

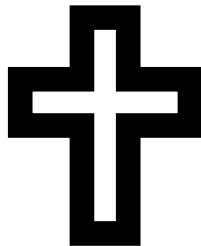
Six Lessons

on

Jonah

by

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JONAH: A SIGN -- LESSON 1

Jonah 1:1--Matthew 12:38-40

1. The book of Jonah records one of the strangest experiences in human history.
 - a. The Place from which he prophesied was the bottom of the sea.
 - b. The Pulpit from which he preached was the stomach of a fish.
 - c. What did he preach? The Gospel of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ 800 years before the birth of Christ.
2. There is no clearer type in the Bible and Jesus declares this in Matt. 12:40.
3. Jesus gave Jonah as the answer to the demand of the Pharisees for a sign of Christ's authority, Matt. 12:38-39.
4. G. Campbell Morgan stated, "Men have been looking so long at the great fish that they have failed to see the great God."
5. Jonah has been viewed as an allegory of the Babylonian Captivity, a parable about the Deliverance of Israel. But Jesus clearly taught that Jonah was a literal historical approach.

6. Different Outlines of Jonah Chapters 1-4

Chapter 1--Jonah Running from God
Chapter 2--Jonah Running to God
Chapter 3--Jonah Running with God
Chapter 4--Jonah Running ahead of God

Chapter 1--Jonah in the Storm at Sea
Chapter 2--Jonah in the School of God
Chapter 3--Jonah in the Service of God
Chapter 4--Jonah in the Shadows with God

Chapter 1--Jonah Fleeing From God
Chapter 2--Jonah Fleeing To God
Chapter 3--Jonah Flying for God
Chapter 4--Jonah Flying at God

Chapter 1--Jonah On His Back--Sleeping--Vs. 5
Chapter 2--Jonah on His Knees--Praying--Vs. 1-9
Chapter 3--Jonah on His Feet--Preaching--Vs. 4
Chapter 4--Jonah on His Face--Mourning--Vs. 2

I. JESUS AUTHENTICATES THE CANON--The History and Literalness of Jonah is clearly authenticated by the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Jesus calls him a Prophet--Luke 11:29

B. He illustrates His own death and resurrection by the true account of Jonah.

C. He authenticates His own ministry thereby authenticating the book of Jonah.

1. There is nothing in the Bible to contradict Jonah's authenticity.
2. Jewish tradition has always accepted its authenticity.
3. The Early Church accepted its reliability.
4. Bible authenticates Jonah--II Kings 14:25.
5. Jesus puts his stamp of approval.

D. Jesus Could Have Used Many Other Types in the Bible.

1. Gen. 1:1--The Earth created, then buried beneath the waters and then emerging in Gen. 1:9-13 on the third day is a picture of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection.

2. Gen. 8:14--The Ark of Noah rested on the 17th day of the 7 month on Mt. Ararat--a Type of the Gospel.

- a. At one time, before the flood, Mt. Ararat could be seen.
- b. Then the flood buried it as well as the rest of the world.
- c. Why did the Holy Spirit register the exact date?
 - (1) The answer is clear--The Passover Feast came on the 14th day of the same month that Christ died on the cross.
 - (2) Three days later on the 17th day of the month, he arose.
 - (3) This is a perfect type. The Ark resting on that Resurrection Mountain is a picture of Christ rising out of condemnation to justify all who would believe.

3. Gen. 22--The Sacrifice of Isaac on Mt. Moriah--A Type

- a. God asked Abraham to offer Isaac. For three days, Isaac was potentially dead in the mind of Abraham.
- b. Gen. 22:4-- "*Then on the third day...saw the place afar off.*"
 - (1) Vs. 9--Altar, wood, knife, fire, ropes. All of these picture what Christ endured at Calvary
 - (2) But on this third day, God restored Isaac to Abraham.

- (3) Heb. 11:19--Abraham believed God would raise him up if he died.
4. Many Scriptures could have pictured the Death, Burial, & Resurrection. Why did Jesus choose Jonah? There must be some significance because God never does anything without purpose.

II. JESUS ANSWERS THE CRITICS

A. Jesus knew that the Book of Jonah would be persistently attacked and denied. Why does Satan attack this book?

1. Answer--If you reject the book of Jonah, you must reject the Gospel.

- a. No other book gives a clearer type.
- b. The Devil hates the Gospel-- "*power of God unto salvation.*"

2. Skeptics have ridiculed the Book of Jonah and called it a myth, a fairy tale, or a parable.

- a. This is a serious position--Jonah is more than a "spiritual episode".
 - b. To deny Jonah's experience--is the same as denying the Gospel.
 - c. Matt. 12:40-- "*As Jonas...so shall the Son of man be.*"
 - d. If Jonah is Fiction--So is Christ, the Gospel, and the Bible.
 - (1) If Jonah is a Fable---Jesus built a literal resurrection on just a story.
 - (2) He built a surety on insecurity.
 - (3) He built a truth on a lie.
 - (4) He built a house on shifting sand.
3. But Jonah was Real--He is verified in II Kings 14:25 around 800 B.C. If Jonah was real, then Christ is real.

B. Jonah was more than a survival episode.

1. Many well-meaning Fundamentalists have tried to explain the miracles of Jonah on a naturalistic basis.
 - a. They have tried to find an animal that could swallow a man.
 - b. They have tried to find a man that has been swallowed and survived.

C. Jonah was a supernatural miracle--that which was naturally impossible and can not be explained naturally.

1. If someone could find a fish that swallowed a man and found the man that had been swallowed, that still wouldn't prove Jonah was Canonical.
2. How did Jonah look when he came out? Was he starving after 3 days in the belly of the fish? Was he half-digested, slimy, with the smell of the fish on him?
 - a. No! He was strong. In verse 4, it was a 20 mile walk through and around Nineveh and he preached as he walked.
 - b. If he had been a starved, half-dead, weak, stumbling, smelling Jonah, then our Saviour didn't really die on the Cross as the Liberals say but was only swooning.
 - c. But our Saviour didn't pass out on the Cross, and then was revived when placed in the cool tomb. He didn't come struggling out with the smell of death on Him.
 - d. Jonah died and Christ died. Both died, both were buried, and both were resurrected.

D. Jonah doesn't need to be proved but preached and practiced.

1. One of the most sneaking attacks of the Devil is to get us to prove the Bible, to make us prove it outside the Word of God.
2. But the true Believer needs no external proof because we have internal proof, the witness of the Holy Spirit.
3. The Bible does not need the endorsement of Science, the proof of Archaeology, and any apologies or defenses of Philosophy.
4. The Bible has stood on its own record while Scientific objects have fallen and crumbled in the dust of antiquity.
5. Our ministry is not apologetic but the positive preaching of "thus saith the Lord."
6. Do we need to defend the Bible? Someone has said, "You might as well talk about defending a lion. You don't defend a lion, just turn him loose and he'll defend himself."
7. The Book of Jonah reminds us that we are dealing with the Word of God. Vs. 1-- "*Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah.*"

Conclusion: This brings us back to the Pharisees' demand, "Show us a sign from heaven."

1. The only answer is that God said it and that settles it whether you believe it or not.
2. God will not descend to prove His word or give any more evidence than what is found in His word.

3. We are to believe it and it will save us. Reject it and it will damn us.
4. We don't understand it all but we should shout over what we do understand and wait until His Coming and let Him explain what we don't understand.
5. We are not to look for feelings, signs, manifestations, or demonstrations but we are to receive it by faith.
6. We must bow to the authority of God's Word. John 5:24-- *"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."*