



(For the entire commentary on the book of Jonah click [HERE](#). For other commentaries of Charlie's click [HERE](#))

# Jonah

## **JONAH 1:13-17 (THE SEA CEASED FROM ITS RAGING)**

The verses in Jonah today will show us, once again, a truth which permeates the Bible. It is that God is pleased with obedience to His word, and that such obedience is displayed in acts of faith. Jonah is being used to make several pictures simultaneously. He is being used to picture Israel, obstinate and contrary to the will of God until the point that all hope is lost.

He is also being used to picture the Person and work of Christ. As with all pictures, there will be things that don't perfectly match, and so the underlying truths need to be looked for, rather than an obvious one-to-one comparison. If everything were exact comparisons, then we would simply be reading the story of Jesus.

But as in all such passages of the Bible, there is the type and then there is the Anti-type. The types are used to make pictures which lead us to the greater Anti-type. Such was the case with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, and a great host of others. And such is the case with Jonah.

Today's verses are somewhat similar to what happened to Joseph when he was cast into the pit by his brothers. That account pictured Christ in a particular way. In a like manner, Jonah will be cast into the sea. From that act, there will be a resulting action. And connected to that is the premise that man is saved by faith. This is seen in our text verse for today –

**Text Verse:** “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” Romans 3:21-22

Who is it that goes away from today’s passage in safety and gratitude to God? Who is it that God responded to because of their act of faith? The answer is obvious, but there is more than just the surface story. Rather, there is a lot of depth and marvelous detail in these five verses.

How can it be that the death of one can be the salvation of many? It is a theme which permeates the Bible and which is seen once again in these verses, and so let’s jump right into them. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **I. You, O Lord, Have Done as it Pleased You (verses 13-16)**

<sup>13</sup> **Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land,**

*va’yakhteru ha’anashim l’hashiv el ha’yabashah* – “and dug down the men to return unto the dry land.” The verse begins with “And” in the Hebrew, but English translations normally choose contrasting words such as “however,” “nevertheless,” “even so,” “but,” or “instead.”

There is a reason for this. The word translated as “rowed hard,” *khatar*, is a word which indicates “to dig.” This is the last of just 8 times that it is seen in Scripture. It comes from a primitive root which indicates “to force a passage, as by burglary.”

This is the only time in the Bible that it is used in this sense. All seven other times, it is translated as to dig, such as through a wall in order to break through it, or even to dig into the pit of hell itself (Amos 9:2). From this, we can see that these men literally dug deep into the water, in order to make headway.

Their sails were of no use to them, and so they resorted to brute force in order to find safe harbor. The choice of the word provides us with the mental image of

these men literally trying to dig through the walls of the waves, as if trying to break out of the tempestuous prison they are in, and into safety.

It gives the sense of really working hard on their part. The Hebrew is active and alive. It is for this reason that many translations begin the verse with a contrasting word like “But” in order to set off the words of Jonah from the last verse which said –

“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.”

What we are viewing then is a group of people to whom have been explained the means by which they can be saved from the raging tempest, and yet who are adamant to save their wayward passenger, even at the possible expense of their own lives.

In other words, a complete contrast is being shown us between Jonah who has fled from the Lord in order to not bring a saving message to the entire city of Nineveh, and to these pagans who are willing to risk their own lives for the sake of a single, guilty, man. The contrast is stark and it is striking.

<sup>13 (con't)</sup> **but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.**

*v'lo yakolu ki ha'yam holek v'soer alehem* – “...and no do they could, for the sea worked and was whirling against them.” The same term that was used in verse 11 is again used here as the sea continued to work and whirl into an even more tempestuous rage. It grew more and more, and no matter what they did, it was a futile effort for them.

Quite often in our own lives, the seas work against us, and it seems that the harder we fight against them, the more the waves mount up against us. In such cases, it could be that we are not living in accord with the word. These men have been told what will save them, but they have a conflict between their moral stand and what the spoken word has revealed.

In Israel, the Lord mandated the death penalty for certain infractions of the law. The people were not given the choice as to whether they could carry out the penalty or not. For example, in Exodus 22 we read these words –

“You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

<sup>19</sup> “Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death.

<sup>20</sup> “He who sacrifices to *any* god, except to the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.” Exodus 22:18-20

If those laws stood today, would we follow through with the punishment? Obviously not. Nor did Israel. They found that extenuating circumstances, degrading morality, and outright rebellion against the Lord was more suitable to their tastes than obedience to His word.

Israel faced their own storms of trials and judgment for not adhering to the word of the Lord, and these men – despite doing what is noble – will continue to face the waves until they obey the Lord’s word.

