



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO US

There are six very important issues that are used in the book of Jonah that have a lot of relevance to you and I today.

1. As we looked at above this story in the pages in the Book of Jonah foretells the resurrection of Jesus Christ Himself. The future death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is talked about throughout the Old Testament and this one small book is a great example of how God showed the coming of Christ in a very special way.

2. This little Book of Jonah teaches that salvation is not by works, but by faith which leads to repentance. One of the most enlightening statements in the Book of Jonah is in chapter. 2 verse 9, "Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9). Jonah acknowledges that God is the author of salvation; He is the architect.

3. Another amazing thing we see in this book is God's purpose of grace will not be stopped. Yes, Jonah refused to go to Nineveh as God had commanded him, but God wasn't going to stop because of one man, He still going to get the message to Nineveh. God used a selfish man that had not planned to go to Nineveh to carry His message of repentance and salvation to a sinful people.

4. It is amazing that God shows us in the pages of Jonah that He will not throw us away even when we've been unfaithful. God may not use us as He had wanted and we may never be used again (It's really our choice), but "He will not leave you or forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6). When we watch athletics we can see that there are far more players that are on the sidelines than are on the field or floor. Those players are still on the team, they are just not being used all the time. They are called into the game when they are needed. God may bench us when we've failed to follow through with what He's called us to. However we are still on the team and He will call on us again and we have a chance to play when we are ready. God wants us on the court doing His work all the time. The rest is up to us.

5. One of the greatest things we can know about God us found in chapter 4 verse 2 of this Book of Jonah. As children we learn about the great fish and Jonah being swallowed by it. But the most important lease might be found in this one verse.

"Then he prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was this not what I said when I was still in my *own* country? Therefore in anticipation *of this* I fled to Tarshish, since I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in mercy, and One who relents of disaster." Jonah 4:2

Our God is a God of love and compassion. He is longsuffering and gives us more than ample opportunity to repent from sin. Even when Jonah turned his back on God and ran in the opposite direction, God wanted him back. He is a God of Love.

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6. Lastly, God is a God of everyone. The people of Nineveh were not part of the family of the Israelites, God's chosen people. Yet He loved them enough to send them a salvation message through Jonah. He knows that we will fail in our lives, the greatest "heroes" of the Bible failed. And yet God loves us enough to want us back in a close personal relationship with Him. He wants us back on the court fulfilling His plans.