

this out as outlined in Psalm 1.

4. Jonah RUNNING AGAINST God. 4:1-11.

Now here is a real enigma--how can a saint enjoy the blessings of His perfect will and then renounce them? How is it that one may experience joy in the Holy Spirit and then turn from Him? This is what Jonah did. Mark well his actions. He moved against:-

- a. God's character. (v.2). God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, full of kindness, does not delight in judgment. What a God! How could one possibly oppose Him? Jonah, like the rest of us, demonstrated how much men are unlike the Lord. Oh, to be like HIM!
- b. God's concern. (v.11). The Lord is concerned with global and cosmic interests. All are precious to Him, even our enemies! Jonah could not get this into his heart!

Conclusion. The will of God. That's the big point. It is our largest opportunity. Oh, to be found in its fullness and to delight therein. Wherever you are, think of His will. First it is His will that you should be saved from your sins (2Peter 3:9). Then it is His will for you to keep pace with Him (Rom. 12:1, 2). How are you running now? Check yourself carefully and take the action necessary to bring Him the greatest glory. Amen.

THE BOOK OF JONAH

"The Running Prophet"
Entire Book

Introduction

1. Here is a book which has really come under the scathing attacks of the critics! By the power of God the testimony of the Lord has stood firm.
2. Jonah was an accredited mouthpiece for God to the northern kingdom during the sinful days of Jeroboam II (782-753 B.C.; 2 Kings 14:24-27). He was a patriot of the first order.
3. The life of Jonah is a challenge to every child of God. The reason is that the will of God is so evidently being considered. As one reads the Book, he becomes impressed with the four actions taken by the prophet in connection with God's will for his life. Study them carefully and you will personally be blessed:-

1. Jonah RUNNING FROM God. 1:1-17.

Here Jonah is seen as a fugitive from the Lord. Two specifics are noted to show that this is true. The prophet ran from:-

a. The Word of God. 1:1, 2.

The Word of the Lord to the prophet is clearly stated: arise, go, cry. These are simple terms and easy to understand. BUT how tragic--Jonah was disobedient to them (cf. John 10:27, 28). Obedience is really the essence of true belief!

b. The presence of God. 1:3, 10.

It must be admitted that one cannot flee from God's presence (cf. Psa. 139). What Jonah did do was move out from the orbit of obedience to the service of the Lord. The progressive decline in the life of the prophet is clearly noted: he went down, he found, he paid, he went down into (v.3).

Broken fellowship and service is not usually an instantaneous matter. It is a dead process.

2. Jonah RUNNING TO God. 2:1-10.

From the fugitive of the first chapter, Jonah now moves to demonstrate his heart as a plaintiff before God. How his heart reaches out for the Lord! He ran to:-

a. Pray. Careful reading of the prayer notes that it includes these elements:

- 1) A prepared heart (v.2) This is marked by his affliction. Normally real PRAYER is not experienced until one is desperate!
- 2) A pleading heart (v.2) He cried unto the Lord. Depth of feeling reaches to the heavens! It is sad to write, but so true, the days of crying before the Throne of God seem all but gone! One wonders how many hearts know the groaning of the Spirit (Rom. 8:26).
- 3) A pierced heart (v.9) So driven thru was Jonah that he genuinely remembered the Lord. When all else faded, he turned again to the Lord and found Him available!

b. Promise. Jonah's promise included:-

- 1) Repentance (v.4) He was intent on looking again to the Lord. It meant he would turn from his own path to the Lord's! True repentance is just this--turning to God from self!
- 2) Sacrifice. (v.9) From the private feelings of repentance, Jonah moved to show them. He reinstated the remembrance of the Levitical offerings. This showed his public intention with the Lord.
- 3) Service (v.9) This is the full expression of God's claim upon the prophet's life. Nothing was kept back!

3. Jonah RUNNING WITH God. 3:1-10.

Here is a glorious picture of one who desires to experience the will of God. What blessing is evidenced here. Jonah ran with God to:-

a. Preach. True preaching involves:-

- 1) A sent preacher (v.1) No sense preaching if God has not sent you! This is the single true mark of a servant of God. Mark the fact that God had never changed his original commitment to Jonah.
- 2) A select people (v.2) God had a specific group to whom Jonah was to preach. No other prophet would do. It is important that one be certain he is where God wants him.
- 3) A sound proclamation (v.2) What Jonah spoke was important too. It had to be exactly what the Lord had bidden him (cf. Num. 22:18).

b. Perform. Here is a marvelous truth. As Jonah did what God told him to do, he had fantastic results. Here they are:-

- 1) The coming of the Word (v.6)
- 2) The conviction of the soul (vv. 7-9). In their utter uncertainty, they turned to God and obtained certain mercy.
- 3) The confidence in God (v.5) The active faith of the Ninevites is abundantly evident here.
- 4) The conduct of good work (v.10) It's really great to read how lives were changed by the miracle working power of God!

NOTE: It will be everlastingly true that the one who enjoys the will of God will flourish therein. Check