

October 25th, 2009
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Serving the Master of the Mission
Sermon #3 Title: The Miracles God Commands
Sermon #3 Text: (Jonah)

I don't have to tell you that God always wins. I do want to remind you that God does not always win naturally. Sometimes He wins supernaturally. In studying the book of Jonah, we have looked at the Man God Calls, and the Ministry God Chooses. Today I want to show you the Miracles that God Commands.

Any missionary, preacher, or servant of the Lord knows that sometimes in serving Him God just plainly intervenes. Sometimes He intervenes with a miracle of blessing that just cannot be explained. Sometimes He intervenes with a disciplinary miracle to set his man back on course. Nonetheless, our Master will use the Miraculous to see to it that He will win in the end.

Miracles are the very reason that some people reject the story of Jonah. – They just do not believe it.

- I've never understood that. It should be no small thing to accept if the Bible is what it says that it is. – If it is the Word of God, and I know that it is, then whatever it says about the Work of God should be no problem whatsoever.

Now you may be like a man that Vance Havner describes. Sitting there down and out wondering where God and His miracles are for you. But wondering where they are, is far better than not wondering at all.

All of that being said I want to tell you today that sometimes, God will use the Miraculous to achieve His mission.

In this wonderful story of Jonah I want you to see three things that caused God to intervene miraculously in the events of Jonah.

I. The Determination of the Master

*Note – Without doubt, the Lord will have His way, and sometimes, God will simply impose His will on your circumstances until you make the right decision.

A. The Movement of the Lord 1:4; 2:1

*Note – All throughout this book, you see the Lord moving things around from heaven.

- 1.) 1:4 – “But the Lord sent out a great wind”
- 2.) 1:17 – “the Lord had prepared a great fish”
- 3.) 4:6 – “the Lord prepared a gourd”
- 4.) 4:7 – “the Lord prepared a worm”
- 5.) 4:8 – “the Lord prepared an east wind.”

*Note – Now there are two lessons in these sets of facts.

a.) God is an Aggressive God! He is not a passive observer just gently flowing along with circumstances. When He purposes, He will rise from His “apparent” inactivity, and become active!

*Note – Now God is never inactive, He just does not always move so obviously. He will move obviously when He needs to.

b.) He will use whatever means necessary!

*Note – All of nature is at God's beck and call. There are no laws of physics, or laws of chemistry, or laws of science, there are only laws of God, and they are all in subjection to His Divine Will.

(1.) The psalmist declared in Psalm 135:7 – “He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.

(2.) Nahum the prophet wrote in 1:3 – “the Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and the in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.”

*Note – A Determined God came after a Disobedient Servant with the Dynamics of His own creation, and don’t think God can’t do that again.

B. The Measure of the Lord 1:15 - “ceased from her raging”

1.) This was a measured miracle!

a.) God never overdoes it, and He never undershoots it.

2.) “the ship was like to be broken” or “about to be broken” – but it was not broken.

*Note – God miracles always come in measured amounts, and it is always the right measurement.

C. The Mercy of the Lord

1.) What was the purpose of this storm?

*Note – Well, preacher, it was to catch old Jonah! It was to get that rebel back on the right track.

2.) Not necessarily . . .

a.) Jonah was already caught. – He never left the presence of the Lord in the ultimate sense.

b.) It was to get Jonah in the water so the fish could get him. – Not necessarily, because sinking the boat would accomplish that.

3.) The Purpose of the storm was to Spare the mariners!

a.) Jonah was a willing rebel, the mariners were ignorant pagans.

*Note – God could have destroyed the boat, and accomplish the same thing. Instead He was doing two things:

#1 – He was separating his man out for judgment.

#2 – He was sparing the other men from judgment.

* - Now they weren’t spared completely. –

~they lost their cargo

~they potentially lost their customer

*Note – Their pagan faith cost them financially. Had they turned to the Lord God of Heaven from the beginning they would have stopped their losses.

*Never let it be missed – phony faith will ultimately cost.

*Note – Now that being said – You can put this down big plain and straight. Miracles may be used by the Determination of the Master!