On the other hand, this also doesn’t necessarily mean that when such trials come, that we’re being disobedient towards the Lord. We can, in fact, have storms while being completely obedient to Him. Instead of trying to make it to a safe harbor on our own, we need to evaluate our lives and align them with the word. If that is already the case, then we need to come to the Lord with our burden and ask Him to carry us through it.

<sup>14</sup> **Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said,**

*va’yiqreu el Yehovah va’yomeru* – “And cried out to Yehovah and said.” The words make it apparent that they honestly believe Jonah’s words, and that it is Yehovah who has sent the storm against them. As Jonah previously explained to them, He is the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.

They have come to accept this as it was spoken to them, and thus they possess the knowledge that because He is the Creator, He is also the One who controls the creation. And so they no longer cry out, every man to his own god, as in verse 5. Rather, they collectively cry out to the true God.

The raging of the winds and the billowing of the waves are caused by Him, and therefore Jonah's other words must then also be true. Jonah has brought this plight upon them. In order for it to end, he must be cast over the side of the ship...

<sup>14</sup> (con't) **"We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man's life,**

*annah Yehovah al na novedah b'nepesh ha'ish hazzeh* – "We beg of you, Yehovah, no we pray perish for soul the man this." If we step back for a second and look at Jonah as a type of Israel as a whole, compared to the pagans here and elsewhere in the story, we can see the strong and obvious contrast between them. There is the stubbornness of Israel, but the complete willingness of the Gentiles to accept the word of the Lord, to do what is right, and to acknowledge the sovereignty of God.

These Gentiles have been given only a small insight into the nature of the Lord, and yet now, they call out to Him by name, yielding themselves completely and wholly to Him.

In their cry, they use a word which is rather rare in Scripture, *annah*, it being seen just 13 times. It is a contraction of two other words, *ahava*, meaning "love," and *na*, meaning "please." In essence, "I beg of you." It is a begging which would come from the soul of the man in a deep and heartfelt petition.

The word is directed to Yehovah, understanding that He alone can grant the petition which has been made. This is the only time that it is used by someone outside of the covenant line of the people of Israel. Despite being pagans, their cry to Yehovah is heartfelt and it is sincere.

The petition is for the sake of their own lives being granted to them for complying with the spoken word against Jonah which will result in the taking his life. What is known to them is that in the taking of another's life, their lives would thus, under normal circumstances, be forfeit. Though pagans, and outside of the covenant line who lived under the Law of Moses, the memory of what was spoken to their ancestor Noah remained with them –

"Whoever sheds man's blood,  
By man his blood shall be shed;

For in the image of God  
He made man. “ Genesis 9:6

Understanding the consequences of this they beg now for mercy...

<sup>14</sup> (con't) **and do not charge us with innocent blood;**

*v'al titen alenu dam naqiy* – “and not lay on us blood innocent.” The adjective *naqiy*, or innocent, was first used in Genesis 24:41. This is the last time it will be used in the Bible. It indicates being blameless, exempted, or free from guilt. Here we see a foreshadowing of the work of Christ. Pilate washed his hands and declared Christ innocent as is seen in Matthew 27:24 –  
“When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, ‘I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it*.’”

They see Jonah’s blood as innocent, and yet they understand that he must die in order for them to live. The passage looks back to Genesis, indicating that they still intuitively understood the words of the Lord to Noah. Guilt is reckoned to anyone who would shed man’s blood. However, the circumstances of their situation called out that they not be charged in this case. And so it also looks forward to Christ who takes away the guilt through His death. Albert Barnes precisely states the situation of these men –

“And lay not upon us innocent blood - innocent as to them, although, as to this thing, guilty before God, and yet, as to God also, more innocent, they would think, than they. For, strange as this was, one disobedience, their whole life, they now knew, was disobedience to God; His life was but one act in a life of obedience. If God so punishes one sin of the holy (1 Peter 4:18), ‘where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?’ Terrible to the awakened conscience are God's chastenings on some (as it seems) single offence of those whom He loves.” Albert Barnes

Though Christ Jesus never sinned, it was reckoned to Him as if He did. To these men, they saw Jonah as innocent towards them, even if counted guilty before God. In the imputation of our guilt to Christ, and His righteousness imputed to us, we see how the perfect Christ corresponds directly to the guilty Jonah. This is how

the Lord saw it in both instances, and therefore, His will must be yielded to. This is next explicitly stated...

