

Jonah 1 (NIV)
“Jonah, More Than A Whale Of A Story”
19 January 2025

It's good to be back. Karla and I had a delightful time at your Holiday Luncheon in December. Thank you for inviting us. Karla is here today in spirit, but she is physically at the homestead nursing her new knee. She is six days post-op, so is a homebound gal. Please pray for her full and quick recovery. Her goal is to gracefully perform well during the Mother-Son dance at Regan and Erica's wedding in August. SELAH!

Welcome 2025. We have a new year of His blessing, His joy, and His hope.

Yet, despite His Blessed Assurance we Christians are often stuck from moving forward in our faith or worse we move backwards because we have wonders, questions, and fears that God has not yet answered. We think God has not fully thought through His plan for us, so subtly or abrasively we think...

“God, you don't fully understand!”

“God, what about the risk.”

“God, I like where I am, who I with, what I'm doing. It's warm and cozy here.” How, when, why are you leading me moving me in that direction?

At times, we are all in with God our Trip Tik is fully outlined in yellow or our GPS shows the shortest route without any road construction, accidents, or weather problems. Lord, I want to assure you that I'm all in on all easy travels and fun adventures. Lord, I'll “go” if.....

Aren't you glad that not everyone in the Bible responded that way.

Arnt you glad

That Abraham started walking when God said, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

That Daniel prayed despite the threats.

That Shadrach, Meshach and Abendigo did not bow down,

Mary responded to Gabriel by saying, “Let it be to me according to your word.”

That Joseph listened to the Angel of God and took Mary as his wife

That Jesus himself did not pass the cup but did His Father's will.

Let us Pray

Thank you Jesus for calling us today. Give us peace, so we can hear you. Give us the courage to respond to you. Give us the strength to follow through with you. Give us victory in your calling.

And when we feel hesitant or afraid let us remember...
Because the Tomb is empty, EVERYthing is going to be OKAY.
Amen!

I love to set the stage of any Biblical reading or teaching with a time, location and condition
Today's reading happens
When did this story happen: 786-746 BC
How do we know:

A. 2 Kings 14:23-25

Jeroboam II King of Israel

²³ In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel became king in Samaria, and he reigned forty-one years. ²⁴ He did evil in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. **²⁵ He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Dead Sea,^[a] in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hopher.**

B. Matthew 12:38-41

Jesus Tells about Jonah

³⁸ Then some of the teachers of the Law and the proud religious law-keepers said to Jesus, "Teacher, we would like to have you do something special for us to see." ³⁹ He said to them, "The sinful people of this day look for something special to see. There will be nothing special to see but the powerful works of the early preacher Jonah. ⁴⁰ Jonah was three days and three nights in the stomach of a big fish. The Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the grave also. ⁴¹ The men of the city of Nineveh will stand up with the people of this day on the day men stand before God. Those men will say these people are guilty because the men of Nineveh were sorry for their sins and turned from them when Jonah preached. And see, someone greater than Jonah is here!

Read first line

1. "Son of Amittai"...means his father was also a prophet. Which tells us that Jonah saw the work of a prophet through his father
2. Prophet means "ones who receives a message from God and shares it. The ordinary Hebrew word for prophet is *nabi*, derived from a verb signifying "to bubble forth" like a fountain; hence the word means one who *announces* or *pours forth* the declarations of God.
3. To clarify a prophet does not predict the future, but rather reveals it

Per the 2 Kings verse, we know Jonah had already prophesized DIRECTLY with the King. Furthermore, the King agreed to do what Jonah had said. In this action King Jeroboam II regained @250% on Northern Kingdom.

So, Jonah had seen his Dad's "success" and had personally responded to God...leading to the King regaining the full Northern Kingdom

Yet, despite this "SUCCESS" what was Jonah's response when God told him to go to Ninevah?

Jonah literally ran away.

Why? Why?

- a. Assyria was the world ruler
- b. Assyria was extremely evil...equivalent to modern day terrorists...brutal, torturous, and threatening

Fun Fact:...this is the first biblical account of a Jewish person sent to "evangelize to a foreign land."

This was a shock on principle.

Certainly, reminds us how the Jews thought the Messiah was coming to rescue the Jews...only to find out Jesus came to save all, Jew and gentile.

Instead Jonah "Ran away from the Lord"

Instead of going east 550 miles to Nineveh, Jonah headed west 2,500 miles to Tarshish

It would be like a Spokaneite be told to go to Banff Canada.....but instead heading to New Orleans

First Jonah traveled on foot to Joppa, modern day Tel Aviv, sixty miles south. Lots of thinking time on a sixty-mile walk

Have you ever found yourself being opposed to God's plan for your life?

The old head down, look at the ground, back out of the room, turn the music up louder, immediately start being busy...maybe even doing other “holy” things.
HMMMM!

