Jonah 1 - Three lessons from Jonah 1

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Preacher: Andrew Barnett

[0:00] Just before Andrew comes and speaks to us, we're going to look at the reading from Jonah chapter 1 and it's on page 928. So if you've got the church Bible please turn to that.

Verse 1. The word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amittai. Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.
But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa where he found a ship bound for the port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.
Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own God.
And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck where he laid down and fell into a deep sleep. The captain went down to him and said, How can you sleep? Get up and call on your God.
[1:10] Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish. Then the sailors said to each other, Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.

They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. So they asked him, Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do?
Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you? He answered, I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.
This terrified them and they asked, What have you done? They knew he was running away from the Lord because he had already told them so. The sea was getting rougher and rougher.
So they asked him, What should we do to make the sea calm down for us? Pick me up and throw me into the sea, he replied, and it will become calm.
[2:12] I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you. Instead, the men did their best to row back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before.

Then they cried out to the Lord, Please, Lord, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, Lord, have done as you pleased.
Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. At this, the men greatly feared the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows to him.
Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Amen.
Thanks, Jennifer. For those who don't know me, my name is Andrew. I'm one of the leadership team here at West Kilburn Baptist Church. And this morning, I'll be sharing from Jonah 1.
[3:20] Jonah 1 is a series that we'll be looking at over the coming next probably three weeks. So I'll be starting in chapter one, and then Steve will continue, and Nathan will finish in chapter four.

Now, a little bit of content. Just kind of imagine, Phil. I just want your memories to kind of pitch on a few things, right? So just imagine in society, right? Imagine a rampant society, right?
Imagine headlines with scandals, female victims, child exploits, another murder hunt taking place. You read it in the papers or social media.
Harsh dictatorships oppressing the nations. Care home under special measures because of inadequate inspection. Wars, terrorism, attacks.
The world seems to be filled and overflowing with violence, hatred and corruption. Reading and hearing, and perhaps even experience some of these tragedies, we begin to understand the necessities of God's judgment in a world like one we live in.
[4:31] We may even find ourselves waiting for vengeance by any means upon the violent perpetrators. Some of us might think, surely, they are beyond redemption for the crimes and things

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that they do.

But suppose that while thinking such thoughts, God told you to take his word to the worst of these offenders. How would you respond?
Well, Jonah was given such a task. Assyria, Nineveh, a great city, it was an evil empire.
One of Israel's most dreaded enemies. The Assyrians flaunted their powers before God and the world through numerous acts of heartless cruelty.
So when Jonah heard God tell him to go to Nineveh and announce God's judgment to the people unless they repent, he ran in the opposite direction as we've just heard.
[5:35] The purpose of this book that we will be looking at is to show the extent of God's grace and the message of salvation to all people, not just some people.

Its audience would have been the Jewish nation of Israel and God's people everywhere. That's you and that's me. I see the book as a reflection, a foreshadow of Christ's messianic kingdom, where he sends out his disciples to all the nations.
Tim Keller might say that the book teaches about race, grace and God's mission. Jonah was a prophet in the days of Jeroboam II.
We read about that in 2 Kings chapter 14, verse 24 to 25. It tells us, it reads there, He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit.
He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Leboth Hamoth to the Dead Sea in accordance with the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah, son of Amittai, the prophet.
[6:50] So we see while Israel was still in sin, God still showed his grace and mercy to them. And God has given Jonah a purpose here, to preach or call out to the great Assyrian city of Nineveh.

It seems Jonah didn't care about for Nineveh, so we responded in disobedience and indifference. Jonah had yet to embrace and show God's love to the Ninevites.
Maybe through Jonah, God reminded Israel, the book's audience, of their mission and their purpose also. We must not limit our focus to our own people.
God wants his people to proclaim his justice, judgment and love in words and actions to the nations.
God calls us to be about his mission wherever we are, which he sends us wherever he sends us.
So we live out all we are called to be as a witness to Christ. And as an example of that, I just want to share many of you know that as a missionary, I work with churches in communities in London, particularly Camden and Islington.
[8:07] And I just want to share quickly is, you know, a mission we was doing once. We went and we knocked someone's door. We met a young male. No, sorry, it's an adult male, an elderly male who was really in a bad way in terms of his vision, his eyesight was so limited, his health was limited as well.

