

Major Lessons From Minor Prophets

Lesson – 6 Eager to Forgive (Jonah)

Memory Verse **Hand Out Scriptures to read**

Jonah 2:9 (NKJV) *But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD."*

The book of Jonah reveals, among other things, that God is more willing to forgive others than we often are.

A Real Person

JONAH = "dove" **AMITTAI** =, "loyal," "true."

2 Kings 14:25 (NKJV) *He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher.*

(785-745 BC) Located 3 miles NE of Nazareth,

Matthew 12:39–41 (NKJV) *But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.*

Matthew 16:4 *"A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."*

***Luke 11:29–30** (NKJV) *And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. ³⁰ For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.*

***James Bartley- Modern Jonah**

The Disobedient Prophet (Jonah 1)

Jonah 1:2 *"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me."*

The ready way is not always the right way. The will of God is not only the right thing for you, it is the best thing for you.

Reluctant Witness

Jonah 1:3 (NKJV) *But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.*

***Matthew 7:21** *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

Psalm 139:7–10 (NKJV) *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? ⁸ If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. ⁹ If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, ¹⁰ Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.*

***Jeremiah 23:24** *Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?"*

Sleeping Before Judgment Peter, apostles, and the 10 virgins slept.

Jonah 1:5 *Then 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.*

The mariners were wiser than Jonah, they prayed and then acted. They were willing to unload. **The pagans are praying and Jonah is sleeping.** Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage.

The Storm

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.*

***Mark 4:38** *and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?*

Psa 44:23 *Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord? Arise! Do not cast us off forever.*

Some in the church are like Jonah they think because they have paid there fare the can just sleep through the ride and are unaware that they are on their way to ruin.

Willing To Unload (Materialism)

Jonah 1:5 *Then 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.*

Saved Through Tribulation Trials show us what we are made of.

Acts 14:22 *... we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

To find out what is in a vessel you must bump it to spill out the contents. If there are impurities in a bottle of water shaking it will reveal it. If we can't thank God during our troubles we have a shallow faith.

- A gem is not polished without rubbing, nor a man made perfect without trials.

Jonah's Psalm

Jonah 2:2–6 (NKJV) ² And he said: "I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, And He answered me. "Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice. ³ For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. ⁴ Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.' ⁵ The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. ⁶ I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God.

A Successful Mission

Jonah 3:5 (NKJV) So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

***Isaiah 42:6** (NKJV) ⁶ "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, **As a light to the Gentiles,**

Isaiah 49:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as **a light to the Gentiles,** That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' "

Isaiah 56:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ "Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— ⁷ Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

Forgiven, Yet Unforgiving

Isa 2:20, 21 In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver And his idols of gold, Which they made, each for himself to worship, To the moles and bats, To go into the clefts of the rocks, And into the crags of

the rugged rocks, From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily.

- Many men owe the grandeur of their lives to their tremendous difficulties. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon
God was going to use Jonah to revive a whole city.

Sleeping Before Judgment

Jonah 1:5 ...But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. **Peter, apostles, and the 10 virgins slept.**

The mariners were wiser than Jonah, they prayed and then acted. They were willing to unload. **The pagans are praying and Jonah is sleeping.** Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage.

Jonah 1:7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. **They cast lots at the cross.**

Storms Are The Best Time Witness

Noah, Joseph, Daniel, and scores of others were great witnesses not because God saved them from trouble but God saved them through trials. They wanted to know God's will so He showed them even if there method was wrong.

Jonah 1:8 Then they said to him, "Please tell us! Seven Questions

1. For whose cause is this trouble upon us? **Sin.**
2. What is your occupation? **Messenger for God.**
3. And where do you come from? **From the presence of God.**
4. What is your country? **Israel.**
5. And of what people are you?" **Hebrew.**

Jonah 1:9 So 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."

Jonah 1:10 Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him,

6. "Why have you done this?" **I did not trust God.**

...For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

Jonah 1:11 Then they said to him,

7. "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?" **Offer me.** For the sea was growing more tempestuous.

Jonah 1:12 *And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.*

John 12:32 *...if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

So why did Jonah not just jump overboard? We must offer Jesus

Jonah 1:13 *Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.*

John 6:19 *So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid.*

Throw Jonah overboard and let Jesus in your boat to have peace.

Many churches would be more peaceful if we throw a few Jonah's overboard.

Jonah 1:14 *Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, "We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You."*

Isa 53:10 *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;*

Jonah 1:16 *Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows. They were converted when Jonah surrendered.*

The highest point of Jonah's story is when he reaches the lowers point and repents at the bottom of the sea. Everything changed then.

In this story everyone obeys but Jonah.

The wind and waves, the whale, the sailors the Ninivites, Jonah was as far from God as anyone could be.