Then Jonah PAID a fair to gentile sailors to travel 2,500 miles to the furthest distance possible in the Mediterranean Sea. Though there is some question as to exactly where Tarshish is located, most scholars believe is in the southern most tip of Spain where the Mediterranean meets the Atlantic Ocean. Literally, Jonah is going as far as he knows is possible to flee from God.

You may be thinking...Jonah is fleeing from Ninevah, but look verse 3

Jonah 1:3 says “...Jonah went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to “**flee from the LORD.**” Jonah was not running from Ninevah, but rather from God.

Interesting that Jonah could even momentarily think he could flee from the Lord. Look at verse 1

Jonah 1:1 “**1** The word of the LORD came to Jonah...” Jonah was just living his best life when Gath Hopher...just doing his “prophet duties”...fetch some water from the well, to the market for some bread, a little prayer. Then Jonah’s Landlord popped in with a tasking. “Hey Jonah, need you to head out to Ninevah and deliver a message for me.”

Now, I suspect we are all thinking, that landlord is overstepping his boundaries. If you had a landlord who was directing your life, it might seem reasonable to “get away” from him

Except this landlord is the landLORD. And this LORD of the Land really does oversee everything.

- **Deuteronomy 10:14:** "To the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it"
- **Psalms 24:1:** "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, / the world, and all who live in it"
- **Job 41:11:** "Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine"
- **Exodus 19:5:** "All the earth is Mine"

Not only is God the landLORD, but he is Jonah and OUR tutor, supervisor, and full-time bodyguard.

Jeremiah 23:24 “**Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord?**”

Psalms 139:7-10 “**Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.**”

So I ask...Are any of us running from the Lord right now? God sends very few of us to Nineveh-like taskings, but He is constantly sending us. At the very least to share the Gospel, evangelize and disciple. Where, how, when, why....

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ **Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations,**[Ⓜ] baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ **Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.** And **BE SURE OF THIS: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

Acts 1:8-9 Jesus' Last Words

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. **And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem,** throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him.

This is our tasking....this is our work...**this is our job**

Chris Howles, a Christian writer states: The Great Commission is not a checklist of tribes, people, culture to mark off one by one. It's a posture than a program. It's reaching the next man up to by telling and guiding....evangelizing and discipling. It is our daily approach to living, might I say "minutely" approach to living

Jonah knew God's landLORD role, yet he ran from the Lord.

While out to sea "the Lord, "maybe we should now say the seaLORD" or the weatherLORD, sent a great wind so violent , the ship threatened to break up."

The seasoned Gentile sailors were afraid and began crying out to each to their own gods (many beliefs, man gods).

They then threw cargo into the sea. Their livelihood. This was a cargo ship not a passenger voyage

Yet, Jonah ran away again. Rather than facing God in the storm, he ducked into the lower deck and went to SLEEP. No helping the crew, no praying....just hiding.

Running from God is always wrong...with personal consequences...but worse running from God risks the livelihood, the lives, the salvation of others.

Jonah running from God...again not running from Ninevah...resulted in the cargo being lost. Someone was depending on that cargo

Jonah running from God damaged and nearly destroyed the ship...a vehicle needed for commerce

Jonah running from God risked the safety and lives of that crew

Jonah running from God risked the crew's family becoming widows and orphans

Jonah running from God also did all of this to the other cargo, ships, sailors in the area

Think how much damage Jonah caused by "fleeing from the Lord"

The rest of the Book of Jonah is fascinating, the being thrown overboard, being swallowed by a fish, praying for three days in the whale of the belly, being thrown up on shore, walking 600 miles to Ninevah, seeing over 120,000 people turn to the Lord...

but the biggest take away should be "we can't run from God."

In 1882, Fanny Crosby, a blind woman, wrote a song to remind us of this lesson. We sang it early today...."Jesus is Tenderly Calling". The words rang true for Jonah 700 years BC and to us today

1 Jesus is tenderly calling thee home-
Calling today, calling today;
Why from the sunshine of love wilt thou roam
Farther and farther away?

Refrain:
Calling today,
Calling today,
Jesus is calling,
Is tenderly calling today.

4 Jesus is pleading; O list to His voice-
Hear Him today, hear Him today;
They who believe on His name shall rejoice-
Quickly arise and away. [Refrain]

Jonah Flees From the LORD (NIV)

1 The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: **2** "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me."

3 But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.

4 Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. **5** All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship.

But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. **6** The captain went to him and said, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish."

7 Then the sailors said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. **8** So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?"

9 He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

10 This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.)

11 The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

12 "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you."

13 Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. **14** Then they cried out to the LORD, "Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased." **15** Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. **16** At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.

Jonah's Prayer

17 Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.