<sup>14</sup> (con't) **for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You."**

*ki attah Yehovah kaasher khaphats-ta asita* – "For You, Yehovah, as pleasing to You, You have done." The words are robust and impressive. They acknowledge that everything has been according to the will of the Lord. The storm arising, the casting of the lots, the words of Jonah concerning what had to happen to him... all of it is as has been directed by the Lord. This word, *khaphets*, is the same word found in Isaiah 53:10 – "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." We are seeing the work of Christ in type and picture.

In the Hebrew, the actions are described with three simple words, and yet they form a profession of faith as great as any found anywhere else, "As is pleasing to You, so You have done." Their words are reflective of the words of the psalmist who was certainly, like each of them had become, a man of faith –

"For I know that the Lord *is* great,  
And our Lord *is* above all gods.  
<sup>6</sup>Whatever the Lord pleases He does,  
In heaven and in earth,  
In the seas and in all deep places." Psalm 135:5, 6

Because the Lord is sovereign, we have but two choices, yield to His will, or buck against it to our own harm and shame. The sailors having become men of faith, conformed their actions according to His will. Again, the words of Jonah are given to show us the stark contrast between Israel and the Gentile people of the world. Contrast their actions to those of Manasseh the King of Judah who would live only a short time later –

"Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord." 2 Kings 21:16

In the account of Jonah, pagans had concern over a single life, but Manasseh, shed innocent blood without a second thought. In the New Testament, we

continue to see a contrast. Not only was Jonah innocent in their eyes, even more, he was a prophet of the Lord.

They risked their lives to save him, and when they finally had no remedy, they begged for pardon from the guilt of his blood. Jesus speaks out the contrast between their actions towards the Lord's prophet and those of the people of Jerusalem –

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing! <sup>35</sup> See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” Luke 13:34, 35

While we're talking about the guilt of innocent blood, I might as well bring up our own guilt. For 44 years, we have been swimming in a pool of blood, to the tune of almost 60 million lives murdered through abortion. The guilt of this nation, and especially the democrat party of the United States, reeks to heaven.

May God help us to open our eyes to see and to turn from what we are doing. I pray that the new leaders of our nation will do everything they can to end all funding to these devils, and to overturn the horrifying and ungodly law which has made us ripe for God's judgment.

**<sup>15</sup> So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea,**

*Va'yisū eth yonah v'tilu-hu el ha'yam* – “And they lifted up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea.” For the fourth and last time in the book of Jonah, and also for the last time in the Bible, the word *tul* or “hurl” is used. It was used in verse 4 when the Lord *hurled* the great wind upon them. It was again used when the sailors *hurled* their cargo overboard, and then it was used by Jonah to tell those same sailors what they were to do with him – *hurl* him over. Now all the hurling at sea is over. The reluctant sailors took the necessary action and the matter was resolved.



We must ask why it is so specific concerning lifting Jonah up. In verse 12, Jonah specifically told the sailors to lift him up and cast him into the sea. Why didn't he just say "Cast me into the sea."? In verse 5, it doesn't say they lifted up the cargo and cast it into the sea. It just says they cast it into the sea. It is because a picture is being made for us. In fulfillment of verse 12 Jesus said in the following in John 12 –

"And I, if I am **lifted up** from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself." John 12:32

And in fulfillment of this verse, we read this in Isaiah 52, using the same word, *nasah*, as is found here in Jonah –

"See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and **lifted up** and highly exalted." Isaiah 52:13

We are being given a prophecy and a fulfillment of the prophecy, right before our eyes.

Each word is revealing the work of Christ. In 1831, someone noticed for the first time that Jupiter had a big red spot on it. Eventually they figured out that it was a giant storm, like a hurricane. No one knows how long it's been there or how long it will continue... it just keeps raging on. Anyone who has been in a storm on the sea knows every minute is like an eternity.

Eventually though, all storms do end. Some lose steam as they come onto land. Some storms fade out from cross winds. Some storms die out from temperature drops. And some storms end because the Lord's wrath is appeased. The men *nasah*, or lifted up Jonah. In Isaiah 52, it says the Lord Jesus would likewise be *nasah*, or lifted, up...

<sup>15 (con't)</sup> **and the sea ceased from its raging.**

*va'yaamod ha'yam mizapo* – "and stood the sea from her anger."

The word *amad* means "to stand." It is used here in the same manner as we use the word in English. The storm "stood" still or ceased. And so you get the mental impression of activity. The storm was as if crouched down, raging and blowing all

around the sailors, but as the word of the Lord was obeyed, the storm stood, as if at attention, and the raging ended.

