

Jonah – The Mercy of God and the Actions of Man

Week 4 – God Reveals Sin

Jonah 1:7-10

God mercifully reveals sin that causes His wrath and fury. God's people respond

Action: We will acknowledge our sin and respond in confession and receive forgiveness

Series Graphic (SLIDE 1)

Merciful Reminder: Do You Do Well to be Angry? (SLIDE 2)

Series Graphic (SLIDE 3)

Opening Idea

Family Christmas with Dog Poop

Our family gathers at one house to share a meal, exchange presents, and usually watch a football game. It is loud, fun, filling, sleepy, and wonderful. One year, something wasn't right. As our family gathered in the house, there was a horrible smell that caused everyone to react strongly. Everyone worked diligently to figure out what the smell was and from where it was coming. It was the disgusting smell of poop! It turned out that I was the one who smelled. Shame!!! I was quickly forced out to the front yard, and I was examined like a traitor who tried to destroy family Christmas. After interrogating me and checking every inch of my clothing, I was discovered to have stepped in dog poop that was lying in the front yard. I was cleared of the fear that I soiled myself, but now I was ridiculed for tracking dog poop into the house. The house was examined thoroughly to find every place I had tracked poop, and it was scoured clean so that we could celebrate Christmas in comfort and joy. My shoes were removed from my feet; the bottoms were brushed clean and washed with soap and water to make them clean to wear again. The yard looked like Easter for a moment as a group of people searched the yard for all the "land mines" that might threaten to hitch a ride on other shoes and wreck Christmas. In the end, Christmas was saved, and I was welcomed back into the home to enjoy family, share delicious food, and celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Sin is like this! It wrecks everything that is good from our relationship with God through Jesus. Rather than rejecting us and treating us with wrath, God corrects us and reveals what is wrecking the peace of living with Him. Let's continue studying Jonah to see what God does after correcting Jonah for sin so that we can know more of God through His merciful actions toward Jonah.

Read

Jonah 1:7-10 ESV

(SLIDE 4) 7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. 8 Then they said to him, "Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?"

(SLIDE 5) 9 And he said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” 10 Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

Series Graphic **(SLIDE 6)**

Notes on Jonah 1:7-10

Lots Fall on Jonah (v. 7)

The captain, the crew, and other passengers were doing all they could to avoid perishing from the storm. The storm continued and the boat “threatened to break apart”. They cried out to their gods and yet the storm continued. They threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship, and they were still in danger. They begged everyone on board to cry out to their gods, and they continued being at risk of going into the tempestuous sea. So, the sailors turned to casting lots to discover who was at fault. Everyone on the boat is in one place, and the crew cast lots. Casting lots in biblical accounts is explained by Smith and Page.

The casting of lots was a widely used method in the ancient Near East. The most common word used for “lot” indicates that they were either stones or pebbles³⁸ that were painted or colored. When the stones were thrown, if two dark sides landed up the usual interpretation was no. If two light sides landed up, that meant yes. A light and a dark side meant throw again. Using this system, the sailors dealt with each individual until the color revealed the guilty person. This specific means of discerning the Lord’s will is found many times in Scripture. For example, the casting of lots was the means for determining the guilt of Achan (Josh 7:14–18), for distributing the land to the tribes of Israel (Josh 18:10), and for selecting Saul as king (1 Sam 10:20–22). As Prov 16:33 says, “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.”¹

God uses casting lots to reveal to the crew and passengers that Jonah is responsible for the situation they are in. One can read into the account and see that God continues showing the readers that everything responds to God, except the man who belongs to God. God pursues Jonah and reveals who He (God) is, who Jonah is, and that Jonah is doing something that threatens the lives of everyone on board. Jonah is the guilty party and responsible for the terrible storm.

Who Are You (v. 8)

The lots point out that Jonah is a person of interest. The lots do not reveal who Jonah is or what he has done. They just reveal that he is a person of interest. The crew then work to find out who

¹ Billy K. Smith and Franklin S. Page, [Amos, Obadiah, Jonah](#), vol. 19B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 232.

Jonah is, why the lots have fallen on him, and how he is connected to the storm or how he might help the crew survive. The crew see the storm as an evil thing. They begin their questioning of Jonah with their desire to know who is responsible for the storm. They don't accuse Jonah yet of being the cause, but they think Jonah will have inside wisdom or answers. They continue questioning to determine if he does something that is connected to the spiritual world. The questions, "What is your occupation?", is likely to find out if Jonah is a spiritual person who can find out who is the problem or speak to nature or the storm and sea to stop what is happening and save the ship and its crew (the cargo is already lost). They continue asking Jonah questions to find out where he is from and what race of people he belongs. This may have held significance for them in that there might be a special race of people or a special country where those people would have innate or supernatural gifts to prophecy or say something that would cause the situation to change for the better. The tone of the questions and the context in which they inquire about Jonah doesn't appear to be hostile, but it does appear that they are desperate. They are reacting to the fact that the lots fall on Jonah, and they desperately want to know if he can help save them. Jonah can reveal what is happening, who is responsible for the storm, and provide a solution that will bring calm and safety. Jonah is a person of consequential interest.

