

Main Point: Rebellion

Jonah's Disobedience mirrors our relationship to God and shows the need for Christ to redeem us and forgive us our sins.

Supplemental Scripture: Daniel 3:13-30

Study Introduction

The Gospel is how Christ has saved us from our sin. Coming to be obedient to all that the Father has commanded, dying in our place, and then being raised from the dead to new life. However, the Gospel is something that God had in mind from the very beginning. Scholars call Genesis 3:15 the "protoevangelium," that is greek for the first Gospel. It is where God made clear his intent to redeem sinful humans for his glory and their good. Aspects of this story can be seen through all of the Old Testament. Over the next six studies we will look deeper into Jonah, while at the same time looking at other stories from Scripture either comparing to our contrasting with Jonah and his tale of disobedience to and exasperation with God, and how we see ourselves in that same position with the Lord of all.

Study Questions

Pre-study:

1. Can you remember any points in growing up where you were disobedient to your parents? What happened in those instances?
2. What forms of discipline have you experienced that you are grateful for? Did you always feel grateful for the discipline?

We will be looking at Jonah's disobedience to God in chapter one of the book. We will see the parallels in our own relationship with the Lord, and how Christ meets us in our rebellion offering restoration.

Read: Jonah 1:1-17

3. What resonated with you from the chapter?
4. What examples have you seen where sin started with small disobedience and ended in disaster?
5. Looking back in your life, what has God used, like Jonah's storm, to bring you back from your sin?

The downward fall into sin starts with disobedience and eventually ends in spiritual disaster, typically affecting others. Just as He did with Jonah, God often sends storms to wake his people up from the slumber induced by sin. If you are in Christ, the storm is never retributive, but restorative. It is never to pay you back for your sin, but to bring you back from your sin.

Parallels in Daniel 3:13-30

Chapter 3 of the Book of Daniel recounts a well-known story which provides a helpful contrast to the opening chapter of Jonah's story. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are the main characters in this story. They were all men of Jerusalem living as captives of Babylon. They were intelligent, handsome, wise, and came from well-to-do backgrounds. But they refused to

compromise their worship of God for favor with the king. Now in chapter 3 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are given an ultimatum to either worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gods or be thrown into a fiery furnace.

Read: Daniel Chapter 3:13-15

6. While on the surface these two stories couldn't be more different, how are the circumstances facing Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego similar to the opening scene in Jonah's story?
7. In what ways are we in the western world able to hide from this kind of martyrdom and persecution?
8. In what ways are those hiding places disappearing?
9. In what ways does following Christ right now put you in danger?

Read Daniel 3:16-18

10. What stands out to you in the response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to the king while facing death?
11. Jonah, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were all men of God, that is, they all knew the same things about God. Why did Jonah flee while the other three stood firm?
12. What do you think keeps us from seeing and valuing God like the men in Daniel 3? Why do we drift into a Jonah-type relationship with God so often?
13. How would you articulate the promise of God we can cling to that gives us such joyful certainty in God's love and care for us? Feel free to share a favorite Bible verse.

Read: Daniel 3:19-30

14. What are the similarities between the outcomes of Daniel 3 and Jonah 1?
15. How does this impact the way we view our love for and obedience to God?

Application

1. Is there an area of your life where you just keep saying, "No," to God? How is that affecting you? How is that affecting the people in your life?
2. What will it take to get you to a place of obedience in that situation?
3. Looking back over your life, can you identify any storms God used for the purpose of restoration? Are you thankful for the end result even though it was difficult to endure?
4. What is one achievable action step you can take this week in response to what we've discussed today?

Prayer

- Spend time asking God to reveal to your group members the areas they may be disobedient.
- Thank God for his past storms, and for the grace that will come in future storms with times of disobedience.
- Ask God for steadfastness in the places we may experience danger for witnessing to Christ.
- Pray for other needs in the group