

## Summer at the Sea – Jonah’s Story – July 12, 2023

Story of Jonah. Kids have gone to sleep with it; Sailors have lost sleep.

**2 Ki. 14:25** – Jonah, Son of Amittai, from Gath-hepher

### Jonah – 4 Chapters - 7 Truths.

**Ch. 1** – God gives Jonah a message: preach to Ninevah. Wickedness, great.

Jonah runs, W to **Joppa** from **Gath-hepher**, takes boat to **Tarshish**. Iraq/Spain?

**1 – Why run?** Look at **Ch. 4** – Jonah knows God is grace, compassion, mercy.

- God is “slow to anger, abounding in love,” eager not to destroy people.
- Jonah wants evil people to get what’s coming to them. **Forestall** grace.

**Jonah 4** – Jonah became angry. 2 He prayed to the Lord, *“Isn’t this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.”*

- What heart wants destruction more than repentance? We do. We struggle w/this. Hearts/hurt. People do bad . . . we have **bad hearts**.
- Judgment will come . . . but God doesn’t want to destroy us. **Mercy**.

**2 – God gives each of us a message/task . . . we often run too.**

- Asked to forgive? Let go of bitterness? Share your story... share hope.
- Maybe we’ve traveled down that road already... struggled w/same thing.
  - We’re on **GPS**. He **brings people together**. Purpose.
    - Learn from Jonah . . . don’t run. **You can’t run from God**.
  - **Psalm 139** – 7-10 - “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I run away from where You are? If I go up to heaven, You are there! If I make my bed in the place of the dead, You are there! If I take the wings of the morning or live in the farthest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me and Your right hand will hold me.”

**3** – Jonah 1:4 - God “sent a great wind on the sea.” So violent, the ship might break up. Sailors afraid; throw cargo overboard. Jonah goes below deck, sleeps. Capt. goes to him - **wake up**. Call on your God, maybe we won’t perish.

- Try to block out God’s voice, but it won’t work.
  - At some point, we have to **wake up**. **Make a choice**. God or not?
    - Want the blessings but no burden? Life, w/no rules.
  - God doesn’t give up on us. **God Loves us too much**.

**4** - The sailors cast lots . . . Jonah. He tells that he's Hebrew, worships God who made the sea & land, but was running from God. **Question:** "what should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

- What we do impacts others. Jonah's running **caused a storm.**
  - o Our unforgiveness ... bitterness... causes storms for other people.

**5** – What to do? Throw Jonah into the Sea... But they don't. . . they try rowing back to land. Sea grew wilder than before. They pray: "Lord, don't let us die for taking this man's life." Don't "hold us accountable for killing an innocent man." They throw him overboard; **sea grew calm.** They feared God, vows, sacrifice.

- **Want peace?** Surrender. Do what u know to do. **Let God be Capt.**
  - o Truth: when **you know what God wants you to do**, go forward w/Him & stop fighting. God **doesn't give up** on us.

**God prepared a "Great Fish to swallow Jonah" . . . in its belly, 3 days/nights**

- o Some translations say a Great Whale, some "large sea creature."
- o Let's deal w/this – *makes this story a little fishy.*

What could swallow a man whole?

- **Whale Shark**, largest fish. 70 ft filter feeder. But esophagus - few inches.
- **Basking Shark**, just a bit smaller. Filter eater, same problem w/esophagus.
- **Blue Whale** – 100 ft length. Esophagus is 1' diameter... Small man could be swallowed, & stomach is largest in animal kingdom. Baleen whale. But Not found in Mediterranean Sea.
- **Fin Whale** – 2<sup>nd</sup> largest whale. 90 ft long. Same Esophagus issue.

**BUT – Sperm Whales** frequent Mediterranean. Can dive more than 10,000'

- o Can reach 70 ft in length. Entire sharks/squid found in them.
- o Jaws not made for chewing, but swallowing whole.
- o Can consume 1 ton of food per day. Man would be a side dish.
- o Whales do "vomit" & Sperm Whale is known for its vomit. Emit **Ambergris**, from which Ambrein is extracted. Perfume.
  - July 5<sup>th</sup> – beached Sperm Wh, found \$544,000 ambergris
- Could also be a **Leviathan** – mentioned in Psalms, Job, Isaiah. "Dragon of the Sea" . . . or some other extinct creature.
  - o Here's **truth** – couldn't survive w/o oxygen for 3 days.
  - o Story true? Jesus said in **Matt. 12:40:** *For as Jonah was 3 days & 3 nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be 3 days & 3 nights in the heart of the earth.*
    - Miracle. We can't **explain miracles.** Give new life, 2d chances

**6** – God prepared a great fish. . . **prepared ahead of time.**

- **Even a fish has a purpose** ... moment/greatness.
  - Fish **Vomited** Jonah on **dry land** . . . **got him to shore.**
- Even more reason for our lives. We can **impact others.** Do good.
  - **Eph. 2:10** – “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”
    - **No accident** you met someone going thru same thing.
- **God is in the Preparation business.**
  - Prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; Psm 23
  - Jesus: going to prepare a place for you. John 14:
    - **God will prepare a great life** . . . trust Him, follow Him.

Jonah prayed from inside the belly of the whale. “I called for help, and you listened to my cry.” Jonah is given a **second chance.**

**Jonah 3:1-3** - Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: 2 “Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.”  
Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh.”

**7** – This experience **was uncomfortable** for both Jonah, and the whale.

- Jonah had seaweed wrapped around his head.
- Pressure as whale dives down to depths “to the roots of the mountains”
  - We have to get **uncomfortable** to get to **where we belong.**
  - Jonah said: “What I have vowed I will make good.” He went.
- God will hear you, too. He’s patient... abounding in love... slow to anger.
  - God’s waiting for you to let Him be Captain of your ship.
  - God is a God of **second chances.** Peace in your life? Surrender.

Song/week - “Jonah and the Whale” – Buddy Greene