

Jonah 1.4-17 | The Grace of God
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Jonah 1.4-5a, 7-8, 11-17:

1. The first thing we see is the Sovereignty of God (vs 4)

The Sovereignty of God means that He does as He pleases: The storm, dice, sea, and fish (Jonah recognizes this 2.3).

Jonah discovers that God dangerous. And he answers to no one. "Our God is a consuming fire" Heb 12.29, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands.." **Noah**, Ex 33.14 :I will gracious to whom I will be gracious, Isaiah 43.13: I work, who can turn it back?! **Jer 5.22**

We have a tendency to shrink God to a manageable size, to a well defined, handleable figment of our imagination. We think God is polite and will gently remind us and ask our permission! No! He is Sovereign! **Jonah discovers who he is running from!**

He is not restricted or bound in any way. He needs give no answer (Romans 9). **CS Lewis!**

You'll never stand in awe of a God you can control and never fear. **His Sov magnifies His love!** You will never weep tears of joy and amazement at salvation from a cosmic santa claus.

We serve a wonderful and awesome God! Stand in awe of Yahweh! If you can't beat Him, join Him! He's not a recruiting drive trying to tip the scales between good and evil!

a) He is so Sovereign His purposes even prevail in our wickedness.

Jonah flees because he doesn't want to share God's love with pagans yet the sailors turn to God! **They move from a prayer of terror to a prayer of faith.** In vs 5-6, they are not crying out to a Father, but to a deity. There is no trust. In the prayer of terror **you use God, but in the prayer of faith, you allow God to use you**, as in vs 16 'sacrificed and made vows'.

Brothers selling Joseph (Gen 50.20). Satan murdering Jesus. Isaiah 46.10-11: We win!

In God's Sovereignty he comes after Jonah and it initially looks like He may be against him. Some of you are worried about the motive of God through this. But God's Sovereignty is good news because God is good. (**Loving and Strong**) **Speak to Non Christians.**

2. We see God using His Sovereignty to discipline Jonah in His love.

Despite Jonah's sin and running, God pursues him. The Hound of Heaven: God owes us nothing. Why would he save us? Not because of His lack. **How this reveals his love!**

Isaiah 65: 'all day long I held out my hand to an obstinate people'.

[This is even true of our salvation. Eph 2. 'but God'. Salvation is of the Lord (2.10).All of our stories are of God's intervention like Jonah! Romans 3.11 'No one seeks God' Isaiah 53 'we all like..' We serve a good God who comes after us though He need not! (Spurgeon).]

a) God's discipline is an extension of his love. But, isn't God good? How can He send a storm to those He loves? Wouldn't that make God evil? **Tyra in the road.**

God acts for our good / long term holiness, **not our short term comfort.** What kind of God would God be if he didn't deal with sin and stop self destructive behavior. **Matt 16.33 'Profit?'**

Hebrews 12.5-11: Sons, loves, holiness (Set apart to Him) righteousness (as Him), trained by it. **Don't confuse discipline for punishment, they are miles apart!**

God's discipline is always redemptive: 2 Sam 14.14 This is what makes God good, not evil. It's like forcing someone to take life saving medicine. Hurting them to take it.

These acts of God towards Jonah are all redemptive. The last line is that God **provided** a fish! We don't hear the prosperity gospel quoting this verse! 'My God will provide all your needs, according to his riches in glory' and 'Jehovah Jireh'. **The fish – the greatest threat becomes the greatest vehicle of restorative mercy.**

When it seems God is against you, it is because He truly is for you.

And so finally, God has Jonah where he wants him. And Jonah realizes, and repents, turning back to God, changing his mind, agreeing with God's view on things. Once this has happened, he can get on with what God has called him to, to see Nineveh saved.

And we should do the same! God wants us to align our minds and hearts with Him too, to be effective for Him.

3. How should we respond?

- a) Repentance. Recognizing we are wrong and turning.
- b) Worship God and praise Him for chasing you, overcoming your resistance!
- c) Surrender your life to Him, commit your life into His hands today.