrong with Jonah’s thinking, so that he ran and chose death and...well, most of you know what’s coming later in this short book... What was wrong? What I want to point you to is something you might, at first, not consider. But I believe this is the heart of the matter: God had promised to Abraham, a thousand years before, that in his offspring **all the nations of the earth would be blessed** (Gen.12:3, 18:18, 22:18). This is a promise which, in the midst of life’s difficulties and one’s own preoccupations, can be easy to forget – **God has a plan for the nations.**
- B. 800 years after Jonah, the Jewish leaders of Jesus’ day had apparently also forgotten this promise. In Matthew 12 and Luke 11, the leaders came to Jesus seeking a sign from heaven. His response was to point them to the ‘sign of Jonah’. Jonah’s return to life out of sure death was ***in order to take the call to repentance to Nineveh***, whose people (Jesus said) would rise up on the day of judgment and condemn that generation for not listening to Him.
- C. But there is something else that’s closely related to this great issue of God’s plan for the nations. Jonah’s view of grace was very restricted. For Jonah, it seems that grace was for him **and his kind**. But his own being saved out of terrible rebellion against God (even as God’s prophet!) should have made clear to him the greatness of God’s grace to miserable sinners (like himself), wherever they might be! Somehow he didn’t make the connection.

Is that sometimes the case for you? Do you find it easy to think ‘grace is for us’ and ‘judgment is for those who oppose us and hate us’? If so, we clearly haven’t understood God’s character very well!!!

III. In Spite Of Such Blindness, God’s Plan Is To Continue To Bring Life To His People And To This World

- A. For us, the heart of God’s plan to bring life is bound up with the Lord Jesus. After giving His life as a sacrifice in the place of sinners, He was raised on the third day. Death no longer has dominion over Him. Salvation is “of the Lord”. What will His people do with this new life God has given? That’s a question that this short book poses to us.
2. As we come to the end of Jonah 2, we find Jonah back on dry land, about to receive God’s command again to go to Nineveh. Why? Because the Lord still intended to bring a message of warning to that wicked city.

Conclusion – Jonah had been through the storm and had been brought back to life from the deep. Sometimes, the Lord brings the power of resurrection into our lives through great difficulties, for prophets and even for apostles (2 Cor.1:8-9). When such times come, make it your aim not only to confess faith by crying out to Him, but also to learn something more about His grace to you and to the world.