

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 436 – The Word Came Unto Jonah Through The Belly Of The Fish (Jonah 1:1-17)

1. What did God require of Jonah?

“(1) Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, (2) Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me” (Jonah 1:1-2).

- “The word of the LORD came” or very like statements: **Genesis 15:1, Genesis 15:4, I Samuel 15:10, II Samuel 7:4, II Samuel 7:4, II Samuel 24:11, I Kings 6:11, I Kings 13:1, I Kings 13:20, I Kings 16:1, I Kings 17:2, I Kings 17:8, I Kings 18:1, I Kings 18:31, II Kings 20:4, II Chronicles 11:2, II Chronicles 12:7, Jeremiah 1:2, Jeremiah 1:13, Ezekiel 1:3, Daniel 9:2, Haggai 2:20, Zechariah 4:8, etc.).**
- We can conclude that this often happened through the Spirit of God (**II Peter 1:20-21**).
- Jonah’s time period is revealed in **II Kings 14:23-25**. Other prophets of this time were Amos (**Amos 1:1**), Isaiah (**Isaiah 1:1**), Hosea (**Hosea 1:1**), and Amos (**Amos 1:1**).
- Arise, go to Nineveh (**Jonah 3:2**). Nahum will prophesy against this city (**Nahum 1:1**). Nineveh is an Assyrian city (**Zephaniah 2:13-15**).
- Crying against the city was to show them their sins (**Isaiah 58:1**). To warn them (**Ezekiel 3:16-24**). Again, a prophet was aided by the Spirit in such endeavors (**Micah 3:8**).
- For their wickedness had come before the Lord (**II Chronicles 16:9, Proverbs 5:21, Proverbs 15:3, and Hebrews 4:13**).

2. What was Jonah’s response to the Lord’s instruction?

He tried (context bears out what that means) to flee: *“But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD” (Jonah 1:3).*

- He rose, but not to go to Nineveh. Jonah is not the only prophet that didn’t want to go and do the Lord’s bidding (**Exodus 3:1-4:31, Jeremiah 20:7-9, and Ezekiel 3:14**).
- A prophet could resist (**I Corinthians 14:32**).
- It was ignorant to think he could flee from the Lord (**Psalms 139:1-13, Isaiah 29:15, and Jeremiah 23:23-24**).

3. What did God send into the sea?

A great wind: *“But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken” (Jonah 1:4).*

- **Psalms 107:24-31 and Matthew 8:24-27**

4. How did Jonah end up in the sea?

“(5) Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. (6) So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. (7) And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. (8) Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? (9) And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. (10) Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. (11) Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. (12) And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. (13) Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. (14) Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee. (15) So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging” (Jonah 1:5-15).

- These mariners were not followers of the Lord. They had their own gods. Those “gods” were not going to save them (**Isaiah 45:20** and **Jeremiah 2:27-28**).
- The shipmaster was not showing faith in God. He was asking Job to cry to his god like they were to their gods. Whether the heathen to their gods or Israel to the God, in trouble people look to higher powers for help (**Psalms 107:12-13**).
- Casting of lots occurred for God’s help (**Joshua 18:10** and **Acts 1:12-26**). The practice also existed outside the realm of God’s help (**Joel 3:3** and **John 19:23-24**).
- They wanted to know who and what Jonah was that caused this evil upon them. Remember, God has punished the whole for the sins of one (**Joshua 7:1-26**). One sinner can destroy much good (**Ecclesiastes 9:18**). In principle, being careful with whom we are partakers with lest judgment fall for guilt by association (**Ephesians 5:6-11** and **II John 1:9-11**).
- Jonah identified himself as a Hebrews. That ties back to Abraham (**Genesis 14:13**) and continually is about being of Israel (**Philippians 3:3-5**). He said he feared God. Yet, fearing God doesn’t mean one is obedient (**Exodus 14:31** [cf. **Exodus 15:22-24** and **Psalms 106:1-13**] and **James 2:19** [cf. **II Peter 2:4**]). He knew God was the Creator, but that didn’t cause him to respond as he should have (**Psalms 95:5-6**).

- The heathen wanted to know “why”. Even to them, disobedience didn’t make sense. Why know right and not do right (**Jeremiah 27:12-13**, **Ezekiel 18:31**, and **Ezekiel 33:11**). It makes one to marvel when people know better than they do (**Galatians 1:6**).
- They wanted to save themselves. What shall we do unto Jonah was their question. When someone rational realizes their doom, they should seek to fix it (**Micah 6:6-7** and **Acts 2:36-41**).
- Jonah offered himself up (cf. **II Samuel 24:17**).
- They couldn’t prevail against the wind God had sent (principle of **Acts 5:39**), so they cried to the Lord to be saved pleading that the innocent not perish with the guilty (**Deuteronomy 21:8**).
- Like with Achan [earlier referenced in notes], they had to cast away Jonah (**Joshua 7:24-26**).

5. What did the men from the ship do after Jonah ended up in the sea?

“Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows” (**Jonah 1:16**).

- Fear and obedience are two separate actions (**Deuteronomy 13:4**, **I Samuel 12:14**, **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**, and **Philippians 2:12**).
- They presented sacrifice and vows in fear (**Psalms 76:11**).

6. What swallowed up Jonah?

“Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights” (**Jonah 1:17**).

- The Lord had sent fiery serpents in times past (**Numbers 21:6**).
- The Lord had sent lions (**II Kings 17:25-26**).
- In Egypt, plagues including frogs, lice, flies, hail, locusts, etc. (**Exodus 5:1-12:51**).
- Now, He uses a “great fish”.
- Jesus referred to this in the New Testament (**Matthew 12:39-41** and **Matthew 16:1-4**).