



Jonah's Lament: A Journey Through the Deep

Date: Sunday 12th July

Speaker: Ruth Page

Key Verses: Jonah 1: 17- Jonah 2:10

Talk Summary:

Jonah reaches rock bottom

- Jonah hits rock bottom, because he has been running from God and in order to stop the storm that God has sent he asks the sailors to throw him overboard.
- Times of trouble can come because there are always consequences of our sin.
- But times of trouble also come for other reasons.
- God's plan to rescue us is always bigger than the reason we are in trouble and whatever the nature the trouble takes.
- But God's rescue plan might not always look like an easy answer or solution. Tim Keller describes the sea beast as a 'severe mercy'.
- It might seem like things are getting worse, but it is a place for encountering God.

Jonah's response

- Jonah prays a lament. A lament is a prayer that calls for help out of a place of pain.
- Lamenting teaches us to pray out of a place of honesty: We are real about where we are and what we feel.
- Lamenting is an act of faith, trusting God to hear us even when we seem in the darkest place.
- Lamenting teaches us that there are things that are bigger than us and we don't/can't understand.

Repentance

- Jonah's prayer is also about repentance and turning towards God.
- Jonah calls to mind God's name, character (gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love) and the place where he meets God (at the mercy seat).
- He remembers his own need of mercy.

- We need to also remember who God is and how he has helped us.
- Jonah declares, 'Salvation is of the Lord'.
- He cannot save himself and neither can we.
- Jonah's time inside the sea beast points forward to the story of Jesus and God's great rescue plan to triumph over sin and death forever. This is what gives us hope.

Worship

- Why not read Jonah's prayer (Jonah 2:2-9) and spend some time giving thanks for God's love and his salvation.

Word

1. Where was God in the hardest times of your life so far?
2. Do you find it easy to come to God honestly - with your grief, sadness, anger – or do you feel like you always have to be happy when you come to God? Why?
3. Do you find it easy to give God all the credit when things work out well for you? Do you find it easy to see that all you have is a result of God's mercy towards you? Why, why not?
4. What in this last week can you give thanks to God for?

Witness

- Jonah's prayer was a story of God's salvation. How might you share a story of when God has delivered you with those that might not know him yet?

Further Resources:

- How to Lament: https://downloads.24-7prayer.com/prayer_course/2019/resources/pdfs/16%20How%20to%20Lament.pdf
- Praying the Psalms: https://downloads.24-7prayer.com/prayer_course/2019/resources/pdfs/5%20How%20to%20Pray%20the%20Psalms.pdf

Prophetic words that were shared on Sunday:

You may want to share these with your group and see if any of them resonate with anyone. Then take time to pray for each other.

- Healing for a Digestion problem
- Return of issue after 12 months. Now solution awaits.
- Trapped in disappointment, new opportunity.
- "How lovely are Your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts! My soul (my life, my inner self) longs for and greatly desires the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God."
Psalms 84:1-2 AMP

We sometimes think of the church building as being the 'courts of the Lord' but God's 'house' is wherever He is Lord - including our living rooms! I like how here in the Amplified Version, 'dwelling places' is plural, as opposed to singular in the NIV. In this time, God is expanding His dwelling places - how beautiful when we come across them in unexpected places.

- The tribe of Manasseh was split in half.
One half “God helped them as they fought...because they cried out to him during the battle....many were killed, because the battle was God’s.” And they lived in their home country. The other half were not faithful to God, but worshipped other gods so God exiled them to a foreign land. I feel like this could speak to two things.
 - 1) Cry out to God in the midst of the battle. The battle is never pretty, still can be violent, but your God will fight for you.
 - 2) in keeping with the Dwelling theme, those who trust God will feel at home no matter the circumstances. But if we live without trusting God, or trusting other ‘gods’ (idols, etc) we may not feel at home, more feel like we’re living in a foreign land.
- As we were praying I was just reminded of how God was speaking to me in the past few weeks with the word rooted and the verse I got with that was Eph 3:16-19 "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."