

Disobedience

Jonah 1

Jonah 1:2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

1. Jonah was a prophet whose name means “Dove.” He received a command from God to go to Nineveh and warn them about His impending judgment on that very city for its lifestyle and its sins. If they did not turn from their wicked ways and repent of their sins than they faced total destruction.
2. God was concerned about the distresses of Nineveh the capital of Assyria, which was an immoral nation in the sight of God. A heathen city and evil in her ways.
3. Jonah hated the people of Nineveh just as did the people of Israel because they were enemies. But, God loved them just as He is concerned for all the inhabitants of the earth today.
4. God had compassion on them and He desires to show His mercy and offer forgiveness to all people of the earth regardless of race, age, religion or nationality, past lifestyle or past sins.
5. Disobedience and running from God has long been a part of our addictive behavior and many of us have come out of the exact same immoral and wicked lifestyle the Ninevites were living.

Jonah 1:3 But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

1. Tarshish was one of the farthest places in the opposite direction of Nineveh that Jonah could flee to.
2. Jonah was running. Jonah thinks he is fleeing the presence of God. Little does he know that there is no place to run and no place to hide from the presence of God because God knows all and God sees all.
3. There are times, just as with Jonah, that we cannot or we refuse to understand why God would do the things He does. This is one of the secrets to recovery in Christ Jesus. We may not understand how everything works, but we must do what God tells us is necessary for a successful recovery.
4. God is forever telling us to stop running, let go and move on from the past allowing Him to lead and control our life before something bad or total destruction comes upon us.
5. When we quit running and hiding and when we step out in faith God will give us the success we seek. Without obedience and God’s help, things can only get worse as we attempt to escape the natural slide toward pain, destruction and its consequences in active addiction.

Jonah 1:4-5 But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. 5Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

1. In Jonah’s disobedience and in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea God sent a great and life-threatening storm in order to persuade Jonah to stop running and obey His call.
2. Because of Jonah’s disobedience the lives of the sailors aboard that ship were also imperiled. (In danger)
3. Because of active addiction, because of our addictive lifestyle, because of the things we do, the places we go, the people we hang out with, our negative actions and attitudes. And because we are not fully committed to God and His will for our life, our families and others will ultimately suffer, as well.
4. Addiction is not a “Me” thing because “All” involved in your life will suffer. Our dependency brings only pain and at times it will bring long-term consequences into the lives of family members and friends.
5. While we are “sleeping” through our addiction many of those around us are imperiled and possibly perishing in our self-made addictive storms of life. *And why?....Because believe it or not they care.*

Jonah 1:6 So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

1. We need to “Arise” from our *sleep of denial*, quit running from God and take responsibility for our actions, our failures and disobedience so that all should not perish.
2. “Arise O’ Sleeper” Are you personally still living in the state of “sleep” or “denial.” If we do not recognize the disobedience (sins) in our life, we are in denial, blinded by Satan and are surely headed for destruction.
3. Awaken and run to God who is in control. He will walk with you step by painful step back onto solid ground.

Jonah 1:7-10 And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. *8* Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? *9* And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. *10* Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

1. The sailors cast lots and with God directing the choosing Jonah was identified as the guilty one.
2. *Jonah 1:12* And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.
3. Jonah's willingness to be cast into the sea to save the lives of the sailors may indicate how guilty he may have felt for disobeying God and for also placing their lives in danger.
4. Many of us have failed desperately. We have hurt others in ways that cannot easily be repaired and have put others lives and welfare in jeopardy. *What can we do with that guilt?* (1) Acknowledge it (2) Confess it to God. (3) Experience forgiveness. (4) Become obedient and God can restore. *If it is His will.*

Jonah 1:17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

1. God miraculously spared Jonah's life and kept Jonah alive for three days in the stomach of a great fish that He alone provided.
2. While suffering the consequences of his disobedience Jonah had three days to sit down and figure out whether or not he was going to follow his plan of fleeing from God or follow God's plan to go to Nineveh.
3. God was patient with Jonah just as God is patient with us. Jonah had choices...We have choices....We can do as God asks and receive His blessings or we can be disobedient and suffer the consequences.
Our Choices are: (1) Life or death? (2) Blessings or curses? (3) Obedience or Disobedience

Jonah 2:1-2 Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, *2* And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

1. Inside the fish realizing he was just as good as dead but still alive he called out to God who listened to his prayers and spared his life. *Suddenly God really had Jonah's attention.*
2. In our disobedience God will allow us to set alone in the depths of our addiction. But, He will always be there to rescue His wayward children. *"if they are willing to become obedient."* He is willing to rescue, forgive and deliver even the worst of sinners.
3. Are you too sitting afraid and alone in the belly of a great fish crying out to God?
4. Are you too suffering the consequences of active addiction and its lifestyle? Or are you still struggling with cleaning up the mess that addiction made of your life? He is there and all He is seeking is our obedience. *Why not cry out to Him?*

Jonah 2:7-10 When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. *8* They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. *9* But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD. *10* And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

1. The voice of the Lord came to Jonah a second time and this time he chose to obey God rather than have to face His discipline. Thus; more than 120,000 Ninevites were spared from death and destruction.
2. God's plan may not be the easiest way, and it may not lead us in the direction we personally want to go, but one thing we can be assured of is that God's way is always the best way in the long run.
3. Jonah was told by God to go to Nineveh because of His great love and concern for the spiritual well-being for all people even though they have lived in sin and rebellion.
4. If we live in obedience and turn to God for help, He will deliver us from our destructive ways and He will encourage us as we walk this upward path of recovery. In the process we may save another who is also doomed for pain and destruction.

Jonah is a short book in the Old Testament.
Today; why not take some time and discover the blessings in reading all of it.