

SERIES - I have four cats (Names) – **Ron**...licked my face to wake me...Life is unpredictable

- I haven’t had to lock my brakes up in years...twice the other day...life is unpredictable
We do our best to try and predict life...but the reality is so much is out of our control
Know what Jonah didn’t see coming? Giant fish that would become his home for three days

Because of Fish - Lot of discussion legitimacy book of Jonah...Historical / Allegorical

- a. **Reads like historical narrative** – Real places – Real people – Real events
- b. **Archeologically** – Gath-Hepher – Joppa – Tarshish – Nineveh are all known today
- c. **Jesus Affirmation** – **Matthew 12:40-41** = Shows that Jonah is a biblical ‘type’ of Christ

⁴⁰For just 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. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

- d. **God can do miraculous things** – Oil / walls falling / raising from dead – Made a fish
I completely believe this story is 100% accurate to what happened...and what happened?
Jonah has been hurled off the boat...all seems lost...gonna die...in comes the Lord

The Lord saves Jonah from certain death...and delivers him from his rebellion

Big Idea – From the Depths Comes Deliverance

Jonah could not have been at a lower place: Running – Hurling – facing death...his actions

- Have you ever been so low? When you’re at your lowest...God will reach for you | How

1. **When you Run, God will: Get Your Attention (17)**

¹⁷And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

This is an attention-grabbing event...place yourself into the situation | Boat – Floating – Fish

- The Lord uses a fish to save Jonah...if God doesn’t intervene then Jonah is a dead man
Jonah’s running from the Lord and the Lord was gonna get his attention | God Ordained it
- Can you imagine this miracle fish? The size of a double wide trailer swallowing a man
- It’s the ultimate God saying, ‘Oh no you don’t’ – ‘Where do you think you’re going’

Have you ever had God, metaphorically, swallow you up by a fish

God’s done it to me...Sermon by CJ Mahaney on forgiveness – I had to ask (Doug R)

Have you ever had that happen? Sermon – Song – Conversation – Hits you like a miracle fish

When God Speaks...Listen...Respond | Fish was not punishment but deliverance

2. **When you Run, God will: Assert His Control (1-4)**

2 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, (funny) ²saying, “I called out to the Lord, out of my distress, 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 flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. ⁴Then I said, ‘I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.’

Do you see how Jonah admits the Lord’s control over these circumstances

- I called – You answered | I cried – You heard | You cast me into the deep...into the sea
- But he ends with hope ‘yet I shall again look upon your holy temple’

When God allows you to go through holy distress, he intends it for a redemptive purpose

- Sometimes God lets you get to the depths so you’ll learn He can pull you out
- Whose fault is it that Jonah is now living in the belly of a huge fish? Jonah’s – Nineveh
- Whose fault is it when you end up at the bottom or the ocean? Yours

Who is coming to save you? When you get to the point you’re crying for God He’s on his way

Can you see the hope through the front door of your crying out to God?

Here is something to remember: God is in control of your hardship and that brings hope

3. **When you Run, God will: Repurpose Your Suffering (5-7)**

⁵The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head ⁶at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God.⁷ When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

It’s a lot of gloom and tomb language – Does anyone think it was fun in the belly of a fish?

- Suffering has a purpose – Whenever God allows for suffering He does so with purpose

a. **Bring him to a point of repentance and remembrance**

⇒ **When God allows you to suffer for sin...bring you to repentance and remembrance**

b. **Give the Ninevites a chance to repent for their sin**

⇒ **Jonah is supposed to be on a rescue mission...gospel message speaks loud in hardship**

c. **Point us to the God who saves | **BACK to Matthew 12** Thousands Years – Savior**

⇒ **Neat story on its own...but, this story is meant to point us to Jesus**

God repurposes Jonah’s suffering...Can we all admit that it’s Jonah who screwed up?

And look what the Lord does with his mistake...Jonah – Mariners – Ninevites – US!

- Jonah hit rock bottom...literally and figurately...Mediterranean Sea...in a fish!
- He admits his faults...**READ FROM ABOVE - ‘Yet you brought me up from the pit’**
I was an addict...I know where rock bottom is...I wouldn’t trade any of it because God

Are you suffering? Are you going through the belly of the fish season?

⁴⁰For just 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. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

No more miracles needed...no more need for the fantastic...Jesus has come! Repurpose

4. **When you Run, God will: Accomplish His Intention (8-10)**

⁸Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love. ⁹But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord!” ¹⁰And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

God accomplished His intention with Jonah

⇒ **Salvation belongs to the Lord** – Isn’t that a beautiful statement for the circumstances

- Jonah forsakes idols and embraces the steadfast love of the Lord
- He brings Jonah to the place he should have been at the beginning
Put yourself into this situation...solitary confinement of a giant fish for three days...

- **You have no idea if this is where you die...He doesn’t know the rest of the story...Fish**
God reveals the rest of the story...he gets vomited up on the dry land

- **How cool would it be to be the only person who has ever been vomited by a fish**

- Jonah was in the beginning and the middle of a story and doesn’t know the end

Have you ever been in the middle of a story you don’t know the end to?

Here is what you need to know...God will accomplish His intention

There’s so many times we’re in the middle of our story and don’t know what’s happening

If you feel like you’re in a forest...keep hacking at branches...God has a plan

Whenever you think there will never be light...remember Jonah

Life is unpredictable – we don’t always see what’s coming | Jonah didn’t see this coming

- You may not either...you may not see how the Lord is going to work events to save
- You may not understand what the Lord is doing, but He going to keep pursuing you

RECAP