How does a mother eagle teach her young to fly? Stirring up the nest exposing the bones and thorns and rocks.

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1. For whose cause is this trouble upon us? Sin.

2. What is your occupation? Messenger for God.

3. And where do you come from? From the presence of God.

4. What is your country? Israel.

5. And of what people are you?" Hebrew.

Jonah 1:9 *So 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."*

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7. "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?" Offer me. For the sea was growing more tempestuous.

Jonah 1:12 *And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me. All the storms in this life are because of Satan's hatred of Jesus.*

John 12:32 *...if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

So why did Jonah not just jump overboard? We must offer Jesus

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There are 13 questions in the book of Jonah.

Jonah was a symbol of the Jewish nation through whom God turned the pagans to him and were the means of saving the lost.

Rev 17:15 *Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.*

Exo 15:23-25 *Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall*

we drink?" So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

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

This was not a normal fish, it was a fish that God prepared just for Jonah. This fish eating Jonah was a result of his sin. Our eating animals is also the result of sin too.

The book shows through Jonah's experience that God would use the Jews wherever they were. They were not to live unto themselves.

Jonah may not have been the only critter still alive in that fish!

If a day equals a year in prophecy than three Jewish years of 360 days adds up to 1080 days or years. This is approximately the amount of time that the Jews spent submission or captivity to other nations. To save them and to teach them.

3 Days & 3 Nights

Mat 16:4 *"A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."*

Matthew 26:45 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ *Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, **the hour is at hand**, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.*

Jonah 2:1 *Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly.*

Jonah prayed when he was in trouble. No place is amiss for prayer. He prayed even though there was no outward sign that God could or would hear him. By faith.

Talk about praying in times of darkness or through a hopeless situation.

God Hears the Distress Calls of all People - Everybody that prays for help and mercy in the book of Jonah is heard by God. Our prayers reach God's temple. (Jonah 2:4)

Jonah 2:10 *So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.*

When we pray it gives the Devil indigestion.

God could have made him swim for shore. Probably back in Joppa.

The sailors were just reaching shore in Joppa and telling of this harrowing experience when suddenly this enormous fish beaches itself and gives a big shudder followed by a mammoth burp and out pops Jonah.

Jonah 3:1,2 *Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.*

His making use of us is an evidence of his being at peace with us. What a privilege to even hear Gods voice

God's mercy never negates His commands but His mercy is intended to enable us to obey His commands.

Isa 40:8 *The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.*

Mark 13:31 *Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away.*

Mat 21:28-32 *"But what do you think? A man had two sons..."*

Repentance is the change of our mind and way, and a return to our work and duty.

Nineveh was surrounded by large walls 100 feet high, so broad that three chariots could drive abreast on them, and defended by 1,500 towers 200 feet in height.

Jonah was sitting and watching to see if God would do to Nineveh what He did to Sodom. Assyria had been the enemy of Israel, Jonah was hoping they would be destroyed.

Prov 24:17,18 *Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles, Lest the LORD see it, and it displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him.*

A small worm at the root destroys a large gourd: our gourds wither, and we know not what is the cause. This worm is the sin.

1. Jonah had more regard for worms and plants than people save the whales abort the babies.
2. Jonah is shown to be inconsistent: after praising God for rescuing him from threat of death, he complained when God did the same for pagans.
3. Everyone listens to God the first time except Jonah. The elements, the sailors, the fish, the Ninevites, the plant, the worm, and the wind.
4. God not only sent Jonah to Nineveh for saving the Ninevites but to reach Jonah.

Including the children the whole population of Nineveh would be about 600,000.

Jonah's trouble came from running away from God, let's draw near and have peace.

Jonah covers; Economics= He paid the fare
 Meteorology = The storm
 Oceanography = The waves
 Marine Biology =The great fish
 Sociology= The sailors and Ninivites
 Zoology =Politics
 Botany = the gourd
 Entomology= The worm

God made Adam out of the dust,
 But thought it best to make me first.
 So I was made before the man,
 according to God's Holy plan.
 God made body all complete,
 without arms, or hands, or feet.
 My ways and acts did God control,
 but did not grant to me a soul.
 A living being I became,
 and Adam gave to me a name.
 Then from his presence I withdrew,
 for this man Adam I never knew.
 My Maker's word I do obey,
 and from these laws I never stray.
 Thousands flee from me in fear,
 but seldom on the earth appear.
 Later, for God's plan you see,
 He placed a living soul in me.
 But that soul God had to claim,
 and from me took it back from me again.
 And when this soul from me had fled,
 I was the same as when first made;
 without arms and legs, feet, or soul,
 I travel on from pole to pole.
 My labors are from day to night,
 and to men I furnished light.

