



JONAH



Jonah's Disobedience - Jonah 1 (NASB)

1The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, 2"Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me." 3But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

Jonah flees from Jerusalem to Joppa and takes a boat north to Tarshish aka Tarsus the city the apostle Paul is from. Going "down" is a terminology used whenever leaving Jerusalem and any time you go to Jerusalem it is called going "up". He is fleeing "the presence of the Lord" as if one could ever truly escape the presence of the Lord.

Was there ever a time in your life when you ran from God?

Have you ever been given clear direction and totally done the opposite? Why?



Jonah sleeping on a boat - Jonah 1:4-6

4The Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up. 5Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, laid down and fallen sound asleep. 6So the captain approached him and said, "How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will.

Jesus sleeping on a boat - Matt 8:23

23When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. 25 And they came to *Him* and woke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!" 26 He *said to them, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. 27 The men were amazed, and said, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

In the midst of a storm, are you sleeping? HOW?

What does Jesus say about how to act in the midst of a storm?

What prevents you from having that faith?

Jonah's shipmates are not happy - Jonah 1:7-12

7Each man said to his mate, "Come, let us cast lots so we may learn on whose account this calamity has struck us." So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. 8Then they said to him, "Tell us, now! On whose account has this calamity struck us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" 9He said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land." 10Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, "How could you do this?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

They knew he was running because he said he was a hebrew. What is the significance of this?

11So they said to him, "What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?"—for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy. 12He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that on account of me this great storm has come upon you."

What is the difference in riding with Jesus and running from him in the midst of the storms?

Man overboard - Jonah 1:13-16

13However, the men rowed desperately to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming even stormier against them. 14Then they called on the Lord and said, "We earnestly pray, O Lord, do not let us perish on account of this man's life and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, O Lord, have done as You have pleased." 15So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. 16Then the men feared the Lord greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

They did not want to throw Jonah over board because they did not want to be guilty of murder and theft.

17And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

The word "appointed" here is the word used for preparing a meal. However the sentence seems to be worded backwards. It should say the Lord appointed Jonah for the fish, knowing this is no mistake what are the implications of the statement here? Knowing the fish ultimately saves Jonah's life.

Matthew 12:40

40 for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.



PRAY * RENEW * COMMIT - Jonah 2

Jonah 1 (Recap) - Jonah disobeys God, gets on a ship, HUGE storm, Jonah asks to be thrown overboard, and gets swallowed by a fish.

Jonah 2:1-4 (CEB)

¹Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish: ²“I called out to the LORD in my distress, and he answered me. From the belly of the underworld (Sheol) I cried out for help; you have heard my voice. ³You had cast me into the depths in the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounds me. All your strong waves and rushing water passed over me. ⁴So I said, ‘I have been driven away from your sight. Will I ever again look on your holy temple?

Q. What is the significance of the Holy temple, that Jonah would ponder it from the depths?

Jonah 2:5-10 (CEB)

⁵Waters have grasped me to the point of death; the deep surrounds me. Seaweed is wrapped around my head ⁶at the base of the underseamountains. I have sunk down to the underworld; its bars held me with no end in sight. But you brought me out of the pit.’ ⁷When my endurance was weakening, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, to your holy temple. ⁸Those deceived by worthless things lose their chance for mercy. ⁹But me, I will offer a sacrifice to you with a voice of thanks. That which I have promised, I will pay. Deliverance belongs to the LORD!” ¹⁰Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto the dry land.

PRAY:

Q. How do you pray? Is it intimate or just routine?

Q. Why did Jonah pray? How did Jonah pray? Where did Jonah pray?

RENEW:

Q. Why is it important to study God’s Word? How can we relate this to Jonah?

Q. What does it take to bring that out?

Our thoughts should be directed from God’s Word. Tell me God Word wasn’t present through Jonah...

<p>²“I called out to the LORD in my distress, and he answered me. From the belly of the underworld (Sheol) I cried out for help; you have heard my voice.</p>	<p>If the Lord hadn’t helped me, I would live instantly in total silence(dumah or silence is one of the names of the underworld in Hebrew). Psalm 94:17</p>
<p>³You had cast me into the depths in the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounds me. All your strong waves and rushing water passed over me.</p>	<p>Deep called to deep at the noise of your waterfalls; all your massive waves surged over me. Pslams 42:3</p>

⁴ So I said, 'I have been driven away from your sight. Will I ever again look on your holy temple?	When I was panicked, I said, "I'm cut off from your eyes!" But you heard my request for mercy when I cried out to you for help. Pslams 31:22
⁵ Waters have grasped me to the point of death; the deep surrounds me. Seaweed is wrapped around my head	Save me, God, because the waters have reached my neck! Pslams 69:1
⁷ When my endurance was weakening, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, to your holy temple.	God heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds. Pslams 147:3
⁸ Those deceived by worthless things lose their chance for mercy.	I hate those who embrace what is completely worthless. I myself trust the Lord. Pslams 31:6
⁹ But me, I will offer a sacrifice to you with a voice of thanks. That which I have promised, I will pay. Deliverance belongs to the LORD!"	Rescue comes from the Lord! May your blessing be on your people! Selah. Pslams 3:8

COMMIT:

This whole chapter has brought Jonah to understand that he had turned his back on God, but God had shown His mercy. Jonah renews his commitment to God v2:9.

