

Prophet #4 **Jonah:** God has compassion upon Gentile nations, even Israel’s enemies, and God’s people should have compassion on them also to fulfill her prophetic role to the nations.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPHETS—JONAH SESSION 2**

**J**onah went running from the Lord and so endangered all his shipmates. They were horrified at Jonah’s foolishness. Who would knowingly offend the God of all Creation? And why did they have such lousy “luck” to end up on the same ship with him? While much of the current discussion of this passage is focused on the improbability of a fish large enough to swallow a man whole and/or the survivability within said fish for three days, there are several significant issues raised here.

***“I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you.”***

*Jonah 1:12b*

### **INTO THE SEA (JONAH 1:11-17)**

In this second part of chapter one, we see the rising panic of the sailors who have the misfortune of sharing a ride with a man who has ticked off **“THE LORD, THE GOD OF HEAVEN, WHO MADE THE SEA AND THE LAND”** (9). They are faced with a terrible dilemma. If they leave Jonah alone they are all going down. But if they do as he suggests and “hurl me into the sea” then they could be guilty of his blood. So they try harder (rowing v. 13) only to find that they are powerless to save themselves. Only after exhausting all other possibilities do they turn to prayer. They cry out to the Lord and ask for Him to not hold them guilty of Jonah’s bloodguilt (Ps 51:14) acknowledging that God will do as He will do. Then they throw Jonah overboard and the sea is silenced. Notice how seeing this actually brings about greater terror than when the storm was raging. They have just encountered someone far more fearsome than the mere prospect of death. They have witnessed the hand of God. This same God now appoints a fish to swallow up Jonah. So let’s look at each one of these pieces.

### **OUR INTERCONNECTED WEB (JONAH 1:11-12)**

The sailors’ fate was connected to Jonah’s. They “just happened to be on the same boat” as a runaway prophet. This brings up issues of how Providence works and the fairness of God dealing with people based on other people’s sins.

<sup>11</sup> Then they said to him, “What shall we **do to you**,  
that the sea may quiet down **for us?**”

For the sea grew more and more tempestuous.

<sup>12</sup> He said to them, “Pick me up and hurl me into the sea;  
then the sea will quiet down for you,  
for I know it is **because of me**  
that this great tempest has come **upon you.**”

### **POWERLESS AGAINST THE RAGING SEA (JONAH 1:13)**

When faced with life-threatening storms, what do we do? Try harder. The sailors’ attempt here is a vivid illustration of how foolhardy this response to God’s actions really is.

<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get back to dry land,  
but they could not,  
for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them.

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### **FEAR OF BLOODGUILT (JONAH 1:14)**

God's prohibition against wrongly killing (murder) someone is first stated in Genesis chapter 4 in response to Cain taking the life of his brother in jealousy. Abel's blood cried out to God from the earth. In Gen 9:6 God makes clear that shedding the blood of man will require a reckoning because mankind is made in the image of God. This bloodguilt for the wrongful shedding of a man's blood was widely recognized throughout the ancient Near-East. Here the sailors clearly want to avoid being held responsible for taking the life of Jonah.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore they called out to the Lord,  
"O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life,  
and lay not on us **innocent blood**,  
for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you."

### **A GREATER FEAR (JONAH 1:15-16)**

<sup>15</sup> So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea,  
and the sea ceased from its raging.  
<sup>16</sup> Then the men **feared the Lord exceedingly**,  
and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

### **MARK 4:35-41**

<sup>35</sup> On that day, when evening had come,  
he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."  
<sup>36</sup> And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat,  
just as he was. And other boats were with him.  
<sup>37</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat,  
so that the boat was already filling.  
<sup>38</sup> But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.  
And they woke him and said to him,  
"Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"  
<sup>39</sup> And he awoke and rebuked the wind  
and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!"  
And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.  
<sup>40</sup> He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"  
<sup>41</sup> And they were **filled with great fear**  
and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

### **GOD'S APPOINTMENT (JONAH 1:17)**

<sup>17</sup> And the Lord appointed a **great fish** to swallow up Jonah.  
And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.