II. The Desperation of the Mission

*Note – There is another factor in the Lord’s using of the miraculous. The Desperation of the Mission. – This was a life or death mission, and time was of the essence.

A. Impending Judgment

1.) “Their wickedness is come up before me.”

2.) “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”

*Note – Nineveh was nearly out of Grace! They had gone as far as mercy could go, and Justice and Judgment were demanding their day.

a.) As the Lord said of Babylon in Revelation 18:5 – “Her sins have reached unto heaven; and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

*Note – The direction of the people demanded destruction of the people, and the righteousness of God required His action.

- For God's Purpose, Jonah was the chosen messenger to deliver His message.

*Note – Now don't get the wrong idea and think that God is desperate He is not! It was Nineveh who was in a desperate situation, and in desperate need of a missionary.

*Note- Man has no more of a desperate need than a Word from the Lord!

- you may be thinking right now, I need some money
- no you don't you need to Hear from the Lord.

- you may be thinking right now, I need physical health – no you don't you need to Hear from the Lord.

*Note – You are never in the condition that you think you are in, you are always in the condition that the Lord says that you are in, and your greatest need is to know where you stand with Him, and what you need to do about it.

- The mission is to tell lost people that they are separated from God, and that they are headed for a judgment, and by the Faith in Christ that leads to Repentance, you can be saved from judgment and restored back to God.

B. Impaired Discernment

1.) "more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand."

*Note – Language scholars tell us that this is speaking of the children of Nineveh.

a.) The Lord essentially said to Jonah, "do you not think that I should spare them for their children's sake?"

*Note – That was the last word recorded in this book. That seemed to end the entire discussion!

*Note – If there is no compassion for the adults, what then about the children?

- They knew no different than the evil of their parents.

- They were victims of the same evil that Jonah's people had suffered.

- Would not saving the children, CHANGE the nation?

*Note – All of that being said, The impending judgment and the children of the nation declared the desperation of the Mission!

*Note – Finally, the third factor in the Lord's use of the miraculous was:

III. The Destination of his Man

*Note – The mission was not the only thing that God was after, but also the man! – God was working in Jonah's life as well.

*Note – Even when God is working "through" someone, He is at the same time working "on" someone.

A. He Captured Jonah's Course

*Note – Don't get the idea that all God does is Calm storms. Sometimes He creates them. – As a matter of fact in this very story He created two of them.

1.) 1:4, and 4:8 – God sent storms into Jonah's journey.

2.) Psalm 107:24-29 the psalmist described the God's sovereignty over sailors. – "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

²⁴ These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

²⁵ For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

²⁶ They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

²⁷ They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.

²⁸ Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

²⁹ He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

*Note – Now listen. – Get rid of the idea that ALL miracles are white clouds and silver lining. Sometimes God miraculously ENDANGERS.

- When we think of miracles we think of the Parting of the Red Sea – Which God opened for the Israelites, and God CLOSED on the Egyptians.

- We think of turning Water into Wine, rather than the BLINDING of the man named Saul.

- We think of Jesus walking on Water rather than the miracle of God silencing Zechariah!

*Note – It is the God that STILLs the STORM that STARTS the STORM!

*Note – God may very well cut off your course, to correct your cause!

B. He Corrected Jonah's Cause

- 1.) "So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the Word of the Lord."

*Note – But before Jonah went, He went through something else.

- a.) 3:7 – "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple."

*Note – God took Jonah to the bottom of His heart because that is the only place a change can ever be made!

- 2.) Until the heart changes, nothing changes.

- a.) Proverbs 4:23 tells us that out of the heart, "flows all the issues of life."

*Note – God always means business, and if you can't mean business here, He'll take you wherever you need to go to mean it.

C. He Convicted Jonah's Case

- 1.) There was no amount of arguing or reasoning in this world that would ever justify Jonah's actions, Jonah's feelings, or Jonah's decisions.

Conclusion: Somebody said one time, "It is never right to do wrong, and it is never wrong to do right."

The Master of the Mission is that Master of the Miraculous. – It is patently foolish for any man woman boy or girl to think that they can run from the Lord.

- But I want to tell you this. – He didn't chase Jonah down to hurt him, He chased Jonah down to help him.