**UNDERSTANDING PURPOSE**

**Text: Jonah 1:1-17**

**INTRO:**

* Pro 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.
* Pro 2:11 Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.

**AIM:**

**FOR US TO UNDERSTAND PURPOSE**

**FOR US NOT TO IGNORE PURPOSE**

**I. GOD’S PURPOSE FOR JONAH’S ERRAND**

* To warn the Ninevites that they will be overthrown in forty days
  + Jonah 3:5
* God is gracious and merciful
  + -Jonah 4:2
* Slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness-v 2
* One who relents from doing harm-v 2
* Jonah has to cry out against them for their wickedness has come up before God.

**II. JONAH’S PURPOSE**

* Go to Tarshish and flee from the presence of the Lord-v 3
* To live on your purpose is leaving the presence of God.
* He went down to Joppa where he found a ship going to Tarshish
* He paid his fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.
* Nineveh is the capital of Syria
* 2Ki 13:3 Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael, all [their] days.
* 2Ki 13:4 So Jehoahaz pleaded with the LORD, and the LORD listened to him; for He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.

**III. THE LORD’S PURPOSE PREVAILS**

* The Lord sent out a great wind on the sea-v 4
* There was a mighty tempest on the sea
* The ship was about to be broken up.
* Living out of God’s purpose is very costly/expensive.
* Majority of us are living against all odds because we insist to live on our own purpose.
* Then the mariners were afraid-v 5
* Every man cried out to his god-v 5
* Jonah was fast asleep as if he wasn’t affected-v 5
* The captain told Jonah to call on his God perhaps He will consider them-v 6
* They cast lots to know whose cause the trouble was-v 7
* The lot fell on Jonah-v 7
* You cannot keep running away from the Lord and you can’t hide from Him
* Jonah told them who he was and that he fled from the presence of the Lord.

**IV. GOD’S PURPOSE FOR THE STORM**

**1.To bring us back to God’s purpose**

* He told them to throw him into the sea, then the sea will be calm for them-v 12
* For I know this great tempest is BECAUSE OF ME-V 12
* Imagine this church as a boat full of Jonah (People living out of God’s purpose)
* Imagine how difficult life would be if Jonah denied he was the cause-v 13

**2. For us to cry out to God in prayer-v 14**

* Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish’s belly- 2:1
* Do not wait until the only chance for you to pray would be the fish’s belly.
* He cried to the Lord because of his affliction-v 2

**3. For us to fear the Lord- v 1:16**

**4. For us to desire His holy temple- 2:4**

* Psalm 84:10 For a day in Your courts [is] better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

**5. For us to remember the Lord- 2:7**

* When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord;
* And my prayer went up to You, into your holy temple
* Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.
* Psalm 119:71 [It is] good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.

**6. For us to sacrifice to God with the voice of thanksgiving-2:9**

* Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of [our] lips, giving thanks to His name.
* Psalm 148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.
* I Samuel 16:23

**7. For us to pay our vows- 2:9**

* Psalm 50:14 Offer to God thanksgiving, And pay your vows to the Most High.
* Psalm 66:13 I will go into Your house with burnt offerings; I will pay You my vows,
* Psalm 66:14 Which my lips have uttered And my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble.
* Ecclesiastes 5:4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For [He has] no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed--
* Ecclesiastes 5:5 Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

**8. For us to acknowledge Salvation from the Lord- 2:9**

**V. GOD’S PROVISION FOR HIS PURPOSE**

* When God calls, He provide
* Pro 16:9 A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.
* He prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah-17
* Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights-v 17
* The Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah in Nineveh-2:10
* Gen 1:28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.“
* He will still bless us even if we don’t live on His purpose by grace but the abundant blessing flows by living on His purpose.
* Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
* Ephesians 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
* VI. GOD’S ORIGINAL PURPOSE IN CREATING MANKIND
* To live within His presence
* Gen 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.
* Rev 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.
* Rev 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
* Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them [and be] their God.
* When He sent Jonah to Nineveh, HE just wanted them to be back to Him.
* The people of Nineveh turned from their evil way and from violence- 3:8

**VII. PURPOSE ACCOMPLISHED**

* They turned from their evil way-3:10
* God relented from the disaster that He had said that He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.
* 120,000 innocent people spared from being overthrown-4:11
* God has always prepared something for to achieve His purpose.
* He prepared a great fish-1:17
* He prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for His head-4:6
* Everyone knows what he was, but he still don’t “know why he was”
* He’d rather die that to live and not know why.
* Ecclesiastes 1:2 "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.“
* IV. KINGDOM IS STILL OUR PURPOSE
* No wonder He commands us to seek it first.
* Live a life of significance or purpose
* God prepared a worm and it damaged the plant and it withered-4:7
* God prepared a vehement east wind
* The sun beat on Jonah’s head, so that he grew faint
* In other words, everything He has done is a preparation for the accomplishment of His purpose.

**CHALLENGE:**

* When things happen, do you consider its purpose?
* Will you stick on God’s purpose or continue in misery by living on your own purpose?

**CONCLUSION:**

* **Pro 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.**