Again, in the sudden cessation of the storm, we have a parallel to the crucifixion of Christ. Although it was darkness and not a storm which the writers describe, it lasted during the ordeal, and ended when the life ended, pictured by Jonah's being cast into the sea –

““Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. <sup>45</sup> Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’” Having said this, He breathed His last.””

Luke 23:44-46

In Jonah's being cast from among the living, the storm ceased, and that anger of the storm was over. In the casting of the life of Christ from among the living, the pall of darkness likewise ceased, and the anger of God at the sin of man was quieted and appeased.

The raging sea of God's wrath had ended, and peace was restored. The prediction of Jonah was realized among these sailors of faith, and the promises of Scripture, even from the time of the fall of man itself, are likewise realized among those who, by faith, cast their sins at the foot of Calvary's cross.

God's wrath is on the opposite side of the coin of God's mercy. When, by faith, the sailors threw Jonah in, His mercy could finally be realized. In the same way, when Jesus woke up and exercised His power, the storm on the Sea of Galilee ended. A mere rebuke from His breath and all was calm –

“But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. <sup>27</sup> So the men marveled, saying, ‘Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?’”

Matthew 8:26-27

And then going back to the account from Acts, the ship Paul was on wasn't saved. It was destroyed on a shoal as the waves beat it to pieces, but all of the people on board were saved. Because of Paul's faithful witness, the Bible says God graciously

granted the lives of all who were aboard. Again and again the Bible demonstrates the power of faith.

How we conduct ourselves now affects everyone we come in contact with – even if we only cross their paths for a moment. A good question to ask as we drive and lose our temper, as we shop and don't find what we want, as we impatiently wait on hold for the technician is, "How will what I do affect my Christian testimony in their lives?" If we remember His presence in all we do, we should have no fear, frustration, or fret. He is in control and is tending to our every need. As we live our lives, we can repeat the proverb...

"When you lie down, you will not be afraid;  
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet." Proverbs 3:24

**<sup>16</sup> Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly,**

*va'yire-ū ha'anashim yirah gedolah eth Yehovah* – "And feared the men, afraid whoppingly, Yehovah." What may be the stupidest commentary ever penned on this verse, the Geneva Bible says, "They were touched with a certain repentance of their past life, and began to worship the true God by whom they saw themselves as wonderfully delivered. But this was done for fear, and not from a pure heart and affection, neither according to God's word."

The fear referred to here, is given as a contrast to the fear that they previously held. This exact same phrase, word for word, was used in verse 10 with but a slight difference. In verse 10, they had just heard Jonah's words that he was a Hebrew who feared Yehovah, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.

Now, their fear is still directed *to* Yehovah, but instead of it being vague and uncertain – a fear which leads to death, it is a fear whose object *is* Yehovah, the God of Jonah; the Creator – it is a fear that leads to life. Further it was wholly in accord with God's word as given to them by Jonah. The Geneva commentary could not be more wrong. The Bible is giving us this contrast for a specific reason, and it's not to assume that there was no change in these Gentiles, but rather a complete and total change.

The fear of Yehovah, we are told, is the beginning of wisdom. They have started on their journey through the fear of Yehovah, with a pure heart and a directed affection.

This brings us back to the word *yayin* or “wine” which is related to the name Yonah, or Jonah, which we evaluated at the start of this adventure. As we saw, vineyards represent the cultural side of humanity. There are various vineyards which are various cultures. Vineyards produce grapes, or cultural expressions, and these are mixed together through a mashing process to produce wine.

In the Bible, wine then symbolizes the merging together of these expressions into a result. The thing that ought to happen can happen, symbolized by wine. It is as if an act of reasoning is occurring, and an intended result is realized. It is as if we are “seeing wisdom as wine drawn from the grapes of observations and deductions” (Abarim).

Like a dove, Jonah’s adventure so far has vacillated, but in the course of events, the minds of the people are changed, and the redemptive process of God is revealed. Jonah is being equated with what his name means, “Dove.” But the root of his name, and the variations of it, are being drawn together by God to tell us a story.

Just as Jonah was the means by which these Gentiles have come to know and fear Yehovah, so Jesus as the fulfillment of the picture, is the means by which the Gentile world, once on the raging sea of chaos, is brought to the peaceful waters of rest in the knowledge of the true God.

The sailors had seen the marvelous power of the Lord as it worked in relation to Jonah. The disciples with Jesus, and the men aboard the ship with Paul, had seen the marvelous power of the Lord as it worked in relation to Christ and the message of Christ. In each circumstance, the words of the psalmist are fulfilled –

Fire and hail, snow and clouds;  
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; Psalm 148:8

In order to effect His word in the lives of others, He even uses the elements to do His bidding and to fulfill His word.