He probably wouldn't walk further than 60 metres without stopping and panting for breath. And meeting him, we got to know him and engage with him.
Going into his house would probably something that, you know, you need to really show appreciation for God's creation because his house was full of flies because of the stale air in there and the way his house was kept.
He was someone who had a carer that comes into his house once a week. So, yeah, it was not really a place where you're going to rush and run and go to. But it is somebody who we know God loves and we know God cares for.
So we had the opportunity to engage him and journey with him and share the gospel with him and see him receptively engage with us to hear God's word, allow us to pray with him.
[9:22] He came to the church building a few times, but he had the physical church in his premises on numerous times where we could get to share the gospel with him. But the point I'm trying to make to you all is eventually, you know, with his poor health, he died.

Maybe after we journeyed with him for 11 or 12 months. And, you know, where he died, we didn't get to see him probably maybe two weeks before he died.
But and the thing is, really, the bigger story is that's God demonstrating his loving kindness and his grace and mercy to someone who would not go church of his own accord.
But the Lord allowed the church to go to him to share the gospel with him. Because we as Christians know he will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account one day.

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That is for certain. And for me, that just displays God's greatness and God's love to his creation. So before I go into this text now, I just want to stop and pause a moment.
[10:29] And I'm just going to pray that the Lord will help me to minister his word, that it would be speaking to us in an applicational way. Father God, we come before you this morning and I pray, Lord, that all that you've put upon my heart, all that you've shown me in this text, Lord, I pray that you will help me to minister your word faithfully in a way, Lord, that it would be applicationally heard and it would be received, Father, so that we would see who you are and we would hear how you are speaking to us through this text.

So Lord, for your name's sake, we pray that you would be glorified this morning through your word in Jonah chapter one. I pray this in Jesus name. Amen. So God's word, it encourages us, it challenges us and it also exhorts us.
And in saying that, I do want to just share and hopefully I want to try and draw out of this chapter. I want to draw out how God speaks to us, how God's word comes to us and how it speaks to us.
I also want to challenge us in terms of being awake and not being asleep like Jonah in the bottom of the boat. And then also, thirdly, I just want to share how God is continually merciful and gracious to us, even when we get things wrong, as we see he provided a fish for Jonah, despite Jonah's disobedience.
So verse one to four, we see the word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amittai. Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it because its wickedness has come up to me.
[12:16] So we see God speaks to those that he has a confidential relationship with. He sent his word to Jonah.

The word of the Lord came to Jonah. God speaks to us. And him speaking to us is so that God's word can be spoken to others as Jonah was meant to go to Nineveh.
We see with God's word being sent to Jonah, Jonah clearly went in an opposite direction. But we see a glimpse of when God's word is spoken.
We see in verse nine, though Jonah was disobedient, he spoke. We see him testifying he's a Hebrew, like we would testify with Christians.
He says he worshiped the Lord. We declare we worship the Lord. We worship Jesus. And we declare he's a God of heaven who made the sea and the dry lands. And we see in verse 10, the sailors, they took note of that because it tells us they knew he was running away because he already told them so.
[13:29] But the thing is, I want to ask us is when we hear God's word, how do you respond when you hear God's word? Do you respond in obedience or disobedience?

Do you second guess God's word? Or do you not respond at all? Now, verse one to four, as Jonah is commanded to go to Nineveh, a little bit more insight into what Nineveh looks like.
In Nahum chapter three, verse one to three, it's going to give us a glimpse what this city looks like. It tells us the city was a place of blood, full of lies, never without victims, many casualties, piles of dead, body without number, people stumbling over the corpse.
Jonah was aware of his distant neighbors, the Assyrians, and probably knew about their atrocities. This is where Jonah had to go and call out against it or preach.
Warning the city of God's judgment and declared they could receive mercy and forgiveness if they repented of their wicked ways. Jonah's attitude and behavior could be viewed by the audience reading it.
[14:55] As potentially a reflection or representation of Israel's reluctance to share God's compassion, love and mercy with other nations, even though this was God's given mission for them.

Instead of accepting his call, it looks like he considered them enemies, not wanting to see them obtain God's favor like they had, as we read in Two Kings with the wicked king, Jeroboam.
We can say he knew Yahweh, that's clear because you'll see that in chapter 4 verse 2. So we did know Yahweh, but to what extent we may ask.
And this very question resonates with the audience, to you and to me. Jeremiah will give us a glimpse what it is to know Yahweh, or the Lord Jesus Christ.
Jeremiah 9.24 tells you, But let the one who boasts, boast about this, that they have the understanding to know me, to know the living God, to know who he is, to know his nature, his ways, how he relates with us, and his call for us to relate with others.

