

MEET JONAH (Jonah 1:1-3)

From time to time we have the privilege of meeting people who are well known and may be even famous. For me, these include some of God's great servants along with a few athletes.

Today we will meet a man called Jonah. He is famous. Anyone who knows at least a little about the Bible has heard of him. Usually people refer to him as, "Jonah and the whale." Jonah's name means "dove."

Jonah was one of God's prophets who was trained in Elijah and Elisha's "school of the prophets," the Harvard of his day. He lived during Jeroboam 2nd's evil reign and ministered in Nineveh in 760 BC. (2 Kings 14:25)

FOUR LESSONS INTRODUCING US TO JONAH WHOM WE OFTEN MIRROR IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE. He was a real person, at a real place, at a certain time.

I. Past Privileges, Obedience, And Fruitful Service Can Never Substitute For Present Obedience To The Word Of God. (vv 1-3)

- A. Jonah had been used by God to speak to the King. (2 Kings 14:24) "God had spoken through him." In this text Jonah is called "the Lord's servant." He had served the Lord with distinction.
- B. Now the simple command of the Lord comes to him, and he disobeys the Lord. (v.3) He chose to run away from God. The command was simple, two words, "Go" and "preach." It was not hard to understand. This is often our problem...
- C. Despite all of Jonah's past privileges and usefulness, he is a man who slips, stumbles, and falls.

II. Jonah's Book Isn't A Book About A Great Fish, It Is Really A Book About God.

This "provided great fish" is almost incidental to the narrative.

- A. God's sovereignty is clearly revealed. This refers to God's plan and control of all things.
 - 1. God chooses Jonah for this mission to Nineveh. (vv.1-2)
 - 2. God exercises His rule even when his servant disobeys. (v.3)
Jonah was to learn in a flight from God that God is sovereign and rules over all.
Note 3 things that God did: He sent a "great storm," a "great fish," to a "great city."
- B. God's mercy is beautifully put on display. If the book is about anything, it is about God's mercy for lost sinful men and women who need repentance and forgiveness. This book tells of the greatest revival in