16 (con't) **and offered a sacrifice to the LORD**

*v'yizbekhu zebakh l'Yehovah* – "...and they sacrificed (a) sacrifice to Yehovah," What the sacrifice was is not said, and thus it is not important what it was. Scholars argue over this as if they were standing there and watching the events unfold. Some argue that they had live animals on board and used them as sacrifices. Some argue that they had already thrown their cargo over and so this wouldn't be possible.

It is all vain and useless conjecture. In the Bible, the *zebakh*, or "sacrifice" is not limited to animals. They very well may have sacrificed animals, but it could be a meal offering, a sacrifice of joy, a sacrifice of a contrite and broken heart, a sacrifice of righteousness, or a sacrifice of thanksgiving. The word *zebakh* is used to describe all of these in Scripture.

Whatever they chose to sacrifice, it was to the Lord and not to the false gods they once prayed to. They had, in essence, come to the foot of the cross, there to worship the true Lord of all.

16 (con't) **and took vows.**

*va'yider-ū nedarim* – "and vowed vows." The sacrifices were made as "right now" offerings to Yehovah. They were directed to him with hearts of contrition, in joy, with thanksgiving, and as a righteous oblation to Him. The vows were made as future conduct towards Him.

They were intended to bind them to the Lord from that point on, and to live for Him as much as could be expected from men apart from the law, but who lived under His grace. The man in the foxhole facing death will inevitably make vows to God. How many will he later act on?

I once listened to a man who was in WWII. He saw a another man ordered to move forward and take out a machine gun nest. The guy charged forward and was shot almost immediately. As he lay there dying, he recited the words of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm.

The man in the foxhole asked the Lord to give him the same type of faith, and he made a promise to God that if he survived, he would dedicate his life to the Lord. When he arrived back in Texas, he planted numerous churches. But even after tirelessly working throughout his remaining years, he felt he had not done enough in repayment to the Lord. He made a vow and he kept it.

It's an important lesson for each of us. We need to remember to fulfill our vows when we make them. This theme is repeated throughout the Bible and is something God expects of us –

“Make vows to the LORD your God, and pay *them*,” Psalm 76:11

Were the book to end with at this point, we could look at the story in one of two ways – that God's plans were thwarted towards the Ninevites because Jonah was cast over and died. Or we could look at it as God's plans were actually directed all along at those who sailed with Jonah; bringing them to salvation in the Lord.

However, we need not speculate because this is not the end of the story. Instead, God's plan wasn't only for the men on the ship, but for those in Nineveh as well. In the Hebrew text, Jonah Chapter 1 ends with verse 16. Verse 17 actually starts Chapter 2.

*How the oceans rage, and the winds blow so strong  
There is no way for us to safely reach the shore  
When will come relief? This tempest will last how long?  
When will the waves die down, to threaten us no more?*

*It is as if God's wrath rests upon us, as we sail on  
Is there no way for the sea to be calm and still once again  
Has God abandoned us, is all hope gone  
Is this our sad destiny, and the fate of all men?*

*No! For in one mighty act the seas have quieted and are still  
When the Lord was cast into the turbulent sea  
In His death, Christ Jesus has fulfilled God's will  
And brought us once again to a place of peace and tranquility*

## II. The Deliverer (verse 17)

**<sup>17</sup> Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah.**

*vay-man Yehovah dag gadol livloa eth yonah* – “And had appointed Yehovah fish whopping to swallow Jonah.” There is a lot about this verse which is misunderstood, or often mistranslated. First, the word here translated as “had prepared” is *manah*. It means “to count.” Thus the fish has been “appointed,” not “prepared.”

Using “prepared” is misleading and gives the sense of an act of creation. Rather, God has created, and he has appointed his creation to act at certain counts, or times, in order to meet His needs. He employs His created agents to do His bidding at His will.

Secondly, the “great fish” here is incorrectly translated in the New Testament by some versions as “whale.” This is unjustifiable and it is incorrect. The Hebrew word is *dag*. It indicates a prolific beast; one that greatly multiplies, as is seen in fish, not in mammals.

Great studies have been done on this, which, if you want to learn more just go browse the internet. This was probably a sea-dog or a type of shark which is found in the Mediterranean Sea. In fact, the scholar Keil notes the following –

“...in the year 1758 a sailor fell overboard from a frigate, in very stormy weather, into the Mediterranean Sea, and was immediately taken into the jaws of a sea-dog (*carcharias*), and disappeared. The captain, however, ordered a gun, which was standing on the deck, to be discharged at the shark, and the cannon-ball struck it, so that it vomited up again the sailor that it had swallowed, who was then taken up alive, and very little hurt, into the boat that had been lowered for his rescue.”