Multitudes of young and old,
 did by my death the light behold.
 No right or wrong can I conceive;
 the Bible and it's teachings I can't believe.
 The fear of death doesn't trouble me;
 pure happiness I will never see.
 If you get your Bible and read with care;
 you'll find my name recorded there.

Hints: The answer is one word, five letters long, and appears only 4 times in the King James Version. (Whale)

The classic book *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville, contains a chapter titled *The Sermon*, and within that chapter there are some beautiful lyrics from an old English Sailors Hymn regarding how God saves the lost the same way he saved Jonah.

"The ribs and terrors in the whale, Arched over me a dismal gloom,
 While all God's sun-lit waves rolled by,
 And lift me deepening down to doom.

"I saw the opening maw of hell, With endless pains and sorrows there;
 Which none but they that feel can tell - Oh, I was plunging to despair.
 "In black distress, I called my God, When I could scarce believe him mine,
 He bowed his ear to my complaints - No more the whale did me confine.
 With speed he flew to my relief, As on a radiant dolphin borne;
 Awful, yet bright, as lightning shone The face of my Deliverer God.
 "My song for ever shall record That terrible, that joyful hour;
 I give the glory to my God, His all the mercy and the power."

James Bartley-Jonah - In February, 1891, the whaling ship "Star of the East" was off the Falkland Islands when the lookout spotted a huge 80' sperm whale. Two longboats were filled with crewmen and launched to hunt the monster. Closing in, they harpooned the whale which quickly dove down pulling eight-hundred feet of line after it before slack showed that it was climbing back for the surface again. Suddenly, the huge mammal resurfaced right under the first longboat, throwing the broken vessel and its men into the air. As the whale went down again, the remaining longboat rescued the survivors and counted two men were missing and presumed drowned. Soon

after returning to the ship the dead whale floated to the surface, so the somber crewmen began their grisly job removing the blubber from the dead beast. By midnight the task was still unfinished, and the sailors went to bed. In the morning, as they resumed their work, the unexpected happened. According to a reporter in Paris, Suddenly the sailors were startled by something in the stomach spasmodically moving. Thinking it might be a giant squid they cut the stomach open. Inside was found one of the missing sailors, James Bartley, doubled up and unconscious. He was placed on deck and treated to a bath of sea-water which soon revived him, but his mind was not clear and he was placed in the captain's quarters. As he recovered, Bartley recalled being hit by the whale's tail and then encompassed by great darkness. Next he felt he was slipping along a smooth passage that seemed to move and carry him forward. His hands came in contact with a yielding, slimy substance, which seemed to shrink from his touch. He could breathe the stifling air, but the heat was terrible. The next thing he remembered he was in the captain's cabin." Except for the fact that his face, neck, hands had been bleached white, Bartley, survived the belly of the monster. We can understand why he left whaling and spent the remaining eighteen years of his life working as a cobbler in his native Gloucester. When he was buried, his tombstone featured a brief account of his adventure and a footnote: "James Bartley -- 1870-1909 ... A modern Jonah." When people is Jesus day asked for a sign, He said no sign would be given but the sign of Jonah.

Mat 26:45 *Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.*

All that was left of the Assyrian Empire was a mound called the Yunas Mound across the Tigris River from the city of Mosul in Iraq, but secular historians didn't know there was anything buried under this Yunas Mound so they ridiculed the Bible and said Assyria never existed. However in 1820 Claude Rich was working for the British East India Company in Iraq. This Claude Rich got interested in some ancient bricks with strange inscriptions on them which were sometimes found in mounds so Rich dug in the Yunas Mound and found some tablets inscribed with ancient writing. In 1842 the French consul to Iraq dug more extensively in this Yunas Mound and uncovered the palace of Sargon.³

Sargon was a major Assyrian King who captured part of Judah and who is named by the Prophet Isaiah.⁴ Secular Historians who had said Assyria

was nothing but a myth were embarrassed but their embarrassment would get worse because in 1845 Sir Austen Henry Layard began a six-year excavation which found the palaces of five Assyrian kings, all of whom were named in the Bible. Layard also found the great library of Assur-banipal with 100,000 volumes.⁵

Oh, and that Yunas Mound; in English Yunas Mound means Jonah Mound or Tomb of Jonah.⁶ This Jonah is the Jonah in the Bible story of Jonah and the Whale in which Jonah takes God's message to the Assyrian capital. Jonah preached repentance to the Assyrians, and guess what; they repented, and after they repented there was a considerable period of peace during which Israel recovered territory⁷ which Assyria had taken from them. In other words we have archeological and historical evidence that the Bible story of Jonah was really true.