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[16:12] That I am the Lord, there is no other. God's word comes to us, and it is to be sent and heard from us to others.

We know the narrative the gospel tells us in John chapter 10, 3b to 4b, it tells us, My sheep listen to my voice.
Jesus' sheep follow him because they know his voice. These first verses help us to see God's love not only extends to us, but beyond us to the nations around us.
The nations' self-seeking ways and sinful behaviours are ever before God. They too deserve the opportunity to hear and know God is not pleased with their selfish, sinful ways.
His word needs to be heard and spoken before them. God shows concern for the great city of Nineveh, because of their wickedness in verse 2, come up to him.
[17:23] And this applies to our great city here of London. Just as Nona was sent to call out against it in the hope they would turn and repent, I believe the Lord would have us to do the same in this great city.

God wants people to hear his word. He wants people to take heed, to be aware of their sinful ways. God loves his creation.
1 Timothy chapter 2 verse 4 tells us, God, in the ESV it says, God desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.
That is God's desire. If it was his will, it would happen without our assistance. But that's his desire and we have a role to play as we see him speaking to Jonah to conduct and carry out his missional purposes.
We cannot hide from God as Jonah tries to do. That's just crazy. I'm sure a lot of us already knows Psalms 139 verse 7 tells us, where can I flee from your presence?
[18:34] You know, if I go down to the depths of the sea, you're there. Wherever we go, God is there. It's just crazy. Whatever God wants to accomplish through us will come to pass, as we will see that throughout this book.

These verses I like to ask, just like Jonah, are selfish desires and self-will to do what we consider is right in our own eyes.
Rather than doing what is right in God's eyes in respect to our neighbours, hearing the truth of God's word. And if you are someone who's here today and you have not heard the call to look to Jesus as your Lord and as your saviour, I want to encourage you, God is wanting you to hear his word.
You cannot trust in all your own ways and your shortcomings. God loves you and has made a way for you to be right and in right relationship with him through Jesus.
Through your acknowledging all your imperfections and your flaws, which the Bible says is our sin. God is perfect in all of his ways. And you will stand before him one day to give an account for your life.
[19:50] And that is a sure thing. Just as the Ninevites wickedness, their evil and bad ways have come up before God, so does ours. Romans 3.23 tells us, We all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

We all have this defect within us. But we are encouraged through Romans 6.23 that tells us, The wages of our sin is death.
And we know that we die, people die. But death is eternal separation from God in utter darkness, which anyone would probably wish no one that we ever knew would ever be in that place, totally separated from God.
But God is gracious and declares in that chapter, in that verse, But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So all your ways, all our ways are before God.
And there's an eternal cost of living life without Jesus as Lord and Saviour. We will one day stand before God and must give an account for the way we lived our life.
[21:00] Living a life without the one who created us is not good at all. We will finally spend eternity one day in heaven, in a place where there's no more sickness, crying, weeping, no more of this suffering that we experience in this world here.

Or we will live and spend eternity in utter darkness, separated from God. And the words that I proclaim is God's word in his Bible. And I will say until God cannot lie.
So these are words that we should take to heart. We have a choice to make. If we do not find forgiveness in God through Jesus, who took all our wrongdoing, our sins upon himself, so we can

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have peace with God, we will enter judgment, which will lead to eternal separation from God, who loves you dearly.
God demonstrates his kindness in sending Jonah to make this truth known to the Ninevites. And today in your hearing, his word is sent and proclaimed to you, so you can respond in acceptance to his kindness, which he desires to show towards you.
God is sovereign over all things. And even an evil nation like Nineveh causes him to have concern about them having the opportunity to know what the consequences will be for them should they continue to live in such a way without repenting and trusting in him, which is where we are today with this nation.
[22:37] So remember, God speaks to us. His word comes to us so it can be sent through us to our neighbours and the nations near and far.

And we know in this church, we are a gospel-centred preaching church. We have members from this church which has gone off on an assignment to do beach mission where they are going out to see how the Lord would want to use them to engage with people who come to the coast this summer to have holiday.
They are seeking opportunities because they're hearing God's voice. We have a monthly outreach where we go out and do a book table, we go and do door knocking to meet people in this very community, to serve our community that God loves dearly and we also love them dearly.
God speaks to us and sends us with his word to speak to others that they would hear that there is a day of reckoning because everything is exposed before God.
And even as God speaks to us, I'm speaking in a missional term, in a missional sense, but God even speaks to us as spouses. He speaks to the husband in how to speak to his wife.
[23:54] He speaks to the wife in how to speak to her husband. He speaks to the parents in how to speak to their children. He speaks to the children in how to relate to their parents. He speaks to one another in how we interact and engage with one another.