Jonah really was cast over the side, and a great fish really did swallow him whole. There is no reason to assume that in order to arrive at the Anti-type, Christ, that the Lord would merely use an allegory to make his point. Rather, he used a real person, with real circumstances, to point us to the true fulfillment of what is now only pictured.

The casting of Jonah over the side was symbolic of his death, and thus a picture of the death of the Lord. The calming of the sea was then a picture of the calming of the wrath against man which was realized in Christ's death.

The swallowing of Jonah by the great fish, is not as most scholars claim a picture of his death, but of his deliverer from his state of death. Just as Christ died on the cross and was then entombed, Jonah was swallowed by the fish after what could be considered his death. This will be seen in the coming chapter.

**\*17 (fin) And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.**

*vay'hi yonah bime ha'dag sheloshah yamim u-sheloshah lelowt* – “And was Jonah in the belly the fish three days and three nights.” What is the greatest tragedy of all, and which has led to innumerable and incorrect rabbit trails concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the words here are reflective of the Hebrew way of reckoning time. This in no way signifies complete days and nights of 24-hour duration, or thus a period of 72 hours. For example, in Esther 4:16, we read –

“Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; and if I perish, I perish!” Esther 4:16

In Esther 5:1, we then read this –

“Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on *her* royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.”  
Esther 5:1

It was the third day from the proclamation, not the fourth or even the fifth day from it. From the first page of the Bible onward, Hebrew has no single word to express what we would consider a natural day. The time here can express one whole day and a part of the other two. We do this in our own language as well.



I might say that I will be out of town for three days, when I leave on Monday afternoon and return on Wednesday morning. I was, in fact, gone for three days, just not for three full days. I also might say, "I have worked for ten days, day and night, in order to finish this project." This does not mean that I worked the entire time, but that the entire time was consumed with my work.

This is how Hebrew time is reckoned in the Bible. It is no different than how the Bible records such things and the Jewish audience of Matthew would understand this. The same account in Luke concerning Christ's time in the tomb reads differently from Matthew because it's given to a different audience. This becomes important in correctly identifying the time and day that Christ was crucified, and the time and day that He arose.

Thirteen times in the New Testament it says that He rose "on the third day." As He rose on a Sunday, the simplest way to resolve this is to count back from the third day. Sunday (1); Saturday (2); Friday (3). However, though more complicated, this timeline is confirmed through a proper study of the gospel records and which I will include at the end of the written sermon which is available on-line. At no charge too. \*PREPARATION DAY\*

Understanding this, Jonah's time in the belly of the fish could have been less than 72 hours, and yet still fulfilling the required sense of the Hebrew reckoning of time. What is important, again, is the type and the Anti-type. All of which points to Christ.

Everything about the narrative is giving us clues of other things – the work of Christ, the bringing in of Gentiles to the Lord by mercy, grace, and faith, the stubbornness of Israel against the Lord and the willingness of the Gentiles to receive Him. Redemptive history is being revealed to us in a marvelous snapshot.

It is as if a tribunal has been held. The ship becomes the courtroom, the sailors become the jury, the raging winds and the storm are the accusers, the Lord's prophet is the accused, the sea is the instrument and pit of death, the fish is the deliverer from death and the womb of life, and behind it all is the hand of the Lord, directing the story.

If you're a Jew or a Gentile, a male or a female – if you're a businessman or a drug addict, a prostitute or a housewife – no matter what your race, creed, or culture, you will also face a trial as an accused. You can face it alone, or you can face it with one who has already stood in your place, willing to take your sentence upon Himself. The sailors found this out. They were given the word of the Lord – “Pick me up and throw me into the sea.”

For a time, they strived to save themselves, digging hard into the waves in order to return to the shore. It is works-based salvation, and it only will lead to a greater rage from God. But they finally yielded to His word, and they came to the cross where the Innocent was to die for the guilty. They called out, “O Lord, please do not let us perish for this Man's life, and do not charge us with innocent blood.” All men will be charged, but the question is, “Will it be in our own guilt, or in Christ's righteousness?” Only He is innocent.

Their final words were, “For You, O Lord, have done as it pleased You.” Only in the death of Christ is God pleased. Only He satisfied the works of the law perfectly, and only His death could cease the raging of the sea of disobedience and death which has worked and whirled against man for countless ages. Only He; only He.

