

Jonah 1:4

⁴ But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.

Jonah 1:12–17

¹² And [Jonah] said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.”

¹³ Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.

¹⁴ Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, “We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man’s life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You.”

¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging.

¹⁶ Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows.

¹⁷ Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

No, Is Not an Acceptable Answer *Jonah 1:4-17*

INTRO:

Pastor Jameson, Pastor Adam, and I were talking about this sermon and I pointed out that I learned three Hebrew verbs in this text are “hurl.” It says the LORD hurled a great wind on the seas and there was a huge storm. The mariners “hurled” the cargo in the sea to lighten the vessel. Finally, the mariners “hurled” Jonah into the sea. Therefore, perhaps the outline should be about the hurling and I should title the message, “A Hurling Contest.” As fun as an outline like this can be, I think a different one is better.

The focus of this account is to record how God pursued Jonah by hurling a storm at them, causing the mariners to experiencing His presence and Jonah to be willing to give his life to save the mariners.

I. What the LORD did (v. 4)

II. What the mariners and Jonah did (v. 5-16)

III. What the LORD did (v. 17)

I. What The LORD did (v. 4)

Jonah 1:4 *“But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.”*

A. Don't forget what we saw before. Jonah was to go to Nineveh. He got up and went in the diametrically opposite direction to the furthest place imaginable. He sought a boat to go to Tarshish. We learn in the text how the sun seemed to shine on Jonah.

B. Now the LORD takes decisive action to teach Jonah and the mariners a lesson about turning against God. He hurled a storm on them so bad it terrified seasoned mariners and threatened to break up their ship. Do you hear the deafening creaking of the boards of the vessel in your mind? Do you smell the fear? Don't miss the experience in this text.

II. What the mariners and Jonah did (v. 5-16)

Jonah 1:5-6 *“Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep. So the captain came to him, and said to him, “What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.”*

A. The camera moves to Jonah and the sailors in the boat.

B. Jonah got down in the bottom of the ship and dropped into sleep. We know he is running from God. One way folks run from reality is to sleep their way through it. Sleeping must have been Jonah's tactic.

C. Meanwhile the sailors in full panic. Sure they could sink they, had a spontaneous prayer meeting pleading with every god they knew and any other god they could find. They “hurled” the cargo into the angry sea. And the captain went exploring to locate the

passenger to get him to pray to a god they had not considered yet. The captain waked Jonah and demanded he pray to his God.

D. The storm rages on, so the activity gets frantic (**v. 7-16**). First the sailors cast lots to see who is responsible for the storm. The lot falls on Jonah. They demand answers to their questions about who Jonah is and what he has done.

1. Jonah's answers are significant. He is a Hebrew. He is of the people of Yahweh. He worships [fears] Yahweh the God of heaven, Who made the sea and dry land. This is no local deity. Yahweh is the supreme God of heaven and earth.

2. Second, the men immediately assigned blame to Jonah. He must have told them he was fleeing this God. They knew he was the center of the tempest. They ask what can they do to appease this God from whom Jonah fled.

E. This thinking is foreign to us because we are not from that culture and we don't think of God in these terms. The seamen are desperate. The storm is getting worse. Still, they are not desperate enough to take the solution Jonah prescribes. This is a prophecy from Jonah.

v.12 *“And 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 this great tempest is because of me.”*

F. The sailors try all of the other options before finally taking the step of hurling Jonah into the sea. No sooner do they throw Jonah overboard than the storm ends and the sea is glass. They were terrified before, but now they are beyond terror.

v.16 *“Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows.”*

III. What the LORD did (v. 17)

Jonah 1:17 *“And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.”*

A. The reason the LORD did not let the sailors turn around and go back was probably because He had already arranged transportation for Jonah. The word translated “appoint” may also be translated prepare. God may have made a giant fish for this very trip. Jonah is swallowed by the fish and lives in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.

B. What Does This Teach Us?

1. God controls all the circumstances of life (Remember **Mark 4:37-41**)

“And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, ‘Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?’ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace, be still!’ And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, ‘Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?’”

2. Our Lord is so concerned about us His servants that like with Jonah, He will pursue us and cause us to be willing to do His will. God is concerned about individual Christians as well as huge amounts of people.

3. Disobeying God affects others as well as ourselves. Not only did Jonah suffer, so did the sailors in the boat with him. How much do others around us in the church suffer because we refuse to obey God?