So the point is, God speaks to us. We should not neglect his word and take it for granted. His word comes to us so it can be sent to our neighbours and those around us that what we speak is the counsel that God gives us through his word.
So we should respond in obedience when God speaks to us. If he says go, we should go. Speak to that person or give more time to him or put this down that is occupying our time or spend more time with him.
Whatever he says, let's seek not to second guess what we heard and figure, did he really said that? Let's step out in faith and trust that he is speaking to us and train ourselves to be more sensitive to his voice.
What nation is there that their God speaks directly to them? There is none. There's none where we have many people on a spiritual journey believing in a creator, believing God but do not know their God, cannot define their God.
[25:22] There is no other nation or people like God's people who put their trust in Jesus Christ who has a God who speaks to them personally as well as he speaks to them corporately as he's doing right now.

Our God speaks to us. Second point we're going to look at now. So we see in verse 5, All the sailors were afraid and cried out to his own God and they threw the cargo into the ship.
But Jonah had gone down below deck and he laid down and fell deep into a deep sleep.
So Jonah lays down and fell into a deep sleep. Get up and call on your God they say to him. So church, this is a challenge to us as people of God.
Awake. Awake to all that God is speaking unto his people, speaking unto his church. Let us awake out of sleep and slumber.
[26:39] Romans chapter 13 verse 11 tells us and do this understand the present time, the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

These urgent calls to spiritual action appear throughout both the Old and the New Testament. The Bible frequently uses wake up from sleep and slumber as a metaphor for shaking of spiritual sluggishness and turning away from sin.
It is a direct call to be alert, watchful and active in our faith. As Jonah travels in the opposite direction to Nineveh, the sailors were also traveling their life's journey in the opposite direction to

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God.
we see that in verse 5 they're calling out to an unknown God who cannot hear, cannot see, cannot respond to them. The author lets us know they knew Jonah was running away as I said in verse 10 because he already told them and I think it's as if the author is alerting readers to the responsibility that they too might be involved in a similar flight.
Could this be true for someone here today? Instead of running to God, you're running away and experiencing metaphorical storms.
[28:19] I want to encourage you to take, I want to encourage you to wake up and trust in God's word and his faithfulness to see you through any situation you may be encountering because he is sovereign and Lord over all things, even your life.

It's possible, it's probably right, it's possible probably should have been naturally for the sailors to throw Jonah overboard. We see they've come to the conclusion as Nathan just brought us in the family slot the solution to this storm was, you know, after Jonah testified, what was the solution? They said, pick, Jonah said, pick me up and throw me into the sea. Now, that may consider to me, where was Jonah at? You know, Jonah was not even calling out to God and so far he's not even showing any signs of repentance.
It shows as he goes down deck into the boat and he sleeps. That's a glimpse to me of showing that when we're disobedient, when we numb ourselves to God's word, to responding to what God calls us to do, we are often getting in a position of a decline and this is where Jonah seems to be at. You would think, I would think, being in a storm on a ship at sea, I would think, you know, it's something where you can turn around and call out to God, but instead he says throw me overboard.
[29:56] So that would be the solution. But we see the sailors seem more honourable than Jonah because they're concerned about life. We see in verse 13, instead the men did their best to roll back to land, but they could not for the sea grew even wilder than before.

So that could not happen. the storm in this situation would speak loudly to the audience hopefully. This is God's plan that people would come to realise their best efforts are useless.
We are not fully in control of everything. Our health, our relationships we have, our plans often change due to unexpected circumstances or events, our careers, our job opportunities, finances, accommodation, we can go on and on.
We are not fully in control of all things. God is. These storms experience should lead us to do what Jonah didn't do but what the sailors did.
So in our metaphorical storms, sometimes because of our disobedience, sometimes because of we choose to follow a path of our own doing and sometimes just naturally because living in a fallen broken world, we will encounter storms.
[31:31] But we saw what Jonah didn't do is what the sailors did. They woke up, verse 14, and it shows, then they cried out to the Lord, please Lord, do not let us die for taking this man's life.