Now the choice is Yours. The sea has ceased from its raging for all who call out to Him. But you must call, and you must receive. Call on Christ today, and be reconciled to Your heavenly Father through His shed blood. God loves you and wants to have a relationship with you. He sent a fish to save Jonah; He sent the completed work of Christ Jesus to save you!

**Closing Verse:** “He sent from above, He took me;  
He drew me out of many waters.” Psalm 18:16

**Next Week:** Jonah 2:1-4 *Yes, from out of the place where after he had died...* (Out of the Belly of Sheol I Cried) (5<sup>th</sup> Jonah Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean rages against you and is ready to swallow you up, He can send delivery to you in the most remarkable of ways. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

## Peace from the Storm

Nevertheless, hard the men rowed  
To return to land; their efforts almost furious  
But they could not, as the events clearly showed  
For the sea continued to grow against them more tempestuous

Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said  
“O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man’s life, we pray  
And do not charge us with innocent blood when he is dead  
For You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You here today  
So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea  
And the sea ceased from its raging completely

Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly  
Surely they quivered and shook  
And offered a sacrifice to the LORD  
And also vows they took

Now the LORD had prepared a great fish, Jonah to swallow  
And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights  
There in the great fish’s belly he did wallow

Lord God, it is we who have strayed from You  
We have gone about our own way, without a care  
And yet, ever faithful and true  
You sent Jesus, in order that us You might spare

He was cast in to the pit of death so that we might live  
What kind of love have You shown towards us!  
What a marvelous Gift to us You did give  
When You sent Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus

Now by our faith in Him, we are reconciled to You  
And we are spared from being sent to the very pit of hell  
And so we give You all of our praise, yes all that is due  
For, our Lord Jesus has done everything so well

Hear our praise, and our voices full of thanksgiving  
We have passed from the grip of death to the land of the living

Hallelujah and Amen...

## WHAT DAY WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED?

What day of the week Christ was crucified? We know for certain that he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on Sunday, 6 April 0032. This is based on dating from the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 and the exemplary work of Sir Robert Anderson.

However, people will still try to find a reason why the crucifixion wasn't on Friday, 11 April 0032. There are a couple reasons why this is disputed, each which certainly results from misunderstanding of biblical terminology. The first is a fear that what's stated in Matthew 12:40 would mean an error in what Jesus said. The second results from a perceived conflict between the gospel accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and that of John.

In the first disputed reason, Jesus is quoted by Matthew as saying, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matthew 12:40

The resurrection certainly occurred on a Sunday and only the most extreme cases dispute this – and they do it without justification. Some folks fear that because He rose on a Sunday and it was "3 days and 3 nights" that Jesus was in the tomb then it was either Wednesday or Thursday that He must have gone to the cross. It's important to note that this verse is from Matthew and is directed to the Jewish people – Jesus as King. Hebrew idioms would have been understood and not needed any clarification or verbal amending. To the audience Matthew was writing to any part of a day is considered to be inclusive of the whole day. It's no different than terminology we use today. If I arrive in Florida on a plane at 11:30 pm on 11 April, during a later conversation I would still say I was in Florida on that day. The biblical pattern of "evening and morning" being a day goes back to the first chapter of the Bible and includes an entire day – regardless of what part of a day one is referring to.

The same verse, as recorded in Luke says, "As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation." Luke 11:29, 30 In this instance, Luke was not writing to only Jewish people, but predominately to non-Jewish people – Jesus as the Son of Man. Therefore, the terminology is amended to avoid confusion. This

occurs many times in the gospels and therefore the addressees (or the background of the writers themselves) need to be identified to understand proper terminology.

The second issue to be resolved is that some scholars claim that John “appears” to place the crucifixion on a different date than the other writers. Because of this, an attempt to insert some second type of Passover meal is made. This supposedly helps the Bible out of an apparent problem. However, no such meal is identified in the Bible – at any time. Nor is it necessary to make something erroneous like this up. The Bible identifies the timing of the entire Passion Week, dispelling the problem. The terminology for “Preparation Day” used in all four gospel accounts absolutely clears this up and will be noted below.

Here’s what you need to know:

Paul plainly states that the Feast of Firstfruits is a picture of the resurrection:

“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

The feast of Firstfruits was a Sunday according to Leviticus 23:15 – “From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks.” Note: the Sabbath is a Saturday. We don’t need to go any further there to know this is correct and that Christ rose on a Sunday.

