



SERIES: MAY- JULY: THE MAIN THING

SPEAKER: JACOB WIRKA

Tuesday, 6/7/22

Scripture: Jonah

TITLE: Jonah - The God of Second Chances

Christians should read the book of Jonah to see the sovereignty and power of God, the reality and ugliness of sin, and the compassionate and merciful heart of God.

The Book of Jonah was written around 793 to 753 B.C. and the author is Jonah himself. Notable people found in this book would be the prophet Jonah, a rough group of sailors, and the Ninevites.

The Book of Jonah is one of the more interesting and more famous stories in the Bible. It goes like this, God calls on His prophet Jonah to go to the evil Ninevites and tell them to repent, to turn away from their sin and turn back to Him, or else there would be judgment. But for some reason rather than following God's instructions and going to Nineveh, Jonah runs from God in the opposite direction. He hops on a boat and tries to sail away from the God who made the sea!

All of a sudden the ship runs into a terrible storm and Jonah tells the crew to throw him overboard which they do hesitantly because they fear God. So we see these sailors repent of their sin and worship God while Jonah the prophet, continues to try to run. God causes a giant fish to swallow Jonah and finally, in the belly of a fish of all places, Jonah cries out to God and says that he's done running. So, the fish throws him up on dry land and Jonah finally goes to Nineveh.

When Jonah tells the Ninevites that judgment is coming, something amazing happens—the people of Nineveh cry out to God and ask for forgiveness for their sins. And so God forgives them. Perhaps the craziest part of the story is found in Jonah 4:1-2 (ESV): “*But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. And he prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.”*

This is Jonah's response to God showing mercy to the Ninevites. He's mad because he knew God would show them mercy. After all, that is who God is. God is a God who is merciful and slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love.

That should be our biggest takeaway from the book of Jonah. This is also how we can see Jesus in this book. God is a God of second chances. He gives Jonah second chances even when he runs away and disobeys. He gives the Ninevites second chances and forgiveness even though they've been living in sin. And ultimately, God has given us all a second chance through the forgiveness of Jesus on the cross.

No one is too far gone to be forgiven by God. The blood of Jesus on the cross can pay for any sin if we are willing to repent, turn away from our sins, and trust in him. Because He is a merciful God, a God who is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. And that's really what the book of Jonah is all about.

So today, as you consider God's mercy to you, who might you show mercy to?