

Subject: *Salvation is of the Lord*

Scripture: *Jonah 2:1-10*

1. The historical setting of this statement

- Chapter 1 – Jonah protests
- Chapter 2 – Jonah prays
- Chapter 3 – Jonah preaches
- Chapter 4 – Jonah pouts

This is one of the strangest and saddest chapters in the Bible. After the great revival in Nineveh, we would expect Jonah to praise the Lord and encourage the people of Nineveh to love and serve the Lord. Instead we are shocked to read ***Jonah 4:1*** *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.* What displeased Jonah and why was he angry? The whole city of Nineveh turned to God in repentance and faith, and God forgave them, and Jonah didn't like it. Can you imagine that? Instead of a rejoicing prophet, we find a prophet who is angry and resentful. He is angry at the people of Nineveh and even angry at God. It is astounding that God sent a great revival through the preaching of a man who did not care about the people he preached to.

The problem is no longer with Nineveh. The problem now is Jonah. He was truly a problem child. God had far more trouble with Jonah than He did with Nineveh. At last we learn why Jonah tried to run away from God's assignment (Chp. 1). When God told Jonah to preach in Nineveh it was like telling a Jew to preach to Hitler and the Nazis. Jonah hated Nineveh and felt like these cruel people were unworthy of God's love. They didn't deserve God's patience, only His judgment.

God showed him that a plant is nothing compared to a soul. God rebuked Jonah for his pride and his mixed-up priorities. Jonah was more concerned about the plant than the people of Nineveh. Shouldn't God be more concerned about people than plants? Nineveh had 120,000 babies and little children, which suggests there were probably at least 600,000 total people living in the city.

2. The doctrinal meaning of this statement

- Salvation is accomplished by the Lord

Salvation is the work of God. It is like creation, something only God can do. Actually it is the most difficult work God has done, if we can say that. Nothing is really hard for God. He has unlimited power. To create all things God just spoke and it was done. To save involved something much more. God devised the plan. Jesus came to earth as a man and lived a perfect life. He kept God's law and never sinned. He died as a sacrifice for our sins, was buried, and rose again to prove He was the Son of God and His sacrifice was accepted as full payment for sin. He ascended to heaven where he continues to make intercession for all believers. Jesus has done and will do everything to save us to for eternity. He has obtained eternal redemption for us. Salvation is not in a place (heaven), but in a person.

- Salvation is applied by the Lord

The Lord not only provided salvation for us, but He applies the benefits of salvation to us. We must repent of our sins and place our faith in Christ. The problem is that we don't seek God. He must seek us. We are dead in sins. We are stubborn and like stray sheep, so the Good Shepherd comes looking for us and finds us. He draws us and opens our hearts. He gives us a heart to repent and believe. He gives us a new heart and a new life. We must be born again, and that is something only God can do. He justifies us, sanctifies us, and finally glorifies us. ***Philippians 1:6*** *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

3. The practical application of this statement

- The application to your life

When it came to his own life, Jonah understood that salvation is of the Lord. He knew that God was his only hope. He said in ***Jonah 2:2*** *Out of the belly of hell I cried, and you heard my voice.* He didn't deserve God's mercy, but that's what he needed. All Jonah had to do was call upon the Lord, ***Romans 10:13*** *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

- The application to others

When Jonah preached the whole city repented. The king told the people to turn from their evil ways and their violence, and then he added in ***Jonah 3:9*** *Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away his fierce anger, that we perish not?* They didn't deserve God's mercy either, but that's what they needed.

God spared the sailors when they cried out for mercy in the storm (1:15). God spared Jonah when he cried out for mercy from the belly of the fish (2:2). God spared Nineveh when they cried out for mercy instead of judgment (3:10). God will spare anyone who humbly asks for mercy. If we have received God's mercy, shouldn't we have a deep desire for others to receive it, too? There is always hope for anyone who will pray, "God, have mercy on me, a guilty sinner."

- You are like Jonah if you do God's will, but don't like it.

Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. The Lord weighs our motives and He examines the thoughts and intents of our heart.

- You are like Jonah if you know God's character, but don't reflect it.

Jonah knew that God was gracious and kind, but he wasn't anything like that.

- You are like Jonah if you think some people are beyond the reach of God's grace.

Jonah knew that salvation was of the Lord. God had saved him and given him a second chance. But he probably thought that Nineveh was too far gone and God couldn't save them. Where sin is great, God's grace is always greater. ***Romans 5:20*** *Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*