Here is the math from the gospel accounts. It’s all there in black and white and very easy to look up –

\*\*“Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.” John 12:1 This would have been a Sabbath day (Saturday.)

\*\*“The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.” John 12:12 This would have been 5 days before the Passover, meaning Sunday (Palm Sunday) as the Passover would have started Thursday night at sundown and run until Friday night at sundown (remember biblical days start at sundown).

The account couldn't be clearer that the next day after the Passover was a Sabbath. This is indicated several times. Some people have attempted to use the terminology in John (it was a "high day" or a "special Sabbath") to indicate that it could have been a day other than a Saturday. Special Sabbaths are specified in Leviticus and don't necessarily fall on Saturdays. However, the term "Sabbath" as used in the other gospel accounts is indicating a Saturday. There is no indication, anywhere, that there were two Sabbaths in a row on this particular week. In fact, such an analysis does an injustice to the reading of the text. Therefore, the special Sabbath occurred on a regular Sabbath day (Saturday).

From this we can give the entire week's schedule (refer to the cited verses in your own Bible to familiarize yourself with what's being said) –

Sabbath 6 before // John 12:1 – ...six days before the Passover. Bethany/Lazarus.

Sunday 5 before // John 12:12 & Mark 11:10 – The next day... Palm Sunday/Riding the donkey.

Monday 4 before // Mark 11:12 Now on the next day... Jesus cursed the fig tree.

Tuesday 3 before // Mark 11:20 Now in the morning... The withered fig is identified.

Wednesday 2 before // The gospels are silent on what occurred on this day.

Thursday 1 before – Passover starts at Sundown //Mark 14:1 After two days it was the Passover... (this is the first timing mentioned since Mark 11:20 which was Tuesday).

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Note: Pay special attention to the fact that in the following accounts Mark is using Jewish time (sunset to sunset and John is using Roman time) -

Mark 14:12 – “Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread when they killed the Passover Lamb.”

John 13:1 - “Now before the Feast of the Passover....” Meal, Washing of Feet, Gethsemane.

\*\*\*Christ crucified this same 24 hour period, but it was obviously after the final night at Gethsemane and then the illegal trial. Mark is speaking of this event from sundown, John is speaking of it on Roman time (this is obvious because they use different terminology for the same meal where Judas left to betray the Lord... can't miss this point and get it right.)

6 days before – Saturday  
5 days before – Sunday  
4 days before – Monday  
3 days before – Tuesday  
2 days before – Wednesday  
1 day before – Thursday  
The Day – Friday

The problem with people believing that John was speaking of a different day (as mentioned above) is that they miss the fact that the terminology for the day is different based on the author. To clear up any misunderstanding between the synoptic gospels and the Gospel of John, one needs only to compare the uses for the term “Preparation Day.” Once one does this, there are no discrepancies in the accounts –

Matthew 27:62 – “The next day, the one after the **Preparation Day**, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate.” This was the day after the crucifixion. Matthew says it is the day “after Preparation Day.”

Mark 15:42 – “It was **Preparation Day** (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached...” This is the day of the crucifixion. Mark says “It was Preparation Day.”

Luke 23:5 – “It was **Preparation Day**, and the Sabbath was about to begin.” This is the day of the crucifixion. Luke says “It was Preparation Day.”

John 19:14 – “Now it was **Preparation Day of the Passover.**” This is the day of the crucifixion. John says “It was Preparation Day.”

Based on the biblical evidence, there is

- 1) No discrepancy between any of the accounts.
- 2) Jesus was crucified on a Friday.
- 3) Jesus rose on a Sunday.

As a final note, the Bible says 13 times that He was raised “on” the third day. This is mentioned by Jesus himself as well as the apostles. Therefore, it must have been Friday that Christ was crucified.



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Please don't believe (as some have claimed) that Christ rode the donkey into Jerusalem on a Saturday instead of a Sunday. This would have been the Sabbath. If He did, He would have violated the law –

“Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.” Deuteronomy 5:12-14

There is no need to make the assertion it was a Saturday unless you simply wanted to finagle the dating. There is also no biblical provision for an exemption to the commandment prohibiting working a donkey. As stated above, the work of Sir Robert Anderson in the 1800s clearly demonstrates that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on 6 April 0032. This can be validated in other ways and is the correct year and month for the Lord's crucifixion.

The biblical evidence is quite clear and without ambiguity or total uncertainty...Jesus Christ was crucified as the Passover Lamb on Friday, 11 April 0032 and was resurrected to eternal life on Sunday 13 April 0032.

He now offers eternal life to all who call on Him by faith. Have you accepted His offer of peace?