They acknowledge Jonah's God because Jonah testified who he is. He's the God of heaven, made the sea and the dry land in verse 9, and he also told them that God brought about this situation. So they have turned and they call out to this God and they wake up to him and call out to the Lord. The Lord expresses his will through the ferocity of the storm and through the casting of the lots. Lots, we probably heard about lots again in the book of Acts when they were looking for the twelve disciples and lots of sometime use. But both of these the crews accept as good and right when the lot fell and they followed this direction.
Jonah remained spiritually asleep, prayerless, easing in the face of eternity. And while the sailors uninstructed in God's word engaged in earnest prayer and faith, they called out and prayed to Jonah's God by the special covenant name Yahweh given to Israel, having accepted Jonah's testimony.
[32:55] They believed that he is the covenant that they believed that he is the God and that he will hear and answer their prayer. The sailors showed themselves more honorable.

So the Gentiles, the sailors now acknowledge and come to believe in the true living God Yahweh. And this picture, the sailors as well as Jonah being sent to Nineveh, these events point towards the coming messianic kingdom of Christ our Lord Jesus as we know now, where the nations will be blessed through the promise offspring of Abraham Christ.
Abraham, which would be Christ, that told you in Galatians chapter 3 verse 16. God's word was to be spoken by Jonah to Nineveh, but in Jonah's disobedience, he testified about God to the sailors.

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As I said again, he told them who he was and he told them who he fears, which that didn't demonstrate, he did fear God. But God demonstrates his missional plan to see salvation extended to the sailors and all the nations and that rings true for us today.
So let us be alert, let us awake, be watchful and active in our faith, awaiting God-given opportunities. And I want to give a bit of insight into this.
[34:24] Before I came to be who Christ has called me to be, I too lived a life in South East London where my wickedness came up to God without my knowing as many other people in society without their knowing, walking in their own ignorance.

I used to participate and live a life of crime, drug dealing and many other savoury things that was wickedness that came up to God.
But when you're in a place in a state of blindness and darkness, you probably do not see that because you consider what is right in your own eyes as many people do outside.
But it was granted to the faithful church those who knew Jesus who have the word of Christ that is preached to them week in, week out. They hear what the Bible has to say about the saints and the sinners.
And they took that word out to the street because they heard it from God's word. And they preached that and they had the opportunity to see me, to stop me, share God's word with me.
[35:31] I heard God's word, didn't really understood it, but I heard God's word. And that was God in his kindness and his goodness to me, to allow me to hear his word.

And in the appropriate time, God revealed his truth to me and I'm standing here before you. Because this same message that I read here is the same message that he communicates to his church.
And I want to touch on also again Josiah. Josiah's mother, Josiah's just got married, our brother, Josiah's mother, I saw on a podcast, his mother was sharing that she said to a friend, can we read the Bible together?
I'd like to read the Bible with you. The friend rejected at the time thought, no, I don't want to read the Bible. But then weeks later or maybe even months after, they said, yeah, I'd like to take you up on that offer and read the Bible.
They sat down, they read the Bible for a while, I'm not sure how long, but eventually that person came to faith in Jesus Christ. And that is what God is saying.
[36:44] Whether they receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour or reject him, they are going to be accountable and they will still stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So it's important as a church that we seek how God would want to lead us and use us to proclaim and share his word.

The Ninevites, again, they were a barbaric people with atrocities and there's many people like that in this society. But we have the words that bring eternal life.
We have news about a loving God who loves his creation. So as God's word comes to us, he sends us to bring his word to others. So let us be encouraged and I pray that God would help us as we do mission in this community.
The third and final point now I just want to touch on, verse 17. So we see in Jonah's disobedience, in Jonah's running away, going in the opposite direction, verse 3 will tell us that he ran from the Lord and he's heading to Tarshish.
The ESV other version will say Tarshish three times and that's just really to highlight Tarshish is more Mediterranean Europe side.
[38:04] It's not going back into the Middle East where Nineveh is. He's going in a different direction and that's just highlighting his disobedience. Now with all of his disobedience, look at our wonderful, gracious God.

look what God does in verse 17. Jonah is outright disrespectful saying he fears God which his actions does not show that he fears God.
Some of us, we can resonate with that. Sometimes our action testifies contrary to what we say we are and how we live before God. but look what God does.
He provides a huge fish for Jonah so he doesn't drown. And that's how God is. God is a merciful God.
He's a gracious God. He's a loving and he's a kind God. Often we all know how we get it wrong. We know how we let God down. We often at times do not do exactly what we know is speaking and directing us to do.