Q. Have you ever broken a commitment? Did you wish you hadn't? Was someone upset with your choice?

Even if you made that commitment to God and broke it, He is right here waiting for you. He never left you! You simply took your eyes off Him.

Q. Are you ready to recommit? Or commit for the first time?

Prayer of Salvation - Say It & Mean It Now!

If you do, don't wait a moment longer to start your new life in Jesus Christ. Remember, this prayer is not a magical formula. You are simply expressing your heart to God. Pray this with us:

"Father, I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you. Please forgive me, and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."



Jonah 3:1-2 1 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you.”

This is like unto Gen 12: Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you;

The command to Abram and to Jonah are similar in that the Lord doesn't tell them the whole picture at the same time.

Q. Has there ever been a time in your life when The Lord led you in something that you didn't know how it was going to turn out and you just had to go by faith?

Jonah 3:3-4 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days’ walk. 4 Then Jonah began to go through the city one day’s walk; and he cried out and said, “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown.”

Nineveh was about to be overthrown by Assur which is the capital of Assyria. This all takes place about 20 years before the northern Israeli kingdoms are overthrown and taken into the Assyrian captivity. Nineveh is actually a defence for the Northern half of Israel from the Assyrian conquest. In order to advance to Israel they have to go through Nineveh. Hence Jonah’s original refusal was actually to the detriment of the kingdom of Israel as a whole.

Q. Is there a time in your life when you refused to do something God wanted you to do that ended up being detrimental to you, your family, your friends, and those around you?

Jonah 3:5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. 33 “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ **for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,**” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

Nineveh’s Repentance echoes the promise of the Lord for the new covenant which we find in Christ.

Jonah 3:6-10 6When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered *himself* with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. 7 He issued a proclamation and it said,

“In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. 8 But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God EARNESTLY that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. 9 Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish.” 10 When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do *it*.

Even the wicked can be saved if they earnestly repent. No one is beyond redemption and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ



Chapter 1: Jonah runs away from God.

Chapter 2: Jonah runs smack into God.

Chapter 3: Jonah somewhat grudgingly obeys God.

Jonah's Anger and at The Lord's Mercy – Jonah 4:1-10 (NLT)

⁴ This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry. ² So he complained to the Lord about it: "Didn't I say before I left home that you would do this, Lord? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people. ³ Just kill me now, Lord! I'd rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen." ⁴ The Lord replied, "Is it right for you to be angry about this?"

Q. Have you ever tried to move God off his throne and put yourself there instead? Q. Have you ever tried to disregard everything that God has said about himself and his commands, because we thought we knew better? You know, every time we sin, that is exactly what we are doing. We are telling God that he does not know what is right and good, and we know better, and so we are going to do our own thing.

⁵ Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see what would happen to the city. ⁶ And the Lord God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there, and soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah's head, shading him from the sun. This eased his discomfort, and Jonah was very grateful for the plant.

⁷ But God also arranged for a worm! The next morning at dawn the worm ate through the stem of the plant so that it withered away. ⁹ And as the sun grew hot, God arranged for a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah. The sun beat down on his head until he grew faint and wished to die. "Death is certainly better than living like this!" he exclaimed. ⁹ Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?" "Yes," Jonah retorted, "even angry enough to die!"

Do you get angry with God when...

- **You think you deserve something from God and find him guilty for not giving it to you.**
- **You think someone else to be unworthy and get angry with God for giving them blessings they don't deserve.**
- **God takes away some blessing from you, which you think He had no right to remove. a pet, our health, our money, our job, a loved one, our dreams, our plans**

All of these things were true of Jonah here, and he was angry with God. So now, since God finally got a response out of Jonah, God is going to teach Jonah a lesson.

¹⁰ Then the Lord said, "You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly. ¹¹ But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?"

It is about God and his dealings with a man whose heart is cold. Jonah wanted the city to be destroyed and did not care for anyone in the city. But he did care for a plant. And God is saying, "Jonah, look what you are saying. You did not cause the plant to grow, and yet you loved it and wanted it to survive. Neither did you cause Nineveh to grow, and yet you want it to be destroyed. And Nineveh is full of 120,000 people who do not know their right hand from their left. In other words, they are ignorant about me and about my requirements. They do not know good from evil. Yet if you had to choose between 120,000 people and a plant, you would pick the plant? The book closes with one final question from God: "Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?" What is this story about?

The story is about you and me. The text leaves us hanging because it asks the question, "What about you? What would you do if you were in Jonah's place? What does God see in your heart?"

What do you love? What are your priorities? Do you love your car, sports, or making money more than you love your family? Are you more concerned with how you look, or the clothes you have than the welfare of your neighbors? Are you more concerned with your personal security or comfort than helping others who might need to hear the Gospel?

Here is the question the text asks of you:

What are you concerned about?

What is God concerned about? Do these match? If not, you better look at your heart, because God's concerns do not change, and He is on a mission to change

your heart. He is not so much concerned with where you are, or what you do, but in who you are. The question is not "Where can God use me the most, but where can God change me the most?" God's will is not necessarily a place, but a heart or a character. Who do you hate? What does God want of you in regard to them?

Look into your own heart today. Examine your motivations and fears. Examine your willingness to obey God. Is God after your heart? Do you harbor resentment and hard feelings toward a specific person or group of people?