Jonah Confesses His Identity (v. 9)

Who are you? Jonah hears the questions asked of him and the disparity with which they are asked, and he answers. Jonah tells the crew who he is, and it will eventually bring peace, but it will cause more concern. Jonah tells them four things that will not put them at ease, but it will cause greater and growing concern. Jonah tells them 1) he is a Hebrew 2) he fears the Lord 3) There is a God of Heaven who is the great Lord over all Lords 4) The Lord God is the maker of all things (the seas and the dry land) and that being creator the Lord God has authority and control of everything. Jonah is telling them that there is one true and great God who is the Lord of all things. He knows this God and this Lord God is the one responsible for this great storm and situation they are in. Jonah's fear of God is a condition of knowing who God is and what God can do and being in a state of awe and reverence. Remember, Jonah declares this about God and himself, but he was asleep and had no care or concern for pleading out to this most powerful God. Jonah is the problem and the cause of the dangerous situation in which all these people find themselves.

Sin (Fleeing) Causes Fear (v. 10)

Jonah writes that the crew ask a question with desperation in their voice. "What have you done?" is more of a statement of despair and hopelessness than to gain more information. Then Jonah reveals where their desperation and hopelessness come from. Jonah writes that the men knew that the Lord God was dealing with Jonah in what they saw as wrath and fury because Jonah told them that he was fleeing from the Lord God's presence. There is a greater sense of fear from what Jonah says! Rather than bringing peace and calm to the life-threatening situation, the crew's fear grows. These men might be afraid that Jonah is an instrument of wrath to destroy

them, or he might be at odds with the Lord God and God will destroy Jonah. They might die because they are collateral damage from God's rage. Jonah's declaration makes the situation more fearful! They realize that Jonah has put them into a deadly situation from which they are likely to die. They respond to Jonah with accusation. Again, their responsive question isn't for more information, but to accuse Jonah of being the cause of their destruction. It is in this question that Jonah reveals that their fear is rooted in the fact that they are about to die because Jonah's God. The Lord God is going to destroy Jonah for fleeing from Him. Jonah is the reason that they are in this storm and will die.

God Mercifully Reveals His Peoples' Sin (SLIDE 7)

Reconciling Them to Himself (SLIDE 8)

Sin Corrupts and Destroys

Wicked People are Rejected and Do Not Belong to God

God's People are His, but Act Like They are not

God Works to Reconcile His People

Purifying Them to Glorify Him (SLIDE 9)

Sin Corrupts God's People

Sin Impedes God's People Obeying and Doing His Will

God Reveals Sin to Purify His People

God's Purified People Desire to and are Aware to Do His Work and Glorify Him

Proclaiming God's Full Personhood (SLIDE 10)

Just and Loving

Wrathful and Forgiving

Demanding and Merciful

Merciful Action

God, Mercifully Reveal My Sin (SLIDE 11)

We will grow sensitive to our Sin

We will confess our sin and ask for forgiveness

We reject callousness toward God and ignorance of His work

Read

1 John 2:1-6 ESV

(SLIDE 12) **2** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. **2** He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. **3** And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. **4** Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,

(SLIDE 13) **5** but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: **6** whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

Series Graphic **(SLIDE 14)**

Daily Readings

Week 4 – God Reveals Sin

Day 1

1 John 2:1-6 ESV

2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. ³ And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, ⁵ but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

God requires that you would not sin. That is a strong requirement, since you are justified and you continue sinning. God reveals your sin and has given you an advocate in Jesus Christ, who is perfect. Jesus has done all that is needed to live truthfully and grow in truly loving God. When you realize that you sin and contradict the love of God, quickly confess that sin and receive forgiveness. If that sin affects another person, then go and reconcile with them. You abide in Christ, so live in that abiding love. God reveals sin to help you truly love God!

Day 2

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 ESV

¹³ The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.^[a] ¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, with^[b] every secret thing, whether good or evil.

God knows all things and will deal with you appropriately. Your life is to show that you are a child of God whom God loves and has given you faith to believe in Jesus Christ. The result of your salvation gives you life and transforms your heart, your mind, and your actions. A child of God fears Him and keeps His commands. Solomon writes that fearing God and keeping His commands is your life's purpose and obligation. God reveals every deed, from every thought, and every desire and value of your heart. The good things bring praise and honor. The evil things are exposed so that they can be dealt with lovingly and appropriately. God empowers obedient life from love. This refining work makes you able to fully abide with God enjoying His love. God reveals sin to help you truly love God!

Day 3

Psalms 139:23-24 ESV

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!^[a]

²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!^[b]

The author pleads for God to search him and know his heart. The deep desire of the child of God is to be known. Being fully known will reveal things that are embarrassing, causes us to try and hide those things. You want God to know you; all of you! The pleasing things God sees will bring joy and honor. The grievous (grave) things that are in your heart need to be dealt with so that you can be led in the way that is eternal and never ends. Take up this plea today and ask God to search you, know you, try you, and know your thoughts. As God exposes and reveals grievous things, confess them and plead for God to help you abide with Him and truly love Him!

Day 4

Ephesians 5:7-10 ESV

⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

You encounter people every day who appear to be righteous and good, but they are not. They do what they think is right and good, but it is selfish and destructive. Do not join your life with

theirs. You will have partnerships, share business, be neighbors with, and connect in other ways, but do not become joined with them. You are called to live a pleasing life and look more like Christ each day. Your life should please God and that is what should please you. The more you know what pleases God and do it, the more your life will bring Him pleasure. God reveals sin to help you truly love God!

Day 5

Ephesians 5:13-17 ESV

¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Jonah was asleep while God brought correction. Jonah was unaware of and choose to ignore God’s work to correct Him. God reveals this sin of “sleeping” or spiritual slumber. God is exposing your sin so that you can confess it, receive forgiveness, live wisely, and glorify God every day. Stop sleeping spiritually and wake up to what God is doing in you, around you, and through you. Knowing God’s will is to glorify Him. Glorifying God will give you a life that is full and enjoys God’s presence and work. God reveals sin to help you truly love Him!