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[39:14] But he still shows his grace, his mercy, his love and his kindness to us. And this is something that the nations could do with hearing and knowing. So that's God in this picture really.

He speaks to us church, he encourages us, he challenges us, wake up, wake up. Do we not acknowledge and aware that our God is right here with us?
And also let us continue to receive his grace and his mercy. There's no need to be condemned. Romans told us there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
So for time I'm just going to bring us to a close and summarize the conclusion. God's sovereignty. Although Jonah tried to run away from God, God was always in control.
And that's the same with our life. He's always in control, no matter the metaphorical storm, whatever's going on. By controlling the stormy seas and providing a fish, God displays his absolute yet loving guidance.
[40:22] Rather than running from God, trusting him with your past, your present and your future. Being disobedient and continuing in sin leads to disasters and a stormy life.

And that's exactly what's happening in the world. The world rejects our God. So there's disasters and storms, metaphorically, as well as real-time storms.
And that's because we live in a rebellious world that wants nothing to do with God. Saying yes to God brings new understanding of God and his purpose and plans for your life and this world. human or Jonah's rebellion evil brings pain and disaster. God's message of love and forgiveness is not just for us alone.
God loves people of the world who he created in his image. The Syrians, the Ninevites, they didn't deserve it in our eyes. But God was willing to spare them so they should repent.
[41:30] It's exactly the same for those who we might find it hard to love like or like because of their appearance, their behaviour, their values, their culture or their belief systems.

In his mercy, God did not reject Jonah for seeking to run from his assigned mission. God has great love, patience and forgiveness. God loves each of us even when we fail him.
But he also loves other people people, including those not of our group, our background, our race or denomination. When we accept his love, we must also learn to accept all those whom he loves. We will find it much easier to love others when we embrace and accept the love of God unconditionally. this kind of love comes from surrendering our lives to Jesus as our Lord and our Saviour.
This invitation awaits you today. All our ways are laid before God. Our self-seeking selfish and sin is right before God.
[42:42] Today's word is declared right before you in your very ears. Let us respond by calling upon God in repentance and faith in Jesus Christ who forgives us and show us forgiveness, kindness, mercy and grace.

So the application, take away what will take away hopefully. Know that God loves you dearly. I cannot even express that enough in words. God loves you dearly.
He chooses to speak to us through his word by his Holy Spirit. He knows everybody's language. He knows how to speak to you to get your attention, to speak right to your heart.
He speaks your language. Let us respond in obedience to what we hear so we grow in truth and knowledge and know God more intimately.
Continue hearing from God through reading his word and studying his word or even listening to his word. And wake up, let's wake up out of sleep.
[43:48] Let us be attentive, alert, watchful and active in our faith. Knowing God neither sleeps nor slumber but is willing and ready to use us for his glorious good.

Act upon the word of God that you hear and try not to second guess what you hear from him. And finally, take heart and be comforted.
God is merciful and provides a way for us when we trust in him. he always does. God will complete what he started in you despite the setbacks, the shortcomings and wrong turns we can often take. God is still invested in you and mean good for you and for your life. Be encouraged. Your God is the creator of all things and will never forsake you.
He continues to have a perfect plan for your life and you can trust him in your life. Don't run from him, run to him.
[44:53] Let me pray. Father God, we thank you for your word that we have just heard in the book of Jonah. And Lord, we do want to just ask for your forgiveness when we have second guessed

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you, when we have been disobedient and not carried out what you have spoken unto our hearts.

Lord, we thank you despite our shortcomings and wrongdoings, you continually provide a way for us, Lord, to draw us closer to you. Father, I pray that those who you may put upon our hearts and those in this community, Lord, give us the courage and the boldness, however, however you want to send us, however you may want us to testify, and share your good news with others.
Help us to do this, Lord, for we know we cannot do that of our own doing. And Lord, we thank you for what we've seen in the last months, Lord, with those who have testified that your word was sent to them, they heard your words and they came to know you and were baptized.
So Lord, for all that we've just heard today, we thank you, all praise and honour and glory belongs unto you and you alone. So Lord, I pray that you would just help us to listen, respond when we hear your voice, help us that we will be alert, attentive and awake.
And Lord, I thank you for your grace, your mercy, your loving kindness and steadfast love that endures towards us forever. Bless your people today, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.
[46:33] Amen.

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