



1:10-16

In last week's study, we saw the consequences of Jonah's disobedience. The LORD hurled a storm in Jonah's path. We also saw the reaction of the sailors when they learned that Jonah was responsible for their predicament. With an opportunity to minister to these Gentile sailors, we find Jonah in verse 10:

*<sup>10</sup> Then 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.*

***Jonah 1:10*** NASB95

The sailors should be frightened; they are trying to survive a bad storm. Nevertheless, their fear is magnified when they learn that Jonah is running from his God. Regardless of their knowledge of the LORD, Jonah's God, they would have an idea of what it means to be disloyal to one's god.

To understand their perspective, let's look at how religion worked in their day.



Nineveh is the capital of, what historians call, the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Originally, the capital of Assyrian was a city by the name of Ashur. These great cities of antiquity were a big deal. There really wasn't anything we would recognize as a country. Instead, the world was organized into city-states. Most of these city-states had kings, and patron gods.



Ashur was also the name of the patron god of the city, and the Assyrians. In the minds of the citizens, the city of Ashur and the god Ashur were basically the same thing. It's no accident that the Greek city-state of Athens is named after the Greek goddess Athena. The people of the city belonged to the city, and the city belonged to the patron god. Their identity was based heavily on their association with their patron god. As the influence of the city, and patron god, grew, as through war and conquest, so did the stature of the citizens. Consequently, the power of these patron deities would be limited by the success of the city.

The sailors wouldn't need to know who the LORD is. All they knew was that Jonah had committed a great sin, disloyalty to his patron God. However, they just witnessed something incredible. They are seeing the power of Jonah's God, who is not limited by a city, etc.

<sup>11</sup> So 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.

**Jonah 1:11** NASB95

The storm is getting worse. These sailors have discovered a man whose God is displaying power which is unimaginable to them. The only thing they can think of doing is to ask this man what to do, that they might survive. They say, "What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?"

To paraphrase, it sounds like they are saying, "What can we do to be saved?" There is another incident where this question was asked:

<sup>18</sup> A ruler questioned Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>19</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.

**Luke 18:18-19** NASB95

This ruler is a young man with much wealth, and he is asking Christ about eternal life. Quite often Jesus is asked questions, and His answer doesn't seem to correlate with the question, until we recognize that He is answer the question the SHOULD have been asked. In this case, Jesus answers with a question of His own, "Why do you call me good?" This seems like He is rebuking the young man, but that's not the case. With the next part of the answer, "No one is good except God alone," is Jesus is establishing His own Divine identity. More importantly, He is establishing the qualification for eternal life, i.e., life with God. Peter tell us:

<sup>15</sup> but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all [your] behavior; <sup>16</sup> because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

**1 Peter 1:15-16** NASB95

Here, Peter is quoting Leviticus:

*<sup>45</sup> For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy.*

**Leviticus 11:45** NASB95

In another words, to be saved, to have eternal life, one needs to be as holy as God is Holy. God's standard of Holiness is Himself. Jesus continues His conversation with the young man:

*<sup>20</sup> "You know the commandments, 'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'"*

**Luke 18:20** NASB95

To be as holy as God is Holy, one needs to follow all the Commandments, all 613 of them, all the time, perfectly. The young man hasn't caught on yet:

*<sup>21</sup> And he said, "All these things I have kept from [my] youth." <sup>22</sup> When Jesus heard [this,] He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." <sup>23</sup> But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.*

**Luke 18:21-23** NASB95

The young man seems to think that his efforts to keep the Commandments should be enough. So, Jesus gets to the heart of the matter: He tells him to, "come, follow Me." But all this young man hears is the part where he is supposed to give up his great wealth, so he walks away. Jesus explained why it's so important for this man to give up his wealth:

*<sup>19</sup> "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; <sup>21</sup> for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

**Matthew 6:19-21** NASB95

The young man's heart was with his earthly treasure, and not with God.

*<sup>24</sup> And Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> "For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." <sup>26</sup> They who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?"*

**Luke 18:24-26** NASB95

This is NOT an injunction against wealth, nor is Jesus a socialist. Christ likens a rich man getting into the Kingdom of God to a camel going through the Eye of the Needle. It's often taught that the Eye of the Needle is a small gate in Jerusalem, where a camel cannot enter unless the camel

is unburdened. Similarly, for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God, that rich man must be unburdened from his worldly wealth. That would mean that there is a possibility, with human effort, to achieve the Kingdom of God, but Christ is quick to clear up that misconception:

*<sup>27</sup> But He said, "The things that are impossible with people are possible with God."*

**Luke 18:27** NASB95

It is only possible with God, to be saved! To have eternal life!

This principle plays out with Jonah, as well:

*<sup>12</sup> He 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." <sup>13</sup> However, the men rowed [desperately] to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming [even] stormier against them.*

**Jonah 1:12-13** NASB95

In an odd turn of events, Jonah is ministering to these sailors. He is inviting them to partake in God's plan: to throw him overboard. However, the sailors still try for salvation with their own power, by desperately rowing to shore. "The things that are impossible with people are possible with God." And ONLY God.

Finally, the sailors figure it out:

*<sup>14</sup> Then 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."*

**Jonah 1:14** NASB95

Finally, they turn to the only source of Salvation, the LORD our God. Is it possible that God allowed Jonah in this situation, that He may be introduced to these Gentiles?

*<sup>17</sup> "For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.*

**Deuteronomy 10:17** NASB95

*<sup>15</sup> So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. <sup>16</sup> Then the men feared the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.*

**Jonah 1:15-16** NASB95

Jonah is thrown into the sea; God's appointed is sacrificed so that worldly men might be saved. Again, Jonah parallels Christ here.

Jonah's name has been a focal point in our study. Last time, we looked at the letters of his name, this time we shall look at the translation of his name. Jonah (pronounced yo-naw') is the word for "dove" in Hebrew, (Strong's H3124, H3123.)



Jonah

יוֹנָה

Dove

Strong's H3124, H3123

The first time a dove appears in Scripture is Genesis chapter 8, during the Flood of Noah.

<sup>11</sup> *The dove came to him toward evening, and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth.*

**Genesis 8:11** NASB95

God uses animals to represent certain concepts in His Word. For example:

The lamb represents innocents and sacrifice (GEN 22:8, EXO 12:21, ISA 53:7, JER 11:19, JHN 1:36, 1PE 1:19, REV 5:12)

The lion represents strength and royalty (GEN 49:9, NUM 23:24, JDG 14:18, 2SA 17:10, PSA 19:12, HOS 11:10, REV 5:5)

The humble donkey represents provision, especially God's provision (GEN 22:3, 42:27, EXO 4:20, NUM 22:27, JDG 15:15, ISA 32:20, ZEC 9:9, JHN 15:14.)

The dove (yo-naw') represents the remission of God's Judgment.

<sup>9</sup> *In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.*

<sup>10</sup> *Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; <sup>11</sup> and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."*

**Mark 1:9-11** NASB95

Whenever the dove shows up, near water, God's Judgment is rescinded, and His mercy is extended!

Despite Jonah's stubborn pride, he is repeatedly acting out symbolically, God's Ultimate plan for Salvation of the World.

<sup>11</sup> *So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding [in the matter] for which I sent it.*

**Isaiah 55:11** NASB95

<sup>17</sup> And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

**Jonah 1:17** NASB95

