

Series: Brother Jonah

Title: Questioning God's Will

Text: (Jonah 4:1-11)

Jonah is a Running Man

Chap 1 Jonah is running *from* God.

Chap 2 Jonah is running *to* God.

Chap 3 Jonah is running *for* God.

Chap 4 Jonah is running *into* God.

Jonah has a Word

Chap 1 - Word from God

Chap 2 - Word with God

Chap 3 - Word for God

Chap 4 - Word about God

Jonah has a Message

Message was brief, 8 words. (Chap 3:4)

Message was blunt. (Chap 3:4)

Message was Believed. (Chap 3:5-9)

Message was blessed. (Chap 3:10)

One Man can make a difference

Our Greatest Ability is our Availability

God uses Ordinary people: *Nothing special about Jonah*

We know this because the Mariners didn't recognize him

God uses Busy people: Jonah had a ministry in Gath-hepher.

God uses Imperfect people: *Even an unwilling servant*

Illus: *I don't know how to do it, great, your hired.*

Chap 4

Jonah is a Broken Man: *Jonah picked a fight with God...*

Broken Spiritually:

Broken Fellowship: (Is 59:1-2)

Broken Testimony: The mariners from Joppa had a major "Fish" story to tell!

Jonah Is an Angry Man Vs 1

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

Illus: *Foxhole Christianity never lasts.*

Vs 2 Jonah prayed, but because of his attitude, it had been better he not pray unless he was ready to repent.

Vs 2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

"*Yet in My Country*" Jonah obviously had an argument with God before attempting to run away from God in chapter 1.

Vs 2 b "*for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.*"

Jonah knew God's nature: (2 Pet 3:9) *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

That is why he didn't want to go and preach.
He wanted them to be judged and destroyed!
Is that why we don't tell others?
Is that what we want? No, but that is the result nonetheless.

Jonah is a Proud Man: Jonah had a pride problem.
God did not fulfill his Prophecy.

(Chap 3:4) *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*
Jonah's Professional reputation as a prophet is ruined.

Vs 3 *Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.*
Jonah's Anger, Bitterness, Depression, Suicidal thoughts.

Jonah needed s Spiritual Heart Transplant:
(Ezek 11:19-20) *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: 20 That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*

Outward Righteousness / Inward Rebellion
He wasn't fooling God.

(Joel 2:13) *And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

Jonah wasn't preaching from a broken heart.
He was preaching out of spite.

Jonah sat sulking, because God did not move according to Jonah's plan.

His attitude stopped him from enjoying it, and made him useless.

Was there ever a time when a man of God was needed to disciple and guide thousands of new converts, it is now?

(Jonah 4:4) *Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?*

Our Loving Father takes the initiative to restore Jonah

Vs 4 what right do we have to be angry with God.

What right do we have to put terms on our relationship with God.

(Rom 9:20-21) *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

We don't HAVE to serve, we GET to serve.

Wouldn't it had been right for God to just let Jonah drown?

The sailors had to ask him his occupation because there was nothing about Jonah that indicated he was a man of God.

Wouldn't it have been just of God to let Jonah die as he sank into the depths of the sea.

Do we have any right to shut out God in the dark and give him the silent treatment.

God gently probes Jonah with a question.
Thank God he doesn't leave us.
He gives Jonah another opportunity to get right with him.

Jonah 4:5

So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

He is sitting and giving God the silent treatment.

“Booth” - Jonah was not much of a builder.
If God has gifted us to preach, don't waste your time doing something else.

Jonah was sulking, and denying God the use of his gifts.

Jonah 4:6

And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

The Lord again provides for Jonah.
“surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.”
God was so good to Jonah.

God prepares a Gourd, a Worm, and a Wind. God the great provider.

The purpose, was to comfort Jonah.
Even in our pity party God is good to us.
(Rom 2:3) *The goodness of God leadeeth men to repentance.*

Jonah rejoiced in the gourd.

This is the only time in the book that Jonah rejoices.

Jonah 4:7 *But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.*

The gourd is gone.
We are to Set our affections on the things above.

God gave it, and God took it away because it was taking Jonah away from God.

Jonah 4:8 *And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.*

God brought the wind.

Jonah is sulking because God is not responding as he wanted.

Jonah has made it all about him.
If we get our eyes off what's best for the Lord, it is not going to be better for us.

Jonah 4:9 *And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.*

God gently probes again.
God never wants us reminder in rebellion.

God takes the initiative to restore our fellowship with Him.

Jonah 4:10 *Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:*

Jonah is grieving over the temporal.

He cared more about the burning sun than the souls of man in the burning hell.

Jonah 4:11 *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*

God has a heart for souls.

1 million are saved.

Jonah was at the very heart from God.

Jonah is so stubborn that he cannot rejoice over God sparing the souls of Nineveh.

Cast me forth

A stubborn, rebellious servant is of no earthly Good to God or Mankind.

The Only Willing, Obedient Servant was the Whale

(Ch 2:10) Jonah was regurgitated.

God asked the fish to do something unpleasant.

Dry land is unsuitable for a Fish.

Is God asking you to go somewhere that is unsuitable.

If you feel sick about God's commands, you will not feel better until you get it out of you!

The whale didn't have to be coerced.

God didn't have to change the Whale's Circumstances to get him to obey.

Illus: what does it take to get us to do God's will?

What circumstances has to come to pass for us to turn our heart to the Lord?

The whale sacrificed himself to do God's will.

Illus: Dry ground is not where Whales Thrive.

The Whale beached himself to get Jonah to dry ground.

Beached whales die. (Ps 116:15)

Others have sacrificed for you to be able to do God's will.

Don't Disdain Their Sacrifice.

Don't Waster Their Sacrifice.

Will you be a Whale of a Servant?

Will you sacrifice all to fulfill God's Will?

Will you sacrifice yourself to see God's will done?

"I don't think it will matter"

One man can make a difference

The Job is not too big, the Vision is too small.

The Opposition is not too big, the Submission is too small

The Task is not too big, the Commitment is too small.

The Goal is not too big, the Effort is too small.

Will you be a Whale of a Christian?

Everyone has abilities.

Your Greatest Ability is AVAIL-Ability.

But you hold the control on Desire.

God cant change your desire. We decide!

God will never force you against your will.

God can & will change your circumstances so you are willing

Is that what it will require?

Is that what it will take for us to serve God?

Is that what it will take for us to surrender our will to His?

OR, We can choose to submit our will to Him of our own free will.

Will you be a Whale of a Servant?