



WEEK THREE HANDOUT – **A Dim Bulb**

BAND of BROTHERS 2021

And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah... - Jonah 1:17 ESV

- **Recap**

- God's redemptive plan
- Link between Jonah and Israel
 - Jonah represents Israel
- Ends with sailors casting lots to see who the cause of the storm was

- **This week**

- Link between Jonah and Abraham

“Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.” – Genesis 12:1-2 ESV

- Abraham was told that his offspring would be blessed if left his country and followed God
 - Descendants would be a blessing to the nations
 - In Hebrew, the name, Abraham, means “father of a multitude”
 - In context, these descendants were the Israelites
 - Going back to Abraham, followers of Yahweh were called to be a light to the world
 - Specifically, they were to be a light to the Gentile world
 - A Gentile was anyone belonging to any other nation or people group besides the Jewish people
 - Israel’s call was to be a light to the world, the nations

- This is God's Heart
 - Isaiah 42 and 49 both speak to the LORD being "a light for the nations."
 - Nations and Gentiles can be used interchangeably
- Patterns Emerge
- The Israelites will follow for a little while then fall back into God's grace
 - Examples:
 - Exodus from slavery in Egypt to wishing to go back (Exodus 17)
 - Moses receives 10 Commandments only to find Israelites worshiping the golden calf (Exodus 32)
 - Israel is ruled by Judges and sin prevails (Judges 21:25)

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes." – Judges 21:25 ESV

- Most of the warnings from the prophets are calls to repentance and God redeeming his people
 - **Hosea 14:1** – *"Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God..."*
 - **Joel 2:12** – *"'Yet even now,' declares the LORD, 'return to me with all your heart..."*
 - **Ezekiel 18:30** – *"...Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin."*
 - **Jeremiah 4:1-2** – *"If you return, O Israel, declares the Lord, to me you should return. If you remove your detestable things from my presence, and do not waver... then nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory."*
- **Jonah and Israel**
 - Ken has set the precedent that Israel is represented by Jonah and the decision he makes
 - With that in mind, how is that playing out?
 - Storm has hit Jonah and the ship of Gentiles
 - Lots were cast to see whose fault this storm was and they land on Jonah
 - Immediately the emotions of the sailors come out through the rapid-fire questions

"What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" – Jonah 1:8 ESV

- Jonah's response:

"I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and dry land." – Jonah 1:9 ESV

- Jonah's first response is that he is a Hebrew
 - Simply put, he is stating that he is an Israelite
 - The Sailors would have understood this to mean Jonah was a Jew
- Mentions God second
 - A literal translation would read "I fear the Lord"
 - In context, this should bring with it reverence
- The Irony is not lost here
 - Jonah willfully uses the name of God in this moment, but refuses to listen to His commands
 - To the reader, Jonah's words should ring incredibly hollow
- Where is Israel in this?
 - Jonah represents Israel at a macro level
 - His putting other things before God in his answer to the sailors was indicative of a much larger problem for the Israelites
 - They knew all of the religious talk but refused to live it out
 - They were just as bad as the Ninevites Jonah was fleeing from
- **Jonah's continual running**

"What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. He said to them. 'Pick me up and hurl me into the sea...'" – Jonah 1:11-12 ESV

 - This is usually cast as a selfless act
 - Jonah seems to be putting the lives of the sailors above his own
 - Maybe he is starting to come to his senses
 - Nothing could be further from the truth
 - Not only was he not showing compassion for the Gentiles on the boat, but he was also **still trying to flee from the Lord.**
 - Jonah is making the conscience decision to die rather than preach repentance to the Ninevites
 - Ironically, the pagan Gentiles on the boat show more compassion towards Jonah

“Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get back to dry land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them.” – Jonah 1:13 ESV

- **The Sovereignty of God**

- There have been a couple of “twists” in this story
 - Jonah fleeing the presence of the Lord
 - Jonah boarding a ship to Tarshish
 - Jonah volunteering to be thrown overboard
- Yet, through all of this the Lord was in control
- This is what Jonah (Israel) did not understand

“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.” – Proverbs 16:33 ESV

“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” – Job 42:2 ESV

“I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things.” – Isaiah 45:7 ESV

- Jonah was failing to be a “Light to the nations”
 - Refused to go to Nineveh
 - Fled the presence of the LORD
 - Voluntarily hurled into sea
- He was being an apostate

Apostasy – Defection from the faith, an act of unpardonable rebellion against God and his truth. The sin of apostasy results in the abandonment of Christian doctrine and conduct. – *Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*

- **The Light to the Nations Had Grown Dim**

“So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.” – Jonah 1:15-16 ESV

- The sailors go from actual fear of the LORD to fear of the LORD in the form of reverence

- This reverence expresses itself quickly
- The sailors offer vows and sacrifices
- These sailors, who once worshiped the pagan Gods of the Gentiles, were now worshipping and fearing Yahweh

- **Israel & the Gentiles**

- The roles of both people groups were reversed
- Jonah (Israel) should have been worshipping Yahweh
 - They should have been a Light to the Nations
 - They should have been following the LORD
- Instead, they were fleeing the LORD
 - The Gentiles in this story were the ones responding to the call of the LORD
 - Both the Gentiles on the boat and the Ninevites
 - In spite of Jonah's disobedience, these Gentiles acknowledge God as their own
 - This shows the heart God has to bring salvation "to the nations"

- **Jonah Swallowed by a Great Fish**

"And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." – Jonah 1:17 ESV

- Again, God's sovereignty is seen as he "appoints" a fish to rescue Jonah
 - The literal translation reads "And the LORD **had** appointed..."
 - This was God's plan all along
 - He was always in control

- Two times in the New Testament Jesus mentions Jonah

"For 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." – Matthew 12:40 ESV

"An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign is given to it except the sign of Jonah." – Matthew 16:4 ESV

- The question becomes how is Jonah a sign and what does he signify?
 - Jesus is saying His deliverance from the grave would be similar to that of Jonah's only much greater
 - The sign of Jonah was Jonah himself and his message from God
 - God's sign is Jesus himself and his message

- Jonah and Jesus can be compared favorably in many ways

Jonah	Jesus
From Galilee	From Galilee
Taught God's judgement and reconciliation	Taught God's Judgement and Reconciliation
Chose death forsaken by others	Chose death forsaken by others
Caused storm to stop after sleeping through it (via repentance)	Caused storm to stop after sleeping through it (via his divinity)
Entered the jaws of the fish	Entered the jaws of the grave
Kept for three days	Kept for three days
Obedience in preaching led to conversion of a great city	Obedience in preaching led to the conversion of many cultures of the world

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

In what ways does the account of Jonah resemble that of the account of Jesus? What might that resemblance say about the plan God has for all mankind? What impact should this have on us?

How might a better understanding of God's sovereignty fuel your obedience to God's commands?

Jonah and Israel failed to be a light to the nations. What are some ways we have allowed our light to grow dim and what